

National Service Remembered

Residential & Care Home Setting Resource



Welcome to the National Service Remembered Resource Pack.

We hope it is of use to you and your residents as you explore the project and remember this unique period of our nation's history.

This document contains a short guide on how to use the Microsoft Powerpoint or PDF included in the pack. The Powerpoint and PDF have been designed to be used as a group activity but can also be used in a one-to-one setting. They contain conscript stories, links to our online exhibition, films we have created, songs of the time, and other resources relating to National Service.

Our online exhibition is easily accessible at www.national-service.co.uk. There, you can download free, printable versions of conscript's stories which can be shared with your residents or used as the basis for activities of your own.

As well as these visual and audio resources, we have included recipes for typical desserts of the National Service period, book & film recommendations and CD suggestions. You know your residents best, so we have included this range of sensory resources to allow you to pick and choose which elements will work for your setting.

We hope you and your residents enjoy using this pack and discovering living history for yourselves.

The Same but Different Team.



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Guide to National Service Remembered Powerpoint

Tip: A yellow banner may appear in the Powerpoint that says 'Security Warning'. This is because the Powerpoint contains videos streamed from Youtube. If you click 'Enable Content' within the banner, this will allow the videos to play.

Slide 1 & 2

A short introduction to the project.

Slide 3 & 4

What is National Service?

This question could be posed to the group or individual before the information is shown. Perhaps some of your residents have stories of their own which could either be discussed here, if they wish, or later on in the discussion activity.

The following information will be shown when clicked:

The National Service years spanned from 1947 until 1963, and in that time more than two million men were conscripted into the British Army, Royal Navy or the Royal Air Force.

National service was mandatory, and generally all able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 30 were called up. However, it was possible to defer if working as an apprentice or studying, or even be exempted altogether if working in an essential service.

National Service conscripts were expected to serve 18 months, although this was extended up to 2 years during the Korean War (1950-53).

All National Service conscripts were asked to attend medical assessments, after which they were sent for six weeks of basic training



in the British Army. Once the conscripts arrived at their training base, they were issued with their uniform and equipment, and training could begin.

After basic training, National Service conscripts served in a variety of roles across the Armed Forces and, as well as serving at home, many Servicemen were posted to one of Britain's many garrisons around the world. An overseas posting also often meant that the conscripts saw active service.

Slide 5

This is a short trailer for the whole project and gives a flavour of the online exhibition, which can be accessed later in the Powerpoint.

Slide 6

Discussion activity.

In this section, we would encourage you and your residents to explore any experiences that they or their loved ones might have had.

Although only men were conscripted, their service directly influenced the lives of their girlfriends, wives, sisters, mothers and friends.

We have included two open questions in the Powerpoint to start discussion, but other questions could include:

Was anybody here conscripted; if so, where were you based?

Were your loved ones conscripted?

How do you remember National Service?

Was it a positive or negative experience?

Did taking part in National Service influence the course of your life, or the path of your loved one?

Slide 7

This slide contains the transcribed experience of one of the ex-servicemen we have interviewed. His story documents the first couple of weeks for Servicemen life and could be read aloud by you or by a resident.

A discussion activity could take place after this to see if his experience matches anybody within the group or the individual you are talking to.

Slide 8

This slide contains two short films that have been filmed and directed by Ceridwen Hughes, our Creative Director at Same but Different. By clicking play and enabling 'full-screen', your group or individual can hear from two Servicemen about their experience of being conscripted.

Slide 9

After discussion of National Service and hearing the experience of two conscripts, you may wish to now view the online exhibition which contains 32 visual and detailed accounts of National Servicemen's experience. If you are using a portable device or a laptop projected to a larger screen, simply click the link and navigate your way through our exhibition. Within the exhibition, there is a 'share your experience' link if any of your residents wish to get in touch.

Slide 10 & 11

After viewing the exhibition, it may be time for a tea-break! If possible, we would encourage you to supply tea, coffee and biscuits, or, if you have the time and facilities, to make one of the recipes in this pack prior to the event.

These two slides contain eight songs that were typical of the period and may be known by your residents. You could encourage singing, or discussion of their favourite songs whilst enjoying a well-earned break

and something tasty. Take as much time as you can afford and enjoy listening to the music.

You know your residents best so if this doesn't sound like a way they can relax during the event, we have also included some book recommendations and CDs for background music that can be played whilst simply talking and enjoying a drink.

Slide 12

If your residents or individual want to see more, we have also included a short film hosted online by National Archive UK. This can be played by simply clicking on the video. The film is just over six minutes long.

Slide 13

A small thank you from our team to say that we hope you have enjoyed hosting and taking part in remembering this unique period of our national history.



