



Pensioners' Newsletter – December 2019

News from the South

Hi Everyone:

Unfortunately I have to start my introduction with some sad news. Ted Read, a long serving member of the VPA Committee, who many of you will remember for running the dance section together with his wife Olive, has passed away. More information about Ted and his life is included in this Newsletter. Also David Davies, a valued trustee of the Welfare Fund has passed away. Both gave up a considerable amount of their time to support Vauxhall pensioners over the years and will be missed by all who knew them.

As this is the last Newsletter for 2019 I would like to thank all the members of the Committee for their contributions in making this another successful year despite the challenges we have faced (and still face) following the takeover of Vauxhall by PSA and the subsequent closure of Griffin House. We hope that a suitable office facility can be found for us in the New Year which will improve our ongoing communications with you.

In the mean time we all wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

John Boast

News from the North

Gosh is it really nearly Christmas? I can't believe it! I think I am still getting ready for last Christmas - what horrible tricks age plays on us (well on me anyway).

I hope you are all suitably prepared for the festive season. Our Christmas lunch is at the Woodcote Hotel on December 13. Please arrive at 11.00 am for coffee and entertainment before lunch.

In October 37 people booked for the Blackpool trip. Some went to the ballroom for dancing and afternoon tea and others went to the circus and finished the day with a trip through the lights. Again in October we had a trip to Salford Quay. Although not well attended those that went said they had a good day. Some people visited the Imperial War Museum and others to the Lowry Gallery, then it was on to the hat museum which was very interesting. Unfortunately we missed both as we were away trying to catch some warm weather.

On Monday November 25, 38 of us sallied forth on the journey down to Bognor Regis for our Turkey and Tinsel break. We had a great time - the hotel, food and company were superb, but I am afraid the prayer mat for good weather did not quite work, but we enjoyed it none-the-less. In Portsmouth many paid a visit to the Historic Dockyard and were full of praise about it. The trip to Chichester was a success if a bit short. It is a lovely little city decorated beautifully with a very festive atmosphere. The cathedral was so interesting it

took up most of our visit and then it was back to the hotel for lunch. 'Christmas Day' was filled with food and games and I suspect most of us returned home carrying 'excess baggage'. The return journey was a long one due in part to traffic accidents and 'Black Friday' shoppers, but Wills, our driver, did a superb job of getting us home safely.

The April holiday is all but booked up with just one room still available. If anybody is interested please see us at the social evening. We will be staying at the Eliot Hotel in Newquay and will be visiting the Eden Project Padstow and Bodmin. We leave on April 6 for 5 days and the approximate cost is £200 per person.

For associate members your annual subscriptions will be collected at the February social night and this year it will be £20 pp.

Until next time may I wish you a happy and healthy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Cheerio for now

Dave Williams

Christmas Message

As Christmas rapidly approaches, whatever our age, we will probably be asking ourselves "Where on earth has this year gone to?"

With the pace and pressure of life today, with the uncertainty of Brexit, a general election looming and the constant barrage of media seasonal advertising it is not easy to focus on Christmas preparations.

But Christmas is coming and in a world where the presents given and received are becoming hi-tech it is reassuring and refreshing to be able to step back and remember the greatest gift of all was God's gift to us, the gift of a child in love, an innocent child who would grow in goodness and in turn sacrifice himself for our salvation. It is good that we remind ourselves that the birth of Jesus is the reason for Christmas.

Christmas is a special time when families and friends meet to exchange gifts, but more importantly share each other's company and what a special gift that is.

If you know someone on their own and can find it in you to include them in your celebrations, then that is probably the greatest gift of all.

So before the mad rush of Christmas shopping, the wrapping of presents and the round of parties begins may we, your Vauxhall Chaplaincy team, wish you a very merry Christmas however you are planning on celebrating it, and may you feel and share the peace and joy of this holy season with those you love.

Merry Christmas and God Bless

Rev David Alexander, Carol Wilson, Rev Ian Smith

Ted Read

Long serving Committee member Ted Read passed away on October 30, 2019 at the age of 96. He worked at Vauxhall until he took early retirement in 1986. Joining the VPA Committee upon retirement he served on it with distinction and pride until ill health prevented him from doing so.



Ted Read

He will be particularly remembered for his energy and enthusiasm in running the Monday Club and also the Wednesday 'Ted's Tea Dances'. For those wishing to get a better understanding of his life please go to the August 2011 Newsletter in the archives section on the website.

