



Veterans & Families – Listening Project

email: veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com

www.vflp.org.uk



August 2020

Welcome

Hope that you are keeping well. It's been good to see you all again on our regular link-ups, as well as welcome some new faces too. Physical V&F-LP community drop-in meetings have been put on hold until Church centres are ready to open.

I was talking with the group's secretary, and he summed things up really well the other day... When he expressed how he just doesn't know how to feel at the moment, concerning the Codiv-19 lockdown; and to be honest, I think that we may all feel like that during these unprecedented times.

However. It's not all about social-distancing & round the clock Zoomin', media platforms, face-packs, or masks... Read on, as we've gotta amazin' newsletter for you!

So, without anymore further ado, drum roll please....



On Tuesday 11th August 2020 at 7:00 pm we would like to take this introduce this month's guest speaker... Tim Jones of -



Our Mission

Our mission is to be the go-to platform empowering serving personnel, veterans and their families to manage transitions between postings and ultimately return to civilian life. Further, where needed, we would be the platform of choice for our struggling veterans to get help after leaving the service.

Positive Transition is a new digital platform using modern artificial intelligence techniques to deliver a community approach to transition providing best in class, end user assured, advice and guidance based on personal experience and lessons learned. It functions across all the elements of transition empowering the individual and, importantly, their families to own their own process and not be beholden to the existing fragmented model where many things are missed.

For more information please visit their website:

www.plus-t.co.uk

Drop us an email veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com for the link to drop-in on the meeting & find out more information.



The times that we are living in right now are most definitely unusual and hard for all of us, and yes, it is actually happening, but hang in there because **you** are doing your very best.

We have been making contact with you, and we are amazed at how well you are doing, how good it is to hear that your all are keeping your lovely friendships that you have built-up while attending our drop-in meeting's at St. Mary's Church & Centre, please carry-on with this important work.

V&F-LP's Veterans & Families Well-Being group users & provider were unuse to significant amounts of screen time, video calls and online support, sometimes it would appear more suited to

some type of sci-fi film; take your pick!!! In-fact the use of technology has proved a major benefit of late for both.

Our Zoom Well-Being group (as well as our drop-ins) have been and continue to be an exciting way of continuing our services during lockdown to the Veterans' Community, we have even seen participation in our drop-in meetings widen to include newcomers, or those that were previously been really, reticent about attending face-to-face (me included!!!).

Our next ZOOM **Well-Being group** will be on **Tuesday 11th August at 12:00 pm – 1:15 pm** with Ali. Just a reminder there will be NO Well-Being on the **17th August**.

The up-side... We've been aware of the amount of time it's taken with technical matters such as BST, GMT, Tea-time.... Any kinda of time!!! Having no visual, running out of time, all this sounds like a game show mmmm.

Helping Veterans & Families gain access to Zoom sessions, that were hesitant to use it 'coz'

not everyone wants to be on Zoom or other media platforms...' We get it – because even V&F-LP are split on issue this too!!!



Our Well-Being group (and drop-ins) bringing the Veterans' & Families within the communtiy together by using Zoom & other

media platforms offering a 'safe virtual space' where you can receive peer support and talk safely and freely, to others that are like-minded, especially individuals that are isolating and shielding themselves as they're high-risk, or just wanting to stay safe. Recently, it was interesting as well as informative, and good to catch-up with Tek the Gurkha Community liaison, and find out more of what was happening in the Nepali communitiy too.



