

# Pensioners' Newsletter – April 2018

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## News from the South

Hi Everyone

Well I was out on the golf course one day, bright blue sunny spring like day and then on the following day I stood looking out of the window at the snow!!! What happened to spring, summer and autumn? Oh well that's UK weather. The first piece of news I have this time relates to two of our longest serving VPA Committee members, Bob and Jean Bavister. They have decided that after over 25 years of service to the VPA they have done their bit and officially stepped down at the AGM. Unfortunately, they were not able to be there, but Dick Mumford, our Treasurer, made sure they received a gift to thank them for their dedication to Vauxhall pensioners. The Committee wishes them a long and happy second retirement.

As mentioned, the VPA Southern Plants AGM took place on Monday, March 19. A good turn-out of more than sixty members heard from James Highnam, Vauxhall Chief Financial Officer, about the current financial position of Opel/Vauxhall and the new focus for the Company following the takeover by PSA. This would concentrate on profitability rather than increased sales. He went into some depth to explain the new plan known as PACE for reducing complexity of both products, which in the future would be based on just two vehicle platforms, and manufacturing processes through more commonisation of parts across models. This would lead to reduced costs throughout the business. Rob Assinder, GME Pensions Department, then presented the situation on the Pension Plans which were in place prior to the takeover and confirmed that these remained with General Motors. He explained the status of the recovery plan and gave details of GM's continued financial commitment to bring the plans back to a positive position by 2024. All members present then had the chance to ask questions of the presenters. The AGM then concluded with a comprehensive address from our President, David Kirke, detailing the activities of the VPA through the year. Finally he announced that John Fulcher had agreed to take up a Vice President position with the VPA.

*John Boast*

## News from the North

Dear All

Welcome to spring (I think). As I look out the sun is shining and the spring flowers have bravely managed to bloom, despite the dreadful weather of the last few weeks. After two weeks in the very hot sun it was a shock to the system to return to snow and sub-zero temperatures which took a bit of getting used to. Now we are looking forward to warmer weather and our spring holiday in Eastbourne.

We have also booked another pre-Christmas holiday, this time to Dunoon in Scotland. It is arranged for December 3 to 7, staying at the

Selborne Hotel. Depending on how many people book the price will be between £199 and £215pp. There are still places available which can be booked at the social evenings.

At the March social evening we held our AGM at which the officers and Committee were all returned to serve again, but if anyone out there fancies joining our Committee you will be made most welcome. New blood is always a good idea. Our lunch at the Mill Hotel in Chester, courtesy of the Committee, was a thoroughly enjoyable meal. It was lovely to see Barry and Daffyd who have both been very poorly.

We are now taking bookings for the May trip. It is on May 17, leaving the Vauxhall Club at 9 am at a cost of £10pp. We visit Welshpool to see a display of sculptures composed of knives collected during an amnesty, following on to the garden centre at Chirk for lunch once again provided by the Club. As for news of the new Club it appears to be almost finished so to that end the Committee plan to make a visit hopefully in April after which a date (or two) will be fixed for us to have a social evening there. You can then make your own minds up whether you think it will meet our needs.

Until next time enjoy the spring, the Easter holiday and anything else you may be doing. Cheers

*Dave Williams*

## Office E-mail Address

The February Newsletter once again highlighted the problems we are having with the office computer. Unfortunately they are still there. If you wish to communicate by e-mail please use the following address which has been amended slightly since our last Newsletter:

[david.2.linney@vauxhall.co.uk](mailto:david.2.linney@vauxhall.co.uk)

## Changes to Downton Country Tour – May 17

Please note that it has been necessary to cancel the Downton Country Tour trip scheduled for May 17 due to lack of support. Sylvia and Dave have excelled themselves by obtaining a visit to Highclere Castle, setting for the TV series Downton Abbey. Included is a tour of the castle itself, an Egyptian exhibition and a stroll around the gardens. The date is Tuesday July 31 and the cost is £30pp for VPA members and £32pp for non-VPA members.

## Fire Safety in the Home

Our October 2011 Newsletter explained the way in which a free smoke alarm could be obtained and fitted free of charge from the Fire Service. As the process has changed it is timely that the current situation is explained.

Most, if not all Fire and Rescue services, offer what is commonly known as a Safe and Well visit. Some may still call it the Home Fire Risk Assessments or Home Fire Safety Checks. A Safe and Well visit consists of members of your local fire and rescue service visiting your home, at a time convenient to

yourself, to carry out an inspection of your home. The visit may be carried out by operational firefighters, so don't be surprised if a fire engine arrives at your home. Alternatively the visit can be conducted by a dedicated safety team from your local fire and rescue team. You should be aware that a fire engine can be called away at a moment's notice as it is still part of a live operational resource. If this happens they will call back or arrange another date and time with you. Safe and Well visits are entirely free and will determine if you qualify for a free smoke alarm to be supplied and fitted where required. You **will not** be sold anything.

