

Veterans stories captured on film

A LEADING research project will be focusing on telling the stories of VIC members and volunteers to capture how the arts and being creative has helped them to transition from military to civilian life.

The Veterans and Families Institute, part of Anglia Ruskin University, has received funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council and is working with academics from the University of Exeter and Manchester Metropolitan University to examine how arts, sports and culture help veterans once they leave the forces.

Lead researcher is Dr Nick Caddick, Associate Professor from the institute, and he said the project is aiming to shed light on 'transition' and what it means from the veteran's

perspective.

He said: "The team is also working to understand and demonstrate the role organisations like VIC play in supporting veterans."

Next year a research team and film crew will be visiting the VIC Centre to capture the stories of veterans.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton said: "As well as being the subject of the study, veterans will be given the chance to get involved in the creation of the film, so they will be able to also learn new skills and be acknowledged and credited for their involvement."

Veterans keen to get involved – either by telling their story or by being part of the research process – should contact Amanda on 01706 833180 or speak to Nick on 07931 656 717 or email nick.caddick@ARU.ac.uk



Calendar and cards

HOT off the press – VIC has taken delivery of our 2022 calendar and a selection of new Christmas Cards.

The calendars have been compiled by Pat McEvoy, Brian McEvoy and Graham Limb, with photographs being provided by members.

Calendars and cards are now on sale at the VIC Centre and at the Hyndburn Outreach at Accrington Arndale.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton said: "I

would like to say a huge thank you to Pat, Brian and Graham for all the hardwork they have put in to creating the calendar and also to Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell for arranging the Christmas Card design competition."

Calendars cost £5 each while a pack of cards comes with six different designs at a cost of £3.50 per pack.

Contact 01706 833180 to place your order.

Come and join the celebrations

AN INTERACTIVE celebration event at the VIC Centre in Haslingden will thank staff and volunteers while also welcoming the community into the building.

Operation Return has been funded by a £995 grant from the Asda Foundation and, as well as paying for the event, the grant will also be supporting work on the VIC community allotment in Helmshore.

Amanda Walton

said: "We will be welcoming people into the centre from 3.30pm to 7.30pm on Friday October 1.

"We want people to have the chance to come in and have a look around our centre in Bury Road to see what we do.

"They will get to meet and chat to the armed forces veterans and former emergency services veterans who they may have seen doing voluntary work in their communities, especially at the Vaccination Centres.

"We will have a mini-Bob Ross painting demonstration class, when visitors can see how Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell leads the session and how everyone attending produces a fantastic piece of art work."

In The Hide, the Crafty Chatters will be demonstrating the group's work and visitors will be able to join in and make something while upstairs the VIC Choir will be rehearsing and visitors will be welcome to join the

singers.

Amanda said: "Display boards will highlight some of the many activities that the veterans undertake

and will show just how pro-active we have been over the last 18 months.

"There will also be a running buffet and we will be selling items that have been made by VIC



members."

If you are a veteran and want to know more about VIC and the work that the charity does, contact Amanda on 01706 833180 or call in on October 1.



Mental health support

FORMER TA Captain Cath Mitton has joined the VIC team as a Veteran Mental Health Caseworker.

Cath has more than 35 years' experience of working in the NHS, Integrated Mental Health Services and with other vulnerable groups in the community.

She is a fully qualified Mental Health Nurse and has worked across Yorkshire and East Lancashire. Not only has she worked on the frontline, but she has managed mental health teams.

Cath trained in delivering EMDR, CBT and DBT approaches, mindfulness, counselling and will be providing members and volunteers with mental health support.

She can work on a one-to-one basis and, as a veteran herself, she understands the culture and issues that service life can have, and the veteran-to-veteran approach can break down the barriers.



Blackburn Rovers Breakfast Hub was officially launched this month. VIC is supporting the new venture, which is based at Ewood Park, by providing welfare support.



VETERAN Bill Ogden was absent from the Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club he organises in September as he completed the gruelling Yorkshire three peaks in just 12 hours.

Bill joined friends to complete the 25-mile circular walk taking in the summits of Pen-y-ghent 2,227ft, Whernside 2,415ft and Ingleborough 2,372ft.

The team was raising

money for Cancer Research UK and Cransley Hospice and in memory of family and friends who had lost their battle with the disease during the last 12 months.

For Bill that included his sister Miriam and his very good friend, VIC member and co-founder of the Rossendale Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club Mick Armstrong.

Bill thanked all his sponsors.



OUR Ribble Valley coffee morning and outreach is on the move from Tuesday October 5 to Trinity Methodist Church in Clitheroe.

Since June, we have been using the The Family Thrive Centre, but now the weekly Tuesday outreach will be based at the nearby church on Parson Lane, BB7 2JY.

Project Worker Ray Sharkey said: "Due to unforeseen circumstances we had to relocate, but our new venue has superb facilities.

"We will be in a larger space and it is more suitable

for the needs of our members. There is capacity for VIC to be able to develop the outreach we offer."

Already 25 veterans have signed up.

Ribble Valley VIC has also joined forces with Men's Walk and Talk group Let's Live Life who arranged a special veterans' session.

Ray said: "The walks have been designed to take into account differing fitness levels and physical capabilities and we had eight members attend the first one."

For details on the Ribble Valley Outreach contact Ray on 01706 833180 or email raysharkey@vic.org.uk

Marshal plea

VOLUNTEERS are being sought to help marshal the Rossendale Hospice Sabre Challenge.

