



# Paying respects

**MEMBERS of VIC paid their respects at Remembrance Services held across East Lancashire and Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale.**

At the service in Haslingden many veterans and staff paraded to the cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday and following the service The Royal British Legion organised refreshments at The Commercial and the VIC Centre was open to all.

The VIC Choir sang at Rawtenstall and Stacksteads Remembrance Services and

representatives were also at the services across Rossendale. In Heywood, three wreaths were laid at the town's Cenotaph VIC also attended services in Bury and Tottington.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "Member Dave Almond represented VIC at the Hyndburn Remembrance and we made sure we attended as many services as possible across our outreach area."

There was also a special Remembrance Armed Forces Breakfast Club on Saturday November 9, when wreathes were laid.



**Thank you to Hyndburn Lancashire Police Cadets who generously held a collection in Morrisons in Great Harwood. Hyndburn volunteer Bob Graham went along and collected £217 from the team for VIC.**





## Carole Mills

**THERE was understandable shock at the sudden death of nurse veteran Carole Mills.**

Carole has been a volunteer outreach worker with VIC in the Hyndburn area and had attended many events, team building days and activities with VIC.

There was standing room only at her funeral at St John's Church, Baxenden, which was attended by many members of VIC.

Along with four standards from The Royal British Legion and Royal Naval Association, veterans formed a guard of honour before her cremation in Accrington. The Last Post was also played.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "I speak for all when I say how shocked and saddened I was to hear the news. Carole was a valued member who always had time for everyone and showed great compassion. She is truly missed by everyone at VIC."

Carole's daughter Emma thanked the members for their kind words and attendance at the funeral.

Special tribute was paid to Carole at the Armed Forces Breakfast Club at Haslingden Community Link.

On St Valentine's Day 1977, Carole joined the Royal Navy Hospital Haslar in Gosport, Hampshire.

She trained as an enrolled nurse for two years and then gave back by serving for two years before switching to the NHS as she had married and wanted a family.

When she reduced her hours five years ago and semi-retired as nurse, she decided to take on a voluntary role and began helping at VIC.

She described VIC as the 'big happy family' she remembered from her time at the Navy Hospital.



## David Thorpe

**VIC volunteer driver David Thorpe had been suffering from oesophageal cancer for some time and sadly died this month.**

His funeral was at Grace Pentecostal Church in Blackburn and Pleasington Cemetery & Crematorium and was attended by many members of VIC.

Dave was one of the volunteer drivers for the Positive Start Food Group and never missed a day. He was also a bass guitar player and had played with and for many famous people, including Cliff Richard and The Shadows.

As a coach driver, David travelled far and wide which fuelled many stories and he was in the process of writing his memoirs. He was a firefighter and an RNLI crewman, even though he couldn't swim.



## Sell-out curry and quiz night

**OUR second curry and quiz night was a sell-out at North Street Indian Restaurant in**

**Rawtenstall and raised a spectacular £461 for VIC.**

The winning team was

Vintage Asda. Thank you to everyone who attended and made the event such a huge success.



# Gordon is an inspiration

## Co-op Fund

VIC Hyndburn has been chosen to benefit from the next round of the Co-op Local Community Fund.

Every time a member buys selected own-brand products and services, 1 per cent of the money they spend goes to their chosen cause.

If you are already a Co-op member then please support VIC.

Visit <http://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/38275>

Please encourage friends and family to support our cause over the next 12 months.

If you are not a member you can register here – <https://membership.coop.co.uk/new-registration>

## Volunteer finalist

OUR very own veteran Jim Smith was named as a finalist in Rossendale Council's Community Awards in the Rossendale Volunteer of the Year category.

Jim also enjoyed a trip to Blackpool Airport on a trip organised by Burnley FC in the Community.

**VETERAN**  
Gordon Aaron is an inspiration to others having taken up running again as a pensioner and just completed the Manchester half marathon.

While he was on his National Service with the Border Regiment in his 20s, he ran for the Army in the famous Berlin Olympic Stadium – coming second in his first ever 400m race.

Although he completed three Rochdale 10k runs to raise money for the Mayor's Charity in the '80s, it was not until he won his battle with prostate cancer that he took up fitness again aged 83.

He was awarded the Changing Lifestyles Trophy at Rochdale Borough Sports and Culture Awards at



Middleton Arena and was a finalist in the Greater Manchester Sports Award at Emirates Old Trafford this month.

The 84-year-old grandad, from Milnrow, said: "Last year I was watching TV and I saw a young soldier climbing Mt Kilimanjaro on prosthetic legs. On the last bit he was struggling and he removed his legs and walked up to the top on his stumps.

"I clapped when he completed it and I thought "if he can go through so much then I

can do a marathon'."

His first Manchester half-marathon was in 2018 and he finished in 3 hours and 5 minutes.

This year, he was the oldest competitor, yet he shaved nine minutes off his previous personal

best finishing in 2 hours 56 minutes.

His wife of 56 years Doreen has dementia and moved into Shawside Nursing Home in Shaw three years ago leaving Gordon feeling very alone.

He determined to get himself fitter and began by exercising, which turned into walking and now he easily walks to Hollingworth Lake and back some seven miles.

