

# ***Pensioners' Newsletter – October 2011***

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## **News from the North**

Hello Everyone

Summer is closing in on us here in the North, but we could have a reprieve with some hot weather – or is that just wishful thinking??

This year we have organised lots of events and the number of members participating continues to grow. That is why you do need to book early when you see events advertised.

Deposits are required at the time of booking and no telephone bookings please.

The holiday for 2012 to Weston-Super-Mare is selling very well, but there is a cut off date. A deposit of £30 is required.

Please may I ask once again that you fill in a card before you go into the Booking Room – bring your own pen – borrowing one only holds up the queue.

The outing to Skipton Market and the Scarecrow Festive in Kettlewell went very well indeed. This was a new venue for us and 2 coaches were filled.

Southport Flower Show also got a good feedback once again. We were very lucky with the weather, so a good time was had by all.

I would welcome any feedback from members on the entertainment provided for club nights. Please add your name – we would like to know how you feel. We want to give you value for your money.

Finally, if you know of any member who is suffering hardship, please let us know and we will look into instances in the strictest confidence.

*Margaret Noblett*

## **News from the South**

Hello to Everyone

I am afraid that I must start this news on a sad note this time. David Watkins, one of our Committee members until just recently, died on 19th September after a short illness. Since retiring from Vauxhall Dave has given a lot of his time to helping others. He will be sadly missed and our thoughts are with his wife Janet and the rest of the family.

As you can tell by the definite chill in the air summer has said goodbye for another year and winter is on its way. Still that doesn't mean staying at home as the VPA has a number of events planned over the next few months including out trip to the Greyhound racing at Peterborough (I can hear my wallet sobbing

already), Golf at South Beds GC and the Tinsel and Turkey trip to Torquay, not forgetting the Christmas Party on 8th December. Details of all these are shown in this Newsletter and we hope to see you at one or more of them.

*John Boast*

## **Introducing Your Committee**

Norman McGregor joined the Committee some three years ago and is the guilty party responsible for writing this Newsletter. How will we know what is true you ask. Well basically you don't, but trust him he used to work in Finance!

Norman joined Vauxhall in September 1965 and retired in September 2005 thereby ensuring a decent gift on completing 40 years service. He worked in Finance and Business Planning throughout his very enjoyable and rewarding career. He has many good memories including working on the teams that established IBC and later the Vauxhall Engineering Centre at Millbrook: he also worked on the project teams that took both Frontera and Vivaro from paper to production. Most vividly he remembers the initial eighteen month period at IBC with the wonderful can-do attitude at all levels in the Company, the whole experience of bringing the Frontera in, with particular emphasis on the vehicle launch side of the project and again the can-do attitude in the early days of the VEC.

In respect of people Norman worked with many different groups within the GM family and remembers fondly his "debates" with TDC in Germany, Isuzu in Japan and Renault in France. This is over and above the Vauxhall/Bedford staff in his Budgetary Control days.

On a personal note he has been married to Susan (secretary to Jack Pope Production Manager AA Block) for 40 years and they have two children Sasha and Neil, daughter-in-law Karen and a grandchild Reece.

Norman's hobbies are reading his kindle, gardening, watching the MK Dons and following Susan's orders.

## **New Police Number for Bedfordshire**

As from 19<sup>th</sup> September, a new police number for non-emergency calls is introduced. If you wish to contact the police, please ring 101 and choose one of three options - Option 1 is for Bedfordshire, Option 2 is for Hertfordshire and Option 3 is for Thames Valley Police.

Please remember this is for all non 999 calls. Calls to the non-emergency number 101 are 15p from either landline or mobile irrespective of time of day or length of call. 999 calls should only be made where life is in danger or a crime is being committed.

### **Free Home Security Checks**

Did you know that if you are over 65 years of age or vulnerable or disabled, you are entitled to a free security check and home improvements from the Bobby Van team, supported by the Bedfordshire Police Partnership Trust and Bedfordshire Police? This is particularly useful as the nights are drawing in for the winter months. A visit from the Bobby Van will improve your home's security and provide advice to safeguard against bogus callers. Brian Prickett of the Beds Police Partnership Trust explains "Our Bobby Van security assessment service is carried out completely FREE OF CHARGE by our team of Bobby Men who are all trained carpenters and crime prevention advisors. They assess each home individually and identify any vulnerable areas and where appropriate improve the security with locks, door chains and viewers, etc. We are also in partnership with Beds & Luton Fire Service and will fit smoke detectors. The service is generally free, but as the Trust is a charity donations, of any amount, are always welcome.

