



VIC Newsletter

Back out on the road

A HOST of social inclusion trips are being planned by VIC and the first was to The Fusilier Museum in Bury.

A full minibus made the trip which was enjoyed by all.

Project Worker Ray Sharkey said: "It was a great day out and we had 13 attend the trip including VIC member Ron Flowers, who is also a volunteer archivist at the museum.

"The Fusiliers were the last unit to guard Napoleon on the island of St Helena."

Visitors learnt about the history of the infantrymen and the 18

Lancashire Fusiliers who were awarded the Victoria Cross in the First World War and are remembered on a stone in the museum's Gallipoli Garden.

VIC member Pat McEvoy is now planning a host of further trips and is asking for suggestions of places that members would like to visit.

The social outings will be arranged between May and October and suggestions include: the Yorkshire Coal Mining Museum, the Fire Brigade Museum in Rochdale, Cold War Bunker in Cheshire, Manchester Police Museum, Imperial War

Museum North and Hanger 42 in Liverpool.

Potential full day trips are also being looked at including: RAF Cosford, Eden Camp, The National Arboretum, AVRO Heritage Air Museum and others.

Future trips will be arranged for Wednesdays or Thursdays, contact 01706 833180 for more information.

- VIC, together with friends from Burnley, will be visiting the Blackpool Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club on Wednesday June 8. Anyone wanting to attend can contact 01706 833180.



Stand-out service

VIC was praised for providing a 'stand-out service for veterans' by Shadow Defence Secretary John Healey MP.

He attended our base in Haslingden with Labour's former Hyndburn and Haslingden MP Graham Jones and Rossendale Council Leader Councillor Alyson Barnes.

Mr Healey spent more than two hours talking to some of our members and seeing what we do.

After the visit, Mr Healey wrote to VIC.

He said: "This was one of the most enjoyable and inspiring visits I've done as Labour's Shadow Defence Secretary – and that's down to your centre staff

and volunteers.

"VIC is a stand-out service for veterans, both in the centre and through your outreach across East Lancs.

"Together you have created such a strong sense of comradeship, contribution and wider community involvement, which is very impressive."

He thanked everyone for sharing their views and experiences.

Mr Healey was very interested in how VIC works and said he thought there could be other areas of the UK that would benefit from a similar service and a centre like ours where veterans can just drop in and get involved in a range of activities.



Corporate sponsors sought

BUSINESSES are being invited to show their philanthropic and altruistic nature by buying a table at a prestigious dinner to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Veterans In Communities.

Chairman of VIC Ronnie Barker said: "We are looking for support from businesses in all of the areas that benefit from the work of VIC that is: all over East Lancashire, Blackburn, Burnley, Pendle, Ribble Valley, Hyndburn and Rossendale along with Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale.

"We are looking for altruistic and philanthropic businesses from all of those areas of benefit to buy a table at our anniversary dinner on Friday September 30 at Burnley Football Club.

"Corporate tables are £500 and in return the business will get two places and they will also subsidise



places for veterans and their partners on the table.

"You will be helping a veteran who has served their country and you may even find a future employee."

Already VIC has had several businesses contact 01706 833180 to book their tables.

All corporate sponsors will have their support for the charity mentioned in the organisation's newsletter, in PR and on screens which will be around the suite at the football club.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton said: "In this current climate, by becoming a corporate sponsor it will be a way for your organisation to give something back to those who have served their country."

The charity has its base in Bury Road, Haslingden, and its veteran services include: a drop-in at Accrington Arndale, a coffee morning at Trinity Methodist Church in Clitheroe, The Sandbag Café in Heywood, the Mess Tin in Middleton, outreach in Rochdale

and Pendle, and supporting veteran organisations at Blackburn Rovers, Burnley and Accrington Stanley Football Clubs.

The charity helps veterans and blue light emergency workers to return to civilian life after service. Through practical projects, support and working closely with Armed Forces and statutory organisations, VIC assists veterans to return, belong and prosper within their own communities.



Wobbly Bob

OPERATIONS Manager Bob Elliott, aka Wobbly Bob, is fitting in nicely with his motorcycling friends the Throttle Twisters' Motorcycle Club.

The club, which meets at Chadderton Social and Bowling Club, has very generously supported VIC by holding fundraising events and more. Although Bob does not have a motorbike yet... he considering getting one. Watch this space.

Boxing offer

A BOXING club in Rochdale is offering ex-Military veterans the chance to join in for free on production of their ID.

Hamer Amateur Boxing Club, on Rugby Road Industrial Estate has launched 'Operation Punch-Bag' thanks to funding from Action Together Respond, Repair and Recover Fund. Contact 07719 883 088 for more information.

