

Welcome to the Spring edition of East Lindsey's Age-friendly newsletter.



"An Age-friendly Community is a place that enables people to age well and live a good later life." (Centre for Ageing Better)

East Lindsey District Council committed to becoming an Age-friendly community in 2019 becoming part of the UK Network of Age-friendly Communities. We work with other organisations and older people from our community to improve things for people as they age. This is an ongoing journey.

In this issue we will be looking at ways to keep ourselves safe and well.

We also have a wonderful account of the World War Two experiences of an RAF Bomber Crew, from one of our Ageing Well Ambassadors.

Protecting Yourself from Scams.

STOP – THINK – CHECK

A lot of older people are worried about Scams. Scams can be by post, over the phone, at your front door or most commonly these days online.



Common Scams to look out for

Tech Support Scams: Scammers pose as computer support, claiming your computer has a virus. They ask for remote access or payment for unnecessary services.

Government Impersonation Scams: Scammers pretend to be from government agencies, demanding personal information or payment.

Romance Scams: Scammer contacts someone online, they build a relationship with the victim, eventually asking for money for travel or emergencies.

Fake Prize Scams: You are contacted by someone, claiming you've won a prize, but you need to pay fees or taxes upfront to claim it.

Doorstep Scams: Someone comes to your door pretending to be from an organisation, offering services or asking for donations. They may also pose as a tradesperson to gain access to your home.

Phone Scams: Scammers call or text pretending to be from banks, tech support, or even family members in distress. They often ask for personal information, money, or remote access to your devices.

[Tips on how to protect yourself and your loved ones.](#)

Doublecheck Before You Trust: Always check the identity of the person contacting you. Don't be forced to make decisions or take actions immediately. Take time to call a trusted number or visit the official website of the organisation they claim to represent.

Remember - If someone comes to your home uninvited you don't have to open the door or let them in. If you are unsure about a phone call then hang up, you don't have to be polite.

Don't Share Personal Information: Never give out personal or financial information over the phone or online unless you are absolutely sure of the person's identity.

Be Sceptical of Uninvited Offers: If an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Be cautious of uninvited calls, emails, or messages.

Report Suspicious Activity: If you suspect a scam, report it to Action Fraud, which is the national reporting

centre for fraud and cybercrime. Their number is 0300 123 2040.

Stay Informed: Keep up to date with the latest scams by following local news, watching daytime TV shows or asking trusted friends and family.

If it sounds too good to be true it probably is!

If you are not expecting it, ALWAYS question it!

Keeping Safe at Home

It's important to be and feel safe at home. Ensuring safety at home is crucial for older adults to maintain independence and well-being for as long as possible.

[Tips for staying safe](#)

Preventing Falls:

Around a third of people aged 65 and over, and around half of people aged 80 and over, fall at least once a year. Here are some ideas that might reduce our risk of falling.

- **Shoes and slippers that fit well:** Many falls are the result of ill-fitting footwear.



- **Eat well and hydrate:** not eating and drinking enough can make you feel lightheaded or faint.
- **Stay Active:** keeping active helps maintain strength and balance.
- **Install rails or grab bars:** Adding these in the bathroom and near stairs to provide support.
- **Remove Clutter:** Keep pathways clear of objects like books, shoes, and rugs.
- **Use Non-Slip Mats:** Ensure mats and rugs are non-slip and securely taped to the floor
- **Personal alarm (or mobile phone in pocket):** A good idea, so that if you do have a fall and can't get up it is easy to call for help.

Fire Safety:

Most of us know these things but it's always good to remind ourselves 😊

- **Smoke Detectors:** Ensure smoke detectors are installed and check batteries regularly. Get specialist smoke alarms if you have hearing or vision problems.
- **Create a fire escape plan:** Talk to a family member or friend about this and practice it. Make sure that corridors, exits and stairs are free from clutter.
- **Avoid Overloading Sockets:** Do not plug too many devices into one socket or extension cord.
- **Keep Heaters Safe:** Place heaters at least 3 feet away from flammable

materials and turn them off when not in use.

- **Stay safe while Cooking:** Check pan handles don't stick out. Be careful if cooking with oil. Keep loose clothing and tea towels away from flames.
- **Home Fire Safety check:** Anyone can complete a free online check www.safelincs.co.uk . Some people are also eligible for a free home visit from Lincolnshire Fire Service Tel:01522 555777.

Bathroom Safety:

- **Mats:** Use non-slip bath or shower mats. Ensure that any mats on the floor are non-slip too.
- **Raised toilet seat:** A raised seat can make life much easier for anyone who struggles to get up.
- **Shower Chairs:** Consider using a shower chair for added stability while bathing.
- **Water Temperature:** Set thermostat to a safe level to avoid scalding.

Keep Emergency Numbers Handy:

Have a list of emergency contacts by each home phone and saved in your mobile phone.



Looking after your Mental Health



Good Mental health is an important part of our overall well-being, and it's a good idea to know how to keep well and what support is out there if we need it.

Tips for keeping mentally well

Stay Connected: Regular social interactions can significantly improve mental health. Engage in community activities, join clubs, or sign up to a course.