On Sunday October 17, teams will be undertaking an eight-mile hike with seven challenges.

VIC has been asked to provide marshals to give instructions to teams on two of the challenges which will be based at the top of Cowpe Lowe, the hill above Waterfoot.

Volunteers need to be available from 9.30am onwards. Contact Bob Elliott for more information on 01706 833180.

Kitchen move

BURNLEY Football Club in the Community has had to close its community kitchen in Charter Walk and the breakfast club is now meeting at Burnley Miners' Social Club at Plumbe Street from 10am on Mondays.

The cost remains £3.50 for a small breakfast and £4.50 for a large with tea and toast available.

In production

VETERANS David Green and Graham Limb used the VIC workshop to stain and prepare wood for memorial benches. David has already prepared and powder coated donated bench ends.





Halo great for walk and talk

WHEN veteran Gary Horrocks called in for his regular meeting with Transformational Coach Gill Hughes, they decided to take their chat outdoors.

Gill had never been to Haslingden's Halo panopticon on the hill behind the VIC Centre. Fantastic weather meant they both enjoyed a great walk and talk.

Gary is supported at VIC through the Building Better Opportunities Changing Futures Project, which is funded by the European Social Fund.



Social inclusion Bolton Abbey trip

A SOCIAL outing that started as an outdoor art class, saw members from all different VIC groups coming together to explore Bolton Abbey in North Yorkshire.

The picturesque setting saw the VIC Crew Van packed and other members attending in their own vehicles.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton said: "The trip was initially suggested by Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell to members of the art group as an outdoor painting session.

"Then it was opened up to other people and a number of the members of the Developing Veterans Photography Group booked, walking group members came along and other veterans joined in.

"Everyone had a great time and one of the key things about the trip was how it brought all our different members together, it unified them and they all worked together and helped each other."

Contact Administrator Amy Thompson if you have ideas for future outings on 01706 833180.



Veterans had an enjoyable walk from Burrs Country Park in Bury.



'Mammy' would have been proud of comedian Jimmy Cricket for calling into Rochdale Breakfast Club.

Annual meeting hears of charity's success

VIC staff and volunteers worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic and are now preparing to celebrate the charity's 10th year serving the community.

At the Annual General Meeting at the Haslingden base, Mayors from Rossendale, Hyndburn and Ribbles Valley were in attendance along with Armed Forces Champions from Rossendale and Burnley, trustees, staff, volunteers and supporters with others attending on Zoom.

The year, up to the

end of March 2021, was described by Chairman Ronnie Barker as 'extraordinary' as, like the rest of the world, Covid-19 impacted on core activities, especially fundraising.

He said: "Day by day Chief Executive Amanda Walton never gave up, kept going, found every available grant and had amazing success."

Throughout the year, apart from Christmas Day, the VIC Centre was manned and project workers made more than 4,000 welfare calls to beneficiaries.

Amanda said: "Many people said that we

were the only organisation that had contacted them and that meant so much to them."

VIC staff were not furloughed and worked remotely during the worst of the pandemic and volunteers helped to quickly move services online aided by a grant for tablets. This enabled veterans to stay in visual contact with each other.

A further grant paid for an online photography course that reached 24 people and helped to relieve isolation and fostered new skills.

Members also stepped up in all

weathers and temperatures to man vaccination hubs in Rawtenstall, Accrington and Darwen for more than 3,000 hours.

Amanda said: "Obviously, this year has been so different and yet we have identified more than 100 new members even though we have not been able to go into the community as we normally would have."

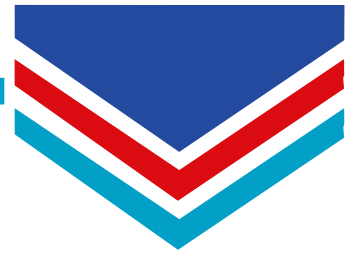
Income generated by VIC was more than £12,000, which amazingly equaled the previous year's total, and more than £4,000 was raised through individual fundraising

and donations.

Ronnie and Amanda praised the dedication of the many volunteers who keep VIC running – the 3,900 volunteer hours gifted to VIC equate to more than £34,000 if paid at minimum wage.

Trustee Colin Crawforth stepped down from his role and was thanked for his service and Jo Shakeel, from Positive Start, was welcomed onto the board.

Tributes were paid to Tracey Vick who sadly died last year; Tracey, along with her partner Darren, was one of VIC's founding members.



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 **NEW VENUE**

10am-noon

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

VIC – 01706 833180

Chief Executive Amanda Walton

amandawalton@vic.org.uk

Operations Manager Bob Elliott

bobelliott@vic.org.uk

07961 554 006

Admin Officer Amy Thompson

amythompson@vic.org.uk

Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth

stevebutterworth@vic.org.uk

Project Worker Bev Fowler

beverlyfowler@vic.org.uk

07741 902 343

Project Worker Ray Sharkey

raysharkey@vic.org.uk

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

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.

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?

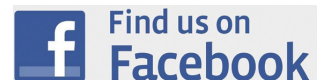
To donate to support the work of VIC please visit our website and click on the secure Virgin Money Giving link

www.veteransincommunities.org/donate.html

Veterans In Communities Charity Number 1151194

VIC supported

by:  East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group



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