GUIDE TO NATIONAL SERVICE REMEMBERED PDF

If you do not have access to the technology needed to run Powerpoint, we have also included a PDF that can be printed off and used for discussion with a group or individual. Why not also access some of the musical resources mentioned in this pack to play whilst you talk?

The PDF includes a short introduction to National Service, photographs of conscripts who took part in the project, a short transcription of one of the conscript's experience of National Service and two fictitious postcards.

Following these is a series of questions that can be used to lead discussion in a group or with a singular resident. Why not even try creating your own postcard detailing a resident's experience?

Our exhibition can be accessed by any mobile device by simply heading to www.national-service.co.uk. We would encourage you to explore this exhibition, in addition to the PDF, with your group or singular resident as an immersive way of remembering National Service.

RECIPES

Food is one of the most enjoyable ways to transport us back in time, and what better way to take your residents on that journey than with a lovely cup of tea and a slice of cake! Below you will find the recipes for a number of classic cakes from the era.

Pineapple upside-down cake

Ingredients:

- 100g softened butter
- 100g golden caster sugar
- 100g self-raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 eggs

For the topping

- 50g softened butter
- 50g light soft brown sugar
- 7 pineapple rings in syrup, drained and syrup reserved
- 7 glacé cherries

Method

1. Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4.
2. For the topping, beat 50g softened butter and 50g light soft brown sugar together until creamy. Spread over the base and a quarter of the way up the sides of a 20cm round cake tin. Arrange 7 pineapple rings on top (reserving the syrup for later), then place 7 glacé cherries in the centres of the rings.
3. Place 100g softened butter, 100g golden caster sugar, 100g self-raising flour, 1 tsp baking powder, 1 tsp vanilla extract and 2 eggs in a bowl along with 2 tbsp of the reserved pineapple syrup. Using an electric whisk, beat to a soft consistency.
4. Spoon into the tin on top of the pineapple and smooth it out so it's level. Bake for 35 mins. Leave to stand for 5 mins, then turn out onto a plate. Serve warm with a scoop of ice cream.

Preparation time 15 mins & and cooking time 40 mins.

Lazy daisy cake (American measurements)

Ingredients:

- 2 large eggs (room temp)
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup cake flour (plain is fine too)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup milk
- 2 tablespoons of butter

For the topping:

- ¾ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup melted butter
- 2 tablespoons of cream
- 1 cup of sweet, shredded coconut

Method

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. In a large bowl, beat eggs, sugar and vanilla on high until thick and lemon-coloured, about 4 minutes.
3. Combine flour, baking powder and salt; add to egg mixture. Beat on low just until combined.
4. Heat milk and butter in a small saucepan until butter melts. Add to batter; beat thoroughly (the batter will be thin). Pour into a greased 9-in. square baking pan.
5. Bake until cake tests done, 20-25 minutes.
6. Cool slightly.
7. For frosting, blend all ingredients well; spread over warm cake. Broil about 4 in. from the heat for 3-4 minutes or until the top is lightly browned.

Preparation time 20 mins & and cooking time 25 mins.

Angel Food cake

Ingredients:

- 140g plain flour
- 1 tablespoon cornflour
- 300g caster sugar, divided
- 12 egg whites
- 1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 ½ teaspoons cream of tartar
- ½ teaspoon salt

Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 190 C / Gas 5.
2. Make sure that your 26cm tube cake tin is clean and dry.
3. Sieve together the flour, cornflour and 150g of the sugar; set aside.
4. In a large bowl, beat the egg whites with vanilla, cream of tartar and salt to medium stiff peaks. Gradually add the remaining sugar while continuing to beat to stiff peaks.
5. When the egg white mixture has reached its maximum volume, fold in the sieved ingredients gradually, one third at a time. Do not overmix.
6. Pour batter into prepared tin.
7. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes in the preheated oven, until the cake springs back when touched.
8. Balance the tin upside down on the top of a bottle, to prevent decompression while cooling.
9. When cool, run a knife around the edge of the tin and invert onto a plate.

Preparation time 30 mins & and cooking time 45 mins, allow 2 hours to cool.

Jam tarts

Ingredients:

- 250g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
- 125g butter, chilled and diced, plus extra for the tin
- 1 medium egg
- 1 vanilla pod, seeds scraped (optional)
- 100g jam, fruit curd or marmalade of your choice

Method

1. Put the flour, butter and a pinch of salt in a bowl and rub them together with your fingertips (or you can pulse these ingredients together in a food processor if you have one).
2. When the mixture looks and feels like fresh breadcrumbs, stir in the egg and vanilla seeds, if using, with a cutlery knife.
3. Add 1 tbsp cold water, then start to bring the dough together in one lump with your hands – try not to knead it too much. Add 1 more tbsp of water if it's not coming together, but try not to add more than that.
4. Wrap in cling film and chill in the fridge for 30 mins.
5. Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6.
6. Butter a 12-hole tart tin, then dust your work surface with flour.
7. Unwrap and roll out the chilled pastry so it's about the thickness of a £1 coin, then use a straight or fluted round cutter to cut out 12 circles, big enough to line the holes in the tin.
8. Dollop 1-2 tsp of your chosen filling into each one and, if you like, cut out little pastry hearts or something similar and pop them on top.
9. Bake for 15-18 mins or until golden and the filling is starting to bubble a little.
10. Leave to cool in the tin for a few mins then carefully transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

