

# Pensioners' Newsletter – October 2019

## News from the South

Hi Everyone:

I hope you are all well and enjoying the warm sunshine of this late summer period, although I must say that my garden could do with some water, as currently it looks like the plains of Africa. Well, the closing down of Griffin House has caused us more of a problem than we had expected and planned for. Currently we still have no office to work from and although it looks as if we may have a temporary solution, it is far from ideal and will only be available for a few months, when the search will start again. Dave and Sylvia are doing everything possible to ensure that our communication with members and information about trips continues to run smoothly, but it is far from ideal, working from home with limited access to records, etc. I would ask for your understanding over the next few months and be assured that we are doing our best to provide the high level of service you have come to expect from the VPA. Enjoy the rest of the year and why not join us at the Christmas dinner to round it all off with a drink and a dance.

*John Boast*

## News from the North

Well it looks as if summer is rapidly turning into autumn and as usual when the children return to school we have some lovely weather.

Our latest trip to Lancaster was a huge success apart from a disappointing low number of people, but those thirty of us had a super day, the weather was glorious as was the destination. We picked up our guide who gave us a very interesting and light hearted talk as we drove around Lancaster and the surrounding area, finishing at the castle where we dropped some people off. The rest of us were taken to the city centre and what a lovely place it was. Later we were picked up and driven up the hill to a large park with a butterfly and bird house. The day was topped off with a sit and a drink in the sun before returning home.

The Newquay holiday is booking up fast, but there are still a few rooms available. We will be staying at the Eliot Hotel from April 6 for five days, taking in the Eden Project, Bodmin and Padstow. The price will be approximately £200 pp.

Until next time enjoy the fall and I hope none of you, unlike us, are affected by the travel company demise. Cheers

*Dave Williams*

## Think of Sylvia

As we continue to locate an office site it is appreciated that Sylvia continues to run the admin from her home. However, she is increasingly receiving calls concerning pension queries. Please note that is not within her area of responsibility so it would be much appreciated if you **would not** call her number, but instead ring the Pensions number shown at the end of the Newsletter Thank you.

## Vauxhall War Memorial, Kimpton Road

In the August Newsletter we showed you how Strawberry Star had erected hoardings around the War Memorial to protect it during on-going building works. Below is an artist's impression of what it will look like when work is completed.



*Artist's Impression of the Refurbished War Memorial*

The Remembrance Day Service will go ahead this year as usual and will be held on Sunday, November 10 commencing at 8.30 am. The service will be followed by refreshments as in previous years.

## Thursford Trip – November 20

The interest in attending this Christmas spectacular matinee has not been as good as we had hoped. It is an extravaganza of non-stop singing, dancing, music, humour and variety and is a fast moving celebration of the festive season featuring an eclectic mix of both seasonal and year round favourites. With a cast of 120 this is the biggest Christmas show of its kind in Europe. The cost is £50 pp members and £55 pp for non-members. If you are interested please contact Sylvia.

## IT Courses

Following on from the lack of activity regarding the Vauxhall provision of IT courses it has been determined that the Noah Enterprise Organisation can offer the following courses to interested parties.

**Digital Learning for Beginners** - here you can learn the basics of using a computer and the internet. You will be taught how to use the internet, create and send emails, use online storage etc. This is a 4 week course and is free of charge. This 4 week course starts completely from scratch and will educate you in the basics of the internet, emails and how to create a document. The course runs on Monday and Wednesday 9.30 am -12.30 pm for four weeks or Tuesday and Thursday 9.30 am - 12.30 pm for four weeks.

Course start dates are as follows:- Tuesday, October 1 and Wednesday, October 2, Monday, October 28, Monday, November 25, Tuesday, November 26, Monday, January 13, 2020, Monday, February 10, Tuesday, February 11, Monday, March 9, Monday, April 20, Tuesday, April 21, Monday, June 1, Tuesday, June 23 and Monday, June 29.

**IT and Confidence** - this course is focused on learning to use a computer to help manage stress and anxiety and developing your confidence. As

with the course above the duration is for 4 weeks and there is no charge. You will be taught stress and anxiety management, how to use IT to simplify your life and using the internet to stay in touch with family and friends. If the thought of using technology makes you feel stressed, then this is the course for you. The course runs on Tuesday and Thursday for four weeks between 9.30 am and 12.30 pm.