His GP surgery suggested he attend a meeting with Project Worker from VIC Bev Fowler and he has

never looked back.

Gordon is now a regular at the Sandbag Café in Heywood where he met Sarah Chard from Link 4 Life and now he has joined her walking group at Hollingworth Lake.

He attends the Rochdale Armed Forces Breakfast Club and also joins another walking group from Milnrow Library on a Monday.

Gordon visits his wife daily at the home, although he said she has good days and bad days.

The former builder was self-employed for nearly 40 years after leaving the service.

He said: "If you look after yourself it will help you later in life. I have met some marvellous people at Sandbag.

"Sarah and Bev have really helped me, I was lonely but now I look forward going out, to the trips and meeting people."



## Many happy returns D-Day despatch rider Lewis

**D-DAY veteran Lewis Banham celebrated his 97th birthday in style by being personally serenaded at the Armed Forces Breakfast Club.**

Lewis, from Weir, has had an amazing few years attending liberation ceremonies in The Netherlands and at the Breakfast Club Natasha and her father Paul, who form part of a group of

entertainers 'The Harpers' performed.

He also recounted tales of his wartime history when he visited members of 2nd Rossendale Cubs in Bacup.





# Veterans aid GP's green dream

## Christmas lunch

**THERE is still time to book a place at our Christmas lunch at the Old Mother Redcap, Blackburn on Tuesday December 17.**

A three course meal will be served costing £9.99 per person at 12.30pm and anyone who would like to attend can secure a place with a £5 deposit along with menu choices.

For further information and menu options contact 01706 833180.

## Name the coffee club

**WE ARE seeking a name for our already popular Middleton Coffee Club, which is held at the Lighthouse Project in the Arndale Shopping Centre every Tuesday from 1pm to 2.30pm.**

If you have a suggestion to pass on to Project Worker Bev Fowler please call 01706 833180.

## Covenant

**VIC has signed the Armed Forces Covenant.**

Organisations and businesses can find out more about signing up to the covenant by contacting Lancashire Armed Forces Covenant Hub. Visit [www.lancashire.gov.uk/armed-forces](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/armed-forces)

**A GP's dream to see Rossendale full of wildflower meadows is growing thanks to a planting plan outside his own practice.**

Before studying medicine, Dr James Cowdery completed an ecology degree and he has already sown a wildflower meadow at his home less than a mile from Waterfoot Health Centre where he is a senior partner.

He joined an army of volunteers to help create the new wildlife and wildflower haven and hopes it could be the catalyst to see more wildflower meadows return to The Valley.

Dr Cowdery said: "In the grass there is already birdsfoot trefoil, oxeye daisy, selfheal, meadow and creeping buttercups, common daisy, clover, cuckoo flower and dandelions.

"In my meadow at home I now have three types of orchids that have grown naturally. Under the grass there will be many dormant wildflowers that have not had the chance to grow because of the grass.

"Once regenerated, we will be putting in a path through the

flowers and long grass leading to a circular seating area where you will be able to hear the water of the River Irwell. In the river we have dippers, a kingfisher and a heron. Buddleia will be planted to encourage butterflies."

He said the practice will be managing the meadow's development to ensure any maintenance is carried out at the right time.

To help Operation Meadow become a reality, Veterans In Communities, was asked to assist with the installation of posts and signage and members of Stubblelee Community Greenhouses joined community volunteers to prepare the ground.

The grass around the front and side of the premises on Cowpe Road was mown closely, then raked over to remove any cuttings and scarify the ground.

Once cleared and prepared, wildflower



seeds were sown along with yellow rattle, an annual known as the 'meadow maker' because its roots sap water and nutrients from nearby plants, especially grass.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "Waterfoot is one of the first surgeries in Rossendale to be a 'Veteran Friendly Practice' and we were happy to be able to help.

"We will be providing a bench for the seating area and also bird boxes and feeders for alongside the river."

The Wildlife Trust was also involved in the project and Rebecca Witcombe, a volunteer co-ordinator for My Place said: "It will create a good mindfulness space when people are waiting for the doctor or after their appointment and staff will also be able to use it."

Dr Cowdery and Nurse Practitioner Bob Seeley, who also helped in the meadow's creation, thanked everyone who had been involved in the project.

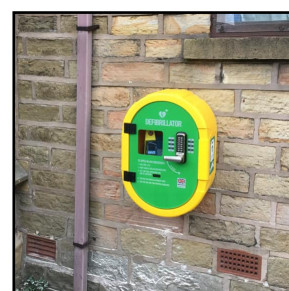
## Defib fitted to VIC Centre

**A COMMUNITY defibrillator has been fitted to the outside of the VIC Centre in Bury Road, Haslingden, and is**

**available for anyone who needs it.**

VIC would like to thank Community Defibs for Rossendale for providing the

equipment and William Dyer Ltd for the installation. A free CPR and defib familiarisation session was held.







## Chefs' cook for vets

**A DELICIOUS meal was served up at a celebration lunch cooked by The Veterans' Chefs Brigade at Strand Community Hub in Rochdale.**

The event was organised by The Veterans Food Co – a community interest company based in Salford.

