

Spreading cheer

THANK you to everyone who donated items that enabled VIC to put together more than 35 hampers to bring Christmas and New Year cheer to veterans.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "We sent a 'call to arms' out in December for food to be donated to VIC so we could make up Christmas hampers for our members who were on their own over the festive season.

"We were overwhelmed once again with the generosity and variety of donations which included: tinned foods, biscuits, cakes, dry foods, tea, coffee, selection boxes, fresh meat, vegetables, presents for children and even hampers for dogs.

"We would like to thank everyone who donated items; the list is too long to name all of those who helped."

As in previous years,

members of VIC made sure the centre in Haslingden remained open during the festive season when most organisations have a break.

VIC provides the 'open all hours' service over the holiday periods because it is recognised that it can be particularly difficult time for some members, especially if they are not with their families.

Over those days as well as banter and company, we were fortunate to receive a generous donation of surplus meat to provide meals and also distribute among those attending the centre.

Ben Wardle, director of Best in Bury Foods, advertised on Facebook that the food was available to be donated to good causes and Rob O'Riordan suggested VIC could benefit.

The food was shared between VIC and Humankind Charity – which runs a hostel in Collyhurst.



New Year treat in Heywood

A FANTASTIC New Year's Day at the Sandbag Café in Heywood, saw 48 full English breakfasts served to veterans.

A total of 51 people attended including many who travelled from the VIC Centre in Haslingden.

A raffle was held with great prizes donated by some of our veterans as well as five hampers provided by VIC.

Volunteer Outreach Worker Liz Davies said: "Some of our

veterans hadn't seen anyone over the Christmas period, so putting on this event on New Year's Day meant the world to them and they had a great time.

"A huge thank you to everyone who came to support us and to all who helped to make it such an amazing success."

Coffee mornings are held every Tuesday from 10am-noon at Sandon House, Taylor Street, Heywood, OL10 1EF.



Singers superb total

THREE stunning Singing Group performances led to an incredible amount raised for VIC.

The final supermarket concert at Tesco in Haslingden raised £627 and when added to the amounts

from the Asda collection and one in Tesco Bury, a total of £1,589 was raised by the group over the festive season.

A big thank you to the singers and the volunteers who helped to collect donations.

Students learn from veterans



STUDENTS on Military Preparation and Public Service courses at AccRoss College have been learning from veterans.

They have been on placement at VIC and as well as helping to prepare the charity's allotment in Helmshore, they have been splitting pallets for Veterans In Production to manufacture them into wooden items for sale at the centre.

Volunteer Production Co-ordinator Simon Peace said: "The students have been good at taking direction and we have started them off and made sure they have understood the commands they have been given.

"We also sat down with the students and veterans talked about their service history and we told them



about what we did and what it is like in the forces.

"We explained that when you join it is like you have got a huge family and they are your family for life."

Brooklyn Royle, 17, from Bacup, wants to join the Duke of Lancaster's Infantry and is looking forward to his training at Glencorse in Edinburgh, from there he will be based at Catterick in North Yorkshire for six months.

He said: "I wanted to go into the

services to develop leadership skills at a young age and to prove people wrong.

"When I first told my parents what I wanted to do they were unsure because I had never stuck at anything but now they are very supportive because I have followed it through.

"The college course has given me an insight into what it will be like and meeting the veterans was good to hear their experiences."

Brooklyn previously was in the Army Cadets when he was a Lance Corporal.

Cameron McWilton, 17, from Haslingden, wants to join the Royal Military Police. He said: "I am thinking ahead so when I leave I would have a job to go to and hopefully I will be able to go into the police."

In production

VETERANS In Production is now advertising its products outside the centre and the orders are coming in.

VIP has taken orders to provide eight raised bed planters for an allotment in Bacup and residents have also been calling into the centre to place orders.

A collection of differently sized planters are available, along with log stores, bird tables, bird houses and even a garden Jenga.

VIP is also appealing for broken or rotten benches with cast iron endbenches that can be reused.

To find out more call in or ring 01706 833180.



Dave Goss



TRIBUTES have been paid to one of the original members of VIC since its inception in Bacup, veteran Dave Goss.

Dave, who lived in Haslingden, was 64 and died early in the New Year. The former Coldstream Guard had some health problems. His funeral will be on Friday February 1 at Accrington Crematorium at 9am.

- VIC members also assisted with the funeral procession of Gemma Greenwood, who sadly passed away from cancer in December. Her funeral was held in January in Haslingden.

Training

VOLUNTEERS who help VIC are taking part in a four-week course.

The workshops explore what VIC is all about, the policies the charity has in place, what VIC does and what is expected from a volunteer.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "We will also be discussing data protection and GDPR, alcohol and drugs and what support VIC is able to provide to volunteers and who they should report to.

The first session was very well attended and included members from the Heywood Middleton and Rochdale areas.