VPA Trips

Given that we still are looking for a permanent home for our office and that Sylvia continues, from the goodness of her heart, to run the trips administration from her home address, it is opportune to stress the following. Details of the amount of deposit etc. are given at the end of the information on 2020 trips. However, it is vital that when sending in your deposit you include a stamped addressed envelope for each individual trip, plus please write on the back of the same the trip concerned. For example, if you are sending deposits for three separate day trips for one person 3 stamped addressed envelopes will be required plus a cheque for £30 (3 x £10). We have always asked for the stamped addressed envelopes so all we are doing is reinforcing this request in recognition of our current circumstances. Your adherence to this system will make Sylvia's job so much easier in what is already a difficult situation. Thanking you for your assistance.

Parking During Trips

Venue 360 have kindly agreed that participants on VPA one-day trips and longer may use their facilities for parking.

Oct 16 – Mystery Tour

A virtual full coach visited the Cotswold villages of Stow-in-the-Wold and Bourton-on-Water. The weather was agreeable and both villages are flat so getting around was fairly easy. A good day was had by all. Well done to all who helped organise.

Nov 20 – Thursford Christmas Show

The coach left Luton just after 9.00 am arriving at Swaffham at about 11.30 am where lunch was taken or in some cases an all-day breakfast. The coach left at 12.30 pm arriving at the venue in time to have a look at the various Christmas decorations on show. The show, or more correctly the extravaganza, was absolutely first class and included festive music along with music from different times, plus a very funny ventriloquist, a

comic, Cirque Du Soleil, a roller skating duo and a clever act involving a large hoop (best not to ask!) Around 120 performers strutted their stuff on a 100 foot stage in a show in its 43rd year which was very much enjoyed by the audience. A truly mind blowing and unique show that was enjoyed by all. Thanks to Sylvia, Dave and James the driver.

October 1 - A Dilemma at the Golf

The VPA Pairs Championship was held at the Aylesbury Vale Golf Club. However, the dark clouds with an awful weather forecast presented the assembled golfers with a dilemma - to play or not to play. At this point ex-Production Director, John Barber, got involved and provided the necessary advice, guidance and motivation to the rather reluctant players.

All the golfers were competing for the Peter Johnson Pairs Tournament trophy. With some very good golf being played and hence some creditable scores being recorded it was a fairly tight contest. Eventual winners were Alan Currington and Bill Baldry with Roger Deane and Phil Watson as runners up. Third place went to Alan Smith and David Eayre and in fourth place were last year's winners Jack Lalji and John Fulcher. The two nearest the pin holes were won respectively by Paul Davies and Peter Johnson.

As it transpired the rain held off, except for a 10 minute light shower towards the end. After the match the golfers sought refuge in the clubhouse for food and liquid refreshment and the customary raffle which is in support of the Keech Hospice. As most went home with a prize and had enjoyed their golf a good day was the unanimous verdict. Please note next year's fixtures later in Newsletter.

British Gas Refund Scam Alert

A sophisticated email scam pretending to be British Gas is being sent to customers telling them they are owed a refund. This email uses the same font and logo as the energy provider, includes a link to your account and says you are eligible to a refund because of an over-payment of £467.20. Needless to say this is a load of rhubarb and should be ignored or reported (see below). Lily Green of the auto-switching service 'Look After My Bill' advises "there are clues to show it is a fake. One, if it seems too good to be true, then it probably is and two starting an email 'Hello' followed by an email address is a red flag alert. Please advise older relatives of this scam." A British Gas spokesperson says "if customers are concerned about an email they should forward it to phishing@centria.com. We all have to be extremely alert to this type of email which can target any organisation. Please remember the golden rule - if it appears to be too good then it almost certainly is.

December Quiz

The theme this month is "what were they called?"

- 1 Ho Chi-Minh City was called what up until the end of the Vietnam War?
- 2 Istanbul is the only city to straddle both Asia and Europe and was originally called?

- 3 What was the original name of the Spice Girls?
- 4 Nissan changed its name from what in 1986?
- 5 We now know them as Starburst, but what was their original fruity name?
- 6 The largest city in India was called what before it became Mumbai in 1995?
- 7 Skin care brand Olay has had a few names over the years, but what was it first called in the UK?
- 8 Finding a search is satisfying on Google, but what was the soothing former name?
- 9 First official name of New York?
- 10 The O2 was originally called what?
- 11 This kitchen roll is now called Plenty, but was originally known as what?
- 12 We now use a Hoover for cleaning, but its prior name was more descriptive of a dustpan and brush?
- 13 Hot Dogs were originally named after the colour of their meat. Can you guess?
- 14 The John Lewis Nottingham store was called what until 1992?
- 15 It can soothe dry skin and help with cuts and burns which explains the original name of Vaseline?
- 16 Mickey Mouse had a different name until Mrs Walt Disney told him to change it to what he is now called. What was it?
- 17 The original title of the US sitcom Friends recognised the number of main characters and was called?
- 18 The Hawaiian Islands originally had a rather tasty name which was?
- 19 eBay had a more literal name originally which was?
- 20 Tokyo started life as a small fishing village. What was it formerly named?