The visit concentrates on three areas:

- 1 Identify and be aware of the potential fire risks within your home.
- 2 Know what to do to reduce or prevent these risks.
- 3 Put together an escape plan in case a fire does break out and ensure you have working smoke alarms.

The inspection of your home is not as intrusive as it sounds. You will sit down with the fire personnel and discuss fire safety issues covering areas including electrical safety, smoking and the use of electric blankets. With your permission they will check each of the rooms in your property looking at, for example, plug sockets and wires trapped under carpets. Doors will be inspected to make sure they shut properly and you will be advised of anything that needs addressing to make your home a safer place to live.

If you qualify for free smoke alarms they will fit them in a matter of minutes all free of charge. The big change since we wrote in 2011 when free smoke alarms were available to all is that you only get them if you are at risk.

In 2017, 283 people died in fires in their homes and you are at least 8 times more likely to die if you have no smoke alarms and they are not in good working order. To this end they should be checked at least once a month or more regularly if possible. You can arrange for a visit by contacting your local fire and rescue service direct. You can also make enquiries on behalf of another person. However, unless you are responsible for that person you will need their permission.

All members of the Fire and Rescue service will have identification. If not do not let them in and contact the local station to check they are genuine. You will not be asked for any money so any caller who asks for a fee is fake.

### **Telephone Preference Service**

Fraudsters are cold calling victims falsely stating that they are calling from well-known UK telecommunications services aiming to provide an enhanced call barring service, including international calls. If you want to go ahead you will be asked to confirm your bank account details and be told there is a one off fee for joining. You will then be charged a monthly direct debit deducted from your account which you have not agreed to. On occasions when victims have attempted to call back, the telephone number given by the fraudsters

could not be reached or the request to cancel the direct debit was refused.

The Telephone Preference Service is a "do not call" register that, if you are registered means that you should not receive any live telesales calls.

Telephone Preference Service is the only official UK register for opting out of these type of unsolicited calls. This service only covers calls made in the UK and some UK based companies, in order to get round the legislation, are making calls to the UK from their own account overseas. If you receive an overseas direct selling call from a company that you believe to be UK based then log a complaint with the TPS using the online complaints form.

To register for this free service visit

<http://www.tpsonline.org.uk>. Please be alert to these scams. If you should fall victim to any type of scam either visit [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or ring 0300 123 2040

### **February 22 - Milestones Museum, Basingstoke**

A smallish group travelled to Basingstoke to visit this museum. Among the many things to look at was a 1940's sweet shop, historic streets with long gone shops, an Edwardian pub, how we used to live, a penny arcade and a 'remember these' exhibition which included such items as a hand turned mincing machine, record players and the early orange Braun hair dryers. There was the usual cafe to satisfy more modern needs. The group thoroughly enjoyed their day.

### **March 14 - Coventry Motor Museum**

Another smallish group visited the Coventry Motor Museum. The facility is filled with a fantastic show of vintage cars, motorbikes and pedal cycles, but not one Vauxhall or Bedford was displayed. Perhaps a recognition of Coventry being at the heart of the production of Jaguar, Riley, Austin etc. Just across from the site was the town centre and most VPA members ended up at Wetherspoons for lunch, after which more traditional sights were visited such as Coventry Cathedral, the Statue of Lady Godiva and the inevitable shopping centre for the ladies. Another enjoyable trip on a dry but chilly day.

### **April Quiz**

The subject this time is catchphrases. The answers are the names of the person each catchphrase is associated with.

- 1 Ooh Betty
- 2 Boom Boom
- 3 I'm free
- 4 I wanna tell you a story
- 5 Just like that
- 6 What a gay day
- 7 Nick Nick
- 8 Lorra lorra laughs
- 9 Hello playmates
- 10 Don't mention the war
- 11 It's goodnight from me and it's goodnight from him
- 12 Lovely jubbly

13 You dirty old man  
 14 I don't believe it  
 15 Nice to see you, to see you nice  
 16 Hello Honky Tonk  
 17 I have a cunning plan  
 18 You stupid boy  
 19 Silly old moo  
 20 Bernie the bolt  
 The names of the star or the character are acceptable. As usual the winner will receive a £10 M&S voucher. The closing date is May 12 and good luck to all who enter.

