

PATRON'S MESSAGE

This is my 5th year as Patron of Veterans Aid and looking back I can't believe how much the charity has changed in this time. Not only is the transformation of New Belvedere House almost complete, the HQ and Operations Centre has been relocated to excellent new offices in Victoria. And as if this were not enough, they have also managed, while making these changes, to cope with an unrelenting operational workload. The result of all this effort is a thoroughly modern and effective charity that really is fit for purpose in today's complex world. This brilliant achievement was only possible because the whole VA team showed true dedication to their cause and I wish to say publicly that I am truly grateful for the enormous commitment shown by all the staff.

I know that our jewel in the crown, New Belvedere House, upon completion of the rebuild, will become even more of a beacon of hope to so many veterans who

need that special place. But it will also be a stunning example, both nationally and internationally, of how lasting change can be brought to the lives of those veterans in crisis. For those who have so generously donated to this wonderful development, I thank you for providing a gift that will keep on giving for many years to come.

In 2014 we had the War Requiem, performed for us on Remembrance Sunday by the Royal Choral Society, in the Royal Albert Hall, to mark the outbreak of the Great War. As I write this we are approaching the Centenary of the Armistice and I am reflecting on that terrible war that went on for so long. Veterans Aid was born out that conflict, to provide care for those who fought, and every year since 1932 has endeavoured, with great energy, to provide hope, comfort and genuine care for veterans who have fallen through the cracks of life. The charity

has not chosen an easy path, and some of the suffering it sees on a daily basis can be utterly heartbreaking.

But Veterans Aid is a place where wonders take place every day; I know because I've talked to so many clients whose lives have been turned around. The key to this is the boundless energy, compassion and determination to save individuals that lies at the heart of the charity. To see it in action is as humbling as it is amazing. It is this that makes Veterans Aid unique and me so immensely proud to be its Patron.

My heartfelt thanks to you all for your continued support, which is so very much appreciated.



The Dowager Viscountess Rothermere
Patron, Veterans Aid

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