

Pensioners' Newsletter - August 2013

News from the South

Hi Everyone:

Wow!!! The summer was very late arriving but when it came, it came with a bang! I hope all of you have been able to get out and enjoy the beautiful spell of weather we have been having over the past couple of weeks. However my garden and all the fields around us are starting to look more like Spain than Clophill. I know with all the sunshine, it's difficult to think about Christmas, but we do need your help if you want us to run the usual Christmas Party this year. We need you to book your tickets now so that we know if enough people are interested to make this event feasible. I think it's a really good night and the feedback we have received following past events has been very positive, so I hope we can again get enough of you interested in coming along. I would like to congratulate Gordon Bedingfield on reaching the grand age of 100.

Finally, on a sad note I must advise you that Doris De'Ath, former long serving Secretary of the VPA and a well known figure in Vauxhall, has passed away. Our thoughts are with her family and friends.

John Boast

News from the North

Hi folks

What a wonderful few weeks we have all enjoyed - a real taste of summer. I know the gardens once again suffered, but I don't think we did. We were away for the whole of June visiting our daughter and family in Germany. They had suffered terrible floods, but we just missed them and had mostly beautiful weather so together with the lovely sunshine since we arrived back it has been a lovely summer so far.

At the end of May a group of us were treated to a lovely day on the canal courtesy of the Narrow Boat Trust. We were skippered on the day by Alan Seymour, one of the volunteers of the Trust. We had a very leisurely day from the Cheshire Cat pub down to the Shady Oak at Beeston where we had our lunch and back. Even the rather inclement weather did not dampen our spirits.

Our 40th anniversary celebrations were a huge success. The club was full. Lovely to see so many people. Let's hope we can keep it up. We enjoyed a lovely meal served to us by some very hard working staff and this was followed by entertainment by a super Abba tribute group who went down a storm. We had as guest of honour, John Newport, who was a founder member of the Pensioners Club and also the Treasurer. Each guest was presented

with a souvenir Vauxhall key ring. Although we were away I am assured the June trip to York was a great success and they were treated to good weather.

I do hope this beautiful weather continues and we all make the most of it so wherever you get to for the rest of the summer enjoy.

Dave Williams

Vauxhall Memories

Dave Taylor, ex Finance, recalls running (?) up the steps to the Plateau car park to beat the queues of cars that would be leaving at shift end. He thinks with difficulty he might just make 8 steps today! Dave started work in the Cost Office, that well known fun palace and general home of all things pleasurable and recalls staff standing next to their desks for several minutes at the end of the shift waiting for the 4.30 pm hooter to go. What Dave found amusing was that no-one could leave ahead of time, but it was somehow acceptable to be ready to leave 10 minutes beforehand. In those long off days the Luton canteen was segregated into 4 distinct areas - Factory, Staff, Management and Directors - very much a thing of the times. It would be unlikely to be allowed today! Birds were often flying overhead and the hope was that you didn't find mayonnaise on your dinner.

Invite to the Heritage Centre

You will receive, in due turn, an invitation to attend a Company presentation on the state of GM and Vauxhall and a tour of the Heritage Centre. Yours truly attended on 1st May and after refreshments Dennis Chick, Director of Communications, presented the situation of GM/GM Europe and Vauxhall, plus a review of future model introductions. We then received a tour of the vehicles in the Heritage Centre and anyone who worked at the Company will find this most interesting. Thanks to Andy Dobbie for his super presentation. My advice to you is simple. If you get an invite please go as I promise you will enjoy.

Dementia

Chris Lloyd who worked in Training first on Commercial Vehicles and then on Cars at the Airport Training Centre and finally at the New College has sent in this moving and informative article on his own experiences in dealing with someone close who suffers from this terrible ailment. We can only thank him for sharing his experiences with us and providing such useful information.

Now we are living longer and dementia is more commonplace, looking after your partner in these circumstances can be very stressful. My wife was diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2006. However, help is available if you know where to look. I didn't know where to look, but found most things out accidentally. So if you are in this situation the following may be of some assistance.

First of all you need to register with Social Services. They provide short term Emergency Care Plans if you are ill and unable to look after your partner. They assess your needs and direct you to other essential services. They supplied me with a tumble drier free of charge or it could have been an oven or washing machine but only one of these items per year. I also get 3 hours per week for a Carer to be present which provides ME time.

The Council allows 25% off the house rates – only 2 people in the house. Department of Work and Pensions provide Disability and Mobility allowances. The NHS have been marvellous, they have supplied my wife with : 2 inflatable cushions, mobile commode, perching stool, wheelchair and 112 waterproof pants every 10 weeks all FOC District Nurse visits have to be arranged via your GP but they are like visiting angels – sympathetic, knowledgeable and very helpful. They know the problems you face and their suggestions are invaluable. They can supply beds and bed rails.

Living with Alzheimer's/Dementia can be difficult, patience is imperative particularly during mealtimes which can take up to an hour. I have a collage of pictures of my wife in front of me to remind me what a marvellous girl she was. To fill the time between mouthfuls I complete a Sudoku, - it has a calming effect and keeps me occupied.

