



Welcome to our February 2022 Newsletter

We are at the beginning of a New Year, V&F-LP would like to take this opportunity to thank you so much for all your unconditional, continual support.

We have all certainly been through some unknown times in the last year, with V&F-LP drop-in being held via ZOOM earlier in the year, to opening up again, and being able to meet you in person – was great.

We are aware that many Veterans & Families have a choice when it comes to where they'd like to go for a brew, banter and may be some advice and support. So choosing V&F-LP does mean such a lot to Team V&F-LP. We truly appreciate all your support. Thank you so much.

In these unprecedented times V&F-LP's commitment and dedication to Veterans & Families still stands strong and will remain stronger than ever this Year. Team V&F-LP will continue to do their best by you and thank you for your continued loyalty. We hope that the V&F-LP's newsletter finds you well, and January to go.... Because on Monday 14th February, that's right

Monday 14th February 2022
10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Our doors will be open from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm, and for the first hour 10:00 am while 11:00 am complimentary bacon or sausage baps will be available*. Even more great news our Well-Being group with Ali will be on too at 12:00 pm, how fantastic is that - to actually meet each other in person...

Please note that you will need to email us:

veteransnfamilies@yahoo.com

And book a place, as well
as *pre-order your complimentary bap.

It would be really good to see you, so to avoid any disappointment please **email** us at the above address to book your place. Please note facing covering | masks are required unless exempt.

We are really looking forward to seeing you Monday 14th February 2022 at the High Cross Church, Knoll Road, Camberley, GU15 3SY. Open from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm.



Right then, are you ready... We have some exciting information to share with you. As we've not got one but TWO guest speakers this month. How fantastic is that???



RUSHMOOR BOROUGH COUNCIL



It is a great pleasure for us to introduce to you one of our guest speakers this month - Andrew Colver, Rushmoor Borough Council's Armed Forces Champion (AFC). He will be sharing a snapshot of his role & work as the AFC, to deliver ideas of the Armed Forces Covenant on behalf of the Council

through local action as well as by building connections between the military and civilian communities. It captures Andrew's approach to being an AFC for our Veteran's & Forces Community alike.

The link to the Armed Forces page:
www.rushmoor.gov.uk/armedforcescovenant

Contact details for

Cabinet Champion for Military:

Cllr. Jacqui Vosper:

www.democracy.rushmoor.gov.uk/mgUserInfo.aspx?UID=116



With equal delight we would like to introduce - Matthew Price the Founder of Veteran's Plot, that was set up at the start of the first lockdown to assist veterans and their families grow their own Vegetables and flowers. They used Instagram to do Live "How too's" and a weekly list of things to do in the garden.

They now have a plot of land at Merrist Wood college to do this on a larger scale, enabling them to invite veterans and their families on the plot to learn and enjoy. Veteran's Plot also look at how being outside and gardening is brilliant for our physical and mental health, they have very good relationship with Defence Garden Scheme, that run a ten-week horticulture therapy courses around the country.

...For further information...

Instagram – veterans_plot

Email – veteransplot@gmail.com

Phone – 077 76 96 41 35

It's time for



Listen UP:



It is with a heavy heart that we share with you the news of Denis, who passed away in January.

We send our deepest and most heartfelt sympathy and condolences to Denis' family for their loss.

Rotary



Club of Camberley

To Camberley Rotary club for all their continual support, especially over the Christmas period with their provision of food hampers for the Veterans & Families of our Armed Forces. We are all extremely grateful, thank you.

BIG Thank you



FIZZIN' WITH FLAVOUR



Friends of the Allied Special Forces Memorial Grove have sent some information regarding their Falklands 40 Booklet detailing the memorials in honour of men and women that lost their lives in the Falklands Conflict 1982.

This is part of their ongoing appeal to establish a permanent memorial to the Falklands Islanders Resistance.

The present memorial can be viewed

via

www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorial/279117.