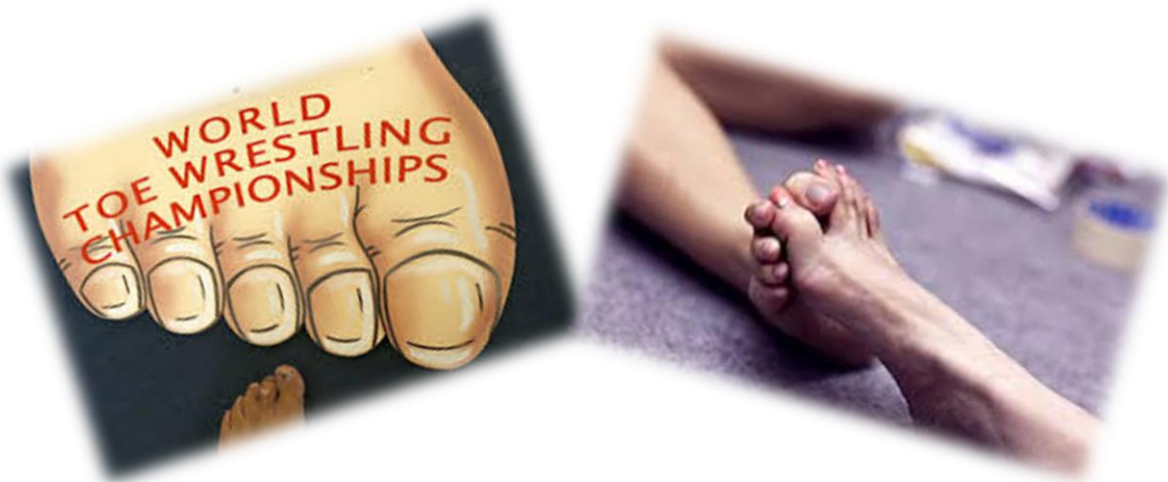
Veterans' Vibes

Well haven't we been busy-bunch just lately, our inbox has been packed with some of things that you have spent time doing.

Finger-painting has gone up a level, with ideas like you've not always thought of before, from bats, pineapples, family trees and birthday cakes



Football, cycling may be your favourite sport... A few days ago toe wrestling images dropped into our inbox. Apparently, it's a major sport to some, even in your own family – group bubble!!!





Follow us today on:



www.linkedin.com/in/veterans-families-listening-project-aa9a74b0/



www.facebook.com/VeteransnFamiliesListeningProject



@VnF_LP



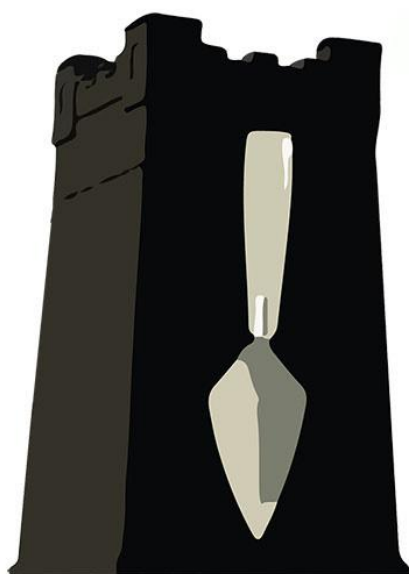
Veterans & Families - Listening Project
email: veteransfamilies@yahoo.com
www.vflp.org.uk

V&F-LP is an independent member of ASDIC.
The association of Ex-Service Drop-in Centres,
Linking Veterans' Drop-ins together across the
United Kingdom.



IT'S TIME FOR.... **HOT TOPICS.**

So, grab a snack & come-on BACK



BREAKING GROUND HERITAGE

IMPROVISE, ADAPT, OVERCOME

Inspiring each other to achieve greatness regardless of limitations

Bellsheil Rig excavation 7th - 18th September 2020

Do you fancy dusting off the old trowel or learn how to use one properly?

