

Documentary filming begins

THE stories of four members of VIC will be told in a documentary film being put together by researchers from Anglia Ruskin University.

Our involvement was announced at our annual general meeting in September, and members Darren Horsnell, Steve Butterworth, Graham Limb and Dave Joddrell have been interviewed, written story boards and filmed as part of the production.

The Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project also involves Manchester Metropolitan and Exeter Universities.

It is examining how arts, sports and culture help veterans adjust when they



leave the forces and VIC members will be explaining how the arts and being creative has helped them.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "The 'Stories In Transition' project will use documentary film-making to examine the role arts, sport and culture play in helping armed forces personnel make the transition to civilian life.

"Researchers will use co-productive and creative methods to help veterans tell their stories and, in particular, challenge stereotypes about

ex-forces being either heroes or victims. "

Bob will be introducing the work of VIC and reading a narrative while the four members are filmed. Steve has taken on the role of interviewer posing questions to the other veterans.

The university team was at VIC for three days to begin filming and the footage will combine the centre, the art room, the Veterans In Production shed, allotment and various outreach activities.

The resulting films will be 'Turn To Starboard', 'Veterans



In Communities' and 'Waterloo Uncovered'.

At the VIC Centre, the participants are creating a huge mural on the wall of the art room and the film crew will be back again in March.

Bob added: "Not

only is it great for VIC to be involved in the piece of research, but it gives us the digital and filming skills to record everything we do in the future. We'd like to thank all those who participated in the filming."



INTREPID walkers were led on a muddy walk from Nuttall Park in Ramsbottom by Veteran Signaller Peter Shinzil. For details of future walks check out the VIC Facebook page.

Dave's role in virtual help

VIC MEMBER Dave Joddrell has been selected for a pilot project involving the University of Cape Town.

He will be undertaking a 10-module Digital Marketing short course with the aim of setting up a Virtual Veterans' Drop In.

The project – entitled Forces for Good – is funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust and

came about because during Covid-19 many organisations moved their face-to-face drop-in to online meetings to maintain contact, albeit virtually.

While Dave is completing the 10-module Digital Marketing short course, he will keep in touch with the project team to find out how he is progressing and he will be invited to help design the virtual hub through online workshops.



VIP visitor hears local stories to help shape government policy

A GOVERNMENT advisor visited VIC to see how the organisation works and chat to our members.

Retired Colonel David Richmond CBE is an Independent Veterans' Advisor and was on a two-day visit to the North to see a number of veteran organisations and will be reporting his findings to Ministers from the Office of Veterans' Affairs.

He toured our building on Bury Road to see how the premises are utilised and find out more about the activities that are held there.

David was accompanied by Lieutenant Colonel Johnny Lighten, National Chair of Veterans UK, and David explained the importance of meeting people first-hand to ensure their views were fed back to the policy makers.

While he chatted to veterans, he questioned them about their experiences of adjusting to life in Civvy Street after their years of service.

Many said they left the military with little knowledge of what life was like on the outside because they had spent so long having everything taken care of, but had not been given the skills or



knowledge of how to live independently.

Former Royal Navy diver Dave Green, from Rawtenstall, has been a member of VIC since 2020 having contacted the charity during lockdown.

He said: "I went through a number of different agencies and I was ready to call it quits."

Dave explained it was thanks to a friend that he was advised to contact VIC and he was in a very dark place when he made the first call to VIC.

Falkland Islands veteran Darren Horsnell said: "People coming here see it as their second home because it is a safe environment and no one gets judged."

Although improvements have been made in the lead up to armed forced personnel leaving the service, all the

veterans David spoke to said they felt ill prepared for life as a civilian.

Dave said: "They should be made aware of the places that are out there, I was not told and ended up walking round in circles. If I had known about this place [VIC], I would have been here and not on the side of a bridge."

VIC Project Worker Ray Sharkey, who joined the Scots Guards at 17, told David: "I will always be a soldier; it is almost like the military created me."

However, on leaving the forces Ray did not adjust to life outside the services and experienced major difficulties, not understanding the consequences of being solely responsible for financial and health decisions.

David summed up

VIC saying: "You are bringing people together here and it is a warm and friendly environment; they are in the community and have a range of services and support offered to them and many activities which support recovery and reintegration or just reconnecting them with people from the same community."

"I have really enjoyed these conversations; it has been very helpful to hear your thoughts and feelings on transition."



A plaque, thanking the NHS created by VIC member Brian McEvoy, has been placed behind a reception desk at the Royal Blackburn Hospital.

Respects

MEMBERS of VIC joined mourners at two veterans' funerals both held on Monday February 21.