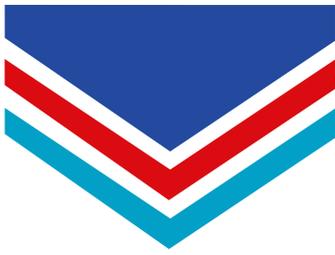
GP stand

AN INFORMATION stand for veterans was held by Project Worker Bev Fowler in Castleton Health Centre, Rochdale, on May 11.

The stand was well attended, veterans made themselves known, referrals were made and future stands will be held.



Veterans and residents gathered to observe the dedication of Ramsbottom's War Memorial with its newly created and engraved World War Memorial Plinths.



Outreaches meet

OUR Hyndburn Outreach and Drop-in at Accrington's Arndale Centre opened for an extra day to welcome members from Ribble Valley.

The outreach is usually only open on a Friday, but on Thursday May 19, visitors from Ribble Valley were welcomed. They enjoyed meeting new members and had a free lunch.

Thanks go out to Pat McEvoy and Aaron

Lorimer of the volunteer team for making this happen

On May 24, the Ribble Valley outreach members also got to watch the 1st Battalion Duke of Lancaster's Regiment Freedom Parade through the streets of Clitheroe.

VIC Ribble Valley holds a coffee morning every Tuesday at Trinity Methodist Church on Parsons Lane and it also corresponded with the parade through the town.

The Platinum Jubilee 'Freedom Parade' saw

more than 120 soldiers and a marching band parading through Clitheroe with 'bayonets fixed, drums beating and colours flying'.

The 1st Battalion of the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, was supported by the British Army Band Catterick and the event heralded the start of Ribble Valley's Platinum Jubilee celebrations marking 70 years since the Army Colonel in Chief Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth acceded to the throne.



THERE was a great turnout at the Blackburn Rovers Veterans' Breakfast Hub where VIC provides support services.



A big thank you to Ribble Valley Borough Council for supporting our outreach. VIC has received a grant of £500 via the Voluntary Organisation grant scheme and this will be utilised to ensure the VIC outreach in Clitheroe can continue to grow..

Anthony Dalton-Hughes

VIC members are invited to give fellow veteran Anthony Dalton-Hughes a proper send off.

Anthony was a well-respected member of the Crown Veterans Breakfast Club and his funeral will be held at East Lancs Crematorium, Radcliffe, M26 4EU, on Friday June 10 at 11.30am.

Any members wanting to attend can parade in blazers with medals and relevant headdress or smart civilian attire.

Standards will be on parade.

A wake will be held at the Mosses Centre at Cecil Street, Bury, BL9 0SB.



Ray joins finds team

HYNDBURN and Ribble Valley Project Worker Ray Sharkey is delighted to have been chosen to join the finds programme of Waterloo Uncovered.

Ray has a passion for history and now undertakes online learning with the charity and assists with cataloguing and researching finds found on the Waterloo battlefields in Belgium.

He is hoping to be able to join the charity on an archeological dig in Belgium later in the year.



St George's Day was celebrated in style at The Sandbag Cafe in Heywood. VIC's outreach meets every Tuesday morning at Sandon House, Taylor Street, Heywood.



Choir sings to shoppers

SHOPPERS in Haslingden's Tesco and Asda Rawtenstall were entertained by the VIC Choir and they gave generously raising more than £950 between the two stores.

The choir was delighted to be back singing in public and veterans and supporters



gave up their afternoons to help collect money while the choir sang.

In Haslingden the choir received a wonderful reception from staff and customers and thanks to collectors – Brian Burrows, David and Maureen Hoyle, Pat McEvoy, Irene Halshaw and Jacko Pearce.

At Asda Rawtenstall the choir entertained



shoppers for three hours.

Meanwhile they have continued rehearsals with Rossendale Valley Sounds ahead of a planned concert later in the year.

The Choir will be back singing at Tesco Haslingden on June 25 during Armed Forces Week. Anyone who can collect should contact 01706 833180.



Kart on track

VOLUNTEERS have been working hard to create VIC's entry for Amazing Accrington's Soapbox Rally.

Now all that is needed to finish 'Willy's Jeep' off is some olive drab paint and all donations will be gratefully received.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "The jeep is being made in the yard of the VIC Centre in Haslingden and we are very grateful to Stubblee Community Greenhouses for the chassis.

"The go-kart has been made by Dave Joddrell and David Green and is almost ready to be test driven,

"The bodywork is looking good and we aim to mount a belt-fed Nerf gun



to the vehicle to add a little drama to the creation."

Anyone who wants to help put the finishing touches to the project should contact 01706 833180.

Sharing best practice

SPEAKERS from a number of different veteran organisations voiced their ideas on what makes a good veterans' drop-in.

VIC Chief Executive Amanda Walton and Operations Manager Bob Elliott attended the meeting of Association of Service Drop In Centres, ASDIC, of which we are a member.

