

Pensioners' Newsletter - April 2013

News from the South

Hi Everyone:

Well I don't know about you, but I am totally fed up with this weather, although I have to say that when I moved into my current house on 13th April some 39 years ago the garden was covered in deep snow. One good thing is that the grass doesn't need cutting yet!! Well, the Southern Plant's AGM took place in the Riverside Suite on 26th March. Our President, Bruce Warman, opened the meeting with an address advising members of the activities of the VPA during the past 12 months and John Fulcher, Vauxhall's Director of Finance, and Marion McDonald, Manager of Pensions, were there to give presentations showing the current position of the Company and the Pension Plans. Despite GM Europe continuing to make a loss in these difficult financial times, John was able to confirm that GM overall were in profit and a plan had been put in place to support Europe, both for manufacturing and development of new products going forward and that the Company was continuing to support the Vauxhall pension fund with an increased £60 million per year. Good news for employees and pensioners.

On a sad note I have to report that Maureen Clark has decided to leave the VPA Committee and her position as Secretary, Entertainments. She will be missed and we wish her all the best for the future. Sylvia Pemberton, our 25 year club representative on the Committee, has agreed to join the Entertainments team and I wish her all the best in this new role.

Finally I hope the weather improves very soon and that you can start to enjoy a bit of sunshine.

John Boast

News from the North

Dear All:

Welcome to spring, although from where I am sitting there is precious little sign of it. After the beautiful weather of two weeks ago all the beautiful spring flowers are hidden under a mantle of snow.

It was great to see Ken at our AGM and looking so well after his spell in hospital. He did however decide to stand down as chairman, but is staying on as a committee member. I am sure his experience as Chairman for so many years will be invaluable to the rest of the team. Tony Byrne who was Vice Chairman has taken over as Chairman and we wish him luck in his new role. A cheque for £1000 was presented to Mrs Roberts on behalf of the Hospice of the Good Shepherd, who

gave us some insight into the cost in real terms of the running of the hospice. Business concluded the evening continued with dancing, bingo, raffle and some good entertainment.

On 18th March a coach full of happy pensioners sallied forth for a five day holiday to Cromer on the Norfolk coast. We had a great time. The hotel had a lovely atmosphere, the staff were very welcoming, we had good entertainment and the food was wonderful. In fact I think we may have returned under the category of "excess baggage". Not having been to Norfolk before we found it a lovely part of the world. The weather was mostly fine if bitterly cold, but after all it was March. Our trips to Yarmouth and Norwich were a success, rounded off by a trip up one of the broads, this was only marred by freezing rain. Our return journey was a testament to the expertise of our driver as the weather had turned sour and he had to make several detours to get us back safely. Well done to him.

Please note that the trip to York which was scheduled for September has now been brought forward to 26th June – details can be found towards the end of this Newsletter. Hoping that by the time this reaches you spring will have caught up with the clock change. Cheers.

Dave Williams

Introducing Your Committee

This issue we are featuring our President, Bruce Warman. Bruce joined General Motors in March 1972 working as Pricing and Estimating Manager at General Motors Limited. He was appointed Resident Comptroller in September 1973 and in 1979 joined GM Corporation in Detroit as an Organisation Development Consultant. In the following years he was assigned into senior positions at GM Limited (where he managed the parts distribution centre in Milton Keynes and was the last Finance Director of that company), Vauxhall Motors and Saginaw Division of GM (where he was Managing Director). His final placement was when he returned to Vauxhall as Director of Personnel, a position he held from December 1987 until his retirement in February 2003.

I use the word retirement, but the reality is that since 2003 Bruce has been actively involved as a member of the Employment Appeal Tribunal, as a Tribunal Member of the Accountancy and Actuarial Discipline Board, a member of the Senior Salaries Review Body and runs his own company, AutoXP Ltd, running demonstrator fleets for car companies. As if that isn't enough he is a Fellow of the

Royal Society of Arts, a Member of the Royal Geographical Society, a Fellow of the Royal Institution and most importantly the President of the VPA. Additionally he is an Honorary Steward of the RFU at Twickenham which guarantees that he attends all the rugby games and concerts that are held at the stadium. Prior to these activities Bruce has been involved in a myriad of activities that are not only too many to list here, but which make me feel rather tired thinking about them.

On a more personal level Bruce enjoys skiing, tending his allotment, cycling on level ground, travelling, and renovating a 140 year old house. His wife Deborah is a senior executive at M&S which (in his own words) keeps him in the style to which he is rightly accustomed, (my words) guarantees cut price food and clothes.

When Deborah retires they plan a three month world trip, a 4 month road trip of the US and a long distance cruise. I hope he gets someone to look after the allotment and that North Korea don't render the other plans impossible. It has to be placed on record that through his undoubted expertise and many contacts Bruce has been an integral member of the VPA and a President we should all be proud of.

Finally, Bruce, I hope this article will push some allotment produce my way!

Neighbourhood Watch

Len Rose has requested that we include an article about Neighbourhood Watch in the Newsletter. This organisation is about everyone looking out for each other and working in unison to make their locality the safest and friendliest place it can be. We can all do more together than on our own.

