

Pensioners' Newsletter — August 2011

News from the North

Hello Everyone

I hope you are still trying to enjoy what is left of our summer months. This year has flown by, or am I just getting older?

We have tried many new venues over the past few months, which have gone down well with you all and we still have plenty to go. Some of the outings will not appear in this issue, but I will give you feed-back in future Newsletters. There are still places available on the trip to Blackpool on 11th to 13th November and we have booked our main holiday for 2012 at the Anchor Head Hotel, Weston Super Mare from 20th to 24th February. Please book early for this to guarantee places and a deposit is requested on booking.

Finally, regarding the trip to Blackpool on 29th October – the Tower is under new management and there have been a few changes. Please see the literature at the Club.

Bye for now – more next time.

Margaret Knoblett

News from the South

Hi Everyone,

Well, summer is here at last and the sales figures for umbrellas are soaring (as usual), but I hope you are still managing to get out and about. If not, why not consider joining other members of the VPA on one of our trips out. They are always good fun and as we subsidise the price for VPA members, good value as well. You can find details of some of the upcoming events in this Newsletter. By the way, this is your Newsletter and it's always nice to remember times gone by, so if you have any memories or amusing stories about your time at Vauxhall, please send them into the VPA office or direct to Norman McGregor. If we get enough we may consider having a Memory Corner.

Finally I can't let this issue go past without congratulating our VPA Vice Chairman, Tom Fox. Tom has given up a lot of his time over the years to help others and this month he got his reward when he and his wife, Pat attended

the Queen's garden party at Buckingham Palace. You can read about Tom's day in the August issue of the Torque magazine.

John Boast

Introducing Your Committee

Ted Read is the longest serving and almost certainly the best known of the VPA committee members. He returned to England in late 1947 after seeing active service in Burma and India. After a number of other positions he joined Vauxhall Pensions Office in 1964, an area he worked in for 22 years until his early retirement in 1986. Initially he was responsible for pension calculations and became the face of the department to the rest of the Company in the role of answering workforce questions. He was then promoted to work on Pension Fund Investments and dealt with various city banks as well as preparing information for Board of Director review.

On retirement he joined the VPA and has been a valued member ever since. In his early VPA days Ted was involved in all manner of things including, not unsurprisingly, dancing section activities. Eventually he followed Peter Vigor as VPA Press Officer, a position he still holds, and over time contributed many articles to the now defunct Vauxhall Mirror.

In his private life Ted, along with his wife Olive, have worked tirelessly for charities, notably those connected with the Luton and Dunstable Hospital, in the course of which much needed funding has been raised. In 2003 he was presented with the Mayor of Luton Award for Service to the Community and in 2004 both he and Olive received an award from the High Sheriff of Bedfordshire in recognition of their good work in the community. Both are highly proficient dancing teachers and are the energy behind the well attended Wednesday tea dances that they run. Ted also works tirelessly in his involvement in the Monday Club. He takes particular pride in his chairmanship of Luton and Dunstable branch of the Burma Star Association, an organisation which includes a good number of Vauxhall retirees. All in all Ted has given much time and effort to the workings of the VPA and has helped make it the organisation it is today.

Calling All Budding Novelists

In an attempt to widen the scope of our Newsletters we are introducing a regular item featuring memories that our members have of their days at Vauxhall and any of the associated companies. These memories might be humorous, poignant or just plain gossipy, the only criteria is that they will be of interest to our readers. To make it worth your while the star feature of the month will receive a £10 M&S voucher.

To take us away from just listing those that have passed away we would like to publish any anniversaries that members may be celebrating.

If you have anything to send please forward to Norman McGregor c/o VPA Office, UK1-100-020, Vauxhall Motors, Griffin House, Osborne Road, Luton, LU1 3YT. Alternatively information can be sent by e-mail to norman.mcgregor@googlemail.com.

The Chain Reaction of Home Visiting

The Home Visitors Committee, in liaison with Cherie Denton, visit the more senior of our pensioners who live in the Luton and surrounding areas. The breadth of knowledge and experience that these pensioners possess can amaze. Often they have the capacity to surprise, and such was the case when Mrs Mary Thomas, the daughter of the late Arthur Pearce, was visited by Mike Roberts, the immediate past chairman of the VPA, in his role of a Home Visitor. Arthur not only held a senior position in Vauxhall, but was the first President of the VPA when it was formed in 1949.

Mary is obviously very proud of the achievements of her father but, and here the plot thickens, asked if the current President wears the Chain of Office on official business. Mike could not recall ever seeing any President wearing a chain or any other adornment.

So come on all you Miss Marples and Hercule Poirot out there. The VPA would like to know of any pensioner who knows anything about, or has a photograph of this long lost item. Who knows - it might be worth a bob or two!

