

Marshalling over and out

WE HAVE completed the last sessions as volunteer marshals supporting the Covid Vaccination Hubs at Rawtenstall Primary Health Care Centre and at the Acorn Centre in Accrington.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "We have done a bit of maths and since Christmas, VIC has completed 50 days outside car park marshalling in Rawtontall alone.

"Volunteers have provided around 4,000 hours of visible support, plus extra hours arranging the logistics, and there has been a team of about 30 different volunteers both veterans, supporters

and helpers, just in Rossendale.

"We have braved temperatures of -5, snow, hail, thunder, lightning, rain and even some sunshine which meant getting the suncream out."

Every week, when new vaccination dates were announced, volunteers stepped forward to provide support.

Bob added: "We have all gained a great deal out of being part of the



solution.

"Veterans have loved being able to put people at their ease before they went in for their vaccination and it has been an honour to have been the first person some people have seen and talked to in months as they have not left their home since lockdown.

"We have smiled behind the masks

when we received a thumbs up as people left the car park having been vaccinated and we have appreciated each and every thank you we have received and wished people well and said have a lovely day back."

Some of us even widened our waistlines after tucking into cakes, chocolates, drinks and

lunch, generously provided by too many people to mention.

The team have guided thousands of vehicles safely into the car parks in Rawtenstall and Accrington and pleaded with many not to park illegally... mostly with the right result.

Now it is time to concentrate on the core VIC activities.

The world would not function without selfless folk doing their bit - Mike Platt

Brilliant and well done - Norman N Elaine McLaren

Thanks all you heroes - Veronica Slater

Great job Thank you to all the volunteers who have helped to roll out the vaccine. You are all awesome - Kath Slaughter

You are absolutely brilliant!!!! We couldn't of done this without you. Met most of you and you are all beautiful people inside and out, hats off to you all and thank you

Some of your messages of support

so much for all your hard work and commitment in sometimes adverse conditions - Christine Goodman

So proud of you all X - Frances Whitehead

Well done everyone, praise due for effort given, excellent - John Lord

Thank you all you guys are heroes xx - Dot Loretan

Aww wow great job all who have put hours of work into getting people vaccinated thank you x - Tracy

Askew

Thanks for excellent job and volunteering. Amazing work!! Well done everyone!! - Dr Magdy Aglan

Without your support, help and dedication we couldn't have managed the last 5 months to each and every one of you Thank-you so very much, it's been fantastic to work alongside you - Becky Langowski

Thank you very much every person has done a great job - Marilyn Greenhalgh

Fantastic, well done all the volunteers because without you it wouldn't have worked so smoothly - Hilary Fairclough

You have done a fabulous job - well done and thank you! - Lynne Kemp

Thank you all, such a friendly atmosphere - Elysia Bulger

Thanks for a job well done! Much appreciated - Veronica Holt

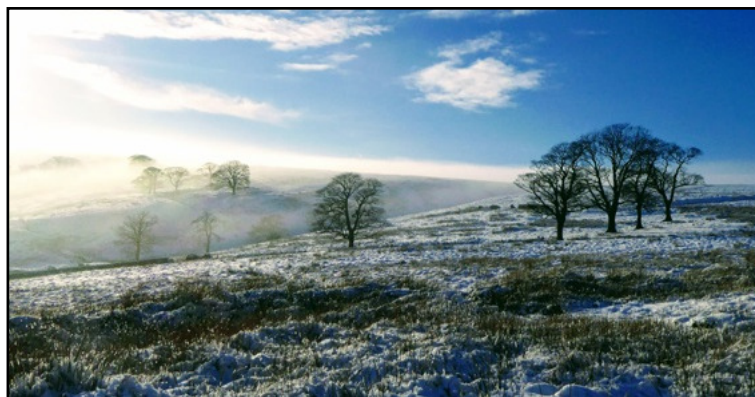
Thank you to you all x - Heather Rose

Thank you to each and every one of you - Therese Balmain

Thank you you're amazing xx - Margaret Ruane

Thank you all. You have done an amazing job - Thelma Holden

I hope the Government realises why the vaccine programme has worked so well in the UK. It would not have been possible without volunteers such as you and all the other people who have been going the extra mile throughout the pandemic! Good work. - Clare Roebuck (in Australia)



Christmas card winners

MAKE someone's Christmas extra special with a unique VIC Christmas card.

A competition was held to select new cards for 2021 and the lucky winners were (from top centre):

Ivy Limbrick who took the stunning snowy landscape photograph;

Vanessa Winterburn painted the animated cartoon Christmas tree;

Jane Tandy embroidered Christmas trees;

Bernard Tighe took the photograph of the three deer;

Graham Limb painted the robin;

Carol Duckworth photographed

a couple walking in snowy woods; .

The cards will be printed ready for sale or distribution in August 2021.

Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell said: "I would like to say a massive thanks for all the entries, they were of a very high standard. Special thanks to the judges who had a very hard job choosing the final six cards."



Sandbag reopens

AFTER months of communicating online over Zoom, members of The Sandbag Café were delighted to be back at Sandon House, Heywood.

Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth said: "A special morning was had by all who attended, as was evident in the photos, especially the one of Gordon and Vinny showing what a special moment meeting face to face was. Sometimes we forget how important these events can be, especially to those living on their own."

Andy and Sarah Bell were thanked for their hard work during lockdown. During lockdown, they providing meals and a listening ear, as well as looking after five young children at home.

Steve also praised chairman of The Sandbag Cafe Committee Ian Rosales, who gave his time willingly and freely, to visit those who would have been most unlikely to see anyone at all.

Ian also has helped at Sandon House delivering meals.

Steve added:



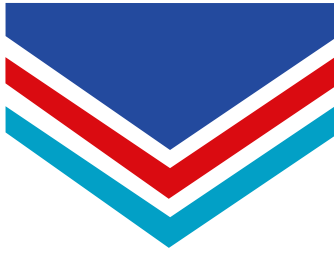
"Project Worker Bev Fowler managed to keep things on an even keel as well, doing what she does best, dealing with any welfare queries but not having had her second job yet, was not able to attend on the first

morning back.

"Zoom was great when needed, and we were very lucky getting the grant to provide tablets to our members, however I think we would all agree that a bacon butty and a brew is better in The Sandbag."

Walkers enjoyed a 5.7 mile circular hike from Clough Head in Haslingden, to Hog Lowe Pike, and Musbury Heights. The next walk will be on Thursday June 10 meeting at 9.30am at Hollingworth Lake, Littleborough, for a six-mile circular hike to Blackstone Edge.





A million steps

A VETERAN whose Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and anxiety mean he sometimes struggles to leave his home, has set himself a million-step charity challenge.

Since Christmas, the VIC team has been volunteering at Rossendale's Vaccination Hub in Rawtenstall and Graham has completed a shift every day that the charity has been called upon.

Now, as VIC steps away from that commitment, Graham has decided to step into a new challenge.

The former soldier and firefighter found last year's first lockdown very hard as he became isolated, so he took up walking.

Graham, 46, said: "Being a former firefighter, I felt really useless. The world was in chaos and I couldn't do anything about it.

"Then VIC had the opportunity to step up where we were needed and we could make a difference at the vaccination hub. So, at the first opportunity, I took it.

"Some days, when my anxiety is bad, I just don't want



to go out, but I put my heart and soul into helping at the vaccination centre.

"Often, when I was volunteering at the hub, I would walk from my home in Haslingden to Rawtenstall.

"From June 1, I am now challenging myself to complete a million steps in eight weeks so I will be walking between 17,000 to 25,000 steps, between 12 and 15 miles each day.

"When I started walking during lockdown, I was only doing about 6,500 steps a day but it started to make me feel better.

"Although I have not used the services of Mind, I know

what amazing work they do. I have complex PTSD because of different incidents in my life and this has left me with depression and anxiety.

"What I particularly enjoyed about volunteering at the hub was calming people down and making them feel better inside, it was helping me to be able to help other people."

Money raised will be split between Mind and VIC. Graham initially set a £500 target, but he has already had £365 pledged and the walking has yet to begin.

Graham joined the Royal Artillery at an early age and struggled to re-adjust to civilian life. When he saw what was happening in Croatia with ethnic cleansing, he felt he couldn't stand by and so fought against the Serbs. During his time there he decided to join the French Foreign Legion and returned to Croatia.

On returning to the UK, he became a firefighter, but had to leave this career early after a traumatic fire where children died.

His full story can be viewed on You Tube PTSD History of a Broken Man.

VIC finalist

OUR non-stop working and supporting the community throughout the pandemic was nationally recognised when VIC was shortlisted for an award.

In the Pathfinder International Armed Forces Lockdown Awards Most Outstanding Charitable Contribution or Gesture in Lockdown, VIC was delighted to have been picked as a finalist.

Of the four shortlisted organisations and individuals, Hereford Veterans' Support Centre at DMWS was the eventual winner.

Club opens

ROCHDALE Veterans Breakfast Club has reopened, but at a new venue as the Town Hall is currently closed.

The club has moved to Touchstones Café, The Esplanade, Rochdale OL16 1AQ. Doors will open every Thursday at 9am.

Attendees need to be seated by 9.30am if they are having food, and they need to vacate their table by 10.15am, so that the area can be cleaned before opening to the public.

A full breakfast and brew still costs £3.50 or £1.50 for toast and jam.

Places must be pre-booked with the Secretary, Alison Mitchell, by noon on the preceding Tuesday.

VIC's outreach will also be reopening and will be held at the same venue from 10.30am to noon.

To donate to help Graham reach his target visit
<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com> and in Search type Graham Limb

Harvey O'Hara

IT IS with great sadness that we have to report the passing of the last surviving member of No 4 Commando Harvey 'Paddy' O'Hara.

Paddy, from Burnley, was among the first wave of soldiers to land on Normandy beaches in the D-Day landings. He passed away aged 97.

Veterans provided

a guard of honour for Paddy's funeral at Burnley Crematorium. A bugler played the Last Post and standards were paraded.