The funeral of 99-year-old veteran RAF mid-gunner and wireless operator Sam Thompson was held at Accrington Crematorium.

Sam served during the Second World War on numerous aircraft including Lancaster Bombers.

Members of VIC also attended the funeral of veteran Para John Palfrey who also served in the police and died aged 63.

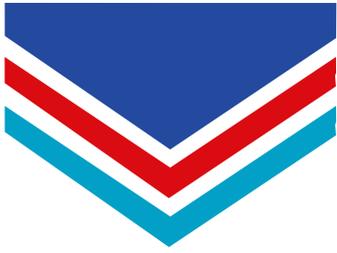
His funeral was at Radcliffe Crematorium.

Choir gigs

THE VIC Choir will be singing in supermarkets from April as they entertain shoppers and raise money for VIC.

On April 13 and June 25, they will be performing at Haslingden Tesco and on May 21 and September 10 the choir will be at Asda in Rawtenstall.

Volunteer collectors are requested for all the performances.



VIC reaches out

WE HAVE seen great turnouts at our many outreach services including The Mess Tin in Middleton, Greggs RV at the VIC Centre in Haslingden and in the Ribble Valley.

These outreaches continue to grow, and as the pictures show, everyone enjoys meeting up over a brew each week. For more information on any of our outreach services please call the office on 01706 833180



Soapbox showdown

THE gauntlet has been thrown down as VIC, Accrington Army Cadet Force and a volunteer working with VIC are all planning to enter go-karts in the Amazing Accrington Soapbox Challenge.

Project Worker Ray Sharkey said: "We already know that Accrington Army Cadet Force are planning to create a tank, so we are planning to create an 'anti-tank' gun.

"We also have competition from



Breakfast Club opens in Accrington

A NEW breakfast club has been launched in Hyndburn by Accrington Stanley Community Trust and VIC is happy to be a supporting organisation.

Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Project Worker Ray Sharkey said: "When Accrington Stanley was planning to open a breakfast club, they sought advice and it was FirstLight Trust in Lancaster who recommended that organisers ask VIC for support as we were a charity that is recognised for providing outreach.

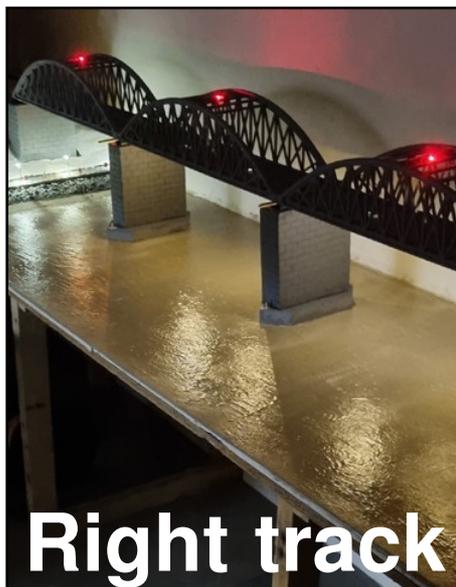
"We work with and support Burnley Football Club in the Community, and Blackburn Rovers Community Trust and run various outreach groups around the area.

"It is important that if veterans attend a breakfast club and they have issues that they need help with, there is someone there who can assist.

"The goal is that the veterans themselves will ultimately get upskilled and become volunteers and possibly outreach workers. They will then be in a position to help others.

"The first session was very well attended with representatives from many different organisations and veterans."

The breakfast club is on the last Wednesday of each month from 9.30am to 11am at Lancashire Carers' Link, in Blackburn Road, Accrington.



Right track

IT IS full steam ahead for our model railway installation in the basement of our drop-in Accrington's Arndale as it begins to take shape.

Along with a stunning bridge, the 'bay' underneath is now in full flow, the bridge lights reflect off the water and boats are on order.

The next stage is to create a harbour and channel lights.

14-year-old Tyler Cockrell who is completing the volunteer part of his Duke of Edinburgh Bronze with VIC.

"Tyler is a student at Haslingden High School and he has a team that have made their own go-kart. He has even held interviews to find a driver."

Veterans wanting to help VIC with the challenge are asked to contact Ray on 01706 833180 or email raysharkey@vic.org.uk

The event will take place on Saturday August 27.

Path cleaning offer

VIC member Brian McEvoy has set up a path cleaning operation and for the cost of fuel, and lunch, he is offering to help residents who need their slippery flag stones cleaning.

For more information call VIC on 01706 833180.





ROSSENDALE

Activities are held at the VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL, unless otherwise stated.

