

# ***Pensioners' Newsletter – April 2014***

---

## **News from the South**

Hi everyone: I hope you are all well and getting ready for the summer.

On March 24 we saw around 70 VPA members attend our Annual General Meeting at the Riverside Suite in Venue 360. Our President, Bruce Warman, gave an address covering all the varied activities of the VPA during 2013 and thanked the members of the Committee responsible for running these. He also reported on the meetings held with the Company during the year where the VPA had been updated on the state of the Company, the various pension funds and other items of interest to pensioners which had been discussed. Rob Assinder, Vauxhall Director of Pensions, then presented the latest financial situation regarding GM, GME and Vauxhall and updated the meeting regarding the latest position of the various pension plans. I then presented proposed changes to our Constitution to bring it in line with current practice and open up membership to all GMUK pensioners. These were approved by the meeting. Minutes of the AGM will be available on the Pensioners website in the near future.

Have a great spring and don't forget to join in some of our events planned for this year.

*John Boast*

## **News from the North**

Hi all: welcome to our Spring Newsletter. I think apart from us all getting very wet and growing flippers, we got through the winter pretty well without too much cold weather. The flowers are up and the birds are beginning to sing so I guess warmer weather is just around the corner, although birds in our garden are somewhat in short supply mainly due to a new ginger tom who has wormed his way into our home and our affections and is keeping the feathered population at bay.

Our February social night turned out even better than we expected. The caller who was to have led the barn dance could not come, but with the help of our superb young MC (Simon) and one of the members we had a great evening, not to say a hilarious one. The floor was full, mainly of people including myself who hadn't a clue what we were doing, but it certainly got the chuckle muscles working! Well done Simon.

All those who went on the trip to Tweedmill said they had an enjoyable day.

In March the social evening followed the AGM with all officers returned for a further year.

Our overnight trip was a huge success despite the late departure due to the coach not being able to locate us. We stayed at the Crowne Plaza at Heathrow which was a lovely hotel. It was a pity we were unable to spend a bit more time there. After a double quick change we descended on Knightsbridge for dinner where some of us even ventured into Harrods, but I think most wallets stayed shut. Then off to the Albert Hall. What a fantastic concert, in a wonderful venue, with lots of rousing music and flag waving. On Sunday morning after a hearty breakfast we were whisked off to Hyde Park to do our own thing for a few hours.

Thank goodness for bus passes.

Till next time folks my wishes for a happy, peaceful (and hopefully warm) Easter.

*Dave Williams*

## **The Monday Club**

The Monday Club is urgently in need of volunteers to cover refreshment duties. This will involve taking money and making tea/coffee etc. If you feel that you would like to offer your services please contact the office, details are shown at the end of this Newsletter. You will most certainly be appreciated.

## **Coming Next Time**

Age UK is an organisation that provides free advice and support on issues that matter to people in later life. We shall highlight the range of services on offer as well as how to get to them.

## **Stockwood Discovery Centre**

We read and hear of so many negative comments concerning local authorities that it is pleasing to highlight an area where the Luton Borough Council deserve praise. How many of whom know of the Stockwood Discovery Centre is unclear.

Situated at the Cutenhoe Road end of the park it offers a wide range of opportunities for all ages.

With a variety of gardens and borders, which in summer are one splash of colour, and complimented by large areas of lawns, it surely is a sight that pleases the eye. Each garden has a special focus to add to the interest and enjoyment. Even better, there are seats generously dotted around the site for those of us that have given up marathon running! As you would expect wheelchair access is everywhere.

Stockwood is well known for the Mossman collection of coaches (George Mossman being a Caddington man) and is the largest collection of carriages in the UK.

The Discovery Galleries are located in the original stables of Stockwood House and house many items that are concerned with the history of the locality.

A beauty of the centre is that there is lots to do for people of retirement age, but there is even more if you rope in the grandchildren. There is a clean, safe kiddies' playground which is unique in that it is not a meeting place for the usual teenagers that frequent these areas.

