



VIC Newsletter

We will remember them



BACUP CEMETERY

STAFF, volunteers and members of VIC paid their respects to the fallen at services all across the country, and even in Florida.

As with every year, we were present at local services throughout Rossendale in Haslingden, Rawtenstall, Bacup, Stacksteads and Weir, in Accrington, Bury, Burnley, Clitheroe, Rochdale, Heywood and Middleton.

Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth attended the National Remembrance at the Cenotaph in London, while Administrator Amy Thompson and daughter Millie paraded standards at the Festival of Remembrance in London at the Royal Albert Hall.

While out in Florida, Social Inclusion Events Volunteer Pat McEvoy, took a pyrography plaque made by her son veteran Brian, to place in the Veterans Park in Florida.

Phil Speddy, Project Worker Ray Sharkey, volunteer Ron Flowers and other regulars from the VIC outreach and shop, were present at Accrington's Remembrance parade.

Phil accompanied his Army Cadet Force detachment in the parade.

He said: "The turnout was awesome and I really felt the deep-rooted sense of loss, love and absolute pride."

In Bacup, Bill Ogden, Tracy Keir and Bernard and Suzi Tighe held a short service at the Cross of Sacrifice at Bacup Cemetery, while VIC was also present at England's highest war memorial service above Weir and at Bacup town centre parade and service on Remembrance Sunday.



ACCRINGTON



FLORIDA



LONDON



HASLINGDEN



BACUP



LONDON



WEIR



Superb Remembrance poppy display in Stubbins graveyard

MORE than 3,000 stunning poppies went on display in Stubbins and raised more than £750 for Veterans In Communities.

Mayor of Rossendale Councillor Anne Cheetham opened the event in the churchyard belonging to the former Stubbins Congregational (United Reformed) Church on Bolton Road.

Resident of School Court Lavinia Tod and her team of volunteers worked tirelessly to create the Remembrance Poppy

Garden, which only opened for two days.

Councillor Cheetham said: "I am overwhelmed by the kindness and creativity of Lavinia and all the members of the villages here, Chatterton, Strongstry and Stubbins, which is wonderful.

"The memories it must have evoked for people who have got relatives who are laid to rest in the churchyard. It has been wonderful to hear what more they want to do to develop the garden."

Councillor Cheetham laid a wreath on the

grave where RAF Sergeant Bernard Halsall is remembered. He was killed in action during the Second World War, on July 17 1941 aged 24, and interred in Den Burg in Holland.

Wreaths were also laid on other graves where servicemen are remembered or buried.

As well as poppy paths, a cross, carpet and posies, visitors went through a poppy arch leading to the fairy garden where tiny poppies adorned the display.

Chief Executive



Amanda Walton said: "We are extremely grateful to Lavinia and her team for an amazing total raised through serving delicious cakes and

drinks and mulled wine. "Several VIC members and volunteers visited and they all commented on what a superb display had been created."



Dedication service for benches

Photo course wins award

A BESPOKE course designed for VIC to help veterans develop photography skills won its creator the 'Rising Star' trophy at the She Inspires awards.

Emma Holt, from Emotive Capture Photography School, said: "To also know that I've helped the members of the wonderful charity VIC was one of the biggest and most important wins ever. Helping those individuals through loneliness, through trauma by delivering that 12-week course, brought some bit of normality to their lives, some happiness and hope through creativity, and by teaching it my way."



A SPECIAL service was held to dedicate remembrance benches made by VIC.

At Salford Memorial Gardens, Swinton, VIC Operations Manager Bob Elliott and Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth attended.

The benches had been made by Veterans In Production and dedicated, some to Victoria Cross winners, and each bench was blessed.

Bob said: "The service was excellent and was well attended. It was good to see the benches in the gardens and the families, veterans and dignitaries and those who helped raise the money to have the work carried out, were able to see the finished furniture."

Legal duty

DEFENCE Ministers have backed a new legal duty that puts responsibility on local services to embody the Armed Forces Covenant and support veterans, serving personnel and their families.

NHS Trusts, and other legal bodies, must now consider how their decision-making impacts on members of the Armed Forces community.

Battlefields

THERE are plans for a Battlefields Tour to be held next year.

At the moment, the plan is to use the VIC minibus to tour the French Battlefields and it would involve a five-night stay. The cost is around £400 per person and expressions of interest are being taken at this time – call 01706 833180. More information to follow.



Planters donated

PLANTERS made at VIC by members of **Rossendale Men's Sheds** have been handed over to **Haslingden Primary School**

Rossendale Men's Sheds is a National Lottery-funded project which aims to reduce social isolation in Rossendale by providing men with places to go and activities they want to participate in.

