



Veterans visit Army college

VIC members were among the first to visit the Army Foundation College in Harrogate since the pandemic started.

The college had to

go into lockdown to protect the young soldiers as because of their age they were ineligible for vaccinations. They continued with their

training and were able to pass out.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "The trip was organised by Burnley Football Club in the

Community and we had members on the VIC crew van as well as the minibus from Burnley.

"We got to see the dress rehearsal of the

passing out parade. It was good to see the next generation of junior soldiers; they were a credit to college and their instructors."

Gordon tops walk off with Snowdon climb

VETERAN Gordon Aaron not only completed a 1,000 mile walk for charity – he celebrated it by climbing 3,650ft high Mount Snowdon on his 86th birthday.

In his 20s, Gordon, from Milnrow, ran for the Army while completing his National Service with the Army Border Regiment.

He began his 1,000-mile challenge in January, completed it two weeks early in July, and has now swapped his walking boots for training shoes as he switches walking for running to prepare for the Manchester half-marathon in October.

Gordon said: "I believe if you set your mind to it, you can achieve anything. If you look after your

body then it will look after you."

As he is a member of VIC, he used the challenge to raise money for the charity and so far has raised £1,200 through online and offline donations. Further money will be raised for VIC when he completes the half-marathon.

He said: "Sarah Shard, who works for Activ8te Me which used to be Link 4 Life at Hollingworth Lake, organises walks for the elderly and she is a great lady and is a good friend.

"She organised for me to climb Snowdon on my 86th birthday and she brought along her dog Molly, a Jack Russell and Staffordshire cross.

"When we got to about 200m from the top, I was slowing down to do breathing exercises and Molly



was looking at me as if to say 'come on, let's go.'

"Then she was almost dragging Sarah to the top of the mountain. She is a brilliant dog.

"I got stuck in a crevice on the way down and I fell and landed in a group of walkers, thankfully I had my two poles.

"My hamstring went, my calves went, my feet and my heels and I thought wow I

have to start looking after myself.

"I had four days of aches and pains. However, I am back now, working up to the half-marathon and I am starting with fast walking – around seven and a half miles to Hollingworth Lake."

Five years ago, Gordon was treated for prostate cancer and the radiotherapy damaged his immune system.

He changed his diet and his lifestyle, returned to walking and running and now is in good health and his immune system has returned, defying the doctor's predictions.

Gordon added: "I may be 86 but I feel about 40. I felt on top of the world when I got to the summit of Snowdon, I appreciate life and am so grateful to Sarah for organising the trip."

Afghanistan – VIC offers support

THE events in Afghanistan over the last few weeks are very disturbing for those who have served there over the last 20 years.

In total 457 British forces personnel or Ministry of Defence civilians died since the start of operations in October 2001, and many thousands more have been left with life changing injuries, both physical and mental.

Veterans In Communities Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "It is worth remembering that we were one of a number

of other countries involved in the coalition over this period, and their servicemen and women will no doubt be feeling the same as our British servicemen and women, their families and friends.

"There are also several local service charities that can also offer support at this difficult time and if we are unable to help then we find one that can help as each charity can't offer a full package and charities working together is the only way forward.

"Operation Courage, which

the NHS launched earlier in the year, is also able to offer more specialist support. To access Operation Courage urgent care and support service, contact your healthcare professional and seek a referral.

"Over the last few days, we've seen and spoken to some of our members who are already being affected by the news coming out of the country.

"Our VIC team is here if anybody would like to speak to us. You can contact the office on 01706 833180 or email info@vic.org.uk"



Bob Ross class

ARTISTS created beautiful triptych seascapes at the Painting in the style of Bob Ross class.

The next class is on Sunday September 5 at 10.30am. The cost is £45 with all materials supplied. Contact Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell for more information on 01706 833180.

Welcome back celebration

WE ARE planning a welcome back celebration at the VIC Centre to say thank you to staff and volunteers for their dedication and hard work.

Chief Executive Amanda Walton said: "I am delighted to announce that VIC has received £995 from the Asda Foundation, which will be used to support the work on our community allotment in Helmshore.

"The grant will also help to fund a welcome back and relaunch party in September at the VIC Centre when we will be opening up the centre to visitors.

"This will be an opportunity for us to say thank you to the wonderful staff and volunteers for everything they have done for us over the past 18 months to support members and also to support the local community."

In memoriam

THE Sandbag Café in Heywood was closed on August 24 as members attended Rochdale Crematorium for the funeral of Brian Whitlow.



Brian was 83 and had served in the REME.

A member of the Trafford Veterans Club Tommy Norfolk also passed away.

Tommy served in Special Air Service during the Second World War and we were honoured to meet him when he attended the VIC Centre.



Donations

VIC would like to say thank you to the families of veterans Mick Armstrong and Harvey 'Paddy' O'Hara for their kind donations following the passing of their relatives.