They deliver cookery sessions for veterans and their families and also community cooking programmes, like the one in Rochdale, where veterans cook lunch for their local community including members of

VIC Sessional Worker Bernard Tighe and Operations Manager Bob Elliott.

Earlier that day, Bob, along with Admin Officer Eileen Smith, Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth and Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell were present at The Crown Veterans' Breakfast Club held at The Mosses Centre in Bury.

Steve had baked a cake for the occasion and around £60 was raised through the sale of Lest We Forget memorabilia. VIC also made special key rings and their sale raised a further £100.



**A superb £447.79 was raised by members of the VIC Choir who performed in Tesco, Haslingden. Thank you must also go to the four collectors Jacko, Barnsey, Eileen and Gary who supported the singers throughout.**



**VIC members enjoyed a great walk up to Darwen Tower on Hallowe'en in very blustery conditions.**



## Christmas wrapped up

**A VAST range of Christmas gifts and cards created by veterans are available at the VIC Centre and also our shop in the Arndale Centre in Accrington.**

Lest We Forget baubles and other gifts, fretsaw work, bird and bat boxes, bug hotels, knitted items and soft furnishings – in fact lots of wonderful ideas for Christmas presents.



## First Aid

**PLACES are available on an accredited Emergency First Aid at Work course at the VIC Centre on Friday November 29. The cost is £65, contact Eileen Smith on 01706 833180 to book.**



**Project Worker Bev Fowler held an information day at Ratcliffe Bars and Function suites.**

## Art class

**OUR popular 'Painting in the style of Bob Ross' class will be on Saturday November 30 and Sunday December 1.**

Places cost £35 with all materials supplied. Refreshments are provided but a packed lunch is advised. Artists will be looking in depth on how to use brushes, mediums, palette knives, mixing and application of oil – bring a picture you wish to change or improve. A £15 non-refundable deposit is required; book places by calling 01706 833180.





## 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

#### WEDNESDAY

##### Allotment and Veterans In Production

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

##### Art Class

2pm-4pm

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

#### THURSDAY

##### Woodworking Course

10am-3pm

#### THURSDAY

##### Computer and IT help drop-in

11am-3pm

##### VIC Choir (weekly)

6.30-8.30pm

#### FRIDAY

##### Art Group and drop-in

10am-3.30pm

#### SECOND SATURDAY

##### Rossendale Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club

10am-12.30pm

The Link Cafe, Haslingden Community Link, Bury Road, Haslingden BB4 5PG

#### EVERY MONTH

##### Painting in the Style of Bob Ross art classes

Contact Darren 01706 833180.

##### Walking Group, Social Outings and Outdoor Activities

These are held every

**THURSDAY**. Visit the *Events* section on our VIC Facebook page or the VIC website and follow the link to *Projects and Activities*.

9.30am-11.30pm

Ebenezer's Coffee Shop, The Old Chapel, Ebenezer's Terrace, Billington, BB7 9NN.

## BURNLEY AND PENDLE

### Outreach Service

#### TUESDAY - alternate weeks

Breakfast Club at Burnley FC in the Community Cafe, Charter Walk.

9am-11am

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

12.30pm-2.30pm

Middleton Gardens, M24 1AB

### VIC Middleton Coffee Club

1pm-2.30pm

The Lighthouse Project, Middleton Shopping Centre, M24 1AB.

#### THURSDAY

9am-10.30am Rochdale Breakfast Club Rochdale Town Hall Bistro OL16 1AB.

10.30am-noon

### VIC Outreach

1 Riverside, Rochdale OL16 1UB.

## HYNDBURN

### Outreach Service and Art Group

#### TUESDAY

10am-3pm

VIC Shop, Accrington Arndale Centre, BB5 1PL.

#### FRIDAY

### Outreach Service

10.30am-3pm

## Want to help?

To donate to support the work of VIC please visit our website and click on the secure

Virgin Money Giving link

[www.veteransincommunities.org/donate.html](http://www.veteransincommunities.org/donate.html)

## RIBBLE VALLEY

### Outreach Service

#### TUESDAYS

## VIC – 01706 833180

Chief Executive Amanda Walton

[amandawalton@vic.org.uk](mailto:amandawalton@vic.org.uk)

Operations Manager Bob Elliott

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Admin Officer Eileen Smith

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Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth

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Project Worker Bev Fowler

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Transformational Coach Gill Hughes

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Volunteer Support Worker Mel Fitzgerald

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Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell

[darrenhorsnell@vic.org.uk](mailto:darrenhorsnell@vic.org.uk)

Outdoor Activities Co-ordinator Ivy Limbrick

[ivylimbrick@vic.org.uk](mailto:ivylimbrick@vic.org.uk)

Sessional Worker Bernard Tighe

VIC Choir Bookings Barry Hyde

[barryhyde@vic.org.uk](mailto: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@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:Lancashire@ssafa.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

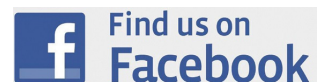
01282 657116

### Bolton Armed Forces Centre 4 Veterans

[www.bafc4v.org](http://www.bafc4v.org)

01204 776628

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