Three organisations have joined forces to provide facilities and former primary school teacher Andy Robinson is now leading Rossendale Men's Sheds based at Haslingden Community Link in Bury Road, Haslingden.

The three-year project unites Haslingden Community Link, nearby VIC, and Whitworth Men's Shed and members meet at all three venues on different days.

Using the shed and yard at the VIC Centre, members have already been honing their woodworking skills by making planters from donated pallets from VIC supporter Vision Commercial Kitchens in Heywood.

They officially handed over the planters to teaching assistant Juliet Murphy, who is leading a project with Incredible Edible, to create for a new community garden at Haslingden Primary School.

Juliet said: "They are superb and just the right height."

Children, who already attend a school gardening club, were also enthusiastic and spoke of how much better food tasted when you had grown it yourself.

For more information about Rossendale Men's Sheds visit Facebook Rossendale Men's Sheds or contact Andy on 07517 118526.



Allotment transformation begins

VOLUNTEER Sam has begun to transform our allotment in **Helmshore** by clearing the site and preparing the beds for planting.

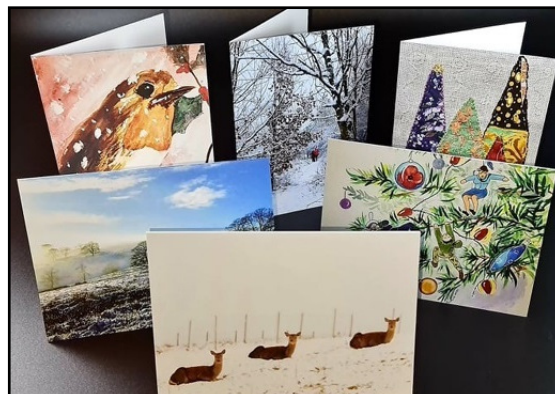
A generous donation of tulip, hyacinth and daffodil

bulbs and sweet pea seeds were provided by Incredible Edible Rossendale are now growing in the beds. A beautiful greenhouse has also been donated.

Over the next few months, members and volunteers will

build the greenhouse along with new planters and shelves for the poly tunnel.

Please contact Steve Butterworth on 01706 833180 if you want to get involved. We are keen to make this a community allotment.



Christmas cards

PACKS of Christmas cards are available to buy with six different designs all created by VIC members.

The packs cost £3.50 and are available from the VIC Centre in Haslingden or the Accrington drop-in, or they can be posted for an additional cost. For more information, call Amy Thompson on 01706 833180.

A stained glass painting workshop at the VIC Centre proved popular. Led by Louise Watson, it followed a series of sessions where members contributed ideas towards new stained glass pieces for Rochdale Town Hall.



Thanks Affan

A **HUGE** thank you to **Affan Burki** who completed his 10-mile run on Remembrance Sunday, despite not being a runner, and raised £465 for VIC.



Happy 100th

Lewis

D-DAY veteran despatch rider Lewis Banham was 100 on November 3 said one of his secrets to a long life is a daily tot of whisky.

VIC member Lewis was born in Bacup and just three weeks before he was called up for National Service in 1942, he married his sweetheart Bessie in the Congregational Church off South Street, Bacup.

After landing on Gold Beach in Normandy on June 6 1944, he travelled across Europe on 'Old Faithful' as he nicknamed his 500cc BSA M20 motorbike, delivering vital messages to the front line.

Lewis said: "When I was finally demobbed in 1946, I got off the bus and was walking up South Street towards Tong Lane when I



bumped into my dad.

"He put my kit bag over his shoulder and when I got to our house, he was very tactful and let me go in on my own to see Bessie."

Lewis and Bessie were married for 72 years and she passed away eight years ago.

He said: "It broke my heart when Bessie died, but what helped me was I went to VIC and Claire Wright and Tracy Keir were there at the time. It helped me a lot and I would go in the art room and colour in, but I can't hold the pencils now.

"I used to say that I wanted to live as long as Vera Lynn and she got to 103."

Veteran Bill Ogden takes Lewis to the Rossendale Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club, the Trafford club in Manchester and sometimes to The Sandbag Café in Heywood. He also applied for liberation medals that Lewis proudly wears on his blazer.

Lewis's son Greg and his wife Shirley arranged a party at Bacup Cricket Club.



Officer Ryan praises VIC

A REGULAR at VIC Ribble Valley is PCSO Ryan Burton.

Following one of our weekly Tuesday meetings, he posted to his social media followers saying: "Today I had the great pleasure of seeing our own local VIC group.

"They are a terrific local organisation and I have never once been in attendance without a lift in my spirits. They meet up every Tuesday morning at Trinity Methodist Church and all ex-service people and relatives are made welcome."

