



VIC Newsletter

Blooming marvellous

OUR allotment is looking lovely, spruced up, spring cleaned and with seedlings sprouting and bulbs blooming.

It is all thanks to volunteer Sam who offered to help sort out the allotment on Holcombe Road, Helmshore.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "We have to say a huge thank you to Sam for all the hard work. Since Sam came on board with VIC, the transformation of the allotment has been nothing short of amazing.

"I am really looking forward to seeing how it progresses over the year and the



project will be one everyone can enjoy."

A donated greenhouse has now been installed and the family of veteran Bill Pearson, who died in December, have donated a further greenhouse and gardening equipment.

When the National Garden Birdwatch took place, Sam invited people to come and observe the many birds that are now enjoying feeding at the allotment, including a pair of robins.

A new gate has been installed on the

site and when a donation of soil was received at the VIC Centre, Jacko Pearce and Phil Speddy helped to transport it to the allotment site.

Sam has planted pansies, thyme, sage,

sunflowers, carrots, peas and many more seeds and rhubarb is already growing.

Bob added: "We are all looking forward to seeing the allotment blossom."



Where's the choir?

WATCH out for the next performance by the VIC Choir – on April 15 at 1pm Asda in Rawtenstall. Volunteers are needed to help with collection buckets.

VIC walks for all abilities

AS WELL as our more strenuous walks, VIC has now introduced a Bimble Walking Group designed for those less able to go on the more challenging walks.

The hardy walkers this week went to Burrs Country Park, Bury, and completed a seven miler where they saw the memorial to Rifleman GS Peachment, one of eight 18-year-olds to receive the Victoria Cross in the First World War.

The bimble walkers completed a level walk around the third reservoir off Grane Road, Haslingden, and enjoyed a brew at Clough Head Cafe.

For more information on the walks follow our Facebook page and group or call the centre on 01706 833180.



Banner now on permanent show

THE stunning Coronation banner has now been put on permanent display next to the staircase at VIC.

The banner, from the late Queen's Coronation, was put on show outside the VIC Centre for the Platinum Jubilee celebrations last year.

It is so large, it was tricky finding somewhere inside the centre to permanently display it, but the staircase, which is also in shade so will not damage the material, proved the ideal location.

Work is now taking place on the centre as part of a Ministry of Defence grant. Carpets are being replaced, the cellar is being properly tanked to make it waterproof and repairs are being carried out to the roof and the back retaining wall.





Best practice

A FACT-finding tour of VIC and our facility in Hyndburn was made as part of our work with the Veterans' Places, Pathways and People project.

Preston City Council's Chief Executive Adrian Phillips, along with President of Preston Armed Forces David Waters, Lancashire Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust Project Lead Ian Barber, and Preston City Council Armed Forces Champion Councillor Nweeda Khan toured the VIC Centre and the Hyndburn shop and outreach.

VIC Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "They came on a fact-finding tour to see how VIC operates and David was talking about the future plans for Preston and his long term aim is to use space inside the museum as a base, but initially it was suggested that they start off with a shop front in the town centre."



Craftsmen share stories

VETERAN Craftsman and D-Day veteran Jack Riley got to meet Matthew Lambert from the REME Association, Recovery Mechanics Association

Branch. Jack, who recently received the highest military honour from France for his actions in 1944, and Matthew chatted about equipment they used and among other things how Jack found himself to be in the

REME. As he put it: "We were asked if we could use a spanner, then marched across the road, up a hill and we were in the REME."

We were joined in the meeting by two local REME retired officers Lt Col Stewart Howells MBE and Maj Mark Ferguson who were delighted to have the chance to have a chat with an 'Original' and 'Founding Member' who was on the beaches almost eighty years ago. Arte et Marte.



Help to trace missing persons

AN AWARENESS and information session at the VIC Centre in Haslingden will highlight the steps being taken to implement the Herbert Protocol.

The free session will be held in The Hide on Thursday March 2 at 1pm during the Greggs RV and it will be instead of the quiz.

Lancashire Police early intervention team and the Fire Service will be in attendance to explain the protocol – used to assist with missing persons – and about fire safety at home.

The Herbert Protocol is a national scheme which

involves carers compiling useful information which could be used by police and other agencies to search for and locate a loved one in the event of them going missing.

Carers, family members and friends complete the form in advance, giving all vital details including medication required, mobile numbers and places known to visit, along with a recent photograph.

The protocol is a simple risk reduction tool used in the event of an adult with care and support needs going missing. It consists of a form that contains vital information about the person at risk that can be

passed to the police at the point the person is reported missing.

