

REMEMBRANCE 2024

NEWSLETTER

www.theripplepond.org

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FROM THE DESK OF AL CARNS

We spoke to Al Carns, and asked him how he commemorates Remembrance as a family:

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"Remembrance is a special time to pay tribute to all those people who serve, have served and importantly those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. Also dedicate time to remember those left behind, the families, the children and the partners.

They are often the island we sail from and hope to one day return to. They are the anchor that holds us steady against the storm and the compass that keep us on the right path.

Every time the bugle sounds, I try to remember each incident and each individual I have unfortunately seen taken from us. It's my tribute and my honour to spend some time to remember them and the sacrifice they made for us.

To you and all the carers who help those affected by conflict, I salute you. Your dedication, courage and sense of service means so much to so many...."

Al Carns

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
(Minister for Veterans and People)





WHAT REMEMBRANCE MEANS TO ME...

“ Remembrance Day, to me, is a poignant occasion to honour and reflect upon the immense sacrifices made by countless individuals in the pursuit of peace and freedom. It is a day to remember the bravery and selflessness of those who served in the armed forces, often paying the ultimate price. This day serves as a powerful reminder of the cost of conflict and the enduring importance of striving for a world where such sacrifices are no longer necessary. It's a time to express gratitude, to learn from history, and to commit to fostering a future built on the values of understanding, respect, and unity.

Tori

TRP Mentor

Remembrance for me is, notwithstanding the past, more focused on more recent times and what the future may bring for those affected by their service. I think about all those individuals and their families whose lives have been changed forever, whether physically and or mentally and who need help in many different ways. Injuries do not necessarily bring families together. More personally I look back on the life my son had before he was injured, which can be painful and whilst we still have good times it is not the same. Life can be a struggle but as my son who needs 24/7 care typed the words a year after his injury “I am still here” . We are pleased he is though all our lives have been changed forever.

Jessica Cheesman

TRP Trustee



“In my younger years I did not really have a full appreciation for Remembrance - it's true meaning or it's impact. I remember being in school, or in a shop or at home and I just knew that I had to be quiet for a couple of minutes, and that it would be considered disrespectful to make a sound during this time. I was always quiet but my thoughts were not where they were meant to be.

Fast forward several years, my husband is a serving soldier and has been for the last 22 years, my brother, brother-in-law and father-in-law have all served their country and we have all lost people we know and love as a result. Remembrance has taken on a whole new meaning in our household. My thoughts are exactly where they should be, I embrace the time to remember and reflect, to appreciate and be proud. My children understand far more than I ever could at their age and we are so grateful for what we have.

True appreciation comes from education, experience or both and I hope we continue to make those we've lost proud by taking the time to pause.”

Toni Browning

TRP Staff Team



WHAT REMEMBRANCE MEANS TO ME...

continued

Although we were not a military family, as a child, my school was brilliant in teaching us about the World Wars and the importance of remembering those who gave up so much in order that we could have the freedoms we have today.

I remember everyone wearing poppies and having to be silent, which, remarkably, we all were. I also remember looking through my grandparents' big leather suitcase of old photos and being amazed at the military ones and the stories that my grandad told me about his time on HMS Ocean at the end of the Second World War.

My great grandad, who I never met, was a gunner; he fought in the first world war in France and on two occasions was shot.



Remembrance, for me took on a stronger significance when I was living in Cyprus with my husband; before then, I'd never been to a remembrance ceremony. Taking part in the ceremony as part of the Military Wive's Choir showed me a very real, very different side to military life and while I feel very lucky that we've never lost anyone due to conflict, I strongly feel that it's important to take part in remembrance to support those that have.

Carolyn Aggar

TRP Staff Team



For us as a family, Remembrance Day is significant. Whilst it remembers wars from history, it's more than that. It remembers all those who've sacrificed for our nation, those we see and those we don't. It remembers the fallen, those that never came home and those who came home different, leaving a part of themselves behind. It remembers the injured and the impact.

