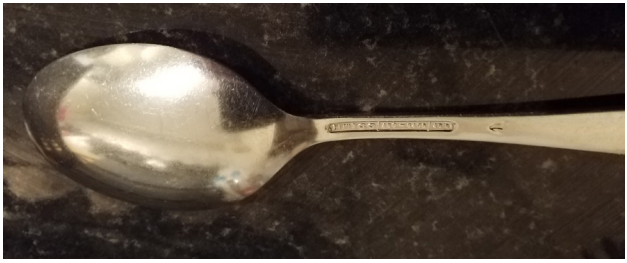
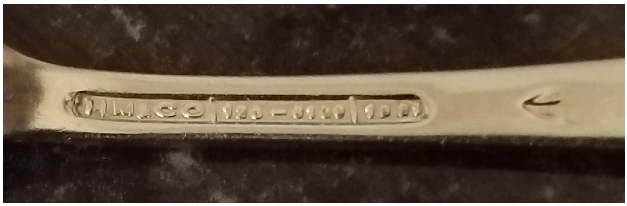
I know what I like





That is my favourite spoon

An old army spoon. It's really good. I quite enjoy it. It doesn't make any noise. It was when I was a warrior.

I have had it a long time. Since I was a boy soldier, and it used to be in the back of my... it just stayed with me.

I get annoyed sometimes because someone is using my special spoon. It's lovely. What I like about it is that it's small. It's very smooth.

When I was travelling round. It gives you confidence. It owes me a debt. It's there. You go away, come back. It's just that, you know, it's the security of it. Nothings going to happen when I have this. It does everything. All the requirements you need of a knife and fork. It might sound silly but no clinking.

ROYAL
ENGINEERS

UBIQUE
"Everywhere"

ROYAL
ENGINEERS
"The Sappers"

The Royal Engineers

How it goes, you start off as a Sapper then you become promoted. I was a combat engineer.

We used to have about forty, fifty Sappers who wanted to come in and they were quite good.

ER
ROYAL SUPERANNUATED OFFICERS
COMPANIONS

ER

Royal Engineers Beret

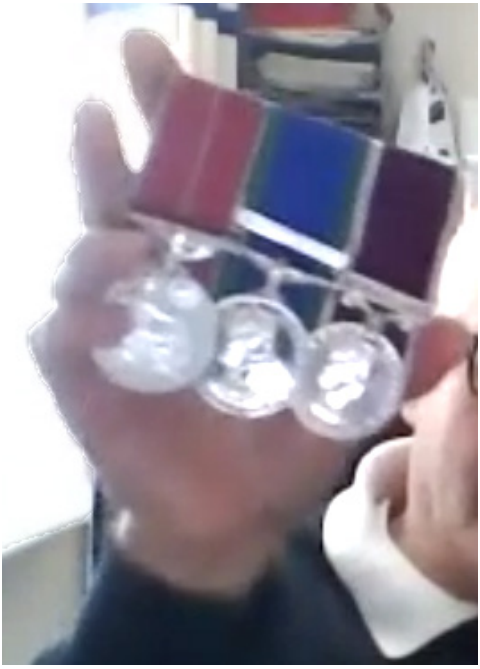
SH2-8A: I have my cap badge. They do wear a bit, that's the problem. It's not the original (beret). I've probably had two. I've had it a long time. I think it's size seven.

SH2-8AX: They wear them for special occasions. So on Remembrance Sunday when we go to church, SH2-8 will be wearing his cap and badge and his medals. A nice blazer, collar and tie, medals and beret.

UBIQUE

You quite often see in the army a plumage

So there's a little plume and a big one.



NORTHERN IRELAND
REGULAR ARMY

My medals

The British Empire Medal forwork in bomb disposal, the Service Medal for Northern Ireland and the Long Service Good Conduct Medal.

There's two sizes. If you go into a soldiers mess, you have the small set size.

SH2-8AX: The dress ones they're called. When you wear your blazer or jacket to something that's when you wear your big medals isn't it? If you had a dinner or something it would be your little medals wouldn't it?

NORTHERN IRELAND
ELIZABETH II DEI GRATIA REGINA F.D.

General Service Medal : Northern Ireland

Well this is lovely , the General Service Medal Northern Ireland. When you think of all the trouble that's been going on, in Northern Ireland for 300 years. This medal is awarded to the military who did active tours in Northern Ireland, and you must have served in Northern Ireland. It was quite harrowing. It pulls everybody together though.

Me and SH2-8AX had been there when I was a young Lance Corporal. We did Belfast and we were stationed in Antrim. I had two four months tours, they were amazing. Then one accompanied. We lived in Northern Ireland for eighteen months in a council house in the 1970s.

