

Pensioners' Newsletter - April 2012

News from the South

Hi Everyone

Well, hasn't the weather been good over the past few days. I love this time of year when everything seems to be fresh and new. The only drawback is that Jean has had me working in the garden and I find that cutting the grass for the first time seems to turn on a switch and it starts to grow like a thing possessed!!! I'm afraid that I do not include gardening in my list of favourite pastimes. I would much rather be searching for my golf ball in long grass than cutting it!!

We held our AGM this month and although we had a good turn out it would be nice to see more of you there. John Fulcher and Rob Assinder came along from the Company and gave us an update on the performance of the Company and the status of the pension funds. They then answered questions from the floor and listened to members concerns.

At the meeting, all officers of the Southern VPA were re-elected for a further year, all having agreed to stand again. I would like to thank all the Committee members for the hard work they put in during the past twelve months and look forward to being your chairman for 2012.

Enjoy the spring sunshine

John Boast

News from the North

Hello Everyone

I have been asked to write this article as Maggie is currently unwell. I am sure you will join me in wishing Maggie a swift return to good health.

As I look out of my window at the blossom and sunshine I really think spring has arrived. We have lots of trips to look forward to, details of which can be found later in the Newsletter. On 20th February two coaches sallied forth down to Somerset to enjoy a 5 day break. Good food, trips, entertainment and company made it an enjoyable break.

The AGM took place at the March social evening. It was well attended with all officers being re-elected and a donation of £1000 was made to the Hospice of the Good Shepherd followed by some good entertainment. On 3rd April we will enjoy our annual hot pot supper at the Club House

The Club events are always enjoyable, so if you have not been before, do come along and you will be made very welcome.

David Williams

Introducing Your Committee

We feature Dennis Cowap this issue. As some of you will be aware, Dennis is the man behind the Quiz Evenings we hold through the year. If you think Jeremy Paxman with a touch of Leslie Phillips you will get the idea. He joined the Company in 1962 and retired in 1993 after 31 years service. Most of his working life was spent in the Accounts Payable Department and a major reward for Dennis was the opportunity to meet lots of people within the Company, the world of banking and the supply industry. Note not a word concerning long liquid lunches and unjustified annual bonuses!

Upon retiring he worked on a part time basis mainly as Company Secretary and Accountant for the Vauxhall Pensioners Services Limited. This Company dealt with the families of deceased pensioners in starting the process of setting up widow's pensions. They also organised factory tours.

Now fully retired Dennis enjoys line dancing, golf, Vauxhall social events and travelling.

In his view the VPA is a very worthy organisation, run by dedicated pensioners and he would strongly urge those who have not been to any of our activities to "give it a go".

Let's Help Each Other Save Money

I am introducing this new feature on very much a "suck it and see" basis. The thought process is that we can all help each other save money by sending in ideas to this Newsletter and having them published. To start the ball rolling I can share my own experience with you.

In the year 2000 water companies introduced a charge on all households for surplus water drainage. Put simply this means that water flowing from your property into the general street drainage system incurred this charge. However, you are entitled to claim a rebate providing you have soakaways on your property and most, if not all, modern homes do.

To claim write to your water company confirming your property has soakaway facilities and ask for the rebate which should be in the region of £20. The bad news is that you can only claim for the current year as they will not pay for previous years. The good news is that you will not incur this charge in future years.

My home was built in 1986 and I have already received a rebate of £21. Go for it and please let me know the outcome.

Please send any ideas you have although sharing a bath with a friend is possibly quite well known!

World War Two - Veterans Alert

We received the following information from Ted Cachart (Chairman of the 49 Squadron Association) which may be useful to some of our members.

Some WW2 veterans may be unaware that in 2011 financial grants (heroes return II) were available from the Big Lottery Fund to enable veterans or their widows to pay a visit of remembrance to the theatre of war they were involved in. Veterans, male or female, and widows and widowers of veterans can apply. The opportunity also extends to Merchant Seamen as well as Wrens, WAAF's and ATS who worked closely with active personnel. It seems that a lower number than was anticipated took advantage of this opportunity in 2011 and these grants have been extended to 31st December 2012.

The grants cover travel and accommodation for veteran, spouse and carer, and range from £150 within the UK, £500 in Northern Europe, £800 in the Mediterranean £1500 in the Middle East and £2000 in the Far East for one person. These grants are increased to cover additional people (spouse and or carer).

Ted has taken advantage of this offer and is more than happy to give advice or information to those wishing to apply. His e-mail address is ted@49squadron.co.uk and his telephone number is 01773 853181.

If any VPA member does take advantage please let me know and we can feature your trip in this Newsletter.

Vauxhall Memories

In the last Newsletter we featured some memories of Vauxhall past and asked for readers to submit their own.

Bill Saul writes "the article did remind me of the music which was played over the tannoy system on the shop floor for one hour mid morning and one hour mid afternoon. It always seemed to be military style marching music and I loved it as the lads on the track would start clowning around and having a laugh. Sadly some did not like it and eventually the workforce voted to discontinue with it."