If you would like to know more about the VIC Ribble Valley contact Project Worker Ray Sharkey by phone on 01706 833 180 or email raysharkey@vic.org.uk



'Knight' Jack's VIP visitors

TO CELEBRATE Craftsman Jack Riley receiving his Legion D'Honneur medal – the highest military award in France, he met with two VIPs from the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Warrant Officer 2 Kelvin Redshaw and Major (retired) Geordie Wright-Rivers attended the VIC Centre to have a chat and collate information for a story in The Craftsman, the REME magazine, on D-Day veteran Jack's wartime exploits.



Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth joined veterans from Burnley FC in the Community on a visit to Blackpool FC Veterans' Breakfast Club. They enjoyed a stadium tour before a butty, brew and banter. VIC and BFCitC work closely together with members involved in both organisations.

More stunning scenery has been created for the model railway installation in the cellar of the Hyndburn drop in at Accrington Arndale. Bob Brindley and Lawrence used polystyrene tiles and plaster of Paris to the scenery.





Therapy helps with stress relief



STRESS-relieving equine therapy is being enjoyed by members of VIC thanks to the team from Brain Health Breakthrough CIC.

The therapy is delivered at the Adventure Neighbourhood Farm in Green Howarth, and while some have only just started on their Equine adventure others were returning for a further eight classes.

Some VIC members from Burnley tried the taster session and all agreed that it was a fantastic experience and cannot wait to tell their friends at Burnley FC in the Community Veterans' Group.

Project Worker Ray Sharkey said: "There is plenty of research that outlines how equine facilitated learning helps

veterans reduce stress anxiety and increase resilience and mental wellbeing. This enables individuals to develop better coping mechanisms. Veterans do not need to have had any previous experience with horses."

To book contact raysharkey@vic.org.uk or Karen@brainhealthbreakthrough.co.uk or call Ray on 01706 833180.

Art room mural unveiled

SINCE the start of VIC being involved in filming for a major UK research project into how veterans lives can be transformed, our art room has also been transformed.

VIC members Darren Horsnell, Steve Butterworth and Dave Joddrell have been part of the Anglia Ruskin University project looking at how art aids veterans' recovery.

The trio, along with other members of the art group have also been painting a new mural that depicts their 'happy place'.

The stories of VIC members will be told in a documentary which has been funded by The Arts and Humanities Research Council.

The 'Stories in Transition' project also involves Manchester Metropolitan and Exeter Universities who have been collating research from three veterans' charities: VIC, Turn to Starboard and Waterloo Uncovered.

The finished film and research will be presented to the Government and MOD next year.

The research examines how arts, sports and



culture help veterans adjust when they leave the forces and VIC members will be explaining how the arts and being creative has helped them.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "This project has given us the skills to now put together our own videos and interviews from what we have learnt from the process.

"It's been an enjoyable experience for those involved and we will be viewing the final cut this month and will be able to make any changes.

"Katie Davies and the team from Anglia Ruskin University fully immersed themselves within VIC and saw how our model works."

To see a time lapse

video of the art room transformation check out the VIC website or Facebook page.

A final draft of the documentary film has been received by VIC and, once approved, it is hoped to arrange a viewing at the VIC Centre.

● As an offshoot, Project Worker Ray Sharkey joined archaeologists who are researching and collating finds from the recent Waterloo Uncovered dig at Waterloo.

Keen historian Ray couldn't join other veterans on the actual dig this year but he joins their meetings via Zoom. He hopes that, in the future, he will be able to accompany one of the digs, and help to identify and archive the finds.

Choir in fine voice

OUR choir members performed twice in November, firstly at Asda in Rawtenstall on November 12.

Then they sang at Jubilee Court, Haslingden, and raised spirits and brought happiness to the home's residents who also generously donated £57.26 for VIC.

On **Friday December 2**, in Haslingden Library, the choir will perform a ticket-only concert as part of the town's lights switch on.

On **Saturday December 10** they will be at Tesco Haslingden while on **Sunday December 18** they will be singing at Asda Rawtenstall. Both supermarket performances begin at 1pm and volunteer collectors are requested.



Bygone Times trip

A BRILLIANT social inclusion trip to Bygone Times in Chorley brought back many memories to the veterans and visitors.

On Tuesday December 13, a further trip will be made to Burnley FC in the Community's outdoor activities centre at Whitehough, Barley, for a wreath making workshop.



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

(PILOT PROJECT)

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 Group/ 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, 27a Plumbe Street, Burnley, BB11 3AA. 10am-noon

Contact 01706 833180 for dates of outreach at: Burnley Football 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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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

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?

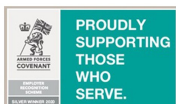
To donate to support the work of VIC please visit our website

www.veteransincommunities.org

Veterans In Communities Charity Number 1151194

VIC supported

by:  East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group




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 ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL



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