Mike Colton

Friends of the Allied Special Forces Memorial Grove

mikecolton@hotmail.com

www.facebook.com/mike.colton.332

www.instagram.com/mikecolton957

Falklands 40



Welcome to the Falklands Memorial Way leading to the Falkland Islanders Resistance Memorial and beyond. This memorial way was created by 2014 to honour the soldiers and civilians who lost their lives in the Conflict which started with the enemy invasion of the Islands on the 2nd April 1982. The enemy surrendered on the 14th June 1982 after being thoroughly defeated by the British Task Force sent to liberate the British citizens on the Islands and ensure that they have the right to freedom, self determination and live their own lives without hindrance. **The 40th Anniversary of the end of the Conflict will be on the 14th June 2022.**

Falklands 4



Before we commence our journey along the Way, a visit to the Captain John Hamilton MC memorial would be in order. Situated close to the Popski's Private Army memorial it can be located to the front of a Mulberry tree.

Captain Hamilton was the only Special Air Service soldier to lose his life in action whilst allowing the other members of the patrol to attempt an escape.

Captain John Hamilton MC is listed with
www.warmemorialsongline.org.uk/memorial/282432
 and 279218



**Come & try
Cupid's Coffee
We're open
Monday 14th
February
10:00am 2:00pm**





'I want to thank everyone'

Reservist saves the day for elderly victim of medal mugging

A SECOND World War veteran who had his medals ripped from his chest by a mugger will again be able to wear his decorations in 2022 – thanks to a big-hearted Reservist.

Jim Marland, 96, was left devastated after he was attacked while paying his respects to fallen comrades at Rochdale Cenotaph last year.

But when Maj Phil Linehan (REME), who runs Northampton-based mounting firm Specialised Medal Services, heard about the attack on the former member of The Durham Light Infantry, he quickly set about replacing his decorations.

Having assembled the cluster of the Defence and War Medals plus the France/Germany and 1939-45 Stars, he packaged and presented it in uniform during a match at Rochdale Football Club, where the veteran is a fan.

Maj Linehan, an ex-Regular who serves with 103 Battalion, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, said he acted after hearing about the assault on social media.

He told *Soldier*: "I'm a military historian and was in Sicily on a battlefield study when a friend from my Northern Ireland days shared the news on Facebook.

"It was shocking to hear – but I realised that I had the original Second World War medals in stock and called my old colleague later to say it would

be a pleasure to replace them."

Having recreated the grouping, the story took a further twist when Maj Linehan was asked by the football club if he would don his uniform and present the decorations.

Adam Trennery – an ex-Royal Navy Serviceman and member of the team's veterans' association – had asked directors if they could lay on a special occasion for the nonagenarian, who fought in the Second World War.

And they were happy to oblige with a half-time ceremony at a match with League Two rivals Stevenage.

Maj Linehan, who originally joined the Royal Corps of Transport in 1978, said it had been a privilege to meet Jim before the game.

"I was very keen to understand his journey – he joined up as an 18-year-old in 1943, fought at Ibbenburen and finished the war in Hamburg," he said. "The Army family got together to produce the award for him and it was a wonderful privilege to give back to someone who gave so much to us all."

Jim, who spent six weeks in a field hospital after being wounded during the fighting in Europe, said he was overwhelmed to receive the medals.

"It was a surprise and I want to thank everyone who has been so nice," he concluded.

Got a heartwarming story? Email news@soldiermagazine.co.uk





The Royal British Legion announces commemorative plans for the 40th anniversary of the Falklands Conflict in 2022.

Thousands of veterans, civilians, and bereaved families will
be invited to attend an event at the

National Memorial Arboretum

on Tuesday 14th June 2022

to mark 40 years since the end of the conflict. Our
commemorations will focus on the broad range of
military and civilian involvement in all aspects of the
Falklands campaign, which was unprecedented in modern
times.

The Falklands Conflict started on
2nd April 1982 and was the first military action since the
Second World War that utilised all elements of the
Armed Forces.

The conflict lasted 74 days, during which seven ships were
lost to enemy action, nine aircraft were shot down, and
255 British personnel lost their lives. Their names are all
inscribed on the Armed Forces Memorial at the
Arboretum.

REF: www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/remembrance/remembrance-events/falklands

Attendees/Eligibility

The Falklands 40 commemorative event is open to veterans of the Falklands Conflict and their spouses/partners, as well as members of civilian organisations that supported the Task Force.

Registration

Registration for the Falklands 40 commemorative event will open in early February, with accreditation being led by the respective military and civilian associations.

The window for registration will run until late April 2022.

