



VIC Newsletter

Paying our respects en France

A TRIP to France to the D-Day landing beach at Arromanche-les-bain, gave Sappers a chance to pay their respects to two comrades by laying a wreath.

VIC Operations Manager Bob Elliott, VIC member Lawrence Gilbertson, from Darwen, and Burnley veteran Andy Holder accompanied Col David Waters RE, who is also President of the Central Armed Forces Association in Preston, and members of the REA Preston Branch on a three-day tour of Northern France.

Bob said: "Three Sapper VIC members were invited to join the Preston Branch of the Royal Engineers Association to go down the Royal Engineers Chatham weekend and then go onto to Normandy.

"The main purpose was to pay their

respects to two of their Branch members who served during the Second World War: Major Philip Kenyon RE and Spr Gerrard Rogerson RE, and to visit the Royal Engineers invasion sites in Arromanches and on Juno Beach."

VIC is planning a visit to Normandy next September and the visit was a good opportunity to look at the sites and some potential accommodation.

The model railway club is also going to make a number of dioramas to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings in 2024.

Bob said: "We were very honoured to be part of the experience, not only as Sappers but to pay our respects.

"Gerrard was one of 8,000 Royal Engineers who landed on Juno



Beach and this was especially poignant to all of us who went.

"We held a short service at the British Normandy Memorial and laid two wreaths, we then visited Arromanche, Juno Beach, Caen and Pegasus Bridge.

"We have to say a very big thank you to Col David Waters RE

and those involved in the planning of this great experience and to the Branch members who welcomed us into their Branch."

Lawrence has already made a diorama of Mulberry Harbour showing the concrete floating docks which were brought across from England to create a

supply pathway so stores and military equipment from the boats could be brought ashore. It is visible at the VIC drop-in at Accrington Arndale.

He is also creating a further diorama of Pegasus Bridge so, while there, took photographs of the structure.

Bikers rock

A FABULOUS Charity Rock Night is being arranged at the North Chadderton Social and Bowling Club to raise funds for VIC.

Organised by the Throttle Twisters Motor Cycle Club, the event will be held on Wednesday October 20 and is the second rock night to be held to benefit VIC.

Good raffle prizes are requested for the night and for more information call Operations Manager Bob Elliott on 01706 833180

BERNERS HALL FISHERY
THE HOME OF 30'S AND 40'S

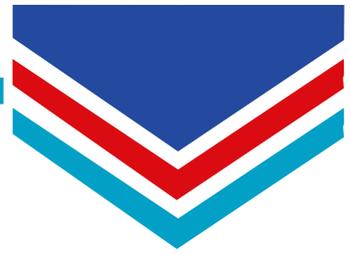
Berners hall Social 2023!

£150 per angler

12th November

BBQ! Breakfast Rolls! Prizes!

Contact Darren Horsnell 01706 833180 to book a place



VIC at No 10



Bob Ross

THE next painting in the style of Bob Ross classes will be held on Saturday and Sunday October 28 and 29 at the VIC Centre, Haslingden.

The sessions begin at 10.30am and conclude around 3.30pm; a packed lunch is recommended, but free tea and coffee is provided.

Classes are run by Volunteer Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell and cost £45 and a non-refundable deposit of £15 is required to secure a place.

Contact Administrator Amy Thompson on 01706 833180 to pay by cash or card.

Marshalls

TWO members of VIC Jack and Pat McEvoy provided marshalling help to the Rossendale 60's Festival in Rawtenstall.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton, Jack and Volunteer Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell also provided marshalling assistance for the Rotary Club Round the Hills Walk.

Sandbag

OUR Sandbag Cafe in Heywood is currently closed, check the VIC website for more information.

TWO members of Veterans In Communities were honoured to attend a reception at No 10 Downing Street with Veterans' Affairs Minister Johnny Mercer.

Bob Elliott, Operations Manager, along with Volunteer Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell, were guests of Hyndburn and Haslingden MP Sara Britcliffe to the London meeting.

Bob said: "All local MPs invited veterans' groups from their areas and there were lots of different organisations present.

"Johnny Mercer made a speech and we all had photographs taken and we got to meet and chat with some of the many groups who were there.

"For both myself and Darren, it was a fantastic experience to see beyond the



front door of No 10.

"We drove down that day and Sara and her team were very good at arranging parking for us in London and had we had the time, she would have arranged a tour of the Houses of Parliament. We can't fault her and her office for every-

thing they did.

"It was great for me and Darren to be there and see all the other veterans' organisations represented."

VIC is based in Haslingden, but works throughout East Lancashire and Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale.

Generous donations

MANY thanks to our local Tesco Community Champions. Emma Bailey from Rawtenstall and Wendy Howarth from Haslingden who provided goodies for VIC.

They also donated raffle prizes after hearing about our weekly Thursday afternoon Greggs RV and even took part in the quiz.

Asda's champion Laura Saxton also joins us for the quiz.



Allotment is blooming

THERE has been loads of progress made on our allotment – thanks to volunteer Jack.

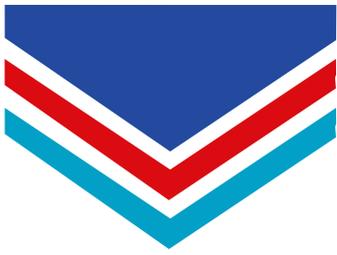
Seeds have been gathered from huge sunflower heads to be planted next year.

A new bench at the allotment, on Holcombe Road, Helmshore, has been made out of a couple of old chair frames and some climbing rope, thank you to the children at

Haslingden Primary School for making a lovely banner for the greenhouse and there is now a solar powered light donated by someone who wishes to remain anonymous.

