

Operation Return

THE community, along with veterans, received a very warm welcome as VIC staged Operation Return.

Thanks to a grant from the Asda Foundation and Rossendale Borough Council, we opened the doors of the VIC Centre on Bury Road, Haslingden, and invited people to look around.

Janet Kelly, who lives in nearby Central Flats, said: "I am a bit overwhelmed at how much goes on inside. I have passed the building many times but I didn't know what went on so it has been really nice to be given a tour and I am going to come back when the art groups are on.

"This is just what Haslingden has been short of."

Members of the Crafty Chatters gave a demonstration, a mini-Bob Ross art class was held, the

VIC Choir was rehearsing, display boards explained the work of the charity and a running buffet was provided.

Many veterans, trustees and supporters of the charity were on hand to chat to visitors.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton presented volunteers and staff with personal thank you certificates for their work during the pandemic and she was given a bouquet as a thank you for her tireless work.

She said: "I am quite humbled by just how many people turned up, it has been fantastic to see so many people in the centre and so many that we have never seen before.

"I really hope the community realise how much this is their centre and how many different things go on here. Our doors are always open if people

want to call in and get involved and join a group, or just for a brew and a chat and that is the community as well as veterans."

Rochdale Councillor Janet Emsley said: "I went upstairs and was listening to the choir rehearsing and they were singing beautifully. It is so nice to hear live singing again and when they sang 'Time to Say Goodbye' it had me in tears; they were amazing."

Also among the guests was the Mayor and Mayoress of Rossendale Councillor Jackie Oakes and Christine Lamb.

Councillor Oakes said: "Having been to the annual general meeting I knew a bit about what goes on but visiting the open day gave me a real insight into the very many groups that meet there and the difference the organisation makes in our community."



Amy honoured to be at Abbey service

ADMINISTRATOR of VIC Amy Thompson was delighted to be invited to the Centenary Service for The Royal British Legion in London.

Amy is also secretary of the Haslingden branch of the Royal British Legion and was invited to the service at Westminster Abbey, which was also

attended by the Queen, after she won a collaboration award for strengthening the links between the legion and VIC.

She said: "It was the first time I had been inside Westminster Abbey and the service was amazing, just the feeling of being there gave me chills.

"I took my mum Dee Lomas with me, she is

also a member of Haslingden Royal British Legion, and we walked into the Abbey through the Great West Door and there was the tomb of the unknown warrior, it was something I had always wanted to see.

"It was a once in a lifetime opportunity and I am so lucky to have been invited."

Gordon soldiers on to finish

DESPITE falling and cutting his face before the start of the Manchester half marathon, 86-year-old Gordon Aaron completed the race.

He was on the way to the start, when the Army veteran fell and cut his face. He called for paramedics, but after 20 minutes, when none had arrived, he decided to complete the run despite the injury.



Although he was late to the start line, and had blood on his face, VIC member Gordon finished the race.

Project Worker Bev Fowler said: "Despite getting injured on the way to

the start, Gordon was determined to still take part and finished in a brilliant time of 3 hours and 4 minutes.

"He showed fantastic determination and it was a real achievement."

GCSE students got the chance to learn all about military careers and the work of VIC when our Chief Executive Amanda Walton and Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth held a stall at the Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School careers' fair.



Welcome Nikita

VIC has a new employee – Nikita Pearson who will be helping Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell with the sublimation printing and sales.

Nikita, 21, from Bacup, who is on a six-month Kickstart programme, studied at AG6 before working with a cleaning company, then at the White Horse Project's Boiler House in Waterfoot and latterly she was calling people as part of the NHS track and trace service.

She said: "I could not deal with the emotional calls I was having to make and my work coach at the Jobcentre suggested I go for a Kickstart job at VIC because I have experience having veterans in my family.

"I am helping Darren with the sublimation work. I will be helping with manufacture, sales and marketing and also social media, the website and our eBay shop

"I am looking forward to the printing. The job is playing to my IT skills and it will be a new challenge for me."

Chief Executive Amanda Walton said: "As part of the Kickstart scheme we have a duty to support Nikita and to help her become more employment ready for the future. She will be provided with workplace coaching which will prepare her for whatever opportunities come along in the future."



VIC clothing

VIC has a new stock of clothing ready for sale.

Hoodies are £22.50, Polo Shirts are £12.50 and T-shirts are £7.50.

Good quality shell Jackets can be ordered at a cost of £25.

For more information call 01706 833180

Book lunch

BOOKINGS are now being taken for the VIC Christmas lunch at the Rose 'n' Bowl, Newchurch Road, Stacksteads, on Wednesday December 15 at 12.30pm.

The cost is £13 per person and a non-refundable deposit of £7 must be paid to secure places. Contact Administrator Amy Thompson to book your place on 01706 833180.