### February Quiz Answers

1 Colony  
 2 Aardvark  
 3 Camel  
 4 Dog  
 5 Four  
 6 Adder  
 7 Eucalyptus  
 8 Toad  
 9 Zoology  
 10 Donkey  
 11 Herd  
 12 Mandrill  
 13 Goat  
 14 Badger  
 15 Carnivore  
 16 Joey  
 17 Hare  
 18 Squirrel  
 19 Cheetah  
 20 Pack

We had our best ever response since the first quiz which was in February 2012. Even more pleasing was that all responses were 100% correct. But there can only be one winner and that is F. Allen who will shortly receive the M&S voucher. Well done to him and commiserations to all those who came joint second.

### Upcoming Events in the South

**April 19 - Norwich** (coach only)  
 £13.00 pp VPA members/£16.00 pp non-members  
**May 9 - 13 - Queen's Hotel, Eastbourne**  
 4 nights half board plus excursions £195.00 pp VPA members/£205.00 pp non-members. Sea view is £24.00 pp extra (members and non-members)  
 £40.00 pp VPA members/£47.00 pp non-members  
**June 2 - Bournemouth** (coach only)  
 £14.00 pp VPA members/£17.00 pp non-members  
**June 22 - Blenheim Palace Flower Show**  
 Includes park and gardens  
 £18.00 pp VPA members/£22 pp non-members  
**July 4 - Kennet & Avon Canal Cruise**  
 Horse drawn barge and cream tea  
 £26.00 pp VPA members/£31.00 pp non-members  
**July 19 - Motown the Musical** (plus 2 course lunch) **SOLD OUT**  
 £54.00 pp VPA members/£62.00 pp non-members  
**July 31 - Highclere Castle Tour**  
 Includes Egyptian exhibition and gardens  
 £30pp VPA members/£32pp non-members

**August 15 - Kent & East Sussex Railway**  
 Steam train with ploughman's lunch  
 £31.00 pp VPA members/£37.00 pp non-members  
**August 29 - Hendon RAF Museum**  
 £10.00 pp VPA members/£13.00 pp non-members  
**September 13 - Mystery Tour**  
**Note: Some walking will be involved**  
 £14.00 pp VPA members/£17.00 pp non-members  
**October 11 - Springfields Shopping Outlet, Peterborough**  
 Christmas shopping with great discounts  
 £11.00 pp VPA members/£14.00 pp non-members  
**November 14 - Hampstead Tour & Christmas Lights** (includes lunch) **SOLD OUT**  
 £33.00 pp VPA members/£39.00 pp non-members  
**December 3 - 7 - Tinsel & Turkey (THL Resort, Torquay)**  
 4 nights half board plus excursions  
 £225.00 pp VPA members/£235.00 pp non-members. Riviera view is £24.00 pp extra (members and non-members)  
**December 13 - Christmas Party**  
 £22.00 pp VPA members/£24.00 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 forfeits their deposit and 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.

### VPA Golf Matches - 2018

**May 17** - Abbey Hill - Team Texas Scramble  
**June 21** - Redbourn - Singles Championship  
**October 2** - Aylesbury Vale - Pairs Championship  
 All golf playing VPA members with a club handicap are most welcome and can register for the events by sending a brief note to either Mike Roberts or Jim Heaney at the VPA Office (address at end of this Newsletter).

### Tea Dances

Due to uncertainty future dances are on hold.

### Upcoming Events in the North

**May 17 - Iron Works Museum, Welshpool**  
 followed by the Garden Centre at Chirk  
**April 11 - 15 - Eastbourne**  
**June 14 - York and Aero Museum**

**July 12 - Blackburn Market/Oswaldtwistle Mill**

**August 15 - Kettlewell Scarecrow Festival**

And on to a venue t.b.a.

**September 19 - Settle Carlisle Railway**

followed by free time in Carlisle

**October 17 – Blackpool**

**December 12 – Craxton Wood Hotel**

Christmas Meal followed by entertainment.

Arrival 10.30am for coffee.

Details of prices and times of trips will be included in the next Newsletter.