There are numerous items all over the place that the kids will take great pleasure in (and in many cases learn at the same time so be prepared for questions).

At the end of your visit the Garden Cafe offers well-priced fare in a clean and airy environment and is worth sampling.

Between now and the end of October the Centre opens 10am to 5pm weekdays and 11am to 5pm weekends and bank holidays.

There is a lot of parking spaces available and best of all entry is FREE.

If this all sounds like an advert for the centre I can only say that Sue and I take our grandson, Reece, there at least twice a month and he never wants to come away. His favourite part by the way is the roost with four chickens in it. The centre was given the Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence in 2013 and if you go onto the Trip Advisor site you can read visitor comments.

My reason for writing this article is that in times of cuts it is important that these type of opportunities remain available to us all. By supporting it with our presence we perhaps help its longevity whilst at the same time having a pleasurable visit.

Should anyone visit the centre as a result of reading this article please write in with your opinion (good or bad).

### February Quiz - Answers

1. Ring
2. Cameo
3. Pearl
4. Moonstone
5. Necklace
6. Amber
7. Medallion
8. Cufflinks
9. Opal
10. Choker
11. Earrings
12. Crystal
13. Eternity Ring
14. Beryl
15. Diamond
16. Coral
17. Onyx
18. Sapphire
19. Bronze
20. Turquoise

We had a very good response this time so please keep it up. The winner of the £10 M&S voucher is Gordon Corin of Luton.

Congratulations to him and thanks to all who entered.

### April Quiz

All of the questions relate to the 1960s, 70s and 80s. As usual the winner will receive a £10 M&S voucher.

1. Who bought *News of the World* in 1969?
  2. The Mau Mau Uprising ended in 1969. In which country did it occur?
  3. In 1969 The Beatles released the last album they recorded together. What was it called?
  4. In which year in the 1960s did the farthing cease to be legal tender?
  5. In June 1967 which Rolling Stone was jailed for a year?
  6. The children's book *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* was written by which author?
  7. In 1979 Margaret Thatcher was elected as the first female Prime Minister of the UK. What was her university degree in and her first job after graduating?
  8. Who became the first man in cricketing history to score a century and take 8 wickets in an innings in 1978?
  9. In 1976 the UK broke off diplomatic relations with which African country under the rule of Idi Amin?
  10. In 1976 which health and environmentally friendly store did Anita Roddick open?
  11. In 1981 Joe Dolce Music Theatre had a UK number one with what song?
  12. In February 1980 the first episode of *Yes Minister* was aired. The name of the MP was?
  13. In 1980 the SAS stormed which Embassy, killing five terrorists and freeing all of the hostages?
  14. Which book did the Muslim community in Bradford protest against in 1989?
  15. In what year did Argentina invade the Falkland Islands?
  16. In 1989 where did police arrest 250 people celebrating the summer solstice?
  17. In 1986 the UK and France announced plans to construct what?
  18. Name the twin brothers arrested in 1965 on suspicion of running a protection racket in London?
  19. 1972 saw the West End debut of which Andrew Lloyd Weber musical detailing the life of a historical religious figure?
  20. In 1964 the book *A Caribbean Mystery* was published. Who wrote it?
- Closing date is Friday May 16. Good luck with your entry.

### Mickies Palace – February 10

As usual this event was very well supported. The location is in Wood Green, London. It is a working men's club so drinks and other things

are well priced. On arrival at 11.30am the VPA group were shown to their reserved tables. The meal was served promptly at noon and consisted of a roast beef meal with all the trimmings, fruit pie with cream and finished with tea or coffee. The meal was much enjoyed by everyone, as was the raffle, particularly by the VPA'ite who won a prize.

The show began at 2.00 pm. It was a new show entitled "Now here's a funny thing!" and was a blend of comedy and vocals. The comedians were funny and, in particular, the female vocalist Marilyn Hill Smith was much enjoyed. The group departed at 4.15pm after having had a rattling good time.

