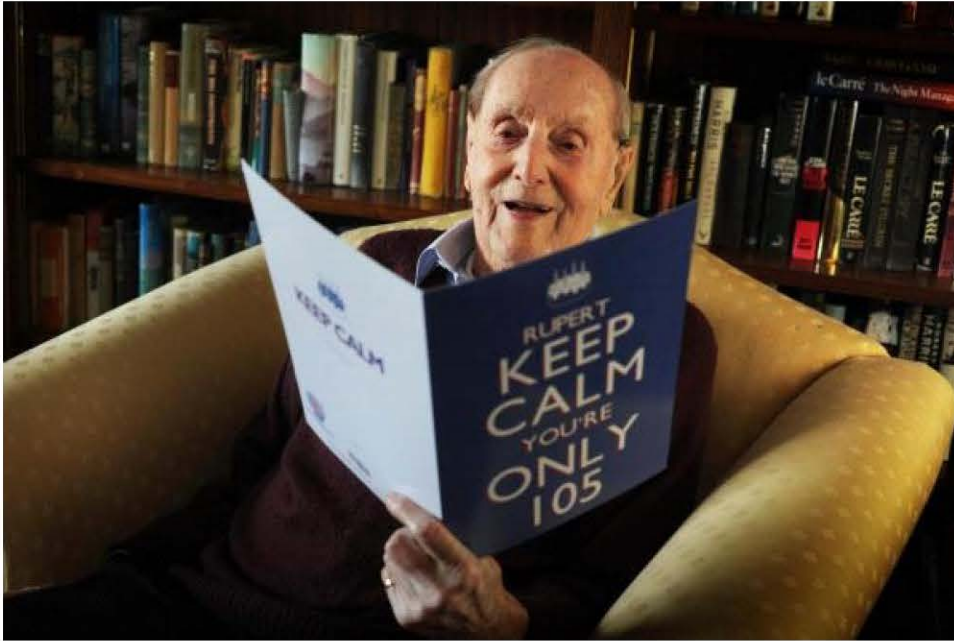




Decorated ex-soldier celebrates 105th with his ‘angels’



Rupert Crowdy is 105 today



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Brigadier Crowdy in 1960

A FORMER Army brigadier believed to be Oxfordshire’s oldest resident is celebrating his 105th birthday with a surprise party today. Great-grandfather Rupert Crowdy will enjoy a glass of bubbly to toast the landmark with carers he nicknames ‘angels’ at Cotswold Home in Bradwell, near Burford.

When asked about the secret of his long life he said: “You’ve got to work hard, play hard, drink enough and live within your financial limitations. It starts with a happy family life.”

Daughter Sue Norton, 71, added: “You can have him over for lunch and he’s still very entertaining and he has lots of friends who visit him.” Annette Baldwin, social engagement leader at Cotswold Home, said:

“He likes to get out and about and loves going to the theatre. We will never have another one like him. He’s a survivor.”

Brigadier Crowdy was born in Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, on March 12, 1910. He spent 35 years in the army, joining up with the Northumberland Fusiliers when he was just 18 in 1928. Within 18 months he was accepted into Sandhurst on a scholarship and then joined the Indian Army, serving with the 17th Dogra Regiment in North Western India. He joined the staff college in Quetta in 1941 and was in Burma during the Second World War. After the partition of India in 1947, Mr Crowdy joined the British Army of the Rhine, serving in the Royal Army Service Corps. He served in Egypt as Administrative Staff Officer of GHQ Middle East in 1950, and was promoted to Colonel, at HQ BAOR in Monchengladbach in Germany in 1957.

In 1962 he was appointed Aide-de-Camp to the Queen.

He met his wife Nora in Guernsey while on leave from Sandhurst, and married her in November 1939. He was made an OBE in recognition of his work during the Berlin Airlift in 1949, when the British air force dropped thousands of tonnes of supplies into the British sector of Communist-surrounded West Berlin. Of his army life, Mr Crowdy said:

“I was well supported by my soldiers and I still hear from some of them.”

After retiring from the Army in 1963, Mr Crowdy ran a wine merchants in Lechlade. He lived in The Lanes in Bampton, before moving to the Cotswold Home 11 years ago after his wife died at 92. He has two other daughters, Jill Cross, 68, and Philippa Brooke, 65, 10 grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.