Those wishing to attend the event on 14th June 2022 are asked to contact their respective Regimental or Service Association to register their interest.

For any other queries, please contact falklands@britishlegion.org.uk or take a look at their FAQs - www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/remembrance/remembrance-events/falklands

Follow us today on:

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

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Veterans & Families – Listening Project
email: veteransnfamilies@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.



Please note: The Arboretum will be open to the public on 14th June with tickets available to pre-book nearer the time for those wishing to observe the event and pay their respects on this day but are not eligible for the RBL hosted event.

More information on how to pre-book tickets will be available on the National Memorial Arboretum's website:

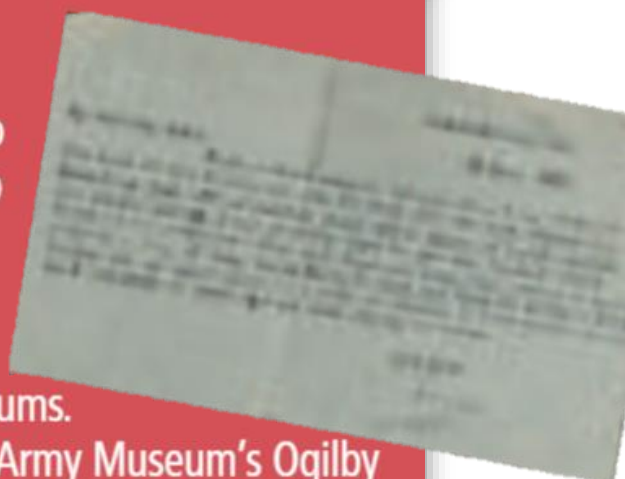
<https://thenma.org.uk/?seg=YPBPPC>





Great War resources

AN online platform has been launched to provide access to the First World War archives held at UK regimental museums.



Set up by the Army Museum's Ogilby Trust, and funded by a Libor grant, the four-year project is designed to preserve the memories of those who served during the conflict.

More than 75 collections are already participating, with more set to join this year. Eventually, it will hold more than two million items including documents, photographs, letters and diaries.

Lt Gen Sir Philip Trousdell, the trust's former chairman, said: "This is an enormously powerful research tool for students, family researchers, historians and those with even a casual interest."

Visit **theogilbymuster.com**

Government Launches Review Into Treatment Of LGBT Veterans



The government has launched a review into the impact of the pre-2000 ban on homosexual personnel in the military.

An independent review into the impact of the pre-2000 ban of homosexual personnel in the military has been launched.

The review is part of the Veterans' Strategy Action Plan, which has also been launched.

The independent review will provide the opportunity for the Government to better understand the lived experience of LGBT veterans who served prior to 2000, including how being discharged from the military because of their sexuality affects their life.

The information and experiences gathered as part of the review will allow the government to better tailor support to the LGBT veteran community.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Leo Docherty said:

While the modern military embraces the LGBT community, it is important that we learn from the experiences of LGBT veterans who were affected by the pre-2000 ban.

This review will allow the voices of veterans to be heard and importantly will help us better tailor support to the community.

Minister for Equalities Mike Freer said:

This government is committed to righting the wrongs of the past. Listening to those veterans affected by the ban will be critical to moving forward.

Our Armed Forces have given us freedom and peace, and I am proud to stand alongside every LGBT veteran.

Craig Jones MBE and Caroline Paige, Fighting With Pride Joint CEOs, said:

We welcome this important step forward by the Government in their work to find remedy for LGBT+ Veterans who stepped forward for military service and were treated in a way that does not reflect the values of the United Kingdom today.

In the course of this review the Independent Chair will hear accounts from Veterans whose lives were shattered by criminal convictions, prison sentences and dismissal in disgrace, and of the enduring impact on those lives.

Thousands more ended careers prematurely through administrative or other routes. FWP looks forward to working with Government to achieve an honourable outcome for LGBT+ Veterans.

Once a chair for the Review is announced, they will give further details of how those personnel impacted by the ban will be able to input into the review, ensuring their voices are heard.

The government has already taken steps to enable those who forfeited medals for reasons relating to their sexuality to apply to have them returned. The Home Secretary also recently announced an expansion to the disregard scheme, so that more veterans can benefit from it.