The first thing we did, we went down to Belfast, the city centre. We were briefed and got ready and they said take your time. Make sure you do really well. Just stay calm. We went out from the corner. We went round and there was this child, luckily they didn't get injured or anything like that. How they got away with it I'll never know. You're thinking thank goodness for that.

There was military personnel who did active search services in Northern Ireland.

REGULAR ARMY
ELIZABETH II DEI GRATIA REGINA F.D.

The Long Service Good Conduct Medal

SH2-8A: This medal is rewarded to the military personnel who have done a minimum service of 15 years service for good behaviour and exemplary conduct (not getting caught).

SH2-8AX: Because that's what they all say dont they? laugh about it. A lot of colleagues are very jealous of this one aren't they? A lot of colleagues really wanted to get the good conduct medal and they didn't get it. Thats what they say dont they? So you never got caught then SH2-8?

SH2-8A: It is a brilliant. achievement

SH2-8AX: I think it was about twenty-four (years). You were supposed to do twenty-two, and they kept you on for an extra couple of years didn't they?

Warrant Officer Class 1

Warrant Officer Class One

I was a WO1 then. Warrant Officer Class One. It's quite good really.

It's actually quite difficult, and it's a great honour.

So as a young troop commander who spent all his time in the army, my biggest command. But it is like what you are controlling.

Quite brilliant when you're in charge, you know..

FOR GOD AND THE EMPIRE
FOR
MERITORIOUS
SERVICE

The British Empire Medal (BEM)

SH2-8A: Yes, that's considered very important. For bomb disposal.

SH2-8AX: Another friend who got the BEM at the same time as you for the same thing, he always puts that after his name. I don't think you ever have, have you ?

So you were an expert in search and bomb disposal?

SH2-8A: I was, yes in a way, yes. I'm a bit modest to be honest! I don't like to say. I don't want to be showing off. In a way we did it for so many years.

"Meritorious" service! It's a forgery then! I am very modest because I might be losing my long service and good conduct medal!

33 ENGINEER REGIMENT (EOD)
BOMB DISPOSAL

SEARCH

After the Brighton bombing, (there was) the realisation that this has happened and it can't happen again and that was pretty good. At the time, what we were doing when we came in, it was really working quite well.

We trained once every month. So we were working in close connection with the police. It was fantastic how we locked in together the police and the army. We picked it up pretty quickly, because the worry was, we didn't want it really bad, we just wanted it to be good protection.

SH2-AX: I didn't know where you were half the time did I? He wasn't allowed to tell me where he was most of the time.

Doorkeeper at the House of Lords

SH2-8AX: When SH2-8 retired from the army he went straight to the Houses of Parliament, and worked in the House of Lords for nearly twenty years.

SH2-8A: Funnily enough, I was down there Tuesday last week. I quite enjoyed it.

SH2-8AX: We met up with one of your old colleagues, didn't we, SH2-8? And she took us around the Houses of Parliament for a quick walk round just to bring it all the memories back.

SH2-8B: I used to do so many tours and it wasn't just to do with the job or the work it was getting together, and you'll find in twenty or thirty years, that was not bad. When the peers would come up to you, and even occasionally MPs. They used to come up and it'd be someone from the Commons rushing back to the chamber and there'd be a bit of chaos really. I used to go around clearing everything up and then one of them would say "Oh SH2-8, which way do you want me to vote?" and I would say "I can't tell you, that's not the point!"

House of Lords Doorkeepers
14th June 2013

The Lords Doorkeepers

SH2-8AX: He did twenty years worth of the State Openings of Parliament.

SH2-8A: And when we had the Queen Mother lying in state, we all got dressed up and then we all marched in when she was in Westminster Hall.

But mainly I just enjoyed doing the tours. Funnily enough on Tuesday, we did a dry run in fact with these people who were new. They were very good, we worked it out between ourselves, it went well.

Do you enjoy sport?

SH2-8A: The England Shirt. Three Lions. I will probably be wearing it tonight until we're losing then I'll lose it!

SH2-8AX: I remember when we were in Chepstow you played football, that was in the eighties, and he used to do a lot of football. then didn't you with your lads there?

SH2-8A: I didn't play much rugby, not as much as football.