Remembrance is a moment to reflect and to take stock; to tell stories of bravery and courage, but also to recognise the very real effect of injury both visible and invisible. Remembrance is complicated, I think of the impact families like ours hold unseen; parades we'd once have attended together, now we go to separately each with our memories of what has been lost and what we still hold. And we carry those alone, weighted and heavy, whilst surrounded by life and family for which I'm forever grateful.



Sarah Parkinson

TRP Staff Team

LAYING WREATHS

We asked some of our staff, trustess and Members to lay wreaths across the UK. Here were some of the pictures and reflections from the day

Honoured to lay a wreath this morning on behalf of [@theripplepond](#) remembering loved ones that have been injured in the British Armed Forces and the families that support them.



Yesterday we had the honour of laying a wreath on behalf of the charity that I work for [@theripplepond](#). We, as a family remember the courage, dedication and resilience of the men and women of our armed forces who sacrificed themselves for our freedom. We are also grateful for all of the soldiers who have been injured, and those supporting them. At the going down of the sun and in the morning. We will remember them!

[#theripplepond](#) [#remembrancesunday](#)
[#wewillrememberthem](#) [#lestweforget](#)



VIRTUAL MEMBER MEET-UP



7:30PM- 9PM



YOUR FORCES FAMILY NETWORK

Dates for the Diary:

We love opportunities to get together online and host regular Virtual Member 'Meet Ups'. These are a brilliant place to meet and connect with other people in a safe and friendly environment hosted by a member of the staff team.

- Thursday 21st November
- Tuesday 3rd December
- Tuesday 7th January
- Monday 20th January
- Thursday 6th February
- Tuesday 18th February
- Monday 3rd March
- Monday 17th March



We also offer specific Virtual Member Meet Ups for our members who are new in the last 6 months, recognising that our newer members may value the opportunity to meet separately.

- Thursday 23rd January
- Wednesday 19th March
- Tuesday 29th April

CHRISTMAS Quiz

Tuesday 17th December

7:30pm



The only thing better than a Quiz night, is a Christmas Quiz Night! Book the date in your diary now and get your quizzing knowledge ready! Family Members are welcome along!

BOOK CLUB

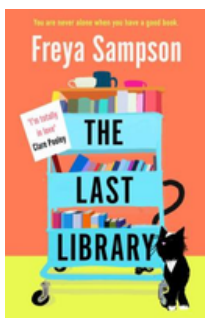


HAVE FUN | MAKE CONNECTIONS | CHAT ABOUT BOOKS



Our Ripple Pond Book Club exists alongside a Reading Force funded Book Club and we host regular meet ups to talk through their current reads. If you are a Member and want to get involved and join The Ripple Pond Book Club get in touch.

CURRENTLY READING



June Jones emerges from her shell to fight for her beloved local library, and through the efforts and support of an eclectic group of library patrons, she discovers life-changing friendships along the way.



A story of loss, hope and redemption against the most impossible odds. 1917. Halifax, Nova Scotia.



“

Book clubs are a fantastic way to have fun and make connections – and everyone is welcome!

A TRP Member



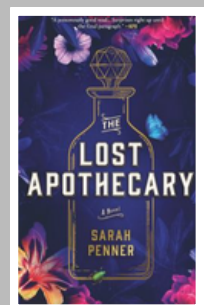
THE BOOK CLUB RECOMMENDS...

We asked our book club to vote on their favourite books they've read together so far...

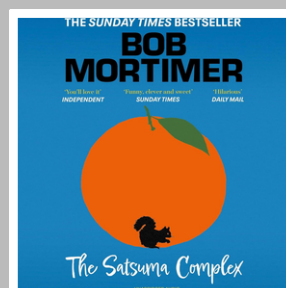
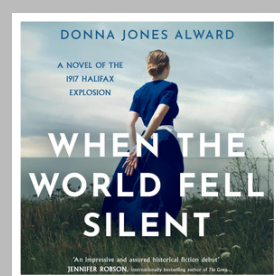
Voted Book Club Favourite:

The Lost Apothecary, by Sarah Penner

"Must Read!"
"Loved this book"



Other Recommendations:



INFORMATION TALKS

CONFIDENT | EMPOWERED | RESILIENT



We know that information, experience and connecting our Members with subject specialists enables our Members to be confident, empowered and resilient.