To arrange a visit or for more information please call one of the following numbers **Janet Helnsen** on 01234 842619, **Brian Prickett** on 01234 842612 or **George Skinner** on 01582 394035.

### **Remembrance Sunday**

A service will be held on Sunday, 13th November at 8.30 a.m. at the War Memorial in Kimpton Road.

### **Winning Letter**

You may recall that last issue we promised a £10 M & S voucher to the winner of the most interesting letter received from a pensioner recalling their time at Vauxhall. Congratulations to Danny Payne of Bromborough, Cheshire who writes "Some years (actually quite a few) ago a similar request was made by a person (name forgotten) for anecdotes to form the basis of a book on Vauxhall. Well, I wrote in with my anecdote and am still waiting to hear from said budding author. If anyone out there can shed any light on this please let the office know. The incident which I referred to occurred in 1941/2. As a member of the Vauxhall Home

Guard we were charged with ensuring the safety of a huge safe locked in the bowels of the offices opposite the showrooms in Kimpton Road. This safe contained the money for the year's profit sharing and hence was a substantial amount. Our base was the upper floor in the Showrooms and we were issued with rifles and live ammunition for our 2 hour stint.

On returning to base we had the important task of unloading our rifles which meant pointing the rifle skywards and operating the bolt five times to eject the five live bullets before pulling the trigger to show that unloading was complete. However one individual failed to count the five bullets correctly before pulling the trigger - resulting in a massive explosion, a hole in the roof, a shower of plaster and people running in all directions because it was thought a bomb had dropped. The sergeant treated the unfortunate man to a tirade of colourful language whilst picking pieces of plaster from his uniform"

Our thanks to Danny for his article and now that you know the M & S voucher is genuine, in the words of Delia Smith "Let's be having you"

Incidentally for the benefit of our younger readers, yes Vauxhall did make a profit. Also how refreshing that we have published an article re the Home Guard without mentioning "stupid boy", "we're all doomed" and "don't panic Mr. Mannerling". Oooops, I think I just did!!!

### **Hyde Hall – 18<sup>th</sup> August**

A party of keen gardeners went to the RHS gardens at Hyde Hall on a fine but breezy day. The location, like Alan Titchmarsh is smaller than imagined, but as the site is situated on a hillside affords a splendid view of the surrounding area. Although some parts of the site were still work-in-progress, there was still much to admire in those parts that were complete. There was the usual opportunity to indulge in a spot of retail therapy to buy plants etc before retiring to the pleasant restaurant and coffee bar. The green fingered experts on the trip (and even the red fingered ones who had touched the mulberries) all expressed a desire to return in a couple of years when the work was complete. To finish a fine trip the rain only started when members were boarding the coach to leave

### **Mickies Palace – 15<sup>th</sup> September**

A group of 31 hardcore Mickies Palace veterans attended a Swinging Sixties show and enjoyed the music on offer, although a couple of members were disappointed when the MC

announced that Elvis would not be appearing. An excellent roast beef meal was enjoyed by all.

### **Letter of thanks**

Just to prove that we have members that do enjoy our trips it is with some pleasure and a great degree of smugness that I can quote the following from a letter from Leonard and Brenda Rose "We did enjoy the trip to RHS Hyde Hall - thanks to everyone. We also enjoyed the trip to Windsor, despite the rain. We bumped into many other VPA colleagues on both of the days"

So there you have it - totally unsolicited and unlike Trip Advisor without (allegedly) free trips thrown in!

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

#### **Greyhound Racing with Meal – 5<sup>th</sup> October**

Okay, so I know that you will never beat a greyhound! But for £25 you can experience the sport of vertically challenged kings, partake of a fine meal and have a flutter on the dogs. As an added bonus your female half can shop in the afternoon in Peterborough and make sure you have less to lose in the evening.