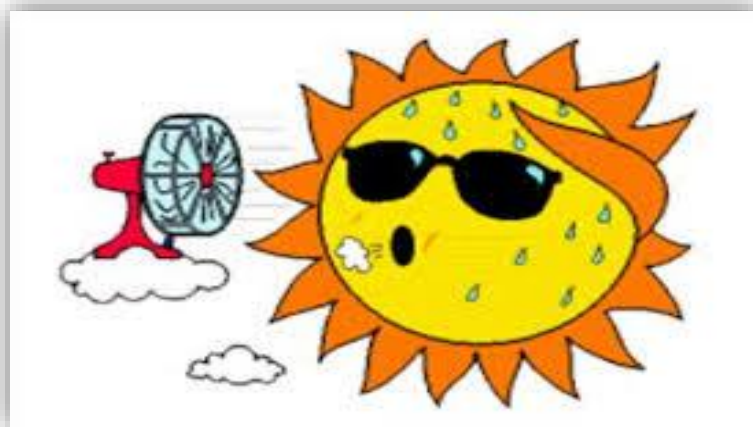
Once again, we will be teaming up with Operation Nightingale and Wessex Archaeology to undertake archaeological excavations in Catterick. This time we will be looking at features of the landscape so we can better understand what their functions were!

We are taking all levels on this project from absolute novice to the old hands, so if you would like to shake those lock-down blues and

make new friends whilst developing new skills why not give this project a go.

This project will involve camping (on a camp site) and plenty of one meter plus socialising. All tools are provided and tuition will be given, all you will need to bring is camping gear, some digging clothes and your interest in archaeology.

If you would like to get involved in this project please click the link below or email admin@breakinggroundheritage.org.uk





Share your WW2 history

Do you have a Second World War or VJ Day connection? Share it with us at ve-vjday75@culture.gov.uk

On social media

Share your Second World War stories, family histories and messages of remembrance on social media. Use **#VJDay75** to join the conversation now.

VJ Day in your home

- Use our dedicated toolkit for resources and branding for your activity, including messages of remembrance and thanks for the WW2 generation, with celebrations at home or in your care setting.
- Submit a couple of sentences, and a photo if you have one, to remember a loved one who fought during the world wars – or just to give thanks for everyone who fought for their country. These will be displayed on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's digital War of Remembrance.
- Contribute to Historic England's digital project 'VE to VJ Day: 75 Places that Witnessed the War'. From ordinary places that sheltered the Blitz-weary, to well-known sites of military might, the collection will feature stories of listed places that harbour wartime histories. The final collection will be revealed on VJ Day.

REF: www.ve-vjday75.gov.uk/



VJ Day Celebration

Join our on-line Zoom event!

Friday 14th August, 2pm-3pm

**Get a Union Flag, a cup of tea, and a biscuit
and let's talk about VJ Day!**

Do you have a story to tell about VJ Day?

We want to hear your story, whether it's yours or a parent's.
What did it mean to you? Were you in the Pacific or the UK?
Did it mean your father, grandfather, uncle or brother was
coming home? And how did you celebrate?

TO BOOK:  **call 0303 040 1234 (press option 1)**

 **or email CSAdmin@actionforcarers.org.uk**

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carerstrust
a Network Partner



What Veterans UK does

We provide free support for Veterans and their Families, Including a helpline, Veterans' Welfare Service and injury / Bereavement compensation scheme payments.

Veterans UK is part of the Ministry of Defence

Email: veterans-uk@mod.gov.uk

Freephone (UK only): 0808 1914 2 18

Telephone (overseas): +44 1253 866 043

Normal Service 10.00 am to 3.00 pm Monday to Friday

For more information visit their website:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk



SURREY HEATH AGE CONCERN

Registered Charity Number 1175933

20 Salisbury Grove, Mytchett, Surrey GU16 6BP

Telephone: 01252 266841

Email: office@sh-ac.org.uk

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!!!

There are many older people living near us who are lonely and isolated with little or no family contact that would really appreciate a visit to have a chat and talk through things with a friend. This friendship can make a really big difference in both the lives of the older person and their volunteer.

The aim of our service is to help older people who may be feeling lonely and isolated by providing the stability of a loyal friend who will regularly visit them at home, providing mutual friendship and companionship.

Our visitors are carefully matched to an older person living nearby so that both parties can gain mutual enjoyment from their friendship.