Annual Outing - Portsmouth and Southsea - 4th June

Three coaches of young at heart VPA members hit the South coast on a gloriously sunny Saturday in June. We were decanted at Southsea and spent a busy 10 minutes sightseeing before deciding that Portsmouth

had more to offer. With plenty of shops, cafes and restaurants those who made the journey were well satisfied, particularly those who sat along the waterfront taking the sun and holding a nice cold beer in their hand. The journey home was relaxing, in pleasant evening sunlight and ended a very good day. The only downside was that the coach company had decided to drop everyone at Southsea which is a fair walk from Portsmouth and proved challenging to some VPA members. However, in line with the maxim that you are never too old to learn, this will not happen on any other trip we organise.

Golf Club Singles Day – 14th June

A bright, sunny day greeted 30 VPA golfers to the Caddington Golf Club to compete for the annual Singles Championship. The course, although in excellent condition, still provided challenges to all taking part.

The eventual winner, with a creditable 37 Stableford points, was Andrew Duthie, a relative newcomer to the VPA golf days. It makes a change for the winner of a golf tournament to originate from Scotland and not Northern Ireland!

A close second was Tony Brown with Lou Chadwick finishing third. There were prizes for nearest the pin on three holes and these were won by Paul Housman, Eddie Lynch and Les Duncan. The day ended with a buffet meal with drinks.

The next golf event is on 18th August at the Three Locks Golf Club, Great Brickhill and comprises a three man team waltz competition. Whatever turns you on!!

London Eye and River Thames Cruise – 23rd June

A party of VPA members visited the South Bank to sample the twin delights of the London Eye and a Thames river cruise. First up was a boat trip on the mighty river Thames which lasted for 45 minutes and took in many famous sights, including the Houses of Parliament, Big Ben, Tower Bridge and the Tower of London. The weather was pretty good and the majority of people sat on the open air upper deck, while keeping a wary eye open for low flying pigeons! When back on Blighty they boarded the London Eye. With such good, clear weather conditions visibility was excellent on all directions and made for a truly awesome experience. After the flight people visited the 4D London Eye show and took advantage of the bars and restaurants in the locality.

Trip to Windsor - 16th July

On a horrible wet and windy day a group of intrepid members visited the town of Windsor. Although the weather was awful it is fair to say that we did not let it mar the day. What was disappointing was that Her Majesty the Queen was in residence and, surprisingly, no VPA member was asked in for tea and scones. The journey home was uneventful but, irony of ironies, was made in dry, sunny weather!

Vauxhall 25 Year Club

The Annual Dinner and Cabaret will be held on Friday, 14th October in the Riverside Suite. Tickets are now on sale at £30 per person. Dress code is lounge suits and only members may attend. For further details please contact Cherie Denton on 01582 427204.

Upcoming Events in the South

Hyde Hall – 18th August

Visit the beautiful RHS gardens at Hyde Hall. Cost is £10 for members of the RHS and £17 for non-members.

Mickies Palace Swinging Sixties Show – 15th September

The cost of £22 per person includes lunch and a fun time is guaranteed for all as you recapture the days when we were all thinner and in the case of the males, had more hair!

Greyhound Racing with Meal – 5th October

For the sum of £25 per person you can watch excellent racing, enjoy good food and as an added bonus lose money with a gamble or two at Peterborough Stadium. As if this is not enough there is also the opportunity to take in some afternoon retail therapy.

Christmas Party - 8th December

As of 18th August there are only 112ish days to our famous Christmas Party. As is normal the main turn is the music and songs of Danny Glass and his daughter-in-law. At enormous expense the second turn this at the party is Jeff Wayne, a singer/comedian who hails from Mickies Palace. I could say he has headlined at the London Palladium and Las Vegas, but that would be telling a lie. Plus if that were the truth tickets would cost £20 instead of the heavily subsidised give-away price of £19.50 per person. For this you get a sumptuous meal (yet to be determined, but highly dependent on what McDonalds are offering that day!) and

international entertainment, plus the chance to buy losing tickets in the raffle. How can you resist?

Future Quiz Night Dates

18th October
6th December

Tea Dance Schedule - 2011

The dates for Ted's Tango Teaching Sessions are as follows. Each date is on a Wednesday. August 10th.

September 7th, 14th and 28th.

October 5th and 26th.

November 9th and 30th.