Dave Taylor writes "I remember the Bar in the canteen in Kimpton Road, complete with one-armed bandits and snooker tables. I bet not many factories have a lunch-time bar nowadays. I worked in Finance in F Block and remember the hot summers and being given salt tablets for the staff. I also remember it being so cold in winter you had to work with your coat and gloves on".

Thanks to Bill and Dave for their input and to all of you - please send your own memories in.

February Newsletter Quiz - Answers and Winners

The answers were as follows:

One who wanders - Rover
A bridge over the Thames - Vauxhall
A short skirt - Mini
Not a Roundhead - Cavalier
Jesus takes me for one - Sunbeam
A famous painter - Picasso
A game on the links - Golf
A temporary hut - Nissan
To win overall - Triumph
An oriental flower - Lotus
He will take you to a dance - Escort
Park your boat here - Marina
Go underground in Paris - Metro
The capital of Texas - Austin
A pupil with power - Prefect
An English dance - Morris
Sounds like there is food kept here - Lada
Alphabetically no's 22 and 23 - VW

We had a good response and a number of members tied for the prize. These were put into a hat and an overall winner selected. So congratulations to Alan and Gloria Clarke, a £10 M & S voucher is on its way to you.

Your Chance To Win £10 M & S Voucher

Listed below are 20 cryptic clues. The answers to them would be found in a sweet shop (past or present). I have put in the first answer to give you a flavour of the Quiz.

- 1 Wiseguys = Smarties
- 2 Edible fasteners
- 3 Alien pub
- 4 Pirates loot
- 5 100% precious metal
- 6 Say it quietly
- 7 Teddy Bear snack
- 8 Royal herb
- 9 Sport for a prince
- 10 Ten cent choc
- 11 Belly dancing perhaps
- 12 Food for a feline pet
- 13 Seen at the races
- 14 Home for tipsy teeth
- 15 Assorted types of girls
- 16 Flowers for eating
- 17 Big bus
- 18 Dark mysterious spell
- 19 Wobbly infants
- 20 Stars and planets (two answers - bonus point for both)

Competition closes Friday 18th May. Send your entry (with contact details) to either the office or normanmcgregor3@gmail.com.

First correct answer drawn out wins the voucher. Good luck!

Light Hearted Memory Quiz

Look at the following 15 things from the past and count up those that you remember, not those you were told about

- 1 Sweet cigarettes
- 2 Coffee shops with a **juke box**
- 3 Home delivered milk in glass bottles
- 4 Party lines on telephones
- 5 Pathe News at the cinema and 2 films (main film and the B film)
- 6 Test cards on the TV
- 7 Peashooters
- 8 78 rpm records
- 9 45 rpm records
- 10 Hi-Fi's
- 11 Potato (spud) guns
- 12 Blue flashbulbs
- 13 Cork popguns
- 14 Wash tub wringers
- 15 Two postal deliveries per day

If you remembered 0 - 4 = You're still young or have a bad memory or are cheating!

If you remembered 5 - 8 = You are getting older

If you remembered 9 - 12 = Don't tell your age

If you remembered 13 - 15 = You're positively ancient!!

Trip to Cambridge Wednesday, 14th March

On an overcast but dry day a group of cheery VPAites left Park Street at 10.00 am and after a pleasant journey arrived at Cambridge around 11.15 am by which time the sun had decided to make an appearance. As this was a coach only trip people were free to do whatever tickled their fancy. Some visited various colleges whilst the more daring enjoyed a punt ride on the River Cam. It seemed that by the comments on the coach coming back that all had experienced a good day. Thanks to Maureen for her efforts on the coach, ably supported by Dick Mumford on the return journey.

Quiz Night – Tuesday, 20th March

Another well supported evening, despite the MK Dons playing at home (they won by the way). The victorious team comprised of Dennis and Doreen Cowap, Mick Smith and Ian Thomas. Congratulations to them. The team that finishes last gets a booby prize (normally produce off Graham Waltons' allotment) and the Pink Ladies may not have known their onions, but certainly walked away with them! As usual thanks to Graham and Pauline for asking and marking the questions.

Upcoming Events in the South

Tuesday, 8th May - 3 nights B & B in York

Great Western Hotel in City Centre

£200 pp

Tuesday, 15th May - Cotswold Tour

Visit to market at Moreton-in-the-Marsh and high tea at historic house.

£19.00 pp

Saturday, 16th June - Annual Outing

Bournemouth

£10.00 pp

Please contact the VPA office for more details of these events. Telephone number and office hours are at the end of this Newsletter.

Golf Dates

Thursday 3rd May - Abbey Hill Golf Club - Texas Scramble

Tuesday 19th June - Caddington Golf Club - Annual Singles Tournament

Thursday 4th October - South Beds Golf Club - 4 Ball event

Quiz Nights

Quiz Nights will be held on 16th October and 4th December. Note that all dates are Tuesdays and the event begins at 7.00 pm in the Acorn Room at the Recreation Club.