The review will provide information and recommendations on:

- The potential impact that the ban may have had on LGBT veterans, including the consequences for their future lives
- The accessibility of veterans' services for LGBT ex-Service personnel
- How the government can ensure that LGBT veterans are recognised and fully accepted as members of the Armed Forces community

The Office for Veterans' Affairs will continue to work with the charity sector to support individuals through issues that may arise from the historic ban on LGBT persons serving in the Armed Forces.

The terms of reference of the review will be published in due course.

PATHFINDER 

APP FOR SERVICE LEAVERS

■ AN APP designed to give Service leavers and veterans a place where they can come together and find employment has gone live.

JobOppO House allows its users to exchange experiences, share tips, introduce their own networks and understand what skills they have to offer in the workplace.

It can be downloaded via the Apple and Google Play stores.

www.soldiermagazine.co.uk JANUARY 2022



Millions to receive £350 boost to help with rising energy costs

Millions of households will receive £350 of government support to help protect them from rising energy costs, the Chancellor announced today.

- Millions of households will receive up to £350 to help with the cost of living following a rise in the energy price cap.
- All domestic electricity customers will get £200 off their energy bills from October, with 80% of households receiving a £150 Council Tax rebate from April.
- Chancellor Rishi Sunak announces £9.1 billion Energy Bills Rebate to support families with rising global energy prices.

Recognising that growing cost of living pressures was the “number one issue on people’s minds”, Rishi Sunak said this package would support hard working families.



The Energy Bills Rebate will provide around 28 million households with an upfront discount on their bills worth £200. Energy suppliers will apply the discount to domestic electricity customers from October, with the Government meeting the costs. The discount will then be automatically recovered from people’s bills in equal £40 instalments over the next five years. This will begin from 2023, when global wholesale gas prices are expected to come down.

Households in England, which are in council tax bands A-D, will also receive a £150 rebate. The rebate to bills will be made directly by local authorities from April. This will not need to be repaid. This one-off payment will benefit around 80 per cent of all homes in England and is £1 billion more generous and more targeted towards lower-income families than a VAT cut on energy bills.

On top of this discount, discretionary funding of £144 million will also be provided to support vulnerable people and individuals on low incomes that do not pay Council Tax, or that pay Council Tax for properties in Bands E-H.

Are you an ex-Service woman, with experience of a mental health issues?

The Veterans and Families Institute for Military Social Research, in collaboration with the Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust and Salute Her, are undertaking research to explore female Veteran's experience of mental health issues and ways to improve current mental health support provision.

Who can take part?

This study is open to anyone who identifies as a woman, who has experience of mental health issues in the last 5 years. You do not have to have sought any support or have a formal diagnosis to take part.

What will taking part involve?

You will be invited to take part in focus group, online or face-to-face depending on your preference. Should you feel uncomfortable taking part in a focus group, you can take part in this study via a one-to-one interview instead.

Will I be reimbursed for my time?

As a thank you for your time, you will receive £20 amazon voucher. If travelling for a face-to-face interview, expenses up to £40 will be reimbursed.



To find out more, please get in touch with Patricia Price (corvumdecorus@gmail.com) and/or Abigail Wood (abigail.wood@aru.ac.uk). **Patricia is a female veteran and the peer researcher on the project and can answer questions and address any concerns you may have.**

Service Leavers, Veterans And Reservists To See Enhanced Support Following Combination Of Employment Services



Two of the UK's largest and most respected military charities intend to combine their employment related work, beginning an exciting new chapter in their history.



The Officers' Association (OA) and RFEA – The Forces Employment Charity are working together to create a single charity to provide exceptional career support to all Service leavers, veterans, reservists, and their families throughout the UK, whatever their circumstances, rank, length of service, or reasons for leaving.

The new organisation will be called Forces Employment Charity, reflecting the purpose and heritage of the two constituent organisations. Founded in 1920 and 1885 respectively, the OA and RFEA both enjoy royal patronage, and provide support, jobs and training opportunities to Service leavers and veterans, as well as their families, acting as a bridge between the military and the civilian world of work. Between them, the charities helped over 25,000 ex-military personnel in 2021.

Historically, the OA has existed to help officers, and the RFEA has supported veterans and Service leavers of all ranks. Whilst having a different focus, both organisations are driven by a desire to achieve the best outcomes for their beneficiaries. This objective will underpin the new charity's direction, building on the individual successes of the OA and RFEA, and turbocharging the two organisations' work to continue transforming the lives of military personnel for the next century and beyond.