Stay Active: Physical activity can boost mood and overall mental health. Maybe start with gentler exercises like walking, yoga, swimming or gardening. Find the thing that works for you.

Seek Professional Help: If you're feeling overwhelmed, don't hesitate to reach out to mental health professionals. Services like Lincolnshire Talking Therapies offer free NHS support.

Practice Mindfulness: Techniques like meditation and deep breathing can help reduce stress and improve mental well-being.

Hobbies: Taking up new hobbies, or revisiting old interests, can provide a

sense of purpose and joy. Try something new, have fun finding activities that you enjoy.

Support is there if we need it...

Lincolnshire Mental Health helpline

Tel: 0800 234 6342 (this is available 24/7)

Lincolnshire Talking Therapies

Tel: 0303 123 4000 or Email: lincs.spa@nhs.net (to request a referral form)

Silverline Tel 0800 4 70 80 90 (National and available 24/7). This is a free phone service specifically for older people (aged 55+) who might be feeling lonely, need access to support or just want a chat.

Samaritans is a national organisation. Call anytime Tel: 116 123

UK armed forces veterans can call Op COURAGE 0300 323 0137 to self-refer or 0300 323 0139 for the emotional support line.

Lincolnshire Rural Services

Network Tel: 0800 138 1710 (8am to 8pm daily). Supporting people in the farming community who are experiencing stress and mental health issues.

Night Light Cafés are safe spaces that offer out-of-hours, non-clinical support and are staffed by trained volunteers. Call 0300 011 1200 or email nightlight@actstrust.org.uk.

HAY (How are you) Directory focuses on information about services and activities that will improve emotional/mental health www.haylincolnshire.co.uk

BOMBER COUNTY:

A Family Link

by Roger Irving

Roger Irving is one of our Ageing Well Ambassadors.

This year, 2025, marks the 80th anniversary of the end of World War Two in Europe. The next few months will, no doubt, be full of stories of family members who experienced life during the conflict. This is one such story of what happened to a then 23-year-old who served in the RAF, told to me a few years before he died.

Being born in 1947, most of my knowledge of the war came from stories in comics (especially War Picture Library) and films such as Reach for the Sky, The Dam Busters and Cockleshell Heroes that proliferated in the 1950s. My father made little mention of his experiences, though I knew he had been a PoW for 4 years.

My wife and I moved to Lincolnshire in 1975, shortly after marrying as I had obtained a teaching post there. I knew little about the area, except the fact that it was known as 'Bomber County'. Further investigation revealed the hugely important part that the numerous airfields, (which by then had often fallen into disuse), played in the defeat of Germany. However, the role of the 125000 bomber crew (nearly half of whom failed to return) had rather been played down after 1945, almost as if Britain felt guilt regarding the inevitable devastation they had caused. They were certainly not celebrated like the Battle of Britain pilots.

One of the many Lincolnshire airfields was RAF East Kirkby. Today the Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre

based there acts as a living memorial to the crews of both 57 and 630 squadrons based there between 1943 and 1945. In this comparatively short time, 162 Lancaster crews flew operationally with 630 squadron – 64 were lost, a rate of about 40%.

One particular crew failed to make it back to Lincolnshire on two occasions but amazingly each time 6 of the 7 crew members survived. The pilot was a 21-year-old Australian, F/S Lionel 'Blue' Rackley and the crew first went into action at the end of March 1944. A month later they took part in a night bombing attack on Munich. At 01.23 hrs their aircraft 'E-Edward' was caught in the German search lights and was hit by flak. Managing to escape but with the intercom hit and the two outer engines dead they decided to jettison the bomb load and to avoid going down in Germany (and becoming PoWs) they set course over the Alps for Corsica – no mean feat on two engines! The aircraft eventually crash landed on the island, though sadly the tail gunner was killed. but all the rest survived and were looked after by American troops who had taken the airfield three weeks before.



The crashed Lancaster in Corsica

It took a month before the crew got back to England via North Africa only to find they had been posted as 'missing - presumed dead' and their possessions disposed of.

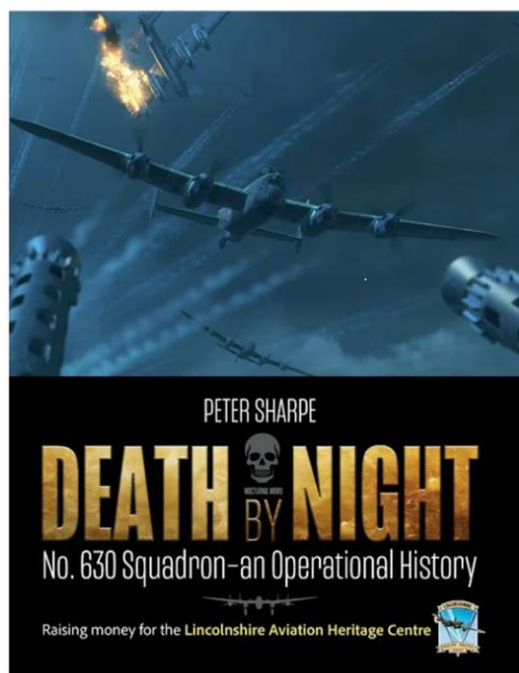


The above image is the crew after returning from a bombing mission over Germany. The pilot 'Blue' Rackley is 4th from the left and my father-in-law, Ian Gow, is 3rd from the right.

