

## People News

# Resident at Southwick care home celebrates centenary

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A resident at a Southwick care home, who survived the explosion of two Naval ships during World War Two celebrated turning 100 last week.

Charles 'Bill' Russell, a resident at Romans Care Home in Southwick, turned 100 last Tuesday and celebrated with a party surrounded by his family.

Bill was born in Brighton, and served in the Royal Navy for seven years as a seaman, being posted around the world, including Australia, Africa and the Mediterranean.

Bill served on HMS Hood between 1939-1940, narrowly avoiding the tragic fate of the battlecruiser.

In 1941 Bill was serving on a naval minesweeper that was blown up with him on board. He said: "I don't remember too much about



Bill received his card from the Queen at his birthday party.

the explosion.

"I just remember being taken to a hospital up in North Shields where I had my leg wrapped in plaster."

After being released from hospital Bill boarded a Naval barrack ship in Portsmouth that was also blown up.

Bill was then posted to Australia in 1944 at the beginning of the invasion and returned home to England in 1946.

After returning home,

Bill left the Royal Navy to return to his original job of upholstering and carpet fitting.

He remained in the Royal Navy Reserves until 1988, when he retired and moved to Newhaven to live in a mobile home with his wife.

Bill then moved to Hove for a short while, before becoming a resident at Romans Care Home in 2013 where he has become a much loved resident.

Care worker Hayley Stenning said: "He is very funny, he has an amazing sense of humour - all us carers here at Romans are so fond of him. He's a legend."

Bill believes there is no secret to making it to 100 years old. He said: "I live as I want to live, drink what I want to drink and eat what I want to eat."

"My favourite drink is definitely beer - always has been."

"I feel no different turning 100 than when I turned 90!"

Bill explained the meaning behind preferring to be called Bill over his birth name Charles.

He said: "When I met my wife in 1936 she didn't like the name Charles - she did like Bill though."

"So she started calling me Bill. It caught on and I became Bill."

One of his granddaughters, Tina Russell, said: "All us grandchildren absolutely love Grandad, he's amazing."