#### **Trip to Cadburys' World – 27<sup>th</sup> October**

Following the success of our half term trip to Wembley in April which allowed grandparents and children to enjoy the same outing, we have arranged a visit to Cadburys' World during October half term to be amazed at their Halloween Spooktacular. All information can be obtained from the office.

#### **Christmas Party - 8<sup>th</sup> December**

As of writing (29<sup>th</sup> September) there are only 70 days to the renowned VPA Christmas Party or VPA Christmas Dinner/Dance. Call it whichever suits you best. The music is excellent, the food to die for and the chance to win a prize in the raffle (gifts are chosen by Les Potter, so now you know who to blame if you don't like what you see). All this for only £19.50 per person and don't forget that VPA members can bring 1 outsider as a guest. Looking forward to seeing you there at the Riverside Suite.

#### **Future Quiz Night Dates**

Denis Cowap is mine host (his way of avoiding taking part) at the Quizzes on Tuesday, 18th October and Tuesday, 6th December. The office can provide details.

### **Tea Dance Schedule - 2011**

The dates for Ted's Tango Teaching Sessions are as follows. Each date is on a Wednesday.  
October 5<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>.  
November 9<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.  
December 7<sup>th</sup>

### **Potential Trips for 2012**

Listed below are the suggested trips for 2012

<b>Feb</b>	Tour of Olympic Village
<b>Mar</b>	Mickies Palace St. Pauls and Westminster Abbey
<b>Apr</b>	Wembley Stadium Tour
<b>May</b>	Cotswold Tour (stopping for tea) 3 night York midweek break
<b>June</b>	Annual seaside trip - to Bournemouth Trip to Cambridge
<b>July</b>	Visit to Bletchley Park
<b>Aug</b>	Buckingham Palace
<b>Sept</b>	RHS Wisley Flower Show Isle of Wight Break (2 or 3 nights)
<b>Oct</b>	Day trip to France
<b>Nov</b>	Birmingham Military Tattoo Tinsel and Turkey (venue t.b.a.)
<b>Dec</b>	Christmas Party

All of the above have yet to be agreed by the Committee and as at the time of writing no firm dates or costs are known. We will keep you informed as and when more information is at hand.

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

#### **Blackpool and Illuminations – 19<sup>th</sup> October**

Depart 9.00 a.m. Entry charges per person  
Ballroom £5.00 Circus £6.00  
Tower £6.00 Dungeon £9.00

#### **Big Band Sound Weekend, Elgin Hotel, Blackpool - 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> November**

Two nights. Cost £110.00

#### **Lunch at Heatherlands Hotel, Wirral – Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> November**

Members to arrange own transport.  
12.00 noon for 12.30 p.m. lunch  
Choice of beef or turkey (state preference on booking) Cost £11.20 per person

#### **Anchor Head Hotel, Weston-Super-Mare 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> February 2012.**

Excursions to Bath, Cheddar Gorge and Wells  
4 nights, dinner, bed and breakfast  
Cost £140.00 per person (sea views extra)