By the start of June 1944 the crew, with a replacement tail gunner, were back flying again. At the end of the month, during a night bombing raid on Wessling, their Lancaster 'G-George' was attacked by a night fighter and badly damaged, though they pressed on to bomb. Heading for home the control column and rudder bar had to be locked to keep the plane flying straight but once over England the pilot realised, they would never make it to East Kirkby and gave the order to bale out. The tail gunner's parachute had been destroyed and the bomb aimer bravely attempted to strap the two of them together, but it failed to work and the tail gunner fell to his death. The navigator hit the tailplane and suffered severe injuries, while the pilot was badly hurt when he landed next to the east coast mainline, and his parachute caught on the London express. He was dragged for some way until the 'chute' tore free – a

search party was sent out when it was found at King's Cross still attached to the train.

All this is relevant not only to me, but to my wife, as the navigator in the crew was my father-in-law, Ian Stuart Gow. When he told me about the two incidents, he acknowledged that it was due especially to the skill of the pilot, 'Blue' Rackley that he and the others survived.



Details of both incidents are recounted more fully in a recently published account of 603 squadron at East Kirkby entitled 'Death by Night' by Peter Sharpe, clearly a labour of love at 400 pages. Every operation is described, every aircrew that perished is given in detail and there are numerous photographs.

Look out for local events taking place to remember and celebrate

- VE (Victory in Europe) Day on the 8th of May 2025
- VJ (Victory over Japan) Day on the 15th of August 2025

BBC - Memories and Dementia: Starting the Conversation

The BBC has just launched a special new season across TV, iPlayer and Radio called Memories and Dementia: Starting the Conversation.



They aim to help start conversations between those living with dementia and their friends, families and carers by evoking memories of their past through content from the BBC's archive. This includes a 'pop up' channel on the BBC iPlayer. There is a selection of programmes from the 1960's, 70's and 80's.

www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer

On BBC Sounds there is also a Memories and Dementia collection. This includes selections of radio programmes from across the decades and new episodes on finance, faith and life in a 'dementia village'.

www.bbc.co.uk/sounds

This is great for those living with dementia but might also be of interest to people who enjoy revisiting some of the TV and radio of their youth. Which leads me to....

The importance of Nostalgia

Nostalgia, often described as a sentimental longing for the past, can have a positive impact on older adults.

Here are some key ways it positively impacts their lives:

- **Boosting Mood:** Happy memories, recalling joyful moments can uplift spirits.
- **Reinforcing Identity:** Reflecting on the past strengthens our sense of self. This can be particularly important at times of change or loss.
- **Strengthening Bonds:** Sharing memories enhances social connections. Talking with family and friends can foster a sense of connection.
- **Stimulating the Brain:** Nostalgia improves memory and cognitive function – it exercises the brain!
- **Providing Comfort:** Focusing on positive memories can bring comfort and help cope with present day challenges.
- **Inspiring Activity:** Past achievements can remind people of their strength and capabilities and motivate them to set and achieve new goals.

So, nostalgia is more than just a trip down memory lane. It's a powerful tool that can enhance emotional well-being.

Maybe take some time to look at the TV and films of your youth, look through your old photos, try an old recipe, visit a place from your past, or talk to a sibling or a friend about the 'old days'.

Would you like to be an Ageing Well Ambassador?

“At the heart of an Age-friendly Community is the meaningful engagement and involvement of older people.” (Centre for Ageing Better)



Listening to the voice of older people is an essential part of an Age-friendly Community. Our Ageing Well Ambassadors play a key role in this process in East Lindsey. They are invited to take part in regular meetings where they can give their views and opinions on things that are important to them. They are also made aware of other opportunities to get involved in local consultations and events.

Ambassadors are people aged 50 or over who live in East Lindsey and are helping us ensure the voice of older people is at the heart of what we do.

The Ageing Well Ambassadors increase the number of older people who will benefit from an Age-friendly Community by sharing a variety of Age-friendly information with people in their community.

This information is very varied. It might be information about activities and events; it could be the latest information about how to keep ourselves safe and well as we get older; it could be information about preparing for our future as we age; it could

be about how we challenge ageism in ourselves and others.

- Would you like the opportunity to have your say on issues that affect you now and in the future?
- Could you share your experience and that of other older people in your community?
- Could you share Age-positive messages with family, friends and your community?

This is a voluntary role, you can give as much, or as little time as you want. Spread the Age-friendly message and help with initiatives and developments across the district. If you are interested, please do get in touch.

Tel: 07394 838346

Email: alison.carlisle@e-lindsey.gov.uk



For further information about anything in this newsletter please contact our Age-friendly Communities Officer

Tel 07584 202220

Email jane.berni@e-lindsey.gov.uk