The nasturtiums have well and truly taken over, creating a beautiful splash of colour and the bees especially are loving it.

If you want to help at the allotment call 01706 833180.



10th VIC AGM

Hanger 42 visit

AN OPPORTUNITY of a lifetime – to sit in the cockpit of iconic Second World War plane a Spitfire – was too good for VIC to pass up.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton and Operations Manager Bob Elliott were invited to a meeting and visit at Hanger 42 Spitfire Centre in Blackpool.

Hanger 42 is run by a group of volunteers who help maintain the site and work on their aircraft and military vehicles.



The hanger is the last one on the airfield that was used during the Second World War and the team has started an ambitious new project to build an old AVRO Anson using a lot of the existing parts and building the fuselage and wings using materials of the day.

VIC is now looking at including Hangar 42 in its 2024 trips' programme.



VIC held its 10th Annual General Meeting at the VIC Centre in September.

At the meeting, Chairman Ronnie Barker outlined the charity's financial position, which was robust, and explained that funding had been set aside to replace the current crew van with an electric mini bus.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton highlighted the many activities VIC had undertaken including, holding more than 300 outreach sessions across the area and identifying, registering and supporting a further 100 new members.

Over Christmas, the centre opened every weekday, for veterans and blue light members who

felt isolated.

Many social inclusion trips had been organised to venues all over Lancashire and beyond and on one trip, with Burnley FC in the Community to Blackpool, two veterans were reunited 30 years after they first served together.

Amanda praised the number and range of community projects VIC members had got involved in from marshalling to designing and planting flower beds.

She said: "We have also established a railway club in Hyndburn, which is amazing. They have built what is believed to be the largest model railway viaduct."

VIC registered as a 'warm place' during Winter 2022/23 when fuel

bills escalated ensuring our members, and the wider community, had access to heat and food.

We also assisted Lancashire Constabulary with the Herbert Protocol reducing risks in the event of a vulnerable person going missing.

Amanda added: "We could not do what we do without our volunteers and they have generously given more than 6,500 hours which would cost us, at minimum wage, £64,000."

Mayor of Burnley Councillor Raja Arif Khan was in attendance. He said: "I am very impressed with your organisation, it is very professional.

"Congratulations to all of your staff and members. You are doing some excellent work."

Out and about in the VIC Crew Van

TRIPS to Whalley Abbey and the National Arboretum were held in September.

The sun was shining when members went to Whalley Abbey and they enjoyed a guided tour of the old house and

grounds and a delicious home-made meal.

Many thanks to our bus driver Phil Chamberlain and Aaron Lorimer for being a taxi for several Clitheroe ladies.

Phil was also the driver for a mini bus of veterans who toured the National

Arboretum in Staffordshire.

Forthcoming trips:

October 10 – Sale Sharks, **October 20** – Heskin Hall, Chorley, **December 5** – Whitehough, Barley. To book call 01706 833180.

Where has the choir been?

THANK you to everyone who supported the VIC Choir and helped to collect at Haslingden Tesco this month.

A fantastic £373.73 was raised and Volunteer Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell, member Jacko Pierce and Chief Executive Amanda Walton collected.

On Saturday October 7, the choir will be at Tesco Haslingden, from 1pm, collectors needed. On Wednesday



November 8 the choir will sing at Jubilee Court in Haslingden, no collectors required.

Grateful thanks to Tesco Community Champion Wendy Howarth for allowing the choir to sing for customers.

Memorial

HYNDBURN and Ribble Valley Project Worker Ray Sharkey was honoured to be invited to attend the 100 years Rededication Ceremony for Clitheroe War Memorial.

He joined more than 200 veterans, dignitaries and families in the grounds of the castle as a guest of Ribble Valley Borough Council and Clitheroe Town Council.



Some attendees had family members remembered on the monument.



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

THURSDAY

VIC Choir (weekly)

6.30-8.30pm

FRIDAY

Art Group

10am-3.30pm

Cost £6 places limited book on

01706 833180

SUNDAY

Drop-in

10.15am-12.30pm

SECOND SATURDAY IN THE MONTH

Rossendale Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club

10am-12.30pm

Haslingden Community Link Cafe, Bury Road, Haslingden BB4 5PG (book in advance)

EVERY MONTH

Painting in the Style of Bob Ross art classes

Contact Darren 01706 833180

Walking Groups/ Social Inclusion trips

see Facebook or website for details

BURNLEY AND PENDLE

Outreach Service

MONDAY

10am-noon

Breakfast Club at Burnley Miners' Social Club, Plumbe Street, Burnley, BB11 3AA.

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

HEYWOOD, MIDDLETON AND ROCHDALE

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 Flying Horse Hotel, Packer Street, Rochdale, OL16 1NJ.

RIBBLE VALLEY

Redoubt Coffee Morning and Outreach

TUESDAYS

10am-noon

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

VIC – 01706 833180

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Project Worker Ray Sharkey

raysharkey@vic.org.uk 07741 902 188

Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren

Horsnell

darrenhorsnell@vic.org.uk

VIC Choir Bookings Barry Hyde

barryhyde@vic.org.uk

**Veterans In Communities
Charity Number 1151194**

Veterans at risk of homelessness

or organisations working with them are encouraged to contact **OP FORTITUDE**

0800 952 0774 or visit riv.org.uk/opfortitude

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@ssafa.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

0300 373 3332 email

opcourageNORTH@cntw.nhs.uk

Veterans UK Free Helpline

0808 1914 218

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

0800 0130 707

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

10.30am-noon

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

Want to help?

To support VIC
scan this QR code



VIC supported by:



Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board



Rossendalealivi
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Putting people first

ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL



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VIC Veterans In Communities