The Fire Service will also be in attendance to give free advice about fire safety at home.

Fires in the home can often be prevented and Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service is urging people to ensure they have smoke and carbon monoxide alarms fitted, establish a bedtime routine and escape plan in the case of a fire and to take care while cooking and making sure cigarettes are properly extinguished.

Crisis course

OPERATIONS Manager Bob Elliott attended a course run by two members of the GMP Hostage, Crisis and Negotiation team.

Craig and Johnny delivered an excellent course and gave an insight into the techniques they use when attending suicide situations and how they defuse the situation to save that person's life.

The techniques and information was very useful to front line staff or volunteers working in positions where they may come into contact with veterans in crisis. Thank you to Inspector Jim Jones BEM for organising the course.

Easter eggs

OUR friends at Burnley Football Club in the Community are appealing for donations of Easter Eggs for their foodbank.

These will be distributed to children in the local area who will not receive one this Easter. Donations can be left at the Burnley FC Foodbank.

Op Banham

AN OFFICIAL premier of the film documenting Veteran Living History Museum Op Banham project will be held at Blackburn Rovers Legends Lounge on March 31.

The evening is entitled Casino and Cocktails with tickets at £40 per person. A casino, auction, raffle, music, food and cocktails will be available. For tickets call Wayne Hester on 07533 715778.



Rebuilding Benji's life

VIC member Bob Brindley is documenting his latest project through our Facebook Group VIC (Veterans In Communities).

Visitors can see videos of how Bob and his wife Janet have been getting on with rehabilitating rescue dog Benji.

Bob said: "If we can do it for people why not a dog? Benji had been in a shelter for seven years. I use the word shelter, somewhat

tongue in cheek, shelter implies a place of safety but safe it was not. The only word that can describe his treatment is brutal.

"We were asked if we would take him on, as we had lost a dog recently. I had applied for two other dogs but they had been rehomed, so for the next 28 days we are going to give it ago."

The progress that can be seen is heart-warming, check it out on our group page.



Abseil for VIC

FOLLOWING on from last year's daredevil aerial acrobatics, members of VIC, and their supporters, have been set a new challenge – to abseil down Peel Tower.

Last September for the 10th anniversary, volunteers completed the fastest and longest zip wire in Europe – Velocity2 in North Wales.

Now 10 places have been offered by Challenge the Wild to abseil from the top of the 128ft high Ramsbottom landmark

Participants will be climbing up Holcombe Moor on the morning of Saturday March 4, and then scaling the 148 steps inside the tower to the top.

Once at the viewing platform, they will climb over the wall and abseil down the outside of the tower, which was built in 1852.

Chief Executive of VIC Amanda Walton said: "We are looking for 10 people to volunteer. It costs £10 registration fee and we are asking that all participants get sponsorship and raise some money for VIC as they descend.

"As a result of our fundraising plans being published in the local press, we not only gained a new member, a Royal Signals and Police veteran, but he also signed up to the abseil and has gained sponsorship."

To grab one of the few remaining places, contact Administrator Amy Thompson on 01706 833180.



Reaching out

OUR outreach services at the VIC Centre and in outlying areas have had a busy start to the year.

At Greggs RV visitors enjoyed another good afternoon quiz and as our resident quiz master Ron Flowers was still on sick parade, Project Worker Raymond Sharkey picked up the mantle, big boots to fill even for a guardsman.

Over in the Ribble Valley, it was another good but blustery day at the 'Redoubt' held at Trinity Methodist Church and Community Hub, Clitheroe.

Thanks to Ron for providing the quizzes from his sick bed.

VIC Transformational Coach Gill Hughes attended, she also works to raise awareness about bowel cancer and the screening programme that is run by the NHS.



While it was another busy morning at The Sandbag Café in Heywood when the winner of the Christmas hamper

donated by the Bury Borough Veterans' Association was announced – well done Derek.



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

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, Plumbe Street, Burnley, BB11 3AA. 10am-noon

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

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

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Project Worker Ray Sharkey

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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

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

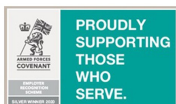
Want to help?

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

www.veteransincommunities.org

VIC supported

by:  East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group



 Rossendale Alive

 Borough of Pendle

 ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

 Cobseo The Confederation of Service Charities

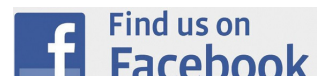
 ASDIC

 Changing Futures Building Better Opportunities

 COMMUNITY FUND

 European Union Social Fund

 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

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VIC Veterans In Communities