Also in attendance were: Veterans Outreach Support (VOS), Veterans In Crisis, Forward Assist, East Sussex Veterans Hub, COBSEO, Veterans Scotland, NI Veterans Support office, Veterans Advisory and Pension Committee (VAPC), Armed Forces Network, The Forces Employment Charity (RFEA), Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA), Office for Veterans Affairs, Project Nova, Veterans UK, DWP, Wigan AF Community Hub, Forces in Mind Trust, Veterans Foundation, and the Armed Forces Covenant Trust.

A lot of good information and good practice was shared between the delegates and it was a very enjoyable and worthwhile conference. Thanks to ASDIC for organising the event.

- The Armed Forces Covenant Community Conference was held in Kings House, Manchester, and was attended by Bob and Amanda. It was the first time the event has been held in the North and the first conference since 2019. A full report will be in next month's newsletter.

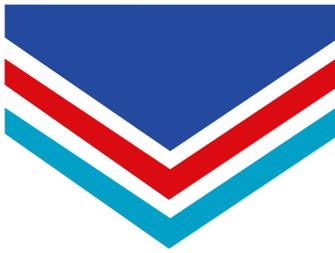
Cenotaph flowerbed

VIC is sponsoring a flowerbed near Rawtenstall's Cenotaph near St Mary's Church.

Rossendale Civic Pride obtained a grant from Rossendale Council for the beds and VIC will be helping to maintain one of them. It will be planted to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Falklands War.



WALKERS enjoyed a lovely trek from Ramsbottom's Nuttall Park, Ramsbottom taking in Peel Tower, Harcles Hill, Pilgrims Cross, then descending down through Buckden Woods and back to Ramsbottom.



Liberation ride

WE WOULD like to wish the Veterans Living History Museum team all the best as they embark next month on Op Banham – a recreation of Lewis Banham’s liberation ride across Europe.

Second World War dispatch rider Lewis, a member of VIC, is 99 and on D-Day in June 1944, together with his BSA WDM20 motorbike, he landed on Gold Beach on the Normandy coastline and then criss-crossed across the Europe delivering vital messages to front-line troops.

Well-wishers wanting to see the team leave the VLHM base in Ordnance Street, Blackburn, should meet there from 5pm on June 9 for a departure between 6pm and 6.30pm.



VIC Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: “We wish the

team well on their journey and hope that they are able to succeed in their ambition of raising enough money so the Lewis and his son Greg can be flown out to meet the team when they ride into Berlin in Germany.”

To find out more visit <https://vlhm.co.uk/opbanham> VLHM director Veteran Wayne Hester said: “The bike is complete and has his original number on the tank.

“There will be 15 of us making the trip and three will be riding the bike: myself, serving Army Captain Ste Tickle and RAF veteran Duncan Balderson.”

The trip, which will visit the countries Lewis did, will end in Berlin.

Stories captured on film



A FILM crew making a documentary on the work of VIC is now editing the footage ahead of the final film being produced.

The crew from Anglia Ruskin University visited the VIC Centre for a third filming session and everyone who has taken part is now eagerly awaiting the next visit to see the edited material.

Song read at ceremony



A SONG ‘Pale Maiden’ written by Falklands Veteran and VIC Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth was read out at the 40th Anniversary ceremony in Carlisle.

Steve, who attended the service, said he was humbled and honoured.

Veterans of the Falklands War marched through the Carlisle streets and wreaths were laid at the cenotaph.

#VICis10 challenge

AS PART of our fundraising efforts for VIC’s 10th anniversary, 16 people have the opportunity to go down Velocity 2 in Wales – the world’s fastest zip wire.

The zip wire has four separate lines that simultaneously travel at speeds of up to and over 100mph over the Penrhyn Quarry with views over Snowdonia. It is a must for thrill seekers and white-knuckle riders.

All participants must pledge to raise a minimum of £200 for VIC, which includes the cost of the zip line and transportation.

The fundraising event will be on Sunday September 11 and is the idea of VIC Trustee Jo Shakeel and Press Officer Catherine Smyth, who will both be participating.

Anyone who wants to take part should contact Amy on 01706 833180.

Thank you

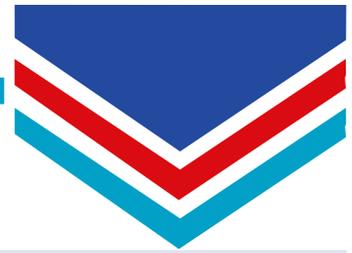
ALL members of VIC who supported the Covid

Vaccination Hub

marshalling

will receive a ‘Hero’ pin badge as a thank you for their help.





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 House, 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

 Cobseo The Confederation of Service Charities

 ASDIC

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