Paddy was a regular at VIC's Accrington shop with his grandson Brett O'Hara; he featured in the March newsletter when he was given a tablet from the Veterans Should Not Be Forgotten



Programme.

He was one of Alexander Fleming's penicillin 'guinea pigs' and that saved his life in 1944 after he suffered horrendous

shrapnel injuries in France.

Our thoughts and condolences to Brett and to Paddy's extended family.



Cheque aids new outreach

A NEW veterans' coffee morning, drop in and outreach has been given a boost thanks to the retiring Mayor of Ribble Valley Councillor Stella Brunskill.

Councillor Brunskill comes from a military family and her son Michael, who serves in the forces, was her consort.

When she selected charities to benefit from

money raised during her year as Mayor, as well as Ribble Valley causes, she also picked VIC.

Outreach Worker Ray Sharkey is in the process of setting up a new VIC coffee morning, drop in and outreach at The Family Thrive Centre, New Market Street, Clitheroe and the funds will help with on costs.

Councillor Brunskill,



who ended up serving for two years because of the pandemic, said: "VIC received 50 per cent of what was raised and as I am the Children's Champion on Ribble Valley Borough Council the rest supported families to support activities to return after the pandemic.

"Money was given to family projects Longridge Youth Band, Clitheroe Dolphins swimming club and Mellor Junior Football Club and there was also some left over to make a contribution towards the Little Green Bus."

Chief Executive of VIC Amanda Walton said: "We are very

grateful to Councillor Brunskill for the donation of £1,000 which we will be put back into the Ribble Valley as we will be using it to cover fees, including rent, for our new veterans' coffee morning.

"The money will help to cover costs until it becomes self-sufficient."

Ray is planning to open the coffee morning during national Armed Forces Week on Tuesday June 22 from 10am to 12.

The Family Thrive Centre is centrally located near the market, bus station and train station.

Railway on track

WORK has begun to prepare the basement at our shop in Accrington's Arndale in readiness for the Model Railway Club.

A layout that is being built needs a port facility/docks, industrial units, back scene, villages/town scene and most of which will be built by hand.

Some buildings have already been made during lockdown and lots of locomotives and track have been donated.

The Accington shop is now open every Friday from 10am to 3pm, For more information contact 01706 833180.



Photo workshop

A SERIES of three photography workshops are being held at Towneley Park, Burnley, by Emma Holt who ran our popular online Developing Veterans Photography courses.

Places are very limited and so need to be booked in advance. Contact administrator Amy Thompson on 01706 833180.



Kitchen to be relocated

A DONATED kitchen has been stripped out from a kind donors house and will be installed in a dedicated veterans' room at Whitehough in Pendle.

One of VIC's longstanding members Janet Attwell and her husband Mark offered VIC a full kitchen with appliances as theirs was being replaced.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "Initially we said that we could not see what we could do with it

and suggested other organisations to see if they could utilise it as they wanted it to all stay together and not be broken up for sale."

A week later, VIC was asked if a kitchen would be available for the room at Whitehough, an outward bound facility run by Burnley Football in the Community. The kitchen will be installed, once the room has been prepared and will be then available for veterans to use.



Donations of food were received from Sam Place from the Fruit and Veg Place in Crawshawbooth and Haslingden Tesco Community Champion Angela Thorpe. Thanks very much to Sam and Angela for their donations.





Art classes resume

RESTRICTIONS easing meant artists could enjoy the first Painting in the Style of Bob Ross class to be held in the VIC Centre for months.

Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell said: "Many thanks to all those who attended the 'painting in the style of Bob Ross' class and



all your kind words of inspiration.

"Since Tracey Vick passed away I have lost the interest and the will to paint. Knowing so many people were waiting to start this group again gave me what I needed to start running monthly classes again.

"We could have filled the

room but, due to social distancing, we could only fit six in the room. We will be running classes the last Saturday and Sunday of every month from now on.

"Well done to everyone this month, they produced great results and it was great to do some painting again."

Scarves for Falklands veterans

A SCARF project which arose out of a Falkland Islander's desire to say thank you to the troops that freed her, is being supported by VIC Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth.

On April 2 1982, when Argentine troops invaded the British islands in the South Atlantic, Rachel Simons was living in Stanley.

Rachel is now a resident in Carlisle, but she has never forgotten the troops and the role they played in freeing the islands.

In 2017 she made her first scarf in the colours of the ribbon on the South Atlantic Medal, blue, green and white and gave it to a Royal Marine friend who had fought on the day the Argentine's invaded. In October 2020 she set up a Facebook group Scarves for Falklands Veterans and the fallen.

Falkland Island veteran Steve served in the Royal Navy from 1976 to 1983 as a catering accountant on HMS Intrepid, but during the day he was a medic patching up the wounded, mainly Welsh Guards, from the Sir Galahad.

Steve said: "I found out about the group through a friend who served. Maria, my wife, has now made 14



scarves that have been given away to veterans through the page.

"I also make pens on a lathe and I used cut up pieces of wool in the medal colours, added resin and then built up the layers to make a pen. One of the pens I made sold for £155, which was donated to the South Atlantic Medal Association '92."