

Pensioners' Newsletter – February 2016

News from the South

Hi everyone,

All of us on the VPA Committee hope that you enjoyed your Christmas and wish you a happy 2016. Our entertainments team have come up with a packed programme for the year ahead, with trips including a tour of Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Club in May, a Thames River Cruise, a visit to Buckingham Palace in August and our usual 5 day Lochs and Glens outing in November. In fact, there is something planned for every month from March to November, so please review the list – I'm sure you will find something to interest you. However, although 2015 was a good year for the VPA with almost all our trips sold out, and in some cases additional coaches required, yet again we had a poor turnout for the Christmas Dinner and Dance. This has made us reconsider the format of this event for 2016 and we would very much appreciate your input as to how we proceed. Basically, there are three options for you to consider: do we continue with a dinner and dance, do we hold a lunch or do you have no preference and would attend either type of function? As this event requires a lot of planning and commitment by the VPA team, we do really value your input by 18 March. **Please assist us by sending your response to the VPA office details of which are printed at the end of this newsletter.**

Once again, have a happy and healthy New Year.

John Boast

News from the North

Dear all,

May I begin this month by wishing you all a happy New Year. I hope you all also had a good and peaceful Christmas. There is a fair bit to report this time, so I will start with the Turkey and Tinsel holiday. After a few problems with the coach being held up in traffic, hence a late getaway, followed by strong winds on the motorway, we were late arriving at the hotel. However, we had a good time, the weather was kind to us and the food, staff, entertainment and trips were excellent, so I think we all enjoyed the break.

We went to the Brook Meadow Hotel for our Christmas dinner, which was a huge success. The setting was perfect for us to dress up for the occasion. My thanks on your behalf must go to the ladies of the Committee for their hard work organising it and doing the table setting. I am glad to report that having the two evenings consecutively did not deter people, so thanks to all who supported the December club night. Thanks also to Simon and Kirsty for entertaining us in such

a festive way. Simon again entertained us in January – this time with his group. Many thanks, Simon.

Those who went to see the Bodyguard reported a good show and a good day out.

Last week Val and I went to visit Bill Dobson, who is once again poorly in hospital, to present him with a cheque and Hilda with a bouquet. I have some snaps, which I will post when they are developed. It will soon be planting time, so I hope next time I write we will be able to see some spring colour in the garden and trust we will not have grown flippers from all the rain. Bye for now,

Dave Williams

2016 AGM

The southern plant's AGM will take place on Monday 21 March at 2.15pm in the Riverside Suite at Venue 360, Luton. Please put the date in your diary. Refreshments will be available prior to the start of the meeting.

Parking For Luton Trips/Outings

Venue 360 has confirmed that we will be permitted to park in the overspill car park in Gypsy Lane. However, this is subject to the proviso that should they receive a booking for a large conference they might have to reconsider their position.

Facebook

The VPA now has its own Facebook page, which currently has 60 followers and is steadily growing. Once you join, you can keep up-to-date with various events, such as days out and short breaks throughout the year. The full list of diary dates for 2016 is pinned to the top of the group's timeline. Once a member, you can interact with fellow Vauxhall pensioners or even reconnect with old work mates of yesteryear. Photos can also be shared, but these obviously should be relevant to the VPA. So, if you are on Facebook already, it's easy to join. You can find our group at:

www.facebook.com/groups/VauxhallPensionersAsociation

If you are not on Facebook, why not sign up and open a Facebook account? It is free. The word account doesn't mean you have to pay (grandchildren can help you). The VPA group will keep you up-to-date on a daily basis regarding our days out and any up and coming events in our 2016 programme. So why not give it a go and embrace social media with us.

Neighbourhood Alert

Back in late 2013 we featured the Ringmaster service, which provided the latest crime occurrences in your area. Bedfordshire Police have moved from Ringmaster and are now using the services of Neighbourhood Alert. The new messaging service creates a range of opportunities. For example, you can select what type of messages you want to receive.