Venue switch

FOR one month only the popular Rossendale Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club is being relocated to Stacksteads.

On Saturday February 9, it will be held at the Rose 'n' Bowl in Newchurch Road from 10.30am to 12.30pm when a bacon or sausage bap and a brew will be available at a cost of £3.75.

The usual venue of Bumbles Cake at Haslingden Community Link is currently being refurbished.

Grub's Up

EVERY fortnight on a Tuesday lunchtime a delicious two-course meal is served at VIC.

To book your meal contact Admin Officer Amanda Walton and pay £2 in advance.

The next Grub's Up lunch will be on February 5.



2018 – an outstanding year

AFC GRANT

VIC received a further grant from the Armed Forces Covenant to continue to provide a range of activities and services across Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale and our Project Worker on the Integrated Neighbourhood Teams across Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale is having very positive results.

VETERANS' WEEK

As part of our involvement with the Pendle Armed Forces Group, we organised a Veterans' Awareness Week involving all veterans groups working across Pendle.

CAFÉ BIRTHDAY

Our 'Sandbag Café' in Heywood celebrated its first birthday in 2018. The weekly coffee morning is run by VIC volunteers and has seen numbers steadily increase. Regular attendance exceeds 20.

SINGING SUCCESS

The VIC Singing Group increased its performances this year attending supermarkets, residential homes and community events.

A second Veterans and Voices concert was held at St Mary's Church in Rawtenstall. The group also performed at the Rossendale Festival of Remembrance.

REFURBISHMENT

The VIC Centre underwent some general refurbishment and the outside of the centre was painted. A sign was made by a VIC member and we updated our security system. Many of the downstairs areas were

painted and the art room was re-boarded to mimic an art gallery.

OUTDOORS

Various adventurous activities were held. We went to Whitehough Outdoor Centre in Barley, canoeing on the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, visited Bowley Scout Camp, attended a bush craft day at Bellisama Retreat and a physical day at an indoor centre in Manchester.

HELPING HAND

VIC provided weekly transport for Positive Start Food Group in Rawtenstall where unused food is re-distributed from large supermarkets to community groups to help those on low incomes.

RADIO LANCS

VIC members Darren Horsnell and Steve Butterworth were interviewed on BBC Radio Lancashire to promote the work that VIC does across East Lancashire.

ALLOTMENT

Our allotment in Helmshore had its best year. Not only did we grow a greater variety of fruit and vegetables that was then used for meals for our members, but we built additional raised beds, a water storage system, and seating area.

CRAFTY CHATTERS

Our Crafty Chatters group were very busy making a wide range of craft items to sell at a number of Craft Fairs.

WALKS

After a survey at the end of 2017, we changed the

walks in response to members saying they wanted longer and more physically demanding ones. They now average seven miles and are held once a month.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Our Social Inclusion trips have included; Hack Green Nuclear Bunker, the Bombay Grill in Barrowford, Yorkshire Mining Museum, a canal boat cruise, Helmshore Textile Museum, Antony Gormley Statues in Crosby, Canal Boat Museum, Blue John Mines, Brockholes Nature Reserve, and a number of Veterans' Breakfast Clubs.

BOOK SALES

We were one of the beneficiaries of the Tesco book stall in Haslingden. Our members and supporters donated the largest amount of books to the sale this year.

AGM

We held our fifth public AGM in September. Accounts are available on the Charity Commission website and a copy will be available on the VIC website.

ART

We held Bob Ross art group sessions nearly every month at the VIC Centre and VIC also held three art exhibitions at the Haworth Art Gallery in Accrington, in a shop unit in Pendle Rise and at Burnley FC Community Café.

The VIC Centre was open as part of the Rossendale Art Trail when a number of workshops were held to demonstrate of our different groups. We also

had a visit from Tony Attard, the High Sherriff of Lancashire.

OPEN ALL HOURS

The VIC Centre opened throughout the Easter, and Christmas periods when an increased number of members accessed the facility.

YOUTH WORK

We worked with a number of young people including: school leavers on the National Citizen Service, young people on work placements with the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and students from North Lancs Training Group and Nelson College.

ARMED FORCES DAY

We organised the Armed Forces Day for the third year in Haslingden.

BRAVO 22

Three of our members worked with Bravo 22 through 'The Art of Recovery' to create some life-sized sculptures of themselves.

INSPIRATION AWARD

Tony Stubbs, our Outreach Worker for Middleton, was nominated in the 'Inspiration Award' category in the national 2018 Soldiering On Awards.

FIRST AID

Two first aid courses were delivered for our members at the VIC Centre and six of our core team completed a Veterans' Mental Health First Aid. We also hosted a Mindfulness Course.

OUTDOOR SHOWS

We attended Trawden Show and The Royal British Legion Haslingden Branch fun day.