You can contact them in the following ways: e-mail at nhw4luton@gmail.com, telephone on 07580 326 426 or by writing to Luton Neighbourhood Watch, Town Hall, Luton, LU1 2BQ.

Did You Know About Ringmaster?

Ringmaster is a computerised crime messaging system run by Bedfordshire Police which offers residents throughout the county details about crime and events in their locality.

The main aims of this service are to raise awareness of local crime patterns and provide up-to-date advice that hopefully will lead to a reduction in crime. Recipients of the service are invited to forward the messages on and contact the Force if they have any information that could help lead to an arrest.

This service is free to everyone living in the county and you can receive messages via e-mail directly to your computer or to your phone at a time that suits you. You can also receive advice on how to prevent crime and

there are currently over 16,000 people registered.

You can join Ringmaster by applying on line at www.safer-beds.org or by ringing 01234 842253 to arrange for an application form to be posted to you.

Missive from Crocodile Roberts

We received a letter from past chairman Mike Roberts who has been in Australia.

He writes "the size of Australia is difficult to comprehend and the climate and weather conditions vary considerably in a country that can take 4 hours to cross by jet plane. Recent hot temperatures allied to very strong winds have resulted in bush fires in Tasmania, Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland destroying huge areas of vegetation. And yet cyclones and tornados have struck the east coast of Queensland bringing severe flooding. (Maybe, just maybe the UK winter has not been too bad!)

During our three month holiday we have been staying in a small town in the Adelaide Hills, a wine growing area with a more stable climate which enables us to play golf, cycle and attend many barbecues. However, a koala kebab is an acquired taste (perhaps he should try horsemeat!)

One favourite trip was to Broken Hill, which is an old mining town some 500 km north of Adelaide. The roads were extremely quiet, in fact, for the last 120km we saw no other vehicles. We did partake in a guided tour of a disused lead, zinc and copper mine. We wore a miner's belt and a helmet with a torch and had great fun scrambling along the dark deep mine shafts.

As with the weather the cost of living does vary greatly by region. As you would expect the major cities of Sydney, Melbourne and Perth are the most expensive for property, commodities and food.

As we prepare to leave family and friends to return to Blighty we prepare ourselves to be reacquainted with warm beer and winter weather."

Vauxhall Memories

We have had no memories from you for this issue. Can I ask that each and every one of you who are reading this Newsletter send in a memory however brief. They can be funny, sad, just about anything except rude or illegal. Without your input this item cannot exist.

April Quiz

The answers to the following (not so) cryptic clues are all television sitcoms over the last 30 or so years.

- 1 Her indoors as a neighbour (2,4,4,4)
- 2 Unsuitable for minors (3,2,5,2,3,8)

- 3 Going by public transport (2,3,5)
 - 4 Victor at deaths door (3,4,2,3,5)
 - 5 Idiots, jesters, Red Rum and Shergar (4,5,3,6)
 - 6 We never close (4,3,5)
 - 7 Polite request to non female teachers (6,3)
 - 8 Stir oats in water and heat (8)
 - 9 It proves we need building regulations (6,4)
 - 10 Home for Christmas bird (6,4)
 - 11 Ooh Betty (4,7,2,3,2)
 - 12 Apology from young Lumsden (5)
 - 13 Albert and Harold at the Skinners Arms (7,3,3)
 - 14 Self sufficiency in Surbiton (3,4,4)
 - 15 Bob and Terry (3,6,4)
 - 16 Liverpool feathered friends (3,5,5)
 - 17 The length of marriage vows (4,5,2,2,4)
 - 18 Inheriting the big house (2,3,5,4)
 - 19 Mothers Pride (5)
 - 20 What Clegg says to Cameron (3,5,8)
- Closing date is Friday, 24th May and as usual a M & S voucher for £10 goes to the winner.

February Quiz Results

The answers are as follows:

- 1 10p and 1p
- 2 90
- 3 8
- 4 Second
- 5 Glass
- 6 They are alive
- 7 Yesterday, today, tomorrow
- 8 Horse named Friday
- 9 One
- 10 Holes
- 11 On the inside of the building
- 12 Still alive
- 13 None - it is a hole
- 14 Cannot he is dead
- 15 House numbers

We had an unusually high number of entries with the winners names put into a hat. Congratulations to Jim Penfold who will shortly be receiving a voucher. Thanks to all who entered.

Friday, 22nd March - Bank of England/ Houses of Parliament

A large group first visited the Bank of England museum with many tears shed at the sight of £1 notes. A very enjoyable mini London tour dropped the group at Westminster, the home of democracy (see comment above re £1 notes) for a guided tour of both Houses of Parliament.

Wednesday, 27th March -Thames Cable Car Trip/Tour of London Sights

Leaving Luton at 10.30 a.m. we hit the great metropolis, picked up our tour guide en route (more about him later) and after a drive around the Olympic Site to look at what has changed since last we were there we stopped of at the

new Westfield Shopping Centre at Stratford. The ladies of course were happy, the gents less so. We then made our way to the Thames Cable site and took a daytime flight over the river, enjoying the panoramic views over the city.