December 7th

Upcoming Events in the North

Shrewsbury Flower Show – 12th August

Depart 9.00 a.m. Cost £17.00

Skipton Market and Scarecrow Festival – Kettlewell – 17th August

Depart 9.00 a.m. Cost £5.00

Tia Ray (vocalist) – 6th September

Club Night at the Vauxhall Sports and Social Club

Blackpool and Illuminations – 19th 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 - 11th to 13th November

Two nights. Cost £110.00

In Memoriam – Luton

Armitage, Roy Dennis, Division 047

Died 17.7.11, Aged 85, Retired 1986

Badger, Walter Henry Richard, VM Staff

Died 13.2.11, Aged 79, Retired 1987

Barker, Joan Division 046

Died 6.6.11, Aged 72, Retired 1995

Best, Lincol Leonard, Division 032

Died 27.6.11, Aged 76, Retired 1997

Biggs, Albert Charles, Division 454

Died 22.5.11, Aged 84, Retired 1985

Burley, Mary, Division 846

Died 12.6.11, Aged 77, Retired 1986

Cadwell, Harold, IBC Staff

Died 18.6.11, Aged 84, Retired 1991

Chalkley, Sidney Bernard, VM Staff

Died 24.6.11, Aged 89, Retired 1981

Clark, Derek, Division 032

Died 24.6.11, Aged 72, Retired 1993

Cucchiara, Giuseppe, IBC Staff
Died 7.3.11, Aged 72, Retired 2003

Dunbar, Stewart, Division 033
Died 30.5.11, Aged 90, Retired 1981

Ellingham, Ronald, IBC Staff
Died 15.7.11, Aged 78, Retired 1994

Farren, Owen, Division 433
Died 7.5.11, Aged 84, Retired 1986

Gill, John, Division 135
Died 27.5.11, Aged 88, Retired 1988

Gooding, Darnley Da'Costa (Danny) Div 043
Died 13.5.11, Aged 86, Retired 1987

Graham, Mary Catherine, Division 032
Died 11.3.11, Aged 78, Retired 1993

Green, Horace Edward, Division 037
Died 17.5.11, Aged 85, Retired 1991

Head, Alan James, Division 518
Died 4.7.11, Aged 77, Retired 1992

Howard, Leslie Eustace, Division 526
Died 6.6.11, Aged 78, Retired 1993

Khan, Mohammed, Division 033
Died 19.3.11, Aged 72, Retired 1994

Lockett, Fredrick George, VM Staff
Died 26.6.11, Aged 88, Retired 1980

Maguire, James, Division 006
Died 12.7.11, Aged 83, Retired 1987

McQuillan, Edna Lillian, VM Staff
Died 6.6.11, Aged 78, Retired 1988

Oates, John Veal, VM Staff
Died 5.1.11, Aged 91, Retired 1975

Pacer, Frank, Division 150
Died 27.5.11, Aged 88, Retired 1988

Parker, Eric Norman, Division 117
Died 19.5.11, Aged 76, Retired 1997

Pratt, Philip George, BCV Staff
Died 24.5.11, Aged 81, Retired 1988

Radford, Herbert, VM Staff
Died 3.6.11, Aged 84, Retired 1982

Ruskin, Douglas Charles, BCV Staff
Died 18.6.11, Aged 82, Retired 1988

Scott, Amazine Ephemina, Division 002
Died 14.5.11, Aged 84, Retired 1981

Sinfield, Reginald George, Division 019
Died 11.6.11, Aged 83, Retired 1987

Small, Joel Ebenezer (Joe), Division 330
Died 23.6.11, Aged 66, Retired 2002

Stevenson, William, Division 150
Died 1.7.11, Aged 82, Retired 1993

Virgin, Robert, Division 015
Died 19.6.11, Aged 92, Retired 1984

Vosper, Harold, VM Staff
Died 6.6.11, Aged 99, Retired 1971

Waldock, William, Division 009
Died 21.5.11, Aged 63, Retired 2008

Wallace, Edward, Division 037
Died 10.5.11, Aged 79, Retired 1995

Whitbread, Fredrick, Division 454
Died 9.6.11, Aged 96, Retired 1980

Wildman, Rex Lewis, Division 150,
Died 27.5.11, Aged 69, Retired 1998

In Memoriam – Ellesmere Port

Bennett, Peter James, Division 670
Died 12.6.11, Aged 63, Retired 2002

Bloor, John Henry, Division 629
Died 6.6.11, Aged 70, Retired 1999

Brumfitt, Leslie, Division 636
Died 13.5.11, Aged 80, Retired 1985

Emmas, Philip Gordon, Division 637
Died 26.5.11, Aged 85, Retired 1989

Hannah, Anthony Brian, Division 623
Died 10.6.11, Aged 84, Retired 1982

Hartley, Alan James, Division 614
Died 21.6.11, Aged 70, Retired 1981

Heard, John Charles, Division 639
Died 19.6.11, Aged 66, Retired 2002

Montgomerie, David Gavin, Division 622
Died 28.3.11, Aged 83, Retired 1982

Morris, Arthur, Division 627
Died 23.5.11, Aged 85, Retired 1988

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www.thepensiondepartment.co.uk/vpp/pensioner_pages

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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

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

VPA North

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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

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