My wife cannot concentrate on anything nor make conversation but she does respond to music. I take her to the hairdresser every fortnight but if it is cold or wet I give her a dry powder wash instead. I was shocked to see her toenails were pointing in different directions – the damage of high heels – I had never noticed this before as there were so many more interesting things to look at. Teresa on 01582 518887 cuts and files her toenails every 6 weeks and also deals with ingrowing problems at £13 per visit.

If you are in receipt of the Higher Rate of the Mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance then you may be entitled to a free Road Tax Disc. Purchase of electric beds and chairs destined for the patient can be purchased free of VAT. Acorn Stairlifts do not supply foot restraints but Stannah do. These restraints are essential for those who have little or no control over their body.

Gardening Tips

I wrote last time of Ralph Hoare the 104 year old gardener and promised you his top ten tips for the garden, so here goes.

1. Pour boiling water on parsley seeds once in the soil to help germination
 2. plant marigolds with tomatoes to stop greenfly
 3. surround small plants with crushed seashells or spiky gravel to stop slugs
 4. if you have unruly pampas grass burn it down, the roots will remain and regrow
 5. for plants that love iron put rusty nails in water for a while and use as a fertiliser
 6. prepare your soil in the moonlight to discourage weed growth. Seeds can't germinate in sunlight
 7. contain rapidly spreading plants (e.g. mint) in a long pipe buried vertically
 8. water with warm water
 9. to keep cut flowers fresh for longer put a penny in the vase. The copper helps kill bacteria
 10. peeing on your garden can be beneficial. Urine contains nitrogen which soil bacteria converts to ammonia on tomato plants. This can apparently double their output.
- Word of warning: tip 10 is not advised for allotments, front gardens or supermarkets.

We Have A Celebrity In Our Midst!

To say thank you to all their fundraising supporters the Luton and Dunstable Hospital has created a 'Thank You' tree, located in the main reception area. The hand painted tree recognises those who have gone over and beyond in fundraising and includes individuals, companies, community groups and charitable trusts. Donors have their name painted on gold leaves with all those featured having raised over £1500 for the hospital funds. Spencer Colvin, Hospital Chairman, officially unveiled the tree in early June and over 100 people who were named attended the ceremony.

Among these were our own Ted and Olive Read who have been regular supporters of the Hospital, who were delighted to recognise their efforts and to thank them for all they have done over the years.



Ted and Olive with Spencer Colvin

On behalf of the VPA well done to the two of you.

For those who want more fundraising information please call Sarah Coulthard on 01582 718289 or e-mail her on sarah.coulthard@ldh.nhs.uk.

June Quiz Results

Answers were:-

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Quality Street | 2. After Eight |
| 3. Pear drops | 4. Milk Tray |
| 5. Gobstoppers | 6. Walnut whips |
| 7. Tutti Frutti | 8. Skittles |
| 9. Matchmakers | 10. Drifter |
| 11. Yorkie bar | 12. Lion bar |
| 13. Lovehearts | 14. Crunchie |
| 15. Minstrels | 16. Flake |
| 17. Starburst | 18. Twirl |
| 19. Marathon | 20. Time Out |

As we only had one entry the voucher goes to Dave Taylor.

August Quiz

There is no quiz this month due to space restrictions. Hopefully the next quiz will get a better response.

Wednesday, 5th June - Oxford and Friars Court

The day was a great success and an enjoyable high tea was had by all, after which there was a tour of the gardens and a talk on the history of Friars Court.

Saturday, 15th June – Annual Outing to Eastbourne

Two coaches went and good weather ensured that all of our visitors had a day to remember.

Thursday, 27th June - Savill Gardens, Windsor

37 members made the trip and were very much impressed with the beauty of the garden, shrubs and plants and the ease of finding your way around, which is not always the case. The talk on the coach back was of how good the day was and also of course the warm weather .

Sunday, 21st July - Lochs and Glens, Scotland

A coach full of intrepid sassenachs left Luton at 5.45 am on Sunday morning heading for a week in the land of kilts and hairy legs (the men are even worse!).

Arriving at base camp (Loch Long Hotel) by late afternoon we unpacked, showered and went down to dinner. Feeling much better after a nights sleep and a good breakfast we took a boat trip on Loch Katrine. On Tuesday we travelled to Fort William to board the

steam train for a return trip through Harry Potter country. We were delayed somewhat as a bad accident meant a detour that resulted in our arriving home at around 11.30 pm.

Wednesday was a visit to Oban, Thursday a visit to Edinburgh and Friday we took the Waverley paddle steamer from Dunoon to the Isle of Bute before making the journey home on Saturday.

A few comments regarding the week. Firstly we were fortunate that we had, in Colin, a fantastic driver. He was a good humoured and informative chap who certainly earned his money the night of the detour. We were also blessed with the weather as we had little rain during the week and when it did rain it was usually at a time that did not matter. In fact we saw more sun than the wet stuff. A big bonus was the virtual absence of midges! The hotel food was better than good with a reasonably wide menu choice.

Finally, many thanks to Brian and Sylvia for their efforts in ensuring that the week went so smoothly.