So if you feel you could help an older person by visiting them at a time to suit you (evenings and weekends are OK too) please give us a call on 01252 266841/ 07902 772585 or email office@sh-ac.org.uk for further details.

'Helping to put a rainbow in older people's lives'

BFBS Academy training for the Armed Forces, their families and veterans seeking social media expertise

Over the past 12 months the BFBS Academy – which is part of military charity and media organisation BFBS – has launched two online courses offering in-depth training to help people use social media to grow their business, or to find a career in social media.

Social Media Spouses

It's first course 'Social Media Spouses', which launched in April last year, is designed to address a real need amongst military spouses and partners to obtain the skills they need to find flexible and interesting work that fits around military and family life.

The course is funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust and is the first free online course to offer military spouses and partners vocational, in-depth, fast-track online training in social media, together with their own dedicated digital training community.

Places are limited and open to military spouses or partners only.

'Digital CULTure'

Building on the success of Social Media Spouses, BFBS Academy has developed the same 11-week online course and digital community to enable a wider audience, including Service leavers and others in the armed forces, to gain the skills they need to secure a job in the digital industry or to expand their own business through social media.

The Digital CULTure course costs £399, which includes access to the online community, a course completion certificate and subscription to the monthly newsletter, filled with the latest developments in social media marketing.

There is a 25% military discount, and the money raised with this programme will be put back into the Social Media Spouses programme to fund the ongoing support offered for military spouses.

About the courses

Both courses are taught by the BFBS social media team, who are part of the military community and are responsible for BFBS' social media channels.

They use a combination of online learning tools, live lessons and mentoring and each student will have weekly virtual lessons with a dedicated social media coach, who'll guide and support them throughout the course.

They offer access to an exclusive online community where individuals can find advice on careers in social media, content or campaigns. The course leaders will also offer ongoing support and feedback on anything related to social media.

Both courses focuses on the following areas of social media:

- Understand Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn's algorithms, along with effective strategies to make content stand out in the noisy world of social media.
- Planning, implementation and evaluation of social media campaigns.
- Growing an engaged audience, moderating comments and discussions, and dealing with difficult situations online.
- Taking truly show-stopping images for use in a social media campaign.
- Producing professional social media videos that can compete with the thousands of others out there... just by using a smartphone.
- Creating effective paid-for advertising on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram.
- Understanding the major platforms' built-in analytics tools to score and evaluate social media campaigns.

To apply for either course, please visit academy.bfbs.com.





Congratulation

**Office for Veterans' Affairs marks
one year since it's creation**



Office for Veterans' Affairs. The article was originally published by the Telegraph.

The UK has always held our veterans in high esteem. No one does Remembrance quite like us and every year millions of Brits buy poppies, lay wreaths, and mark moments of silence to commemorate those who have fought for our country. In recent years we've seen a record amount of public giving to Service Charities, honouring the sacrifice of so many in Iraq and Afghanistan.

But Governments of all colours have been historically deficient when it comes to looking after those who have served. Some brilliant initiatives and individuals have achieved genuinely excellent outcomes for our veterans.

But on the whole, services have been disjointed, hard to access and at times too focussed on inputs rather than actually asking what it feels like to be a veteran in the United Kingdom.

This Government has changed that. Established just a few days after the Prime Minister came to office one year ago, the Office for Veterans' Affairs has already overseen a significant shift in the Government's provision for veterans. From railcards to guaranteed interviews in the Civil Service; from a National Insurance holiday for employers of veterans to including a question for veterans in the 2021 census for the first time – much has been achieved. Prioritising veterans for new homes; helping shape a through-life healthcare plan in the NHS for service personnel and their families; commissioning long term studies to provide evidence-based policy for the years ahead – anyone who knows me and knows my history would

understand I wouldn't say it if it were not true: this Government has genuinely shifted the dial in these matters. And I'm proud of it.

