



VIC Newsletter

10th anniversary celebrations

A HUGE celebration will be held on September 30 to mark 10 years of Veterans In Communities.

We will be hosting an evening celebration at Burnley Football Club on Friday September 30 with an after-dinner speaker.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "Has it really been 10 years since we started? The charity has come a long way since those first few days when we were based at the REAL Centre in Bacup.

"We are looking to hold a variety of different fundraisers to help us to offset the cost of celebration night tickets for our members and we are also asking local businesses to show their support by buying a table and sponsoring a free veteran place."

From those early days based in Bacup, VIC was gifted the former Mary Hindle Centre in Haslingden in 2013 – now the VIC Centre on Bury Road – and outreach



spread throughout East Lancashire as well as Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale.

Bob said: "We can have 150 to 200 people at the event and Volunteer Support Worker Mel Fitzgerald is organising the evening.

"As well as our after-dinner speaker, more about him later, there will be a high-quality buffet and we will be holding an awards ceremony to thank our

volunteers from all of the areas where VIC operates, without their help VIC would not be the success it is."

A number of fundraisers will be held based around the number 10 and one being planned is a sponsored trip down Velocity 2 in Wales – the world's fastest zip wire.

If anyone can help to organise a fundraising event, contact the office on 01706 833180.

As part of our 10-year celebration activities, our Monday Crafty Chatters group is planning to create a special quilt.

The group is appealing for donations of cotton fabric and any regimental badges that will be incorporated into the final piece.

Thank you Harry Frost

VIC was fortunate to be among the charities to receive a bequest from the late Harry Frost, a former Councillor for Crawshawbooth.

Harry, who passed away in December 2020 aged 94, was a Master Craftsman in joinery and electrical drawing and later went on to qualify as a teacher working in schools across Manchester.

Harry and his wife Sheila were known to James Neary, who owns Neary's General Store in Helmshore for a number of years.

After Sheila and their son Miles died, Harry asked James to ensure his estate be distributed to local charities, mainly in the Rossendale area, that were supported or managed by volunteers.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "James chose a number of local charities to donate to and we thank him for considering Veterans In Communities."



'Banksy' Brian gets creative

OUR very own 'Banksy' Brian McEvoy has been making his mark on where he lives in Clayton-le-Moors.

Veteran Brian has been painting concrete fences near

his home with huge stunning scenes of his worldly adventures.

Come rain or shine he has been out in his neighbourhood adding murals to the fences.



Outreach



Tiling his way to success

OUR work experience Bailey Ralphs has been learning new skills.

Bailey is a student at North Lancs Training Group and attends the VIC Centre on a Wednesday when he helps out with maintenance and the

Veterans In Production project. On a Friday he is based at the Hyndburn shop at Accrington Arndale.

His most recent task has been to tile a wall in the bathroom at the VIC Centre, and he succeeded in making an excellent job of it.

Operation Courage - here to help you

THE war in the Ukraine is affecting the mental health of many veterans and any armed forces veterans suffering a mental health crisis can access specialist care as part of Operation Courage.

Doctors, nurses and other NHS staff will work with military charities to provide therapy, rehab services and, in extreme cases, inpatient care to hundreds of former soldiers, sailors and RAF personnel each year and those needing urgent help will receive a same day referral.

The service is free and can be accessed by the veteran, a member of their family or their carer.

To contact Op Courage: The Veterans' Mental Health and Wellbeing Service in the North of England, call 0303 123 1145 or email vwals@nhs.net

At VIC, the charity also has a Veteran Mental Health Caseworker, former TA Captain who has more than 35 years' experience within the NHS Cath Mitton.

Contact VIC on 01706 833180.



Bob Ross art class

OUR popular painting in the style of Bob Ross class will be held on Sunday April 3 at the VIC Centre.

The class starts at 10.30am finishes around 3.30pm and costs £45. All materials are supplied along with refreshments.

A packed lunch is advised and places are limited.

To book a place contact 01706 833180 and a non-refundable deposit is required. Payments can be made at the VIC Centre or by bank transfer.

Veteran's send off

A HEARTFELT thank you was sent to VIC for our help to make sure a veteran received a proper final farewell.