### **Greenwich, Cutty Sark & Cable Car March 27**

A coach full of intrepid VPA members set off on a journey to Greenwich to visit the National Maritime Museum, the Cutty Sark and finish with a Cable Car ride across the Thames. The group were met at 10.30am by a guide who gave a most informative commentary on the sights of London on the way to the Maritime Museum. A refreshment break at the museum was followed by a guided tour of the facility. After the tour and a visit to the Queen's House (not Buckingham Palace) it was time for lunch. Some of the group were lucky enough (cor blimey guv!) to find a Pie and Mash shop which was a real treat, although no-one saw Arthur Daly! Next stop was The Cutty Sark which was in pristine condition having recently undergone extensive renovation. After a tour of the vessel the group ended up underneath the hull of the Cutty Sark in a rather unique cafeteria, unique in that you sat dining or supping with the massive hull towering over you. By common consensus it was a fantastic experience. Everyone re-joined the coach and went to the departure lounge for the Cable Car ride. The car is sponsored by the airline Emirates who insist in calling the journey a flight across the Thames and not a ride. Whatever it is called the flight/ride gave some brilliant views along the Thames and of the O2. The weather on the day was chilly, but luckily the rain held off and a good day was had by all.

### **Roving Reporters**

The above report on Mickies Palace was written by Irene Bartlett and Bill Saul provided the write up for the March 27 trip. My thanks to both of them.

If you want your name in print and all the attendant fame and glory please feel free to write in to the office. We are open to all things sent but would really appreciate trip reports from anyone going on a trip.

Other than trips we welcome input regarding Vauxhall (or IBC, Millbrook and other GM) memories. If the remark about fame and glory

worries you, rest assured we have a group of counsellors at hand to help at all times!

### **Upcoming Events in the South**

#### **Thursday April 24**

Canterbury - coach only - £13 pp

#### **Tuesday May 13**

Cotswolds by steam & Cheltenham - £28 pp

#### **Saturday June 7**

Annual outing to Brighton - coach only  
£12 pp

#### **Friday June 20**

Blenheim Palace Flower Show (inc admission to House and Gardens) - £23 pp

#### **Wednesday July 16**

Mystery tour - coach only - £13 pp

#### **Wednesday August 6**

Lords Cricket Ground Tour  
Adults £18 pp/grandchildren £15 pp

#### **Thursday September 11**

Denbies Vineyard Tour - £25 pp  
(including wine and food tasting)

#### **Thursday October 9**

Imperial War Museum Duxford - £27 pp

#### **November 24 (4 nights)**

Tinsel & Turkey, Warners Hotel,  
Bodelwyddan Castle, North Wales  
£275 pp

#### **Thursday December 4**

Christmas Party - £22 pp

If you have any questions regarding the above or require more information, please ring the office where Sue, Sylvia or David will be only too happy to assist.

### **VPA Golf Section - 2014 events**

Thursday May 8 - Abbey Hill - Team Texas  
Scramble

Thursday June 12 - Whipsnade Park - Singles  
Stableford

A third event is still being arranged and details will be provided as soon as possible.

### **Tea Dance Schedule**

April..... 2, 16, 30

May ..... 14

June ..... 4, 18

July..... 9, 23

August..... 6, 13

September ..... 3, 17

October..... 8, 29

November..... 12, 26

December ..... 10

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

#### **Tuesday April 1 - Hot Pot Supper**

Commencing 7.00pm

#### **Wednesday April 9 – Trip to Leeds**

Leaving Club at 9.00am

Cost £5 pp

#### **Tuesday June 17**

Trip to Wensleydale, including steam train ride

Cost £12 pp

### Wednesday July 9

Trip to Quarrybank at Styal which is a National Trust property.  
Cost £10 pp, but if you are a member and remember your ticket cost will be £5 for coach.

### Wednesday October 1

Trip to Liverpool Empire to see Wicked.  
Cost £30 pp  
I will give you further details of these trips and any others as they become available.