VIC rises to challenge

WHEN former soldier John Dawson planned an epic challenge for teams in memory of his father David, VIC stepped up to offer assistance with marshalling.

Volunteers manned a crossing point on busy Newchurch Road, Stacksteads, for the duration of the event – which saw 26 teams of four completing an eight-mile walk over the hills of Rossendale and completing challenges enroute.

Among the teams was the Kaleidoscope Kickers, a colourful team of four headed by VIC PR Officer Catherine Smyth and friends Sophie, Caroline and David.

Dressed in rainbow colours, the team certainly didn't go unnoticed, and they completed the Sabre Challenge in five hours raising more than £600 for Rossendale Hospice with online and offline donations.

Catherine said: "As the event was in memory of David, and he was the photographer at the Rossendale Herald and Post when I worked there as a journalist, I had to do the challenge.

"Our fundraising page is still open if anyone would like to donate."

<https://rossendalehospice.enthouse.com/searchforKaleidoscopeKickers>.





Remembrance

Cards and calendars

GET your orders in for our collection of Christmas Cards and our special VIC Calendar for 2022.



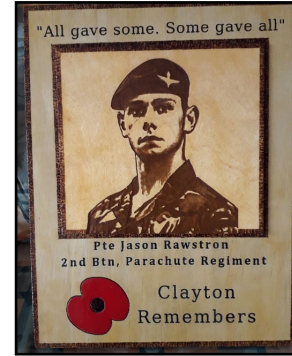
Cards cost £3.50 for a set of six and the calendars are £5. Call in at the office, Hyndburn outreach or call 01706 833180, to place your order.



REMEMBRANCE silhouettes are available to buy from VIC at a cost of £20.

The 'We Salute You' window statues are about 18in high made out of MDF and painted with a poppy.

To get yours contact 01706 833180.



VIC member Brian McEvoy has created another stunning piece of pyrography

Not forgotten

A VETERAN who lost his life to Covid, has had his medals mounted and framed by VIC.

Kathy Hardman, EMDR Consultant at Oldham's Older Peoples Psychological Services and The Military Veterans' Service, helped one of her patients Ruth to honour her husband.

Ruth's late husband had served in the Armed Forces and had been a keen artist.

Kathy approached VIC as she was aware we run an art group for veterans. Ruth had wanted to donate some of his artwork and materials for other veterans to utilise in their recovery.

Ruth strongly believed her husband would have liked helping veterans in their time of need and in return for her kindness, VIC asked if they could mount her husband's medals.

Ruth said: "I am so pleased with what you have done; it has really cheered me up."



Arboretum visit

THREE mini buses took veterans from Burnley FC in the Community and members from VIC to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

The trip was a great success with veterans getting the chance to pay their respects to their respective units and fallen comrades.

For Sandbag Café members Vinnie and Peter, they were delighted to meet and chat to 16 and 20 Signals Regiment Ghurkas.



Coffee morning move

THE VIC Ribble Valley Coffee Morning has successfully relocated to Trinity Methodist Church Community Hub.

Friends and members old and new joined the group for cake and a brew and also in attendance was Ian Barber Project Lead of the Lancashire Armed Forces Covenant Hub, and Ribble Valley Council Armed Forces Champion Councillor Richard Sherras.

Call in any Tuesday Morning from 10-12pm at the new Community Hub at Wesleyan Row, Parson Lane, Clitheroe BB7 2JY or email raysharkey@vic.org.uk or call 01706 833180.



Layout on track

OUR multi-level model railway layout is taking shape and lighting has now been added to the cantilever bridge.

The model railway club meets in the basement of the VIC Hyndburn outreach inside the Accrington Arndale on Fridays from 10am to 3pm.

The two centre spans of the bridge



will have white lights on the underside of the bridge, and the bridge piers now have navigation lights on top as well.



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

VIC Choir (weekly)

6.30-8.30pm

FRIDAY

Art Group

10am-3.30pm

Cost £6 places limited book on

01706 833180

SECOND SATURDAY IN THE MONTH

Rossendale Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club

10am-12.30pm

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

Limited numbers book in advance

EVERY MONTH

Painting in the Style of Bob Ross art classes Contact Darren 01706 833180

Walking Group see Facebook or website for details

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 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

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

10am-noon

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

VIC – 01706 833180

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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@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

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.

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?

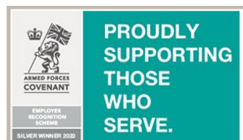
To donate to support the work of VIC please visit our website and click on the secure Virgin Money Giving link

www.veteransincommunities.org/donate.html

Veterans In Communities Charity Number 1151194

VIC supported

by:  East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group



 Rossendale Alive


 Borough of Pendle

 ROCHDALE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

 Changing Futures Building Better Opportunities

 COMMUNITY FUND



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www.facebook.com
VIC Veterans In Communities