The family of RAF Side-Gunner/Radio Operator Sam Thompson appealed for help to assist his great-granddaughter in her quest to have a military presence at his funeral in Accrington.

We contacted RAFA, publicised the call to arms and managed to get the Squadron Leader of 9 Sqn, Sam's old unit, to attend the funeral alongside a Colour Party with his old unit's Standard.

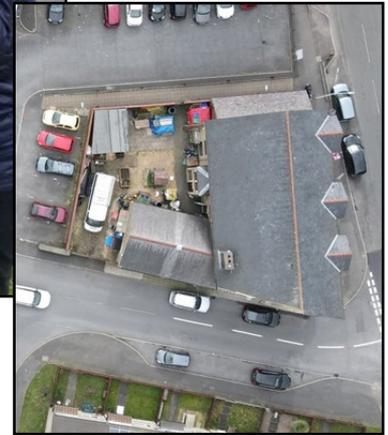
We provided a VIC Poppy wreath and a bugler was sourced as well as several other Standards from the RBL and other RAF units.

Michael Nutter, former Company Sergeant Major in the Scots Guards and Chair of West Lancs Armed Forces Veterans' Association, wrote to VIC to say: "Thank you, Ray and the team. Holly and her wider family are truly grateful for the efforts you have gone to, to inform of the funeral arrangements.

"I thank you personally for your continuing help and support across Lancashire for veterans, their families, and friends."



Lights camera action



THE stories of veterans are being told in a documentary being put together by researchers from Anglia Ruskin University.

A team of filmmakers has been at VIC over the last few months to get to know the members and film aspects of the charity's work which will illustrate how art has helped the former servicemen to transition to Civvy Street.

As well as being filmed, Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell, Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth and member Dave Joddrell have been

upskilled as they have been taught how to use filming equipment and learnt interview techniques.

Filmmaker Katie Davies said: "The film we are making is part of a larger research project telling the stories of transition and funded by The Arts and Humanities Research Council.

"The films are a great opportunity for veterans to voice what transition is like and also for them to define their own identities. They are saying what it is like to be a veteran.

"A lot of academic research involves gaining information via a questionnaire so the veterans do not have a voice.

"In our first meeting we found out how important the artistic projects are at VIC, not just for the veterans but for the community also."

Three films are being made and the project also involves Manchester Metropolitan and Exeter Universities.

Dave said: "It is exciting and I am really pleased to be a part of it. I think it will make a huge impression when everyone sees it."

While the filming has been taking place, a giant mural has been created on the wall and ceiling of the art room.

Veteran Brian McEvoy has also been using his

drone to take aerial shots which will also be used in the final film.

The film crew will be back next month and then in November it is hoped to have the documentary ready for the veterans to edit.

There will be three films made as part of the project – the other universities have been looking into how sports and culture help veterans adjust.

One of the filmmakers, EB Landesberg, is originally from Los Angeles and has just got a job teaching filmmaking in South Carolina, where there are lots of veterans'

organisations. She said she would be taking a copy of the film with her.

Steve said: "It has been wonderful to be a part of the project as I have never been involved in anything like this before.

"I struggle with tech; I can learn something one day but if I then don't use it every day, I will forget what I have learnt. Each of us has brought something different to the film.

"Darren has even got himself a Go-Pro camera which he is going to use to help make videos of his painting classes."

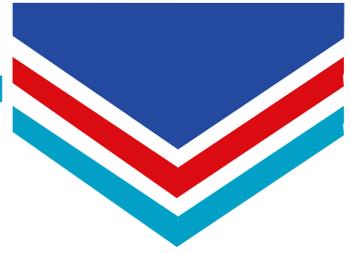
Steve said the

experience would help them to make videos in the future about the work of VIC.

The resulting films 'Turn To Starboard', 'Veterans In Communities' and 'Waterloo Uncovered' will hopefully get a cinema screening in early 2023.

As a spin off, Steve will be going on a sailing boat with charity Turn to Starboard, while Project Worker Ray Sharkey is getting involved with Waterloo Uncovered because of his love of history.





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
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Volunteer Support Worker Mel Fitzgerald
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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



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VIC Veterans In Communities