

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Medal plaque honours veteran Jack's service

VETERAN Jack Riley has been a calling in at VIC for the last few years and like many veterans, his medals were just tucked away in a drawer at his home.

Jack, 95, joined the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and served in the Second World War.

He was assigned to a Scottish Division and landed in Normandy and stayed in Germany until 1947 as part of the occupation force. He learnt to speak German, he also wrote a poem in German.

He returned to make his home in Haslingden and his wife passed away a couple of years ago.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "Jack is one of our Second World



War veterans whom we have supported over the last few years and we were delighted to present him with his medals that we had framed by our Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell.

"As with many veterans, his medals were kept in a drawer and we thought they would look better framed and then they could be something that can be passed down the family. It was an absolute pleasure to do this for Jack."

Jack was delighted with the 'picture plaque' and wrote a lovely thank you to Bob, Darren and all the staff.

He said: "Well made, well thought out; a real Artisan piece of work, which I really appreciate.

"In colloquial jargon, I am really 'chuffed'. A pleasure for life, and for the family afterwards. It is already on show and has been since I got home with it.

"Thanks again for the honour bestowed."

Open all hours

WHEN other services close their doors, VIC is happy to be able to open our centre so we can be available when veterans need support most.

The VIC Centre in Haslingden will be open on:
Christmas Eve 10am-1pm
Boxing Day 10am-3pm
December 27 10am-3pm
December 30 10am-3pm
New Year's Eve 10am-3pm
News Year's Day the centre will be open at 10am and then the minibus departs at 10.30am to take people to The Sandbag Café, in Heywood, for a full English Breakfast cost £2.

Our successful shop in Accrington will be open on Friday December 27 and Friday January 3 and then from January 7 the normal openings on Tuesdays and Fridays will resume and the shop will also begin opening most Saturdays in the New Year.

Please note that two kind Haslingden businesses will also be open on Christmas Day.

Las Tapas will be open between 1-3pm on Christmas Day for those who are spending Christmas alone or on the streets. A free turkey dinner will be provided followed by a warm Christmas pudding.

Also on Christmas Day Jaznias will be open from noon to 3pm for any families or people in need and anyone who is homeless to call in and share food and company.

Festive meal

MORE than 50 trustees, staff, volunteers and VIC members enjoyed a Christmas celebration meal.

This year it was held at the Old Mother Redcap in Blackburn and thanks go to Outdoor Activities Co-ordinator Ivy Limbrick for organising the event.

Chris Smethurst donated a luxury hamper and a raffle raised more than £100 and congratulations to the winner – Vinnie Houghton. A good time was had by all and a Merry Christmas to everyone.





Choir brings shoppers festive cheer

TWO singing performances in the same week by VIC Choir in Asda Rawtenstall raised the amazing total of £882.

Many thanks to the Choir for the beautiful singing, champion

Laura Saxton from Asda, the staff and customers of Asda and Jacko Pearce and Jim Smith who collected.

Tony Nixon of Rossendale Radio also came to VIC to record the choir and

then played the songs and carols over the airwaves

Laura said: "Well done to everyone. It is always a real pleasure to have you in store. Thanks for kicking off our festive entertainment."



Memorial sponsored walks

TWO sponsored walks between Cenotaphs and memorials arranged by members of the Conservative Party in Burnley are set to have raised around £500 for VIC.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "I would like to say thank you to Phil Chamberlain and all the members of Burnley Conservative Party for all their efforts."

The town's new Conservative MP Antony

Higginbotham has also been presented with a VIC lapel badge kindly donated by Burnley Councillor Dale Ferrier, so look out for the white badge when he makes his maiden speech in Parliament.

The daughter of former VIC Volunteer Outreach Worker Carole Mills Emma has shared this photograph from her mother's funeral at Accrington Crematorium when Standards preceded the funeral hearse and veterans formed a guard of honour.



Brian and Buffy aid Poppy Appeal

Veteran Brian McEvoy and his assistance dog Buffy helped to raise money for The Royal British Legion in Asda Rawtenstall.

This year the Rawtenstall RBL raised more than £12,000 during the Poppy Appeal period. VIC delivered and collected many of the boxes to local businesses and schools.

Workshop for doctors

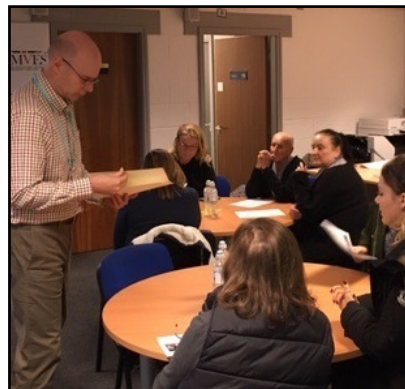
PROJECT lead for Lancashire Armed Forces Covenant Hub Ian Barber and VIC's Operations Manager Bob Elliott delivered a workshop for GPs.