Raffle

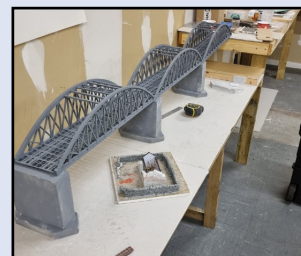
THANKS to VIC member Pat McEvoy for organising a raffle at the Hyndburn Veterans Drop-in over the last few weeks, it raised £106.

Facebook

VIC has now introduced dedicated Facebook pages for Hyndburn, Ribble Valley and the Mess Tin in Middleton.

The pages support the work of the outreach and project workers in those areas, provide details of events that are happening and give a platform for veterans to share their views.

On track



MODEL Railway enthusiasts are chuffed with the progress of their layout as a complicated bridge is taking shape at the VIC Shop in Accrington's Arndale.

Trustee of VIC Bob Smethurst and his wife Chris held a Big Tea Party and raised nearly £300 which was split between VIC and a Breast Cancer charity.





Breakfast hub opens doors at Rovers

A NEW Veterans' Breakfast Hub at Blackburn Rovers is being supported by VIC Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth who is helping with welfare issues.

The Hub, is based in the Legends Lounge at the Darwen End of Ewood Park, BB2 4JF, every Tuesday from 10.30am to 12 noon and costs £3 including breakfast.

It is organised by Community Welfare



Officer Chris McGrail with the support of the Veterans Living History Museum. VHLM also donated £300 to kickstart the breakfast hub and £1,100 was received from local donations.

Chris said: "We held the first meeting in August and will be officially launching on September 7. Rovers have done some work with veterans in the past but only on a small scale; I want this to be

larger.

"We have already consulted to see what activities members want to do and we will be organising fishing, bowling, darts and footgolf – football golf – and will be working with VIC.

"When I said I wanted to set this up it was initially to get veterans socialising more and at the first event a female veteran offered to set the quiz for the next hub

meeting; that is just what I wanted to see happen."

Rovers Breakfast Hub is also linking with Albion Mill, which provides supported living and a dementia care home. There is a communal garden area which will become a vegetable patch and there is also room for a 'man' shed.

For more information call Chris on 07787 585109 or email Chris.McGrail@brfctrust.co.uk



VIC AGM

THE VIC annual general meeting will be held in person and online via Zoom on Wednesday September 15.

Doors at the centre open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start and all visitors should inform Administrator Amy Thompson of their attendance and also bring along their vaccination card to show they have had both jobs.

Attendance is also welcome online over Zoom – meeting ID 891 0118 1006 passcode 711688.

Social trip

MINIBUS places on a social inclusion trip to Bolton Abbey were snapped up quickly, but members who want to drive themselves are welcome to make their own way.

The trip, on September 8 leaves the VIC Centre at 9am. A packed lunch is advised, but there is also a café.

Art on show

WORK of artists from VIC went on display in Burnley Football Club in the Community Kitchen at Charter Walk in Burnley.



VIC calendar

THANKS to members, a fundraising calendar is being put together to celebrate the hard work of VIC.

Pre-orders are being taken for the VIC 2022 Calendar and each month will show a different activity and the members who were involved. Calendars cost £5

This year VIC has also revamped its Christmas card range with a new set of images. A set of six costs £3.50.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "Thank you to Pat, Brian and Graham for sorting the calendar, and to all the members who kindly provided their photographs for use, and to Darren for organising the Christmas cards and everyone who sent card designs."

To pre-order calendars or cards call 01706 833180.



Busy month for VIP

IT WAS a busy August for Veterans In Production volunteers as they created bespoke items from recycled pallets.

Various members were involved in creating a garden nook. The large outdoor covered seat was delivered to Great Harwood;

thanks to Graham Limb, Raymond Sharkey, Phil Speddy, Jacko Pearce and Phillip Mills for their help. Christine provided a lovely buffet as a reward.

Wendie created a wheelie bin store which was delivered to Crawshawbooth.

We are also

providing three large planters for Haslingden and Helmshore Civic Pride for Townsend Street, Haslingden. and will be refurbishing some benches on Deardengate.



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 the Community Kitchen, Charter Walk.

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

The Family Thrive Centre, New Market Street, Clitheroe, BB7 2JW.

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

Rossendale Citizens' Advice

0300 456 2552

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?

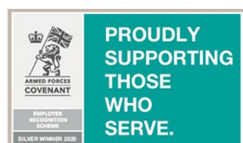
To donate to support the work of VIC please visit our website and click on the secure Virgin Money Giving link

www.veteransincommunities.org/donate.html

Veterans In Communities Charity Number 1151194

VIC supported

by:



www.facebook.com
VIC Veterans In Communities