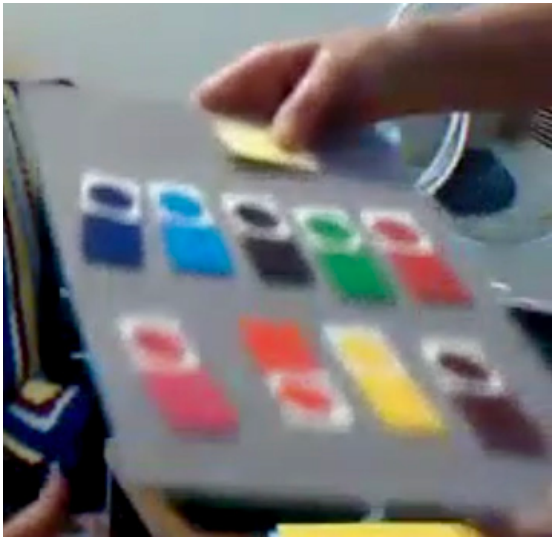
I have done a walk a mile a day during September the last two years, raising money for Age UK. We have raised a thousand pounds altogether over the two years .

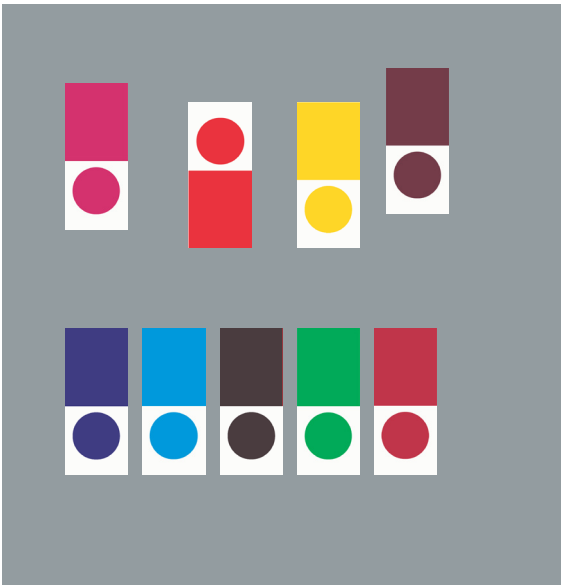
SH2-8AX: Its like a dose of medicine, a good walk, isn't it?

SH2-8A: After the Memory Clinic - Yeah, it knocks you, when you get a bad setback. It wasn't good and it was affecting me, and I was thinking about it all the time. We went outside, and then we got together, got sorted out, two or three different walks, and we come out, then we got slowly better.

I know what I like

Colour



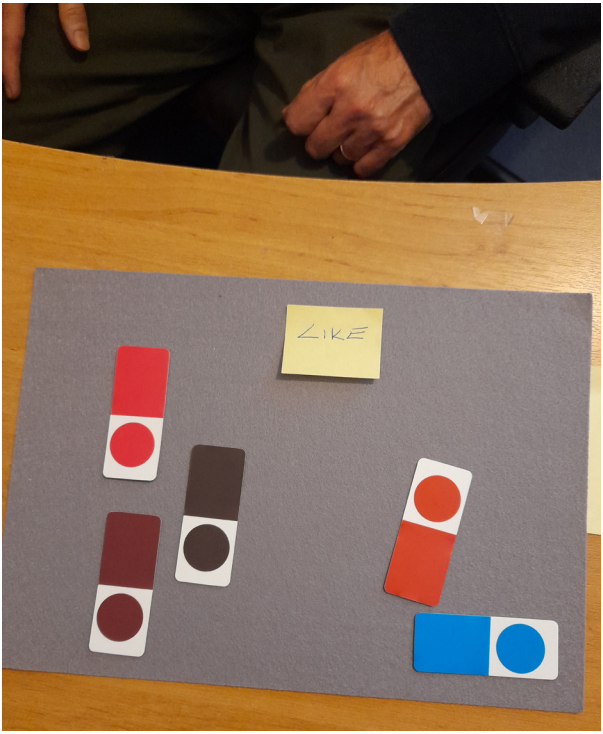


My Likes

The colours I've chosen. I have no association with.

My likes are bright light and cheerful and its really good, because I just like the vibrant colours.