## **In Memoriam – Luton**

**Brade**, George, VM Hourly  
Died 11.8.11, Aged 88, Retired 1988  
**Chandler**, Peter Thomas, VM Staff  
Died 21.8.11, Aged 88, Retired 1982  
**Clark**, Daphne, VM Staff  
Died 10.9.11, Aged 82, Retired 1981  
**Day**, Robert, Edward, Division 61  
Died 11.8.11, Aged 68, Retired 2000  
**Dixon**, William, BCV Staff  
Died 5.9.11, Aged 80, Retired 1988  
**Easydorchik**, Edwin, VM Hourly  
Died 27.8.11, Aged 92, Retired 1982  
**Franks**, Ronald Norman, VM Staff  
Died 6.9.11, Aged 90, Retired 1982  
**Giles**, Ronald Philip, VM Staff  
Died 9.8.11, Aged 92, Retired 1982  
**Gill**, Robert, Division 342  
Died 23.8.11, Aged 73, Retired 1999  
**Goodwin**, Norman, VM Hourly  
Died 5.8.11, Aged 96, Retired 1979  
**Kirk**, David John, VM Staff,  
Died 23.7.11, Aged 68, Retired 1995  
**Kovacs**, Sandor, BCV Hourly,  
Died 5.8.11, Aged 80, Retired 1988  
**Lansbury**, Ronald William, VM Staff  
Died 8.8.11, Aged 93, Retired 1982  
**Long**, Leslie Douglas, VM Hourly  
Died 26.8.11, Aged 94, Retired 1982  
**McEvoy**, Arthur, Division 135  
Died 2.8.11, Aged 80, Retired 1997  
**Mullin**, Sylvia Aletha, Division 037  
Died 1.8.11, Aged 74, Retired 1995  
**Newby**, Philip Henderson, VM Hourly  
Died 10.8.11, Aged 97, Retired 1976  
**Nind**, Neville Derrick, IBC Hourly  
Died 18.9.11, Aged 79, Retired 1988  
**Panter**, Peter, Division 197  
Died 23.9.11, Aged 79, Retired 1991  
**Philpot**, Peter Charles, VM Staff  
Died 9.8.11, Aged 86, Retired 1981  
**Piorek**, Mizczyslaw, IBC Hourly  
Died 2.9.11, Aged 91, Retired 1986  
**Riches**, Colin Stuart, Division 074  
Died 5.8.11, Aged 81, Retired 1995  
**Roberts**, Harold, IBC Staff  
Died 23.8.11, Aged 81, Retired 1988  
**Spray**, Alan John, Division 349  
Died 22.8.11, Aged 74, Retired 1994  
**Tweedy**, John James, VM Hourly  
Died 19.8.11, Aged 92, Retired 1982  
**Watkins**, David, Division 108  
Died 19.9.11, Aged 75, Retired 1994  
**Wilson**, James Guthrie, Division 117  
Died 3.9.11, Aged 83, Retired 1993  
**Yardley**, Philip Frank, Division 305  
Died 5.9.11, Aged 81, Retired 1990  
**Zealey**, Albert Arthur, Division 046  
Died 6.8.11, Aged 83, Retired 1991

## **In Memoriam – Ellesmere Port**

**Bolger**, James, Division 631  
Died 4.7.11, Aged 88, Retired 1981  
**Boulton**, Derek, Division 674  
Died 28.7.11, Aged 87, Retired 1986  
**Bradley**, John, Division 663  
Died 7.8.11, Aged 75, Retired 1998  
**Bushell**, Marjorie, Division 662  
Died 12.9.11, Aged 92, Retired 1979  
**Francis**, Allan, Division 616  
Died 23.7.11, Aged 73, Retired 1998  
**Grimshaw**, John, Division 636  
Died 21.8.11, Aged 77, Retired 1998  
**Hughes**, Malcolm John, Division 639  
Died 22.7.11, Aged 64, Retired 2004  
**Jarvis**, William Arthur, Division 642  
Died 17.6.11, Aged 71, Retired 1987  
**Lowe**, William Boyd, Division 628  
Died 11.8.11, Aged 73, Retired 1998  
**Lyth**, Norman, Division 617  
Died 10.8.11, Aged 79, Retired 1997  
**Parker**, Thomas, Division 638  
Died 13.7.11, Aged 80, Retired 1996  
**Pritchard**, William Arthur, Division 616  
Died 31.7.11, Aged 88, Retired 1987  
**Tomlinson**, Geoffrey, Division 629  
Died 26.7.11, Aged 76, Retired 1991  
**Walters**, David William, Division 650  
Died 2.9.11, Aged 77, Retired 1991

## **How To Access the Newsletter 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](mailto:rachael.hayman@vauxhall.co.uk)

## **Useful Telephone and Contact Information**

### **VPA South**

Cherie Denton, Vauxhall Welfare Officer  
01582 427204

E-mail [cherie.denton@uk.gm.com](mailto:cherie.denton@uk.gm.com)

Vauxhall Pensions Department 01582 721122

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

VPA Office 01582 427921

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

### **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 [norman.mcgregor@googlemail.com](mailto:norman.mcgregor@googlemail.com)

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