Course start dates are as follows: Tuesday, October 29, Tuesday, January 14 2020, Tuesday, March 10 and Tuesday, May 26.

Both courses are held in the Noah Academy at 20 - 22 High Town Road, Luton LU2 0DD. For more information please ring 01582 726152 telling them you are a VPA member. I do urge you to take advantage of this offer as a greater understanding of the internet helps you broaden your horizons and improve your quality of life. Plus you can submit articles for this Newsletter!

Noah also run a course called Getting Started with IT in Dunstable, Leighton Buzzard and Bedford. For info phone the Luton number above for details.

### **The Pecks**

Many of you will know of Denise and Brian Peck who are regulars on many of the outings that we hold. Perhaps not so much common knowledge is the fact that in September 2018 they suffered a catastrophic house fire. The fire started in their kitchen which in itself was totally gutted. There was a lot of smoke damage which resulted in the loss of most of their furniture. This happened in the early hours of the morning and luckily for Denise and Brian the smoke alarm woke them up and they got out safely. Go and check your smoke alarms now or arrange to get one installed. We would much rather you read this Newsletter than appear in the obituaries column! Anyhow they are back living in their 'new house' since April after being housed in a hotel and then rented accommodation. On a lighter note Brian is an Elvis Presley nut and even has a 6 foot cardboard cut-out model in his music room which serves as a shrine to the King of rock and roll. Also in this room is a picture of a Wurlitzer Jukebox 1015 'one more time' playing vinyl 45s. It had long since been a dream of Brian's to own said jukebox and guess what - he has had one since 2009 and plays at any one time from a selection of 50 records. The music room is decorated with lots of neon light metal signs and memorabilia, some from Gracelands, and finished in black emulsion and vinyl flooring. Brian used to be a roadie for a disco when he worked in the van plant and when the disc jockey moved from vinyl to cd you just know who got the records. So you see "Elvis hasn't left the building" - he's in the music room of the house.

### **VPA Member Rules the Waves**

Situated 8 miles west of Bournemouth is the resort of Swanage which is now the home of Stan O'Flynn who, while employed by Vauxhall

Engineering was a Design Manager, mainly involved in engines. He was later transferred to AWD and then to Marshalls of Cambridge until he retired. The bulk of his working life was with Vauxhall.

Anyway, back to Swanage and the reason for this article. Swanage has a long sandy beach, the usual amusement arcades and a small sea front fairground. Running to Corfe is a daily operated steam railway. The other main feature of the town is the wooden Victorian Pier which was built in 1895. The pier is owned by a charity trust and is 95% operated by volunteers covering activities such as shop sales, gate and parking charges, plus all aspects of maintenance. Recently the pier management identified the need to introduce a kiosk on the pier to control the thrice daily ferry which runs between Swanage and Poole Quay. Accordingly Stan was requested to design said kiosk and with assistance of two other volunteers produced the kiosk shown in the picture below. It took about 3 months to complete from start to finish and is indeed a magnificent structure.



*Stan O'Flynn and kiosk*

So if there are any of you out there who have similar tales to tell please send them in, hopefully with a picture, and we will feature them.

### **National Crime Agency - Scam Warning**

The NCA has launched a campaign to highlight the growing number of fraudsters pretending to be NCA officers in order to swindle people out of money. One scam has already been reported in our area, but it is likely that there will have been others. What is known is that other areas of the country have been targeted so please share this message with friends and family. As is usually the case these fraudsters are wanting your personal details and your bank account information.

**An NCA officer will never:**

- ask for remote access to your computer via phone, email or online
- ask you to verify your personal details such as passwords, account numbers or card details via phone, email or online
- ask you to transfer or hand over money via phone, email, online or on the doorstep
- speak or act in an intimidating or threatening manner.

If you are unsure, stop. If someone calls at your home shut the door and contact the NCA on 0370

000 6000 for verification. If they are not who they say ring 101 or, in an emergency 999.

If ever you suspect you have received any type of suspect phone call or email (not necessarily one connected with the scam highlighted here) call Action Fraud on 300 123 2040.