I was just wondering how you go about arranging the colours?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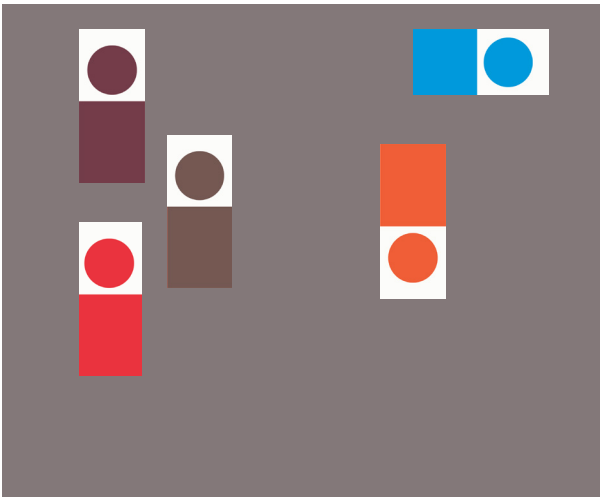
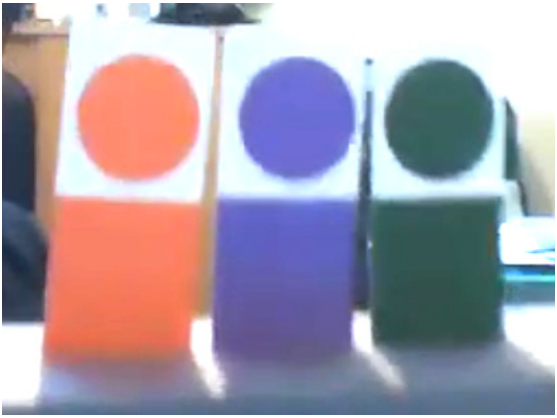


My Likes

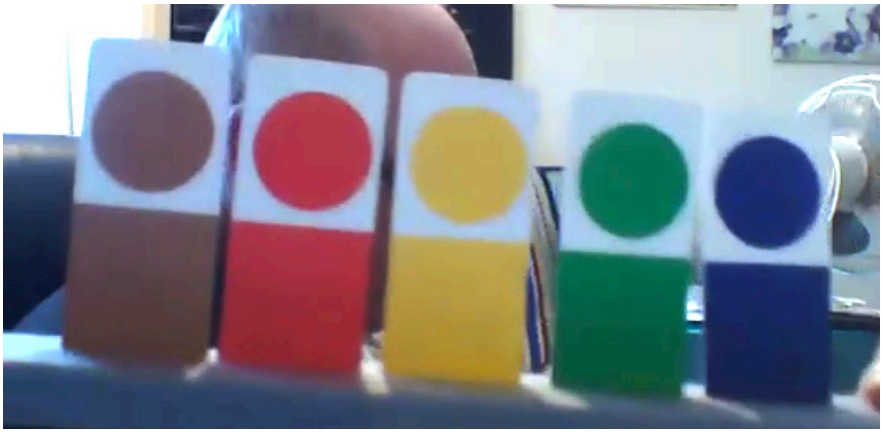
SH2-8BX: There is no real reason why you like the colours was there?

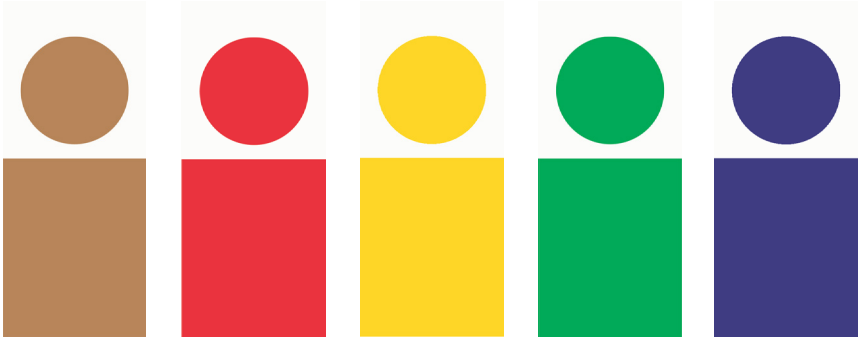
You said no, and I said well do they mean anything to you?

SH2-8: Well they're just nice colours, they're just vibrant colours. They're quiet and vibrant, and great to see, brings a bit of heart.