Forces Employment Charity will be headquartered in Mountbarrow House, London, and led by Alistair Halliday, current Chief Executive of RFEA, and the new Board of Trustees will be comprised of trustees from both charities. Ben Farrell MBE, a current trustee of the OA, will be appointed the new Chairman of Trustees. The OA Presidents and RFEA Vice Patrons will also lend their considerable experience. The OA's CEO, Lee Holloway, will continue to run the OA's grants and welfare services to officers and their dependants.

Ben Farrell (Chairman designate of Forces Employment Charity) said *"The rationale of combining the employment capabilities of both existing charities is clear, and will lead to an improved offering to all beneficiaries who can look forward to an unprecedented level of support from Forces Employment Charity. We are completely committed to continuing the OA and RFEA's current programmes, retaining the advantages of having a bespoke service for the Officer Corps, and delivering all existing contracts to the highest standards. The charities' staff will also be given the opportunity to play their part in this new strategy, with all employment and directly relevant support staff carrying over into the new organisation. Lee Holloway's contribution to the OA over the last eight years has been immense, and we all wish him the very best for the future."*

Kingsclear Memory Cafe



8am to 10am - Last Thursday of Every Month

Join us for our Memory Cafe to hear from our team and guest speakers providing information and advice around living well with dementia. It is an opportunity to ask questions and share experiences in a safe and supportive environment.

Get in
touch

Call us on freephone 0808 223 5516
Email to book a place j.barr@caringhomes.org
Park Road, Camberley
Surrey, GU15 2LN

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The association of Ex-Service Drop-in Centres,
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Veterans Strategy Action Plan: Teaching, Prison And NHS Roles To Be Fast Tracked For Veterans



It has been announced today by the Cabinet Office that a £70M action plan known as the Veterans Strategy Action Plan, will see former forces personnel fast tracked into public sector roles in teaching, prisons and the NHS.

Also as part of the plan, funding will be used to improve healthcare services for veterans, including mental health.

Several schemes are included in the plan such as veterans fast-tracked into over 50 prisons in England and Wales, a “troops to teachers” training programme will provide veterans with a £40,000 bursary to become secondary school teachers, 100 civil service placements offered to veterans by 2024 and the continuation of the NHS’s “Step into Health” scheme, which actively encourages people leaving the military to apply for healthcare roles.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Steve Barclay said the plan aims to make the UK “the best place in the world to be a veteran”.

“Veterans make a fantastic contribution to society and the measures announced today will help even more ex-service personnel realise their potential,” he said.

“Whether it’s more employment opportunities, better digital services and targeted support, all of Government is working to make the UK the best place in the world to be a veteran.”

Defence minister Leo Docherty said: “The veterans strategy action plan will boost employment, modernise services and help us better understand the needs of the veteran community.

Veterans already make a huge contribution to society and the plans outlined today step up our commitment to allowing them to live successful and healthy lives after service.”

An estimated £18M is to be invested for veterans healthcare as part of the plan.

NHS England chief executive Amanda Pritchard said the funding will make health services more accessible for veterans.

She said: “Our armed forces personnel are an immense source of pride for our country but veterans and their families need access to NHS support that is considerate of their unique circumstances.

“In line with our long-term plan, the NHS is investing an additional £18 million to make our health services more accessible and ensure GP surgeries and hospitals are even more veteran-friendly so that veterans and their families get the services they need, closer to home, which we know they want.”

Read the report in more depth including comment and reaction from various sources in the February issue of Pathfinder International magazine.

New Medal Unveiled To Honour Kabul Evacuation Heroes



Operation PITTING Medal and Clasp.

Members of the Armed Forces who were deployed in August 2021 to support the evacuation from Afghanistan will receive medallic recognition for their contribution. This was the largest humanitarian aid operation in over 70 years.