The new benefits include a 24 hour a day website (www.bedsalert.co.uk), a secure and confidential service, the ability to unsubscribe and configure your account as you wish and it is totally free.

Turkey & Tinsel - Monday 23 November 2015

36 VPA members left for Dawlish Warren to spend an early Christmas and New Year at the Langstone Cliff Hotel. After unpacking and settling in to their rooms, the group met with other guests for pre-dinner drinks and, after dinner, were entertained by the Graham Rowell Sound. Tuesday was Christmas Day, and after breakfast the party were taken for a mystery coach tour, ending with a visit to Trago Mills, a discount shopping and leisure experience (one all the men hope never to repeat!). Returning to the hotel, pre-dinner drinks were followed by a visit from Father Christmas, with everyone getting a present before sitting down to a traditional Christmas dinner.

Wednesday (Boxing Day) was a free day, giving the chance to explore the locality as they wished. The evening meal was followed by a Christmas Quiz and a magic show. Thursday was New Year's Eve and after breakfast the group were taken on a coach trip to Torquay. In the evening, there was a Hogmanay party, ending up with a rousing rendition of Auld Lang Syne. Friday was home time, and after a hearty breakfast it was time to get on the coach for the trip back to Luton.

Christmas Dinner/Dance - Thurs 8 December

A lowish turnout of 100 guests nevertheless enjoyed a great meal and good entertainment. Thanks to Sue, Sylvia and Dave for making it happen. John Boast, in his News from the South at the beginning of this Newsletter, has covered a potential way forward to encourage more participants, so please do contact the VPA by e-mail, phone or letter to tell us what you would prefer.

Monday Club Christmas Lunch – 11 January

Just when you thought Christmas was over, the Monday Club held their Christmas Lunch at The Cross Keys, Pulloxhill. Why so late? They were all too busy to fit it in before Christmas!

32 members got on the coach and headed for the country pub. Once at the pub they all got a drink from the bar and were then served a three-course Christmas lunch. Everyone had a good time and the

food was excellent. The coach picked us up and took us on the short journey back to Luton.



A group of happy diners!

Can You Read This?

Aoccdrnig to a rseearch sduty at Cmabridge Uinervitsy, it deosn't mttar in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat lttter be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a toatl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.

Word Play Can Be Fun

A lexophile is a person who has a love of words. Here are some examples of what makes them happy. I know we covered other examples a year ago but I enjoy them so please indulge an old lexophilic:

- Venison for dinner again? Oh deer
- A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy
- I used to be a banker but then I lost interest
- England has no kidney bank but does have a Liverpool
- I tried to catch some fog but I mist
- I know a man addicted to brake fluid but he says he can stop at any time
- I waited all night to see where the sun went and then it dawned on me
- I didn't like my beard at first but then it grew on me
- Broken pencils are pointless
- Velcro - what a rip off!
- I got a job at the bakery because I kneaded dough
- I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I can't put it down
- I dropped out of a communism class because of poor Marx

February Quiz

This month's answers are all the name of a vegetable, fruit or herb:

- 1 Cresses' partner (7 letters)
- 2 Geldof offspring (7)
- 3 Aid to eyesight (6)
- 4 Sounds like a couple (4)

- 5 Cheese or ear (11)
 - 6 Gives Popeye strength (7)
 - 7 Hill in Fats Domino song (9)
 - 8 Professor in Cluedo (4)
 - 9 Keeps vampires at bay (6)
 - 10 Rude sound (9)
 - 11 Cool as a ? (8)
 - 12 Fields forever (10)
 - 13 Egg plant (9)
 - 14 Lovers unwanted companion (10)
 - 15 Lady in a poem (7)
 - 16 Mr Fawlty (5)
 - 17 As red as a ? (8)
 - 18 Staffordshire town (4)
 - 19 Wise old person (4)
 - 20 A mixed up large monkey (3)
- The closing date for entries is Tuesday March 15.
As usual a £15 M & S voucher awaits the successful entrant. Good luck to all.