Blending this with increasingly important private and third sector work, the ambition - to make the United Kingdom the best place in the world to be an Armed Forces veteran – is now well within grasp. But there is of course more to do.

REF: www.forcespensionsociety.org/2020/07/office-for-veterans-affairs-marks-one-year-since-creation

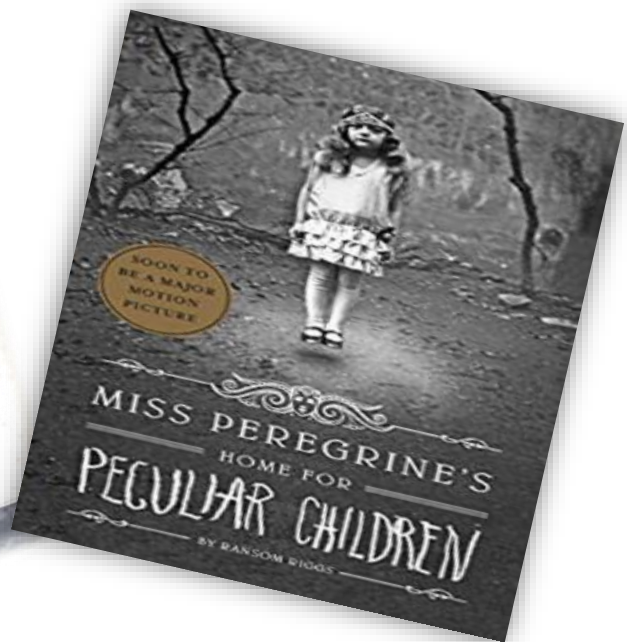
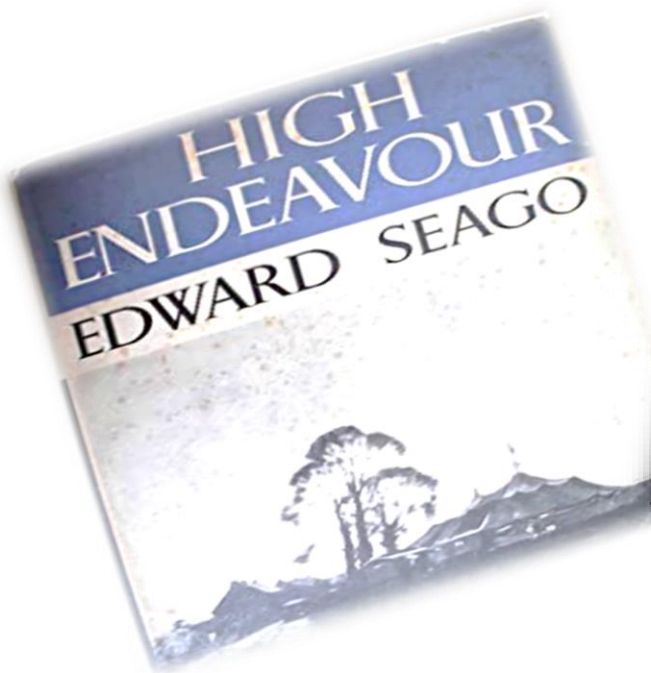
Book Chats

Well folks, this is it... Year of THE Lockdown Reading Challenge **#TLRC2020**, and we hope everyone has had a great time so far-- whether or not you're on track to meet your goal. If you haven't heard about it, don't worry – you have now!!! **#TLRC2020** is a year-long reading challenge, dedicated to reading more books by authors that you've never considered, or even heard of... And we've got two more this month, for you to relax with.

It's been really satisfying to see all of your progress in **#TLRC2020** so far, no matter how many books by unimagined authors you've picked-up, put-down. The fact that you're actively reading books by other authors—whether you liked reading or not (always good with a brew!!!) – is so meaningful, and we're all so appreciative for all your support over the past months.