Over the past few months, we've dedicated a huge amount of resource into ensuring our Members have the information they need, as they need it and hopefully before they need it. We are really excited about some of the resources we are working to produce.



Huge thanks to Paralympian Gregg Stevenson for being part of a conversation with us to talk about his journey to recovery and the impact on his family.

Gregg has recently been appointed as a Trustee for Walking with the Wounded, we know he brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to that role and we look forward to seeing more from that.

We also interviewed staff members from The Family Employment Services Partnership between The Ripple Pond and The Poppy Factory to get more of the inside scoop.

Watch our socials as this conversation goes live on **Monday 18th November**



Injury, uncertainty and safe conversations
Exploring how families support a loved one with catastrophic injury

With

Dr. Hilary Engward



Veterans & Families Institute for Military Social Research



Blesma
THE LIMBLESS VETERANS



Huge thanks also to Dr. Hilary Engward at the Veterans and Families Institute for Military Social Research for talking to our Members about her research exploring how families can support a loved one with a catastrophic physical injury.

We have more information talks coming soon from Tom Harrison House, Fighting with Pride, Op COURAGE and more.

We are so thankful to those who are sharing their knowledge to improve family outcomes.

Professional Information Session



11am

PROFESSIONAL INFORMATION Session

Friday 29th November

Join us for a short presentation about The Ripple Pond detailing who we support and what membership looks like, and how to refer to us. There will also be time at the end to answer any questions you may have.

REGISTER NOW

THE RIPPLE POND
YOUR FORCES FAMILY NETWORK

If you are a professional working with, or in contact with serving or veteran families and would like to find out more about who we are and what we do, join us for our next Information Session where there will be a short virtual presentation on Microsoft Teams, a chance to meet some of the Team and ask any questions you might have.

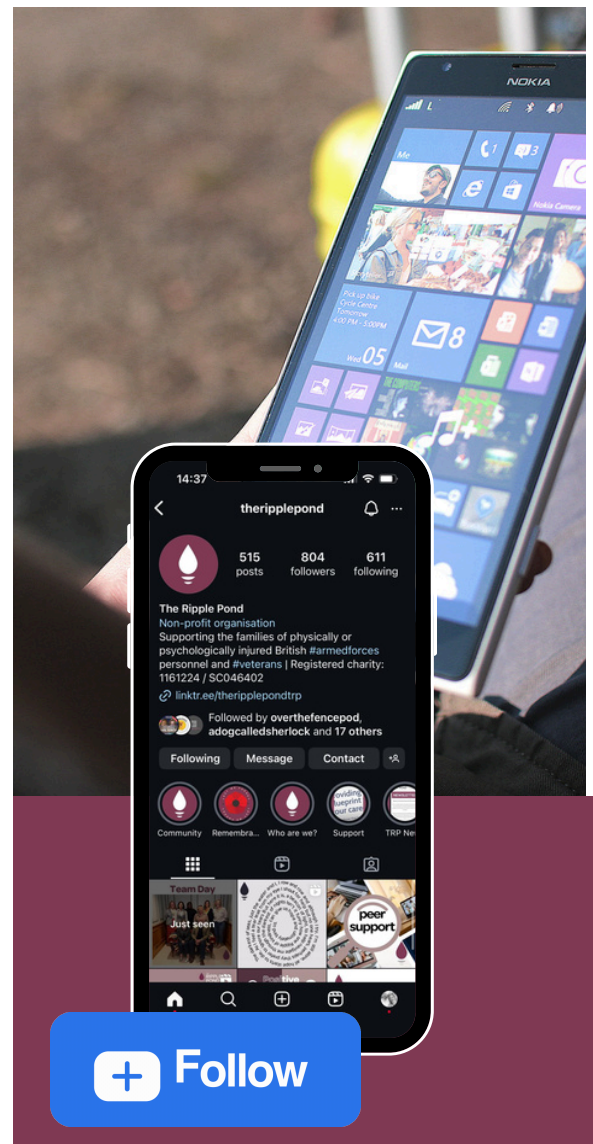
Please feel free to share with colleagues and anyone within your network who may benefit from the session.