Tea Dance Schedule

Held in the Riverside Suite and starting at 2.00 p.m. the dates for 2012 are:

Apr 11th, 25th

May 2nd, 16th Jun 13th, 20th

Jul 4th, 18th Aug 1st, 8th, 29th

Sept 12th, 26th Oct 10th, 24th

Nov 7th, 14th Dec 5th

Upcoming Events in the North

Wednesday, 18th April

Black Country Living Museum

Saturday, 12th May

Malvern Spring Gardening Show

Wednesday, 30th May

Liverpool Empire to see Sister Act (fully booked)

Monday, 25th June

Crich Tramway Village, plus visit to Bakewell

Monday, 16th July

Welsh Highland Railway

Full details of times and cost of all these trips can be obtained from the Club.

Tea Dances:

April 10th, 17th, 24th at Whitby Sports and Social Club.

**Pensioners Lottery Results – Luton
Drawn 14th March 2012**

M.G. Archer	P1006688	£ 50.93
A. Beard	P2007728	£ 25.47
A. Bowers	P070220J	£101.87
C. Davies	P021921	£101.87
J. Essex	P028621B	£ 50.93
D.J. Heley	P028807	£ 25.47
P.A. Lucas	P011131	£ 25.47
C. Millett	P100595	£404.47
T. Phelps	P1011292	£ 25.47
L. Price	P016719	£ 25.47
R.J. Samuels	P023309	£ 25.47
G.J. Whiting	P2005313	£ 50.93

**Pensioners Lottery Results – Ellesmere Port
Drawn 22nd March 2012**

W. Beckett	P1008368	£127
R. Boote	P1010628	£127
J. Davies	P1000780	£328
J. Gates	P1009597	£127
R.I. Hay	P1006140	£127
R.C. Holland	P1010813	£328

In Memoriam – Luton

Ball, Eric John, BCV Hourly
Died 16.1.12, Aged 78, Retired 1988

Brown, Rose Alice, Division 121
Died 14.1.12, Aged 86, Retired 1975

Boulton, Edwin, VM Staff
Died 27.2.12, Aged 88, Retired 1983

Burnell, Ronald George, Division 431
Died 27.2.12, Aged 83, Retired 1986

Cavendish, Martin John, VM Staff
Died 20.2.12, Aged 89, Retired 1986

Chamberlain, John, Division 349
Died 16.1.12, Aged 67, Retired 2002

Cyganek, Jan (known as John), Div 053
Died 21.2.12, Aged 87, Retired 1989

Dixon, Robert Gordon, VM Staff
Died 29.2.12, Aged 88, Retired 1981

Hale, Edward, Division 902
Died 28.1.12, Aged 92, Retired 1981

Hazell, Joan Mary, VM Staff
Died 22.2.12, Aged 91, Retired 1974

Jones, Theophilus Arthur, VM Staff
Died 24.2.12, Aged 97, Retired 1978

Kitteridge, Betty, VM Hourly
Died 24.1.12, Aged 88, Retired 1987

Langham, Edwin John, BCV Staff
Died 20.12.11, Aged 77, Retired 1986

Lenz, Ewald, BCV Hourly
Died 21.2.12, Aged 87, Retired 1986

Little, George Henry, VM Staff
Died 27.2.12, Aged 91, Retired 1976

McLeod, Robert, Division 207
Died 18.2.12, Aged 77, Retired 1988

Parsons, Geoffrey Hugh, Division 150
Died 17.1.12, Aged 64, Retired 2002

Puddicombe, Norman Harold, BCV Staff
Died 28.2.12, Aged 85, Retired 1986

Shortland, Trevor Nash, VM Hourly
Died 24.1.12, Aged 84, Retired 1986

Squires, Terry Nicholas, Division 082
Died 20.1.12, Aged 74, Retired 1996

Stelling, Peter Roy, VM Staff
Died 1.3.12, Aged 82, Retired 1988

Tate, Donald Cecil, Division 526
Died 16.1.12, Aged 78, Retired 1993

In Memoriam – Ellesmere Port

Bell, June, Division 608
Died 24.2.12, Aged 63, Retired 202

Hayes, John Patrick, Division 662
Died 5.11.11, Aged 83, Retired 1981

Jackson, George, Division 627
Died 27.1.12, Aged 77, Retired 1993

Lloyd, Kenneth George, Division 640
Died 17.2.12, Aged 81, Retired 1992

McAuslane, Andrew Frank, Division 640
Died 12.3.12, Aged 68, Retired 2001

Morrisy, Donal, Division 640
Died 9.2.12, Aged 66, Retired 2005

Punter, Frank, Division 638
Died 8.2.12, Aged 79, Retired 1990

Roberts, Leslie, Division 663
Died 24.1.12, Aged 75, Retired 1997

Wood-Fingresty, Gordon Herbert, Div 616
Died 15.3.12, Aged 83, Retired 1989

**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)

Register For E-Mail Prompts

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

rachael.hayman@vauxhall.co.uk

**Useful Telephone and Contact Information
VPA South**

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01582 427204

E-mail cherie.denton@vauxhall.co.uk

Vauxhall Pensions Department 01582 721122

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

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

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.