### **Tea Dances**

April 10, 17, 24

May 8, 15, 22, 29

### **In Memoriam – Luton**

**Blake**, Roger, Vauxhall

Died 27.11.2017, Aged 84, Retired 1990

**Bond**, Thomas Hughes, Division 349

Died 27.1.2018, Aged 87, Retired 1988

**Brewer**, Alfred John, Vauxhall

Died 21.2.2018, Aged 94, Retired 1982

**Clarke**, James, Division 117

Died 25.1.2018, Aged 83, Retired 1997

**Clarke**, Alan Redvers, Division 349

Died 21.2.2018, Aged 82, Retired 1990

**Crosbie**, Colin George Frederick, Division 499

Died 20.12.2017, Aged 75, Retired 2003

**Davidson**, Fred, Division 365

Died 22.12.2017, Aged 77, Retired 2002

**Day**, Roy, Division 848

Died 22.12.2017, Aged 78, Retired 2002

**Gilkes**, Bertie Henry, Vauxhall

Died 23.2.2018, Aged 94, Retired 1989

**Hackett**, Jean Elizabeth, Vauxhall

Died 30.12.2017, Aged 83, Retired 1989

**Hooker**, Stephen, Division 349

Died 19.12.2017, Aged 89, Retired 1989

**Horner**, William, Division 0623

Died 24.12.2017, Aged 66, Retired 2013

**Hyde**, Brian Victor, BCV

Died 5.2.2018, Aged 86, Retired 1988

**Khan**, Mohammed Azhar, Vauxhall

Died 26.12.2017, Aged 85, Retired 1990

**King**, Douglas, Division 349

Died 20.2.2018, Aged 86, Retired 1987

**Lynch**, Ronald Trevellian, BCV

Died 28.1.2018, Aged 90, Retired 1988

**Norman**, George Ernest, Division 015

Died 20.1.2018, Aged 84, Retired 1993

**O'Neill**, James, Staff

Died 27.2.2018, Aged 93, Retired 1989

**Reid**, Derek Martin, Staff

Died 22.2.2018, Aged 73, Retired 2007

**Smith**, Stanley Frederick, BCV

Died 25.12.2017, Aged 89, Retired 1988

**Solano**, Michele, Division 135

Died 20.12.2017, Aged 86, Retired 1997

**Warner**, Clifford John, BCV

Died 20.1.2018, Aged 95, Retired 1987

**Wilson**, Thomas Albert, BCV

Died 12.1.2018, Aged 88, Retired 1988

### **In Memoriam – Ellesmere Port**

**Bailey**, Roy, Division 678

Died 29.12.2017, Aged 82, Retired 1997

**Blake**, Anthony, Division 640

Died 26.1.2018, Aged 76, Retired 2002

**Foxley**, Eugene Robert, Division 642

Died 23.2.2018, Aged 77, Retired 2001

**Griffiths**, Gordon Llewellyn, Staff

Died 28.12.2017, Aged 84, Retired 1990

**Halliwell**, Elwyn, Division 696

Died 29.12.2017, Aged 91, Retired 1988

**Hodson**, James Windall, Division 624

Died 30.1.2018, Aged 91, Retired 1988

**Ledsham**, Gordon, Division 624

Died 29.12.2017, Aged 89, Retired 1990

**Lysaght**, Ronald Francis, Division 628

Died 27.2.2018, Aged 74, Retired 1992

**Parry**, Keith, Division 642

Died 21.2.2018, Aged 77, Retired 2003

**Reddy**, Laurence Duncan, Division 638

Died 27.2.2018, Aged 87, Retired 1996

**Saxby**, John Dennis, Division 641

Died 30.1.2018, Aged 86, Retired 1996

**Southern**, Robert William, Division 608

Died 23.2.2018, Aged 83, Retired 2000

**Theaker**, Walter Robert, Division 616

Died 27.1.2018, Aged 87 Retired 1996

**Whittaker**, James, Division 622

Died 19.12.2017, Aged 71, Retired 2006

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

### **How to Access the Newsletter and 2017 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/VauxhallPensionersAsociation](http://www.facebook.com/groups/VauxhallPensionersAsociation)

#### **Register For E-Mail Prompts**

If you wish to receive an e-mail prompt when the Torque Magazine and Newsletter are available on line, please send your e-mail address to:

[madeleine.shutt@vauxhall.co.uk](mailto:madeleine.shutt@vauxhall.co.uk)

#### **Useful Telephone and Contact Information**

##### **VPA South**

VPA Office 01582 427921

Office is manned Tuesday and Friday between 10.00am and 2.00pm.

E-mail [david.2.linney@vauxhall.co.uk](mailto:david.2.linney@vauxhall.co.uk)

VPA Office, UK1-100-020, Griffin House, Osborne Road, Luton, LU1 3YT.

Vauxhall Pensions Department 01582 721122

E-mail [marion.mcdonald@gm.com](mailto:marion.mcdonald@gm.com)

Cherie Denton, Welfare Officer 01582 427204

E-mail [cherie.denton@vauxhall.co.uk](mailto:cherie.denton@vauxhall.co.uk)

##### **VPA North**

Anne Atherall 01244 325891

If you have a story you would like to tell, then please get in touch with Norman McGregor via the VPA office or

e-mail [normanmcgregor3@gmail.com](mailto:normanmcgregor3@gmail.com)

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