We then went on a wonderful tour of the city. I mentioned our tour guide above. He was called Martin and was our guide last year when we toured the Olympic village. He was not only a non stop fund of information, but also made sure we reached parts other coaches could not. We even had a coach drive down the Mall and enjoyed waving to the "ordinary folks". After this tour we stopped for refreshments until night came down and then we took a night flight on the cable car before returning home.

Incidentally anyone taking both of the above trips had the opportunity with the Bank and the Olympic site to see what caused the debts that our grandchildren's grandchildren etcetera will be working to pay off.

Upcoming Events in the South

Thursday, 2nd May - Camden Market

Coach only - £11.00 p.p.

Tuesday, 14th May - Black Country Living

Museum - £25.00 p.p. including entry

Wednesday, 5th June - Oxford and Friars

Court for High Tea - £22.00 p.p.

Thursday, 27th June - Savill Gardens,

Windsor - £19.00 p.p.including entry

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.

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, 9th May - Abbey Hill

Tuesday, 18th June - Caddington

Thursday, 17th October - South Beds

Quiz Nights for 2013

Tuesday, 21st May

Tuesday, 15th October

Tuesday, 3rd December

Tea Dance Schedule

24th April

1st May

5th and 12th June
3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th July

Upcoming Events in the North

Bury Market/Bygone Days – 10th April

Leave Club at 10.00 a.m.

Spring Holiday – Spalding Flower Festival 3rd to 5th May

£145 p.p. Places still available.

Sleeping Beauty on Ice – Llandudno

8th May - fully booked

Leave Club at 9.00 a.m.

£16 p.p.

Abba Night – 4th June

40 Year Celebration Night/Meal

£12.50 p.p. Tickets/menu available on next
Club Night

York Trip – 26th June

Leave Club at 9.00 a.m.

£5.00 p.p.

Great North Show, Yorkshire – 10th July

Leave Club at 9.00 a.m.

£20.00 in advance or £23 on gate.

Shrewsbury Flower Show/Fireworks

10th August

£21 p.p.

Ludlow Good Food Show - 13th September

Details in next Newsletter

Dunoon and the Scottish Highlands –

1st October for 4 nights

staying at the Esplanade Hotel, Dunoon

£209.00 p.p. plus £20 single supplement

£30 non-refundable deposit

Blackpool – 9th October

Leave Club at 10.00 a.m.

£5.00 p.p.

Tea Dances

April 9th, 23rd, 30th (none on 16th)

May 14th, 21st, 28th.

June 11th, 18th, 25th.

There will be no tea dances in July or
August.

Luton Lottery (drawn 20th March 2013)

J.P. Kinsella	P1006233	£ 92.21
A.G. Asher	P100918A	£ 92.21
Z.H. Shaikh	P1011118	£ 46.10
D.E.J. Farrar	P2004657	£ 46.10
A. Demuth	P2004722	£ 46.10
E.C. Hazel	P2004440	£ 46.10
B.M. Cawte	P1006165	£ 23.05
J.W. Sims	P1009426	£ 23.05
P. McNiffe	P1011178	£ 23.05
M. McLean	P0210638	£ 23.05

E/Port Lottery (drawn 20th March 2013)

C.H. Wood	P1009554	£330.00
F.J. Bendall	P1007325	£330.00
P.F. Wrigley	P1007865	£127.00
C.F. Mercer	P1005594	£127.00
C.J. Clague	P10011901	£127.00

M.R. Taylor	P1006766	£127.00
G. Roberts	P1008378	£127.00

In Memoriam – Luton

Allen, Keith John, BCV

Died 24.1.13, Aged 80, Reired 1986

Allison, Aubrey Frederick, VM Staff

Died 1.2.13, Aged 90, Retired 1983

Arnold, Ror Earnest, BCV

Died 20.1.13, Aged 86, Retired 1986

Barrett, Henry, Division 390

Died 28.1.13, Aged 90, Retired 1966

Clark, Peter Graham, Division 390

Died 21.1.13, Aged 72, Retired 1994

Christie, Herbert, BCV

Died 29.1.13, Aged 84, Retired 1986

Field, Brian William, Division 238

Died 1.2.13, Aged 85, Retired 1987

Frankish, John Keith, VM Staff

Died 22.1.13, Aged 85, Retired 1987

Huxtable, Doreen Beryl, Division 787

Died 4.2.13, Aged 85, Retired 1986

Riggans, Samuel Findley, Division 152

Died 18.1.13, Aged 74, Retired 1994

Yates, Frank, Division 436,

Died 2.2.13, Aged 72, Retired 1986

In Memoriam – Ellesmere Port

There have been no deceased pensioners at
Ellesmere Port since the February 2013
Newsletter.

How To Access the Newsletter and 2012 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: ashley.daly@vauxhall.co.uk

Useful Telephone and Contact Information VPA South

VPA Office 01582 427921

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

E-mail vpa@gm.com

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.