Answers to December Quiz

- 1 Capricorn
- 2 White
- 3 Brandy
- 4 Cracker
- 5 None (they belong to Santa)
- 6 Prince Albert
- 7 Rockerfeller
- 8 Cranberry
- 9 12th Night
- 10 34th
- 11 Snowball
- 12 Comet
- 13 Sandringham
- 14 Mince pies
- 15 Portugal
- 16 Buttons
- 17 Aladdin
- 18 Wales
- 19 Robert Burns
- 20 Spice Girls

We had a 4 way tie with 19 out of 20 for the December quiz and after the hat was used again the voucher is going to Steve Waterhouse with congratulations from the VPA.

Upcoming Events in the South

- Mar 3** - Brick Lane Music Hall with afternoon tea £31 pp
Mar 24 - Illegal London (inc coffee and lunch) Includes visit to Scotland Yard's Black Museum £31 pp
Apr 21 - Bath (coach only) £16 pp
May 19 - Tour of Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Club and Museum £24 pp
June 4 - Annual outing to Eastbourne £13 pp
July 28 - Bressingham Gardens (optional steam train ride) £23 pp

Aug 18 - Thames River Cruise & Buckingham Palace £30 pp

Sept 15 - Mystery Tour (Coach only) £16 pp

Oct 6 - Faversham & Whitstable (City & Village tours) Coffee & Lunch included £31 pp

Nov 10 - Dickensian Christmas. Visit old meat and fish markets, Mayfair, Fortnum & Mason (inc coffee and fish and chip lunch) £31 pp

Dec 5 - Tinsel & Turkey, Bembridge Coast Hotel, (Warners) Isle of Wight (4 nights) £224 pp + coach
Dec TBA

Tea Dance Schedule

February 10, 24

March 9, 23

Apr 6, 20

As usual events are held in Riverside Suite. Entry is £1 per person with a start time of 2.00pm

VPA Golf Section Dates 2016

The golf programme for 2016 is as follows:

May 12 - The Steve Brooker Cup, a Texas Scramble competition at Abbey Hill Golf Club

June 16 - The VPA Championship, a Singles competition at Whipsnade Park Golf Club

October 4 - The Peter Johnson Trophy, a pairs competition at Aylesbury Vale Golf Club.

The details of these events plus entry forms will be sent by e-mail to all regular players in early spring. Should any other golf playing VPA member with a club handicap wish to participate, then please register by contacting either Mike Roberts or Jim Heaney at the VPA Office, UK1-100-020, Griffin House, Osborne Road, Luton LU1 3YT.

Upcoming Events in the North

Mar 1 - AGM at the Club. Please all try and attend

Mar 16 - Bridgemere Garden Centre £10 pp. Depart Club 9.00am

April 30 - Llandudno Extravaganza £10 pp. Depart Club 9.00am

May 18 - Mystery Tour £10 pp. Depart Club 9.00am

June 15 - Lakes tour and railway trip Depart Club 9.00am

June 25 - meal venue TBA

July 13 - Electric Mountain and Llanberis Depart Club 9.00am

August 17 - Powys Castle and gardens Depart Club 9.00am

Sept 14 - Ffestiniog Railway and Caernarvon Depart Club 9.00am

Sept 23 - meal venue TBA

Oct 12 - Blackpool trip Depart Club 10.00am

The cost of some trips has not yet been finalised but I will let you have them in due course.