Outreach Service MONDAY-FRIDAY

9am-4.30pm

For a home appointment call 01706 833180

MONDAY

Crafty Chatters

10am-12 noon

TUESDAY

Art Group

10am-3.30pm

Cost £6 places limited book on 01706 833180

WEDNESDAY

Allotment

Help on the allotment in Holcombe Road, Helmshore. Contact 01706 833180

THURSDAY

Greggs RV

1pm-3pm

VIC Choir (weekly)

6.30-8.30pm

FRIDAY

Art Group

10am-3.30pm

Cost £6 places limited book on 01706 833180

SECOND SATURDAY IN THE MONTH

Rossendale Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club

10am-12.30pm

Haslingden Community Link Cafe, Bury Road, Haslingden BB4 5PG
Limited numbers book in advance

EVERY MONTH

Painting in the Style of Bob Ross art classes

Contact Darren 01706 833180

Walking Group see Facebook or website for details

10am-noon

Trinity Methodist Church, Wesleyan Row, Parson Lane Clitheroe, BB7 2JY.

BURNLEY AND PENDLE

Outreach Service

MONDAY

Breakfast Club at Burnley Miners Social Club, 27a Plumbe Street, Burnley, BB11 3AA. 10am-noon

Contact 01706 833180 for dates of outreach at Burnley FC in the Community, the Pendle Armed Forces Support Group, Holmefield Mill, Gisburn Road, Barrowford, at Morrisons in Nelson and Asda in Colne.

HEYWOOD, MIDDLETON AND ROCHDALE

The Sandbag Cafe and drop in

TUESDAY

10am-noon

Sandon House, Taylor Street, Heywood OL10 1EF.

VIC Outreach

TUESDAY

The Mess Tin - cafe and drop in

1pm-2.30pm

The Lighthouse Project, Middleton Shopping Centre, M24 1AB.

THURSDAY

Rochdale Veterans' Breakfast Club and VIC Outreach

9am-10.30am Touchstones Cafe, The Esplanade OL16 1AQ.

RIBBLE VALLEY

Coffee Morning and Outreach

TUESDAYS

VIC – 01706 833180

Chief Executive Amanda Walton
amandawalton@vic.org.uk

Operations Manager Bob Elliott
bobelliott@vic.org.uk 07961 554 006

Admin Officer Amy Thompson
amythompson@vic.org.uk

Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth
stevebutterworth@vic.org.uk

Project Worker Bev Fowler
beverlyfowler@vic.org.uk 07741 902 343

Project Worker Ray Sharkey
raysharkey@vic.org.uk

Transformational Coach Gill Hughes
gillhughes@vic.org.uk 07741 902 411

Volunteer Support Worker Mel Fitzgerald
melfitzgerald@vic.org.uk

Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell
darrenhorsnell@vic.org.uk

Veterans Mental Health Caseworker Cath Mitton
cathmitton@vic.org.uk

VIC Choir Bookings Barry Hyde
barryhyde@vic.org.uk

Contacts

Combat Stress Helpline

0800 138 1619

NHS Military Veterans Psychological Therapies Service (NW)

0300 323 0707

The Royal British Legion

0808 802 8080 7 days a week 8am-8pm

SSAFA

email Lancashire@ssafo.org.uk

01772 260 462

Citizens' Advice Rossendale and Hyndburn

0808 278 7975 freephone Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

The Samaritans

01282 694929 Mon to Fri 9am-9pm

Freephone 116 123

Op Courage

0800 652 2867 seek a referral through a GP or health professional

Veterans UK Free Helpline

0808 1914 218

East Lancashire Single Point of Access via GP or self-referral

01282 657116

Armed Forces Support Group

01282 613132

HYNDBURN

Outreach / Drop In/ Model Railway Club

FRIDAY

10am-3pm

VIC Hyndburn, Accrington Arndale Centre, BB5 1EX.

Accrington Stanley Breakfast Club/ Drop In

LAST WEDNESDAY EVERY MONTH

9.30am-11am

Lancashire Carers Link, 54-56 Blackburn Road, Accrington, BB5 1LE.

BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN

Outreach Service

TUESDAY

Rovers Breakfast Hub, Legends Lounge, Darwen End, Blackburn Rovers FC, Ewood Park, Blackburn, BB2 4JF.
10.30am-noon

Want to help?

To donate to support the work of VIC please visit our website

www.veteransincommunities.org

Veterans In Communities Charity Number 1151194

VIC supported

by:  East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group



 Rossendalealive BOROUGH COUNCIL

 Borough of Pendle

 ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL



 Find us on Facebook

www.facebook.com
VIC Veterans In Communities