LEWIS

Our oldest Second World War veteran Lewis Banham was invited to three commemorative events abroad; two in Holland and one to visit the D-Day beaches.

COMMUNITY WORK

Community projects included; building a shed at a primary school, gardening and general maintenance of properties and supporting the creation of a Community Café run by Burnley FC in the Community.

HAIRCUTS

In November we were offered some complementary haircuts and beauty treatments by Barbers At Work.

REMEMBRANCE

Last year saw our busiest Remembrance period to date and we had members at many of the services held around Rossendale, Lancashire and Greater Manchester.

LEST WE FORGET

Commemorative items were created from a piece of stunning fret work produced by one of our members. These included: mugs, table mats, towels, key rings, coasters, wallets and clocks.

IN PRODUCTION

Our newest VIC project Veterans In Production involves the manufacture of wooden items made from donated pallets. It has seen a rapid growth.

CHRISTMAS MEAL

We had the highest ever number of veterans, families and carers at our Christmas meal in Rochdale - 70 in total.



ROSSENDALE

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

Outreach Service MONDAY-FRIDAY

10am-3pm

For a home appointment call 01706 833180

MONDAY

Crafty Chatters

10.30am-12.30pm

TUESDAY

Allotment and Veterans In Production

Help on the allotment in Holcombe Road, Helmshore, or manufacture wooden items at the centre. Contact 01706 833180.

TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

Art Group and drop-in

10.30am-3.30pm

Grub's Up

12.30pm

Luncheon club every fortnight £2. Book and pay in advance - contact 01706 833180.

WEDNESDAY

Community Arts and Crafts

10am-noon

Art Class

2pm-4pm

Jubilee Court, Jubilee Road, Haslingden, BB4 4DD.

THURSDAY

Woodworking Course

10am-3pm

Computer and IT help drop-in

11am-3pm

Painting with Pan Pastels (from Feb)

1pm-3pm cost £10

Singing Group (weekly)

6.30-8.30pm

SECOND SATURDAY

Rossendale Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club

10.30am-12.30pm

JANUARY ONLY Rose 'n' Bowl, Newchurch Road, Stacksteads, Bacup, OL13 0UG.

EVERY MONTH

Painting in the Style of Bob Ross

Contact Darren 01706 833180.

Walking Group, Social Outings and Outdoor Activities

These are held every **THURSDAY**. Please visit the *Events* section on our VIC Facebook page or log on to the VIC website and follow the link to *Projects and Activities*.

BURNLEY AND PENDLE

Outreach Service

MONDAY - first week only

Place de Creil, near Wilkos, Nelson.
10am-noon

MONDAY - second week only

Market Place Car park, Town Square, Colne.
9am-11am

TUESDAY - every week

Breakfast Club at Burnley FC in the Community Cafe, Charter Walk.
9am-11am

WEDNESDAY - every week

Veterans Community Cafe, 1 Great George Street, Colne, BB8 0SY.
9am-11am

Contact 01706 833180 for dates of outreach at the Pendle Armed Forces Support Group, Holmefield Mill, Gisburn Road, Barrowford.

HEYWOOD, MIDDLETON AND ROCHDALE

The Sandbag Cafe and drop in

TUESDAY

10am-noon

Sandon House, Taylor Street, Heywood
OL10 4EF.

THURSDAY

9.30-10.30am Rochdale Breakfast Club, Rochdale Town Hall Bistro OL16 1AB.
10.30am-noon

VIC Outreach

1 Riverside, Rochdale OL16 1UB.

HYNDBURN

Outreach Service

MONDAYS

1-3pm

Ground floor near cafe Accrington Market.

Want to help?

To donate to support the work of Veterans In Communities please visit our website and click on the secure BT MyDonate page

www.vic.org.uk

VIC – 01706 833180

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Outdoor Activities Co-ordinator Ivy Limbrick

ivylimbrick@vic.org.uk

Singing Group Bookings Barry Hyde

barryhyde@vic.org.uk

Contacts

Combat Stress Helpline

0800 138 1619

NHS Military Veterans Psychological Therapies Service (NW)

0161 253 6638

The Royal British Legion

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

SSAFA

email Lancashire@ssafo.org.uk

01772 260 462

Rossendale Citizens' Advice

0300 456 2552

The Samaritans

01282 694929 Mon to Fri 9am-9pm

Freephone 116 123

Mental Health Helpline

0800 915 4640 Mon to Fri 7pm - 11pm Sat

& Sun 12 noon to 12 midnight

Royal Air Forces Association

0800 018 2361

Veterans UK Free Helpline

0808 1914 218

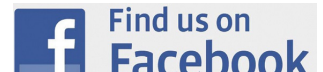
East Lancashire Single Point of Access via GP or self-referral

01282 657116

Bolton Armed Forces Centre 4 Veterans

www.ba4v.org 01204 776628

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