Follow us on social media

We want to curate content that is helpful and meaningful. We believe that everyone caring for a loved one with service attributable injuries should be seen, heard and supported and we are doing our best to get content out, but we would love it if you could help us:

- Could you follow us on the social media platforms you use, we post regularly on: LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and X
- Would you consider sharing our posts to help them reach more people. Statistics show us there are many more in our armed forces community that could benefit from support and we want to make sure they have our details if they need it.

 theripplepond



14:37

theripplepond

515 posts 804 followers 611 following

The Ripple Pond
Non-profit organisation
Supporting the families of physically or psychologically injured British #armedforces personnel and #veterans | Registered charity: 1161224 / SC046402
linktr.ee/theripplepondtrp

Followed by overthefencepod, adogcalledsherlock and 17 others

Following Message Contact

Community Remembra... Who are we? Support TRP Ne

peer support

+ Follow

A FINAL WORD:

On my way to post remembrance poppy wreaths for our members, I found myself with an untimely puncture, waiting in a local tyre centre; a small, fascinating cross-section of society. Around me were people from all walks of life, reflected in the car park outside, where old, worn vehicles sat beside gleaming luxury cars. Inside, tweed jackets brushed up against high-vis vests, and one person, unusually, sat absorbed in a book while most others focused on their screens.

It might appear that this mix of people share a common experience, yet on closer inspection, each had their own private worries. The self-employed worker glanced at the clock, worried about lost income; the young parent sat quietly, anxious about an MOT; the driver of the flashy car sighed, perhaps wishing their car trouble had arisen closer to the West London dealership. A young driver nearby looked lost in thought, possibly wrestling with guilt after damaging their mother's car.

In that moment, I found myself reflecting on remembrance and how each person's experience is shaped by unique memories; it is not universal. Every individual's understanding is different and often diverges from the narratives we typically hear.

As CEO of The Ripple Pond, I am often asked what remembrance means to me. For me, it is layered. I feel immense pride in my service, and I think of the steadfast, courageous people I served alongside who embody the commitment we honour on Remembrance Day.

But remembrance also brings back other memories: when I joined the Army at 16 as a child and witnessed the mistreatment of those who were seen as "different." I remember LGBT+ personnel facing discrimination and men and women dealing with abuses that left lasting scars. For me, remembrance includes these unseen wounds, often hidden but just as real.



For families caring for those affected by hidden injuries, remembrance brings silent burdens too often overlooked. This is where The Ripple Pond finds its purpose. We honour the resilience of these families, building a community where they can share stories and find understanding. As we remember, we also look forward, embracing the diverse narratives that deepen our understanding of sacrifice and resilience. Together, we ensure every story is valued, bringing hope and healing.

Remembrance also has a wider context, with talk of potential conflict becoming increasingly common. If war comes, it may look very different from our recent experiences, impacting the entire nation in ways we have not seen for decades. Therefore, any decision to engage in conflict must be taken with the greatest care, and as a nation, we must be fully prepared in every sense. This readiness goes beyond having optimised Armed Forces; it requires ensuring that our country's strategic infrastructure is fit to support both the demands of conflict and the lasting legacy of war, including the long-term care of injured personnel and their families.

Remembrance must be an active commitment, one that informs not only our view of defence but also how we shape national policy. War and conflict affect each one of us, and for our country to be resilient, we must foster a healthy, prepared, and united society. This preparation is not only about physical readiness but also about understanding the enduring effects of war on our communities, on our families, and on our future. Only with this holistic resilience can we truly honour those we remember, support those who continue to bear the costs of conflict, and ensure that our nation is ready to withstand and recover from the profound impacts of war

Rodger Cartwright

Chief Executive Officer



KEEP IN TOUCH:

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 www.theripplepond.org



THE
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YOUR
FORCES
FAMILY
NETWORK