### Tea Dances

The Tea Dances have been very well supported this last year and the new dates are:

April ..... 15, 22, 29  
May..... 13, 22, 27

### Luton Lottery (drawn March 12)

J.J. Gallagher	P1005817	£355.67
K. MacPherson	P0289640	£88.92
A. Gardener	P035208D	£44.46
J. Andrews	P1009241	£44.46
V.G.A. Smith	P1011802	£22.23
G.R. Cretney	P10008394	£22.23
V. DeLucia	P015943J	£22.23
E.M.J. Sarjent	P087874B	£22.23
J. Shuttle	P2001389	£22.23
N.E. Dougall	P020428G	£22.23

### E/Port Lottery

No results available

### In Memoriam – Luton

**Burrell**, Stuart, Division 511  
Died 23.1.14, Aged 91, Retired 1982  
**Carroll**, Patrick Cyril, Division 150  
Died 19.2.14, Aged 74, Retired 1994  
**Clark**, Muriel, Division 523  
Died 25.1.14, Aged 79, Retired 1989  
**Cowley**, Elaine Margaret, VM Staff  
Died 21.1.14, Aged 67, Retired 2002  
**Dolby**, Percy Edward John, Division 219  
Died 2.3.14, Aged 87, Retired 1982  
**Fisher**, Peter Robert, Division 049  
Died 19.1.14, Aged 90, Retired 1982  
**Gent**, Peter Ernest, Division BCV  
Died 28.2.14, Aged 81, Retired 1989  
**Haddon**, George Arthur, Division 527  
Died 16.2.14, Aged 83, Retired 1993  
**Heels**, A.J., BCV  
Died 23.2.14, Aged 82, Retired 1987  
**Levey**, Elsie Irene, Division 121  
Died 30.1.14, Aged 90, Retired 1975  
**Newton**, Anthony George, Division 074  
Died 4.2.14, Aged 82, Retired, 1988  
**Overy**, Harry George, Division 223  
Died 16.1.14, Aged 92, Retired 1982  
**Shone**, Harold Vincent, Division 931  
Died 18.2.14, Aged 89, Retired 1981  
**Watson**, Richard, Division 033  
Died 28.12.13, Aged 79, Retired 1993

### In Memoriam – Ellesmere Port

**Campbell**, John, Division 618  
Died 20.2.14, Aged 57, Retired 2006  
**Duck**, Kenneth Cyril, Division 615  
Died 19.12.13, Aged 92, Retired 1982  
**Hawker**, Alfred John, Division 608  
Died 24.12.13, Aged 65, Retired 2000  
**Howells**, Michael, Division 642  
Died 15.2.14, Aged 73, Retired 1993  
**Hughes**, Leonard, Division 628  
Died 28.2.14, Aged 80, Retired 1995  
**Hulse**, John William, Division 617  
Died 17.2.14, Aged 72, Retired 1998  
**Mercieri**, Carlos, Division 615  
Died 19.12.13, Aged 87, Retired 1987  
**Morris**, Vernon, Division 642  
Died 9.3.14, Aged 77, Retired 1994  
**Roberts**, K.H. Division 627  
Died 24.2.14, Aged 69, Retired 1999  
**Skinner**, John William, Division 629  
Died 11.2.14, Aged 78, Retired 2000  
**Stephens**, Gerard Peter, Division 628  
Died 8.2.14, Aged 87, Retired 1975  
**Ward**, Kenneth Jack, Division 627  
Died 2.2.14, Aged 94, Retired 1981  
**Wright**, George Wm Steven Victor, Div 617  
Died 2.2.14, Aged 88, Retired 1980

### How To Access the Newsletter and 2013 AGM Minutes on the Internet

[www.thepensiondepartment.co.uk/vpp/pensioner\\_pages](http://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: [annisa.whitehall@vauxhall.co.uk](mailto:annisa.whitehall@vauxhall.co.uk)

### Useful Telephone and Contact Information VPA South

VPA Office 01582 427921  
Office is manned Monday, Tuesday and Friday between 10.00am and 2.00pm.

E-mail [vpa@gm.com](mailto: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](mailto:marion.mcdonald@vauxhall.co.uk)

Cherie Denton, Vauxhall 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.