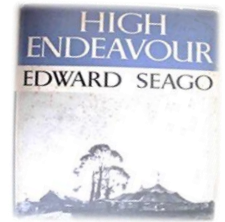
Keep an eye out for the next media platform link-up... But for now, let's talk about August's challenge theme, same as July – “Unknown Authors”. Each month, the **#TLRC2020 team** from V&F-LP select two books to feature for the month's theme (which is optional, in case you want a harder challenge!), and this month, the theme was...

Unknown Authors



High Endeavour by Edward Seago

Gillian: I knew he had been a popular and much admired 20th Century artist. I discovered he had written it and illustrated it too. It was about a man he had met during World War II when he was in the army. The story he told was of this man's determination to become a Fighter Pilot to serve his country. Belonging to a wandering circus family the man had many gaps in his schooling e.g. mathematics, which he had to overcome.

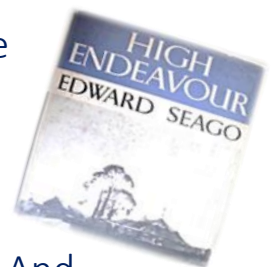


Being an animal trainer one of the hurdles he experienced was of being turned down, because of the evidence on his body of past encounters with lions and it showed evidence of 'repairs', at military medicals! He also had a family. It might be of interest as at the moment this period is being talked about.

I was so impressed I sourced some other second-hand copies from the Internet and spread them around!

9 / 10

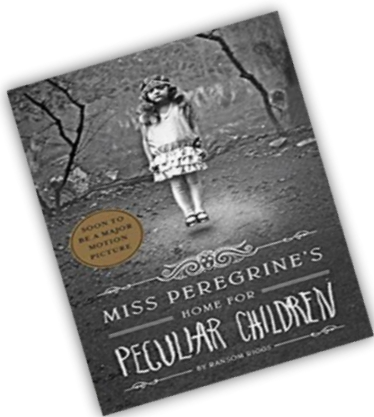
John: This is the inspirational (and true) story of a poorly-educated circus performer who decides to enlist during the 2nd World War, as a fighter pilot. He has to overcome numerous educational and administrative barriers to achieve his dream. But this man is a battler - just the sort of person his country needs at that moment in our history. And he gets there in the end, not just as a pilot, but as an officer. His success is all the more poignant because his little son, who essentially represents the generation for whom he and so many others were preparing to give their lives, dies of infection while he is still in training.



This book was given to me when I was going through a difficult period in my life!! I was thought of this book - it helped me fight my way through it: if he could do it, I was going to try my best too.

Edward Seago's style is a little difficult in places: but the book includes his own drawings illustrating each chapter (he was an accomplished artist). I can recommend this little book to anyone who is looking for an uplifting narrative (no play on words intended, although it clearly was intended in the title). 9 / 10

Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs

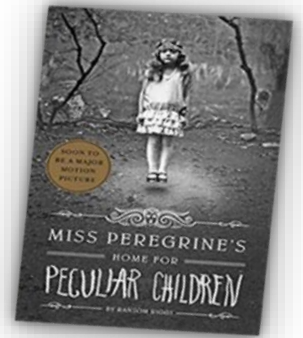


Key: The first thing to strike you is the stunningly atmospheric and creepy photographs throughout the book. The fact that the author's woven a strange and fast-paced narrative between the photos makes it a unique page turning read. It takes you back to being a kid.

There really is something to exploring a story with immersive and darkly-fantastical visuals to match. The dank and yet luscious Welsh countryside with its spooky, abandoned house was a great backdrop. It was great fun to read about the peculiar children and step into their world.

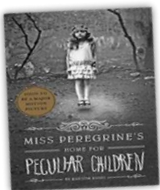
I think more than anything though, this is a great book to show the creative, powerful effect images can have. It makes you think of different worlds from the everyday things you see around you! 8 / 10

Pam: I don't often enjoy reading a book as much as I had hoped but, on the whole, when I get to the end I'm glad I made the journey! With Miss P it was the other way around, I did enjoy the reading, I was very disappointed with thing as a whole. I didn't realise this book was targeted for a younger audience, if I'd have known, probably wouldn't have bought it. My fault. Having said that though, for me, the story started very strongly and, of course, it was going to be peculiar!