October Quiz Answers

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Gotham City | 2 Bubbles |
| 3 Apple | 4 Pig |
| 5 Esso | 6 Red |
| 7 Rupee | 8 Venus |
| 9 False | 10 Sainsbury |
| 11 Ten pin bowling | 12 True |
| 13 Iron | 14 Dipsy |
| 15 Four | 16 Bowler hat |
| 17 Scooby Doo | 18 Tinkerbell |
| 19 Futurama | 20 Red, green and blue |

Upcoming Events in the South - 2020

Wednesday March 12 - Mickies Palace

Elvis is in the Building Show plus roast beef lunch. Members £26 pp/Non-members £30 pp.

Thursday April 2 - Cadbury World

See how your favourite chocolate is made and buy at bargain prices in the factory shop. Members £23 pp/Non-members £26 pp.

Thursday April 23 - Tina - The Musical

Matinee performance of this hit musical at the Aldwych Theatre, followed by a 3-course carvery meal at the Imperial Hotel.

Members £70 pp/Non-members £75 pp.

Saturday May 9 - Iconic Movie Music

At the Royal Albert Hall and performed by The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Vocals by West

End star Louise Dearman. Price includes pre-show lunch.

Members £45 pp/Non-members £50 pp.

Saturday June 6 – Eastbourne Coach only.

Members £12 pp/Non-members £15 pp.

Wednesday June 17 - Nottingham

Includes 3 hour River Trent Cruise with a roast beef and apple pie lunch.

Time for shopping etc. before river cruise.

Members £30 pp/Non-members £35 pp.

Wednesday July 15 - The 'Strictly' Tea Dance

Venue is a static boat on the Thames and features dance professionals. You can strut your own stuff if so inclined. Afternoon event and includes canapes and afternoon tea.

Members £40 pp/Non-members £45 pp.

Wednesday August 12 - Quanton Windmill

Visit the Quanton Windmill built in 1832 and is one of less than 40 working mills in the UK.

As well as the mill the price includes entry to the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre. This day is a designated Steam Day with trains running along a short length of track, plus other attractions and a restaurant area in the Railway Centre. There is a parish church dating from 1340 and it is all set in a 'Miss Marples' setting.

Members £19 pp/Non-members £22 pp.

Thursday September 17 - Adam Hanson's Farm

The day includes a tour of the Cotswolds including a carvery lunch, plus a visit to the farm of Countryfile presenter Adam Hanson.

Members £42 pp/Non-members £47 pp.

Thursday October 1 - Steam Railway

Visit the Gloucester Warwickshire Steam Railway with a fish and chips lunch while enjoying the views of English rolling countryside.

Members £36 pp/Non-members £40 pp.

Thursday October 15 - Mystery Tour

Includes carvery lunch.

Members £26 pp/Non-members £30 pp.

Thurs November 12 - London Lights and Lunch

Afternoon visit to London for Carvery Club lunch before a Blue Badge guide tour of Christmas lights.

Members £42 pp/Non-members £46 pp.

Monday November 30 – December 4

Festive break at Warners Hotel, Alvaston Hall, Cheshire. Half board with excursions.

Members £290 pp/Non-members £300 pp.

Wed December 9 - Christmas Dinner Party

Members £24 pp/Non-members £28 pp.

Day trip bookings will only be confirmed on receipt of a non-refundable £10.00 deposit pp. For the longer event in December this deposit rises to £30.00 pp.

To book for a trips please ring Sylvia on 01582 759851. As usual VPA members may bring a maximum of one non-VPA member per trip. Note the higher price for non-members. We do require your pension number and a contact number on application and also a **stamped addressed envelope** for each trip. Please also note that any member/non-member who cancels a booking 4 weeks or less before the date of the trip may also be requested to pay for the cost of any event tickets purchased by the VPA. Finally, travel insurance is

not included in the price of any of our trips. We strongly advise that you make your own arrangements to give peace of mind.

2020 Golf Events

May 14 - Texas Scramble, Abbey Hill

June 18 - Singles Competition, Redbourn

Sept 29 - Pairs Competition, Aylesbury Vale

Upcoming Events in the North - 2020

Tuesday January 7 - Party Night at the Club

Normal time. Buffet and quiz.

Thursday January 16 - Rock and Roll Panto

Everyman Theatre, Liverpool. Panto starts 1.30 pm.

There is a café or you can bring your own lunch.

Coach leaves Club at 11.45 am.

Tuesday February 4 - Social Afternoon at the Club.