Tea Dances

Feb 9, 16 and 23

Mar 8, 15, 22 and 29

In Memoriam – Luton

Atkinson, Marjorie Lillian, Vauxhall
Died 8.12.15, Aged 90, Retired 1981

Clarke, Joyce Dora, Division 089
Died 10.11.15, Aged 78, Retired 1980

Cook, David, Vauxhall
Died 13.12.15, Aged 80, Retired 1992

Dodson, Evelyn, Vauxhall
Died 21.12.15, Aged 99, Retired 1974

Fensome, Allan Sydney, Division 527
Died 11.1.16, Aged 90, Retired 1990

Garner, David John, Vauxhall
Died 16.11.15, Aged 81, Retired 1989

Haigh, Nigel Philip, Vauxhall
Died 1.12.15, Aged 76, Retired 1993

Kovacs, Olga, Division 838
Died 25.11.15, Aged 88, Retired 1986

Lewis, George Richard, Division 526
Died 9.11.15, Aged 81, Retired 1991

Nigro, Soccorso, VM Staff
Died 28.11.15, Aged 85, Retired 1988

Panchal, Prabhudas Khushalbai, Division 838
Died 17.11.15, Aged 95, Retired 1985

Scott, Dennis Roy, VM Staff
Died 2.12.15, Aged 88, Retired 1982

Steil, John, VM Staff
Died 18.12.15, Aged 84, Retired 1989

Stevens, William Henry, Dunstable Plant
Died 10.11.15, Aged 95, Retired 1982

Sturdy, John Harry, BCV
Died 9.11.15, Aged 86, Retired 1984

Thomas, David Gwilym, Vauxhall
Died 5.11.15, Aged 90, Retired 1982

Tibballs, Heather Courtenay, Vauxhall
Died 2.1.16, Aged 90, Retired 1983

Whinnett, Doris Ruth, Division 526
Died 4.11.15, Aged 88, Retired 1987

Wilton, Trevor Douglas, Vauxhall
Died 19.11.15, Aged 92, Retired 1981

In Memoriam – Ellesmere Port

Blaydon, Donald William, Division 638
Died 21.1.16, Aged 78, Retired 2002

Blundell, Eric James, Division 618
Died 17.11.15, Aged 69, Retired 2004

Cameron, Ross, Division 678
Died 4.1.16, Aged 64, Retired 2010

Dillon, Pierce, Division 641
Died 26.11.15, Aged 85, Retired 1991

Evans, Raymond Thomas, Division 663
Died 27.12.15, Aged 81, Retired 1999

Gethin, Robert Alan, Division 618
Died 19.12.15, Aged 68, Retired 2005

Guest, Anthony Ferquhart, Division 636
Died 28.11.15, Aged 82, Retired 1989

Lawson, Jeffrey, Division 617
Died 17.12.15, Aged 78, Retired 1999

Margerison, Ernest Powell, Division 630
Died 30.10.15, Aged 86, Retired 1990

Moore, Brian, Division 627
Died 17.11.15, Aged 76, Retired 1997

Nester, Patrick Michael Joseph, Division 638
Died 9.12.15, Aged 78, Retired 1994

O'Sullivan, Daniel J., Division 627
Died 1.12.15, Aged 82, Retired 1998

Pleavin, Alan Free, Division 600
Died 5.12.15, Aged 73, Retired 1991

Ryan, Patrick Anthony, Division 638
Died 3.12.15, Aged 84, Retired 1996

Seager, Thomas, Division 605
Died 25.11.15, Aged 88, Retired 1983

Thomas, Geoffrey, Division 610
Died 6.12.15, Aged 74, Retired 1999

Ward, Ernest, Division 627
Died 16.12.15, Aged 88, Retired 1993

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

How To Access the Newsletter and 2015 AGM Minutes on the Internet

www.thepensiondepartment.co.uk/vpp/pensioner_pages

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:
chloe.burrowes@vauxhall.co.uk

Useful Telephone and Contact Information

VPA South

VPA Office 01582 427921

Office is manned Tuesday and Friday between 10.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m.

E-mail vpa@gm.com

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

Vauxhall Pensions Department 01582 721122

E-mail marion.mcdonald@vauxhall.co.uk

Cherie Denton, Vauxhall Welfare Officer 01582 427204

E-mail 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

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