Preparation time 25 mins (plus chilling time) & and cooking time 18 mins

Eccles cakes

Ingredients:

For the pastry

- 250g block cold butter
- 350g plain flour
- juice ½ lemon

For the filling:

- 25g butter
- 200g currants
- 50g mixed chopped peel
- 100g light muscovado sugar
- 1 tsp each of cinnamon, ginger and ground allspice
- Zest of 1 lemon and 1 orange, plus a few tbsp of orange juice

To glaze:

- 1 egg white , lightly beaten
- lightly crushed La Perruche sugar cubes (available at Waitrose, delis or online) or 3 tbsp preserving sugar

Method:

1. To make the pastry, dice the butter and put it in the freezer to go really hard.
2. Tip flour into the bowl of a food processor with half the butter and pulse to the texture of breadcrumbs.
3. Pour in the lemon juice and 100ml iced water, and pulse to a dough.
4. Tip in the rest of the butter and pulse a few times until the dough is heavily flecked with butter. It is important that you don't overdo this as the flecks of butter are what makes the pastry flaky.
5. On a floured surface, roll the pastry out to a neat rectangle about 20 x 30cm. Fold the two ends of the pastry into the middle, then fold in half.
6. Roll the pastry out again and refold the same way 3 more times, resting the pastry for at least 15 mins each time between roll and

- fold, then leave to rest in the fridge for at least 30 mins before using.
7. To make the filling, melt the butter in a large saucepan. Take it off the heat and stir in all the other ingredients until completely mixed, then set aside.
 8. Heat the oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 8
 9. To make the cakes, roll the pastry out until it's just a little thicker than a £1 coin and cut out 8 rounds about 12cm across.
 10. Re-roll the trimming if needed.
 11. Place a good heaped tablespoon of mixture in the middle of each round, brush the edges of the rounds with water, then gather the pastry around the filling and squeeze it together.
 12. Flip them over so the smooth top is upwards and pat them into a smooth round. Flatten each round with a rolling pin to an oval until the fruit just starts to poke through, then place on a baking tray. Cut 2 little slits in each Eccles cakes, brush generously with egg white and sprinkle with the sugar.
 13. Bake the Eccles cakes for 15-20 mins until just past golden brown and sticky.
 14. Leave to cool on a rack and enjoy while still warm or cold with a cup of tea.

Preparation time 2 hrs - including chilling time & and cooking time 20 mins

OTHER RESOURCES

Films, TV programmes, CDs and books about National Service:

There are so many beautiful films from the era, many of which would almost certainly transport your residents back in time. However, we have focused our suggestions on those specifically about National Service.

Films:

- Carry on Sergeant
- The Virgin Soldiers

TV programmes:

- The Army Game
- Get Some In

YouTube links:

It is worth noting that if you simply search for 'National Service UK' (or a similar search term) in YouTube, you can find some real gems. In addition, museums like the National Army Museum and the Imperial War museum have also done their own short clips which they feature on their websites. We've noted a few YouTube clips below that we particularly enjoyed.

- The Interesting Military Career of Sir Michael Caine – clip of MC reading from his book 'The Elephant to Hollywood' which documents his NS experience
- They Stand Ready – National Archives UK film
- Blue Peter National Service re-enactment

Books:

- National Service: A Generation in Uniform 1945-1963 by Richard Vinen
- My National Service (1955-1957): The Making of a Man by Brian Holdich
- RAF National Service in Six Movements: A Conscript's Experiences in the RAF of the 1950 by Roy Taylor
- A Cyprus Journey: Memoirs of National Service by Albert Balmer

- Perfect Wives in Ideal Homes: The Story of Women in the 1950s, Virginia Nicholson
- Her Brilliant Career by Rachel Cooke

CD suggestions (all currently available on Amazon):

- The British Hit Singles (1940-1950) – The #1 Hits of the 1940's
- Top Hits of the 40s
- No. 1 Hits of the 50s
- Male Voices of the 1950s
- Female Vocalists of the 1950s



CONTACT

We would love to hear from you. To get in touch simply call, email or write to us using the details below:

Same but Different CIC

The Old Chapel

91 Wrexham Street

Mold

Flintshire

CH7 1HQ

01352 757007

enquiries@samebutdifferentcic.org.uk