Personnel from across the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force will receive the Operational Service Medal (OSM) Afghanistan, with its own distinctive clasp, for their involvement in Operation Pitting – an evacuation effort to airlift thousands of Afghans and British nationals from Afghanistan as the Taliban seized control of the country.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

I'm delighted that Her Majesty The Queen has given permission for a special medal to be awarded to all those who deployed to Kabul, to honour their heroism in the face of extreme adversity. Operation PITTING will go down as one of the great achievements of our UK Armed Services and their civilian counterparts in the post-war era. The whole country can be immensely proud of their tireless work to bring men, women and children to safety. They represent the very best of us.

Commanded from the UK's Permanent Joint Headquarters in Northwood, Operation Pitting began on 13th August 2021 and assisted those eligible for relocation to the UK under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy from Afghanistan.

During this period of humanitarian crisis, the military provided food and water, clothing, medical supplies and hygiene products for evacuees and policed the airport alongside multiple forces from across the world. 16 Air Assault Brigade put 600 soldiers on the ground to provide force protection and logistical support to the vast operation at Kabul Airport.

The RAF also completed a record-breaking flight with a passenger number of 439 on a Globemaster.

The operation ended on 28th August 2021 and resulted in the safe evacuation of over 15,000 people on 100 flights, from at least 38 different nations. This was a key part of a multi-national effort which secured the evacuation of over 122,000 people.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

Last August, the Armed Forces demonstrated true heroism, bravery and dedication by supporting Operation Pitting – a monumental effort to airlift over 15,000 vulnerable Afghans and British nationals from Afghanistan during a rapidly deteriorating humanitarian crisis.

As the security situation worsened by the hour, our service men and women stepped up and delivered the largest British evacuation since the Second World War. They will rightly receive medallic recognition for their efforts.

I would like to thank them, and all our service personnel, on behalf of the public and UK Government for safely evacuating endangered Afghans through some of the most desperate scenes imaginable. You have done us all proud. Following approval from Her Majesty The Queen, they will now receive the medallic recognition their efforts deserve.

The medal

The medal is the existing OSM Afghanistan, but with an 'OPERATION PITTING' clasp. Those who already have the OSM Afghanistan with the 'AFGHANISTAN' clasp will receive the new clasp to affix to the ribbon. The medal is silver and circular in shape.

- The obverse shows the crowned effigy of Elizabeth II with the inscription ELIZABETH II DEI GRATIA REGINA FID. DEF.
- The reverse bears the Union Flag, surrounded by the inscription FOR OPERATIONAL SERVICE and the four major points of the compass with, between the points, four Coronets: Royal (top left), Naval (Navy, top right), Mural (Army, bottom left), and Astral (Royal Air Force, bottom right).
- Ribbon: The ribbon consists of a broad central red stripe, flanked each side by a stripe of navy blue and one of light blue, to represent the three services, with an outer stripe of light brown, to represent the Afghan landscape.
- Clasp: OPERATION PITTING clasp.

Image: Crown Copyright.

PATHFINDER 



**"Tell me more about the Acupuncture Diet.
Does it really work?"**

Quiz Answers

Hi...


I hope this will make you **Snickers** !!! I didn't know what to get you for Christmas??? A ride on a **Double Decker** or a trip on a **Aero** plane. A holiday to New **Yorkie** Oh no – we can't. A Space adventure around the **Milky Way**, visiting **Mars**. Actually at the moment, I'd like to go to another **Galaxy** far, far away with you.

But – I looked in our piggy-bank and all I could see was

Buttons!!! So instead I made this **Extra** special card for my one in a **Million** Love.

The **topic** to last year's Christmas what we did there!!!) you have to fill in the blank Space with a



Next year I'd like to go on a **Turkish** holiday, or we could go for a **picnic**, play **Skittles** put on some music and **twirl** around together. I am not gonna **Wispa**, but I am going to say loudly (and put on my Instagram & FaceBook page) I  you.

So let's **flake** out and enjoy eating the chocs. Love you lots like **jelly tots**. Cos I've got my **Heroes** and that's you.

We hope that there are some **smartie** pants out there that can fill in the blank space.

The quiz image was spotted on Twitter November 2021.

Well done if you got them all correct...



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**PLEASE
REMEMBER**

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10:00 am – 2:00 pm



Thank you
VETERANS
HONOURING ALL WHO SERVED



*Come & try
Cupid's Coffee
We're open
Monday 14th
February
10:00am 2:00pm*



*Pre-order your sausage or bacon bun – available between 10:15 am – 11:00am

**Face covering | masks will be required