Starts 2.00 pm. Format same as the evening social.

Tuesday March 3 – AGM

Followed by a hot pot supper and comedian.

Thursday March 11 - Tour of Liverpool

Coach leaves Club at 9.00 am. £10 pp.

Monday April 6 – Eliot Hotel, Newquay

5 day holiday

Visiting the Eden Project, Bodmin and Padstow

Approximately £200 pp.

Monday May 11 – Bakewell Market and Tour

Coach leave Club at 9.00 am. £10 pp.

Thursday June 18 – Bury Market and Bents

Garden Centre

Coach leaves Club at 9.00 am. £10 pp.

Sunday June 21 – 3 Day Break in Cotswolds

Details to follow.

Thursday July 9 – Buxton Well Dressing

Coach leaves Club at 9.00 am. £10 pp.

Friday August 28 – Nantwich Food Festival and

Arley Hall

Coach leaves Club at 9.00 am. Cost tba.

Thurs September 24 – Staleybridge Canal Trip

Either afternoon tea or hot pot supper on the boat.

Limited to 40 places.

Coach leaves Club at 9.00 am. Cost tba.

Wednesday October 14 – Blackpool

Coach leaves Club at 10.00 am. Cost £10 pp.

Thursday November 26 – Chatsworth House

Coach leaves Club at 9.00 am. Cost tba.

Tea Dances

Dec 10, 17

Jan 14, 21, 28

In Memoriam – Luton

Bell, Michael Graham, Division 188

Died 30.9.2019, Aged 77, Retired 2000

Browne, Enos Cornelius, IBC

Died 24.9.2019, Aged 85, Retired 1994

Davies, David Vaughan, Division 320

Died 17.10.2019, Aged 73, Retired 2003

Hunt, Robin, IBC

Died 30.9.2019, Aged 89, Retired 1995

Rollinson, Harry Gilbert, IBC

Died 2.10.2019, Aged 85, Retired 1994

Scowen, Molly Christine, IBC

Died 4.9.2019, Aged 79, Retired 1998

Walcott, Dorette Agnes, Division 032

Died 21.9.2019, Aged 83, Retired 1993

Wiseman, Michael David, Division 150

Died 1.10.2019, Aged 72, Retired 2002

In Memoriam – Ellesmere Port

Appleton, John, Division 642

Died 15.10.2019, Aged 82, Retired 1994

Archer, John Edward, Division 641

Died 10.9.2019, Aged 67, Retired 2006

Ballinger, George Leonard, Division 691

Died 23.10.2019, Aged 87, Retired 1991

Charles, Anthony, Division 642

Died 6.10.2019, Aged 88, Retired 1996

Goodall, Gerald Keith, Division 650

Died 25.10.2019, Aged 89, Retired 1989

Kirkham, Allan, Division 691

Died 24.10.2019, Aged 83, Retired 1999

Larsen, Joan, Division 617

Died 2.9.2019, Aged 86, Retired 1997

Lewis, Derek, Division 642

Died 17.10.2019, Aged 78, Retired 1998

McRobbie, Ian, Division 641

Died 6.9.2019, Aged 81, Retired 2003

O'Hara, John, Division 674

Died 25.10.2019, Aged 90, Retired 1994

Sheen, David Ronald, Division 641

Died 14.10.2019, Aged 72, Retired 2001

Stephens, Peter John, Division 650

Died 28.10.2019, Aged 83, Retired 1994

Stewart, Frederick Daniel, Division 608

Died 20.9.2019, Aged 83, Retired 1995

Williams, Anthony Ernest, Division 629

Died 29.9.2019, Aged 81, Retired 1999

Wills, Donald, Division 670

Died 5.10.2019, Aged 78, Retired 2003

All information on deceased pensioners is provided by the Pensions Department.

How to Access the Newsletter and 2019 AGM Minutes on the Internet

www.thepensiondepartment.co.uk/vpp/pensioner_pages

Facebook

[www.facebook.com/groups/VauxhallPensionersAs](https://www.facebook.com/groups/VauxhallPensionersAssociation)

[sociation](https://www.facebook.com/groups/VauxhallPensionersAssociation)

Useful Telephone and Contact Information

VPA South

All contact details for the new VPA office will be announced when these are known. In the meantime please phone 01582 759851.

Vauxhall Pensions Department 01582 282956

Email marion.mcdonald@gm.com

Welfare Fund 07460 171565

Email welfarefund@vm.co.uk

Website www.vauxhallwelfarefund.org

VPA North

Dave Williams 0151 6088701

If you have a story you would like to tell, then

please get in touch with Norman McGregor

email normanmcgregor3@gmail.com

The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Company.