Upcoming Events in the South

Thursday, 8th August - Thursford Experience Norfolk - £20.00 p.p. including entry

Tuesday, 3rd September - Southend Coach only - £10.00 p.p.

Thursday, 26th September - Chelsea Hospital and Poppy Factory - £18.50 p.p.

25th November for 4 nights - Turkey and Tinsel, Russell Court Hotel, Bournemouth £170.00 p.p. (deposit £30 p.p. by 30th August) Guaranteed : fun, frivolity and frolics

Thursday, 5th December - Christmas Party £21.00 p.p.

Tuesday, 10th December - Christmas Market, Rochester - Coach only - £15.00 p.p.

You can get more details or book through the office (01582 427921)

Golf Dates for 2013

Thursday, 17th October - South Beds

Quiz Nights for 2013

Tuesday, 15th October

Tuesday, 3rd December

Tea Dance Schedule

Aug 7th, 14th, 28th
Sept 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th
Oct 2nd, 9th, 16th, 30th

Could be subject to cancellation.

St. Mary's Monday Club

Please note that the St. Mary's Monday Club will not be held during the month of August and will re-start on Monday, 2nd September.

Upcoming Events in the North

Ludlow Good Food Show - 13th September

£7.00 (includes entry to Ludlow Castle)

Blackpool – 9th October

Leave Club at 10.00 a.m.

£5.00 p.p.

Dunoon and the Scottish Highlands –

21st October for 4 nights staying at the

Esplanade Hotel, Dunoon

£209.00 p.p. plus £20 single supplement

£30 non-refundable deposit

Dick Whittington Pantomime/Shopping at

Christmas Market – Thursday, 12th

December

Leave Club at 9.00 a.m.

Christmas Supper Dance – Friday, 13th

December

Tea Dances

There will be no tea dances in August.

September 10th, 17th and 24th

Luton Lottery (drawn 17th June)

P.G. Venstone	P1009840	£366.31
D.E.J. Farrar	P2004657	£ 91.58
S.S. Braithwaite	P1005783	£ 45.79
M. Ahamed	P1017993	£ 45.79
M.B. Large	P2004811	£ 45.79
L. Tearle	P0298230D	£ 22.89
K.A.M. Dickson	P017236F	£ 22.89
R.J. Marrill	P1006900	£ 22.89
J. Rughani	P1015356	£ 22.89
L. Farrell	P1004022	£ 22.89
T.F. Carey	P1004045	£ 22.89

E/Port Lottery (drawn 26th June)

W. Beckett	P1008368	£285
F. Mottram	P1010808	£110
F. Robinson	P1010863	£110

In Memoriam – Luton

Audas, James Howard, Division 436

Died 22.6.13, Aged 90, Retired 1982

Bird, Samuel Kenneth, VM Staff

Died 16.5.13, Aged 83, Retired 1983

Brewer, Edward George, BCV

Died 22.6.13, Aged 82, Retired 1988

Cain, Peter, VMD

Died 15.6.13, Aged 91, Retired 1982

Chapman, Robert George, Division 049

Died 18.5.13, Aged 85, Retired 1987

Crowley, Constance Rose, Division 198

Died 18.6.13, Aged 90, Retired 1981

Dawson, Stanley George, Division 074

Died 1.6.13, Aged 86, Retired 1983

De'Ath, Doris, VM Staff

Died 13.6.13, Aged 93, Retired 1979

Forde, Julia Mary, Division 046

Died 23.5.13, Aged 65, Retired 2002

Gribben, John Robert, Division 150

Died 26.6.13, Aged 63, Retired 2002

Harkin, Veronica, Division 037

Died 29.5.13, Aged 80, Retired 1982

Marchant, Geoffrey Edwin, Division 528

Died 31.5.13, Aged 75, Retired 1993

Martin, Conor Coen, Division 847

Died 31.5.13, Aged 84, Retired 1988

McGrath, Mary Nance, Division 527

Died 2.7.13, Aged 75, Retired 2002

McLeod, Trevor, Division 033

Died 22.5.13, Aged 55, Retired 1997

Spark, David, BCV

Died 21.5.13, Aged 81, Retired 1988

Stanton, Robert, VMD

Died 22.6.13, Aged 86, Retired 1982

Thorne, David William, Millbrook

Died 8.7.13, Aged 71, Retired 2003

In Memoriam – Ellesmere Port

Burns, William Geoffrey, Division 650

Died 21.5.13, Aged 85, Retired 1992

Jaques, Wilfred Ernest, Division 689

Died 11.6.13, Aged 93, Retired 1983

Jones, Eric James

Died 19.5.13, Aged 90, Retired 1981

Manford, Glyn, Division 629

Died 24.5.13, Aged 82, Retired 1984

Wynne, Keith, Division 643

Died 22.5.13, Aged 79, Retired 1998

How To Access the Newsletter and 2012 AGM Minutes (New Introduction) on the Internet

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

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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: ashley.daly@vauxhall.co.uk

Useful Telephone and Contact Information VPA South

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

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01582 427204

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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.