Jacob wants to know the truth about his grandfather stories. Finally, he and his Dad travel to what sounds like one of the wettest islands off the Welsh coast, to where his grandfather was evacuated to during the war. Jacob finds the school dilapidated, deserted, and wet but there is more to it, than that.

The photographs in the book come in their own - adding to the weird atmosphere around this story. I got over my disappointment – I found it really enjoyable, regardless of who it is actually aimed at. **7 / 10**

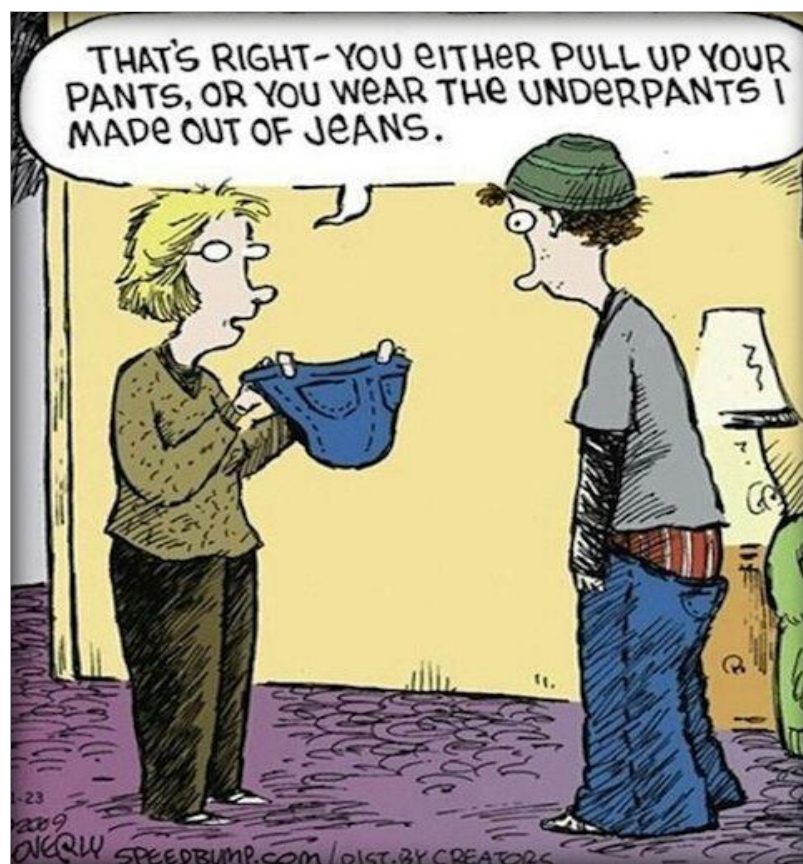


Rich: The way the story is woven around the photos in this book are fantastic - and knowing they are original, un-photoshopped photos from personal collections makes it that extra bit special. The story takes a while to get going but builds in pace well. I've seen a lot of comments saying it's a little like the X-Men (gifted children, old house, an all that) but honestly, it didn't feel that way at all when reading it. The good news is that when I finished the book, I had no idea there was a sequel.

9/10

Well, both books this month seem equally interesting, what do you think? Thank you to **#TLRC2020** team for your entertaining reviews. Please keep on sharing your book reviews with us, it's a good way to relax.

What's on your reading list
this month?!



Good
Luck
EVERYONE
@

We wish The Blue Van Veterans' Drop-in
in Eastbourne all the best with their recent
bid for English Veterans Awards



Team V&F-LP are looking forward to
seeing you
Soon
Have FUN, stay SAFE

All information correct at the time of going to press & PDF
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