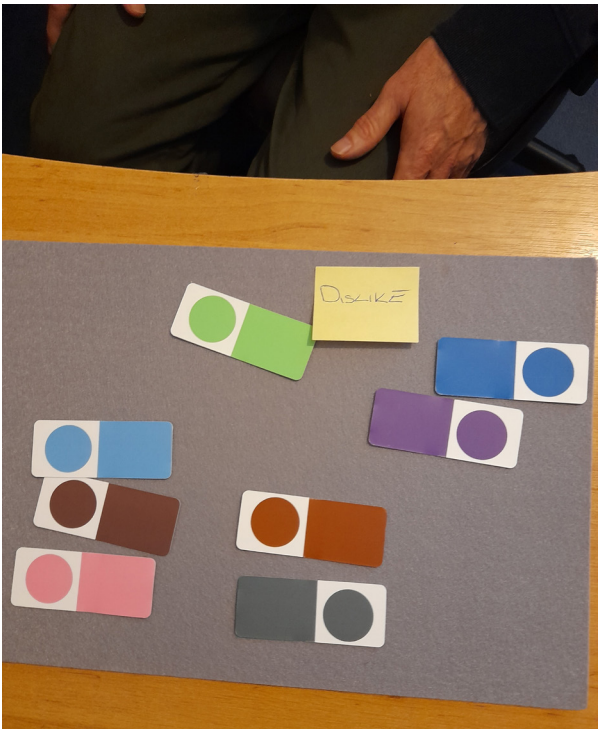
Colour combinations





Colour combinations

Dark colour each end and blues each end and then bright yellow in the middle.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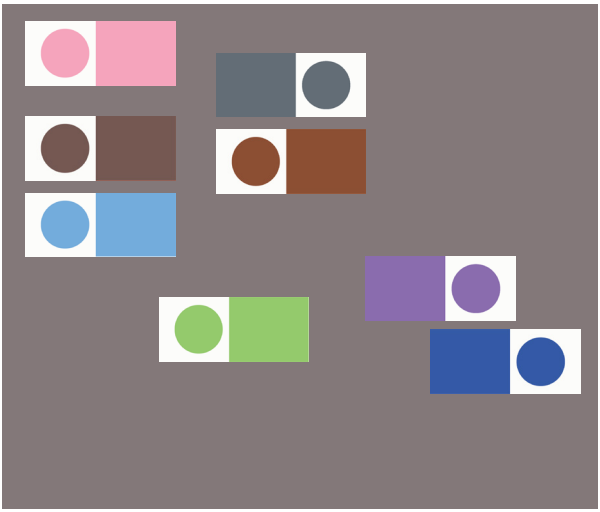

My Dislikes

I know what I like

Favourite spaces

AMAZING
Grandad

Favourite space at home

SH2-8C It's very nice. It's had it's time, but it's actually in quite a good condition. They're comfortable. There's a settee there and that's comfortable. When people come up from all different areas we meet up and sit out there and enjoy ourselves.

I like to have my paper on there but I am struggling. It's not as easy as it was. I used to, yes, normally the Telegraph.

SH2-8CX : He used to sit out there an awful lot, I mean every single weekend you'd spend hours out there. He used to get one of the Sunday papers. He would read it for the whole week. It would last him the whole week.

AMAZING
Grandad

Harri Girl

SH2-8CX: We used to look after our daughter's little staffy a lot. Harriet, we used to call her Harri Girl so it was Harri for short. So she's Harri Girl.

They just loved each other, and she used to sit on that chair with you, didnt she? Sometimes she'd sit on it and as soon as you got up she'd get herself up on that chair because she liked it on there.

SH2-8C: And on Sunday she would sit inside the house with her back against the seat. So it used to be quite funny, didn't it? She knew exactly what she wanted.

SH2-8CX : Our granddaughters got that (cushion). You've got one on the bed as well that says, 'Grandad snores here', that they bought the year before.

Do you like gardening?

I used do a lot of vegetables, potatoe in buckets, runner beans, and all the fruits that would be prepared.

They would last you. That's what we found with potatoes and things like that. If you put one in, maybe two in the centre, smallish that they would grow nicely.

You do so much sometimes and it's just a bit.... I mean it is difficult, it get's tiring. I find it tiring. Sometimes I just think, well I'll just have to do the best I can and carry on. I am finding it more and more difficult. And then I have to recover.

We've got robins. We've got a few blackbirds. I like listening to them.

I used to do (the cooking). I'm finding I'm struggling with it. Certain things you cook or prepare. Preparation that's not so bad.

We do like walking

I stand by the river. Especially where we are, when the tides in that's what we look for.

There's another walk, we go the other way. We go left or right, and there's a lovely little village. It's pretty good. That one's about 45, 50 minutes.

SH2-8CX: I think the walking and the getting out and about has taken over because you just don't like sitting still.

Our daughter every weekend, she tries to make a point of going for walk with you, doesn't she?

SH2-8C: Or a couple, yeah.

SH2-8CX : SH2-8C used to take Harri Girl up there a lot. It's like we say, when we walk up there its Harri Girl's spirit's there because she used to love it, walking up there.

SH2-8CX: You go through the orchard, and then at the other end of it you've got the river, so it's a nice walk.

The other walk that SH2-8C does a lot is over through the golf course. So it's one of those two walks, probably near on every day.

Dementia UK

I love walking

I have done a walk a mile a day during September the last two years, raising money for Dementia UK.

We have raised a thousand pounds altogether over the two years.

SH2-8CX: So yeah, SH2-8C would much rather be out I think, than in.