Staff from Preston doctors' surgeries were

invited to the session when Ian and Bob explained the advantages of becoming an Armed Forces Veteran Friendly Practice.

The session aimed to increase the understanding of the needs of the 10 per cent of the population who have a link to the Armed Forces, explained the barriers faced by veterans in seeking help and also the wide range of specialist services and funds that GPs can refer veterans to.

Further advice sessions are planned in areas across Lancashire.





NAAFI Break

THANKS to the generosity of Greggs in Haslingden, the VIC Centre will be setting up a NAAFI Break coffee morning every Thursday morning.

Any pasties left unsold in the Deardengate shop on a Wednesday, are donated to VIC the following day.

They are then free for veterans who accl into the centre to take part in the organised activities to have a brew and enjoy a pasty.

Co-op grant

DON'T forget to pick VIC Hyndburn to benefit from the next round of the Co-op Local Community Fund.

Every time a Co-op member buys selected own-brand products and services, one percent of the money they spend goes to their chosen cause.

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

Bob Ross

VIC will be holding the next 'Painting in the style of Bob Ross' class on Saturday December 28 and Sunday December 29.

The cost is £35 with all materials supplied.

The classes begin at 10.30am, but please arrive 15 minutes early to get organised.

Classes should finish around 3pm.

Refreshments are provided but a packed lunch is advised.

Places are limited and must be pre-booked.

Note that a £15 non refundable deposit is required.



Hampers of joy

A SPECIAL Santa treat was contained in all our veterans' hampers that were distributed on the run up to Christmas.

VIC has been given surplus army ration packs from the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment and included them in the hampers being given to older veterans, single veterans and

those with young families.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "We have already made 25 hampers and will have completed more than 30 before Christmas.

"There is a difference with the hampers this year, because we have included ration packs, the veterans will know just what to do with

them.

"We are very grateful for all the generous donations of food to go into the hampers that we have received this year."

Hampers will be distributed to members in East Lancashire, Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale.

Tom Griffiths, who has been supporting veterans with their appeals for benefits, has donated a range of books for those who wish to research the First World War or would like to sit down and read with a brew in The Hide.



Brian makes his mark

WITH no desire to paint on a canvas, veteran Brian McEvoy has found a different way to show his creative side and make his mark.

Brian, from Accrington, is a volunteer and helps to run the VIC Shop in the Arndale Centre.

He said: "I wanted to work with wood and so I tried to carve it and I bought a Dremel and started to drill into the wood then I just decided to start burning the wood."



Sessional Worker at VIC Bernard Tighe lent Brian a soldering iron to practice with and then bought him a pyrography kit and he has not looked back.

A whole selection of items he has made

including baubles and pictures are now for sale at the VIC Shop.

Brian will also be leading a weekly pyrography session to pass on his skills to others in the New Year.

Vacancy

VIC is seeking an Administration Assistant to work in the VIC Centre in Haslingden.

The successful applicant will have excellent communication and organisational skills and the ability to work as part of a team as well as with minimal supervision.

Contact 01706 833180 for more information.

Applicants should submit a CV and personal statement on their ability to meet the job description and person specification by 12 noon on Friday January 11 to Chief Executive amandawalton@vic.org.uk



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.

RIBBLE VALLEY

Outreach Service

TUESDAYS

VIC – 01706 833180

Chief Executive Amanda Walton

amandawalton@vic.org.uk

Operations Manager Bob Elliott

bobelliott@vic.org.uk

07961 554 006

Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth

stevebutterworth@vic.org.uk

Project Worker Bev Fowler

beverlyfowler@vic.org.uk

07741 902 343

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

Outdoor Activities Co-ordinator Ivy Limbrick

ivylimbrick@vic.org.uk

Sessional Worker Bernard Tighe

VIC Choir Bookings Barry Hyde

barryhyde@vic.org.uk

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

Mindmatter via GP or self-referral

Hyndburn 01254 226007

Rossendale 01282 657792

Burnley 01282 657268

Pendle 01282 657927

Veterans Gateway 0808 167 7542

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

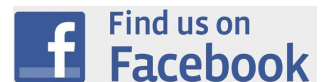
visit our website and click on the secure

Virgin Money Giving link

www.veteransincommunities.org/donate.html

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