### Aug 22 - Sussex Prairie Gardens

A full coach left Luton at 9.00 am and stopped at the Old Barn Garden for refreshments and a comfort break before arriving at the village of Shipley around 11.45 am. Shipley, quite correctly, is proud of the beautiful old church where in 1952 the Queen attended a wedding along with her mother and sister. A plaque on the front row pews attests to this fact. Climbing back onto the coach we were then taken to the village of Bamber and into the Old Tollgate Restaurant where we enjoyed a superb carvery lunch. After filling ourselves we had a stroll around the place taking in the lovely gardens and buildings to be seen. We re-boarded the coach and travelled to the Prairie Gardens, designed and owned by Paul and Pauline McBride. Opened about 11 years ago the 8 acre garden is planted in a naturalistic style and very engaging to look at. After tea and home-made cake it was delightful to sit back and bask in the sun on a glorious day. Well done to the organisers and James the driver.

### Sept 4 – RHS Wisley Flower Show

The coach left Luton at 9.00 am and arrived at Wisley at 10.30ish. As is usual with members first stop was for refreshments and a call of nature followed by a wander around the gardens and all the various exhibitors dotted around the facility. Also on hand was an outdoor sculpture exhibition, the highlight of which was a Henry Moore statue of two sheep. You would be looking at a photo of this, but some clot photographed his thumb as well. Well what do you expect from someone who worked in Finance?! After lunch most people purchased items and/or took advantage of the many benches scattered around the place. The weather was sunny and dry and a contented group left at about 3.30 pm to return home. Even the M25 was good for once. Thanks to Sylvia, Dave and James the driver.

### Sept 18 – Oxford

On a day that began with difficulties due to an accident affecting the M25 and M1, which caused havoc in South Luton, 39 VPAites reached Oxford (eventually) and in lovely weather enjoyed a splendid day in the city of spires. Thanks to the office as usual for arranging.

### October Quiz

- 1 Batman operated in which city?
- 2 What was the name of the chimpanzee companion of Michael Jackson?
- 3 Which fruit gave its name to a desk top computer in 1984?

4 What type of animal was Babe in the film of the same name?

5 Whose slogan was "put a tiger in your tank"?

6 What colour are Superman's shorts?

7 What is the unit of currency in India?

8 What is the closest planet to Earth?

9 True or false - hair pulled out by the roots will not grow back?

10 Which supermarket chain used Jamie Oliver for advertising?

11 What is the favourite sport of Fred Flintstone?

12 True or false - women blink twice as much as men?

13 What mineral is spinach high in?

14 What was the name of the green Tellytubby?

15 How many wings does a butterfly have?

16 What sort of hat did Laurel and Hardy wear?

17 Which cartoon dog has the initials 'S.D.' on his collar?

18 What is the name of the fairy in Peter Pan?

19 Which TV animation has a robot called Bender?

20 What are the three primary colours in white light?

Answers in the December edition of the Newsletter.

### August Quiz Answers

- |                              |                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 Spain                      | 11 Friar Tuck   |
| 2 Diamond                    | 12 Mosquito     |
| 3 Mary Poppins               | 13 Stairs       |
| 4 Florida                    | 14 10           |
| 5 Her glass slipper          | 15 Jazz         |
| 6 Brazil                     | 16 Robert Burns |
| 7 Liquorice Allsorts         | 17 Ayers Rock   |
| 8 All the perfumes in Arabia | 18 Flute        |
| 9 132                        | 19 Siesta       |
| 10 Only Fools and Horses     | 20 Shamrock     |

### Upcoming Events in the South

#### Oct 16 – Mystery Tour

£12.00 pp members/£15 pp non-members

#### Nov 20 – Thursford Christmas Show (Matinee)

Top Class festive musical extravaganza

£50.00 pp members/£55.00 pp non-members

#### Dec 2-6 – Turkey and Tinsel

Warners Hotel, Sinah Warren

Enjoy an early celebration of Christmas and New Year on a return visit to this excellent hotel complex.

£260.00 pp members/£270.00 pp non-members

#### Dec 11 – Christmas Party

£24.00 pp members/£27.00 pp non-members

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

To book for a trips(s) please ring the office on 01582 427921 or write in to the office address at the end of this Newsletter. 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.

### **2019 Golf Events**

#### **Oct 1 – Pairs Championship**

Aylesbury Vale Golf Course

### **Upcoming Events in the North**

#### **October 9 - Blackpool**

Leaving Club at 10.30 am

Cost £10.00 pp

#### **October 17 - Salford Quays and Hat Museum**

Leaving Club at 10.30 am

Cost £10.00 pp

#### **November 25 - Tinsel and Turkey, Bognor Regis**

Royal Norfolk Hotel **SOLD OUT**

5 day holiday

Full day trip to Portsmouth and half day trip to Chichester. Two lunches at Hotel

Cost £215 (to be confirmed)

Deposit of £40.00 required when booking

#### **December 13 – Christmas Lunch, Woodcote Hotel**

Arrangements to be advised

#### **April 6 2020 – Eliot Hotel, Newquay**

5 day holiday

Visiting the Eden Project, Bodmin and Padstow

Approximately £200 pp

### **Tea Dances**

October 8, 15, 22, 29

November 12, 19, 26

### **In Memoriam – Luton**

**Aird**, James, IBC

Died 16.8.2019, Aged 96, Retired 1984

**Basharat**, M. Staff

Died 24.4.2019, Aged 67, Retired 1994

**Beresford**, Anthony Vernon, Division 015

Died 22.8.2019, Aged 87, Retired 1993

**Buttigieg**, Carmel, IBC

Died 17.8.2019, Aged 92, Retired 1987

**Clinch**, Alan Kenneth, Division 082

Died 25.8.2019, Aged 90, Retired 1990

**Coleman**, Eleanor Mary, Division 380

Died 4.8.2019, Aged 83, Retired 2000

**Compton**, Donald Leslie Marshall, IBC

Died 5.8.2019, Aged 83, Retired 1994

**Groom**, Allan Cyril, IBC

Died 15.7.2019, Aged 81, Retired 1994

**Hollingsworth**, George Leonard, IBC

Died 6.8.2019, Aged 83, Retired 2001

**Humphrey**, Donald George, Division 180

Died 14.8.2019, Aged 80, Retired 1994

**Jones**, David Evan, Division 135

Died 28.7.2019, Aged 79, Retired 2002

**Kearney**, Dermont Joseph, Division 117

Died 20.8.2019, Aged 79, Retired 2002

**Kershaw**, Richard, IBC

Died 1.8.2019, Aged 76, Retired 2003

**Pollard**, Dennis John Henry, IBC

Died 8.6.2019, Aged 88, Retired 1988

**Stubbs**, Joseph Colin, IBC

Died 2.8.2019, Aged 83, Retired 2002

**Thomas**, Delores Elaine, IBC

Died 14.5.2019, Aged 77, Retired 2002

**Tompkins**, Ronald Jack, IBC

Died 30.8.2019, Aged 91, Retired 1987

### **In Memoriam – Ellesmere Port**

**Bryce**, John, Division 629

Died 18.7.2019, Aged 80, Retired 1993

**Dade**, Peter, Division 678

Died 24.7.2019, Aged 80, Retired 1994

**Flynn**, John James, Division 642

Died 12.7.2019, Aged 87, Retired 1997

**Hay**, William John, Division 675

Died 11.8.2019, Aged 53, Retired 2005

**McMahon**, James Bernard, Division 641

Died 26.7.2019, Aged 85, Retired 1993

**Molyneux**, Albert Ernest, Division 638

Died 16.7.2019, Aged 85, Retired 1999

**Mowles**, Peter Victor, Division 695

Died 2.8.2019, Aged 84, Retired 1992

**Robinson**, George, Division 682

Died 21.8.2019, Aged 86, Retired 1992

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](http://www.thepensiondepartment.co.uk/vpp/pensioner_pages)

#### **Facebook**

[www.facebook.com/groups/VauxhallPensionersAssociation](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](mailto:marion.mcdonald@gm.com)

**Welfare Fund** 07460 171565

Email [welfarefund@vm.co.uk](mailto:welfarefund@vm.co.uk)

Website [www.vauxhallwelfarefund.org](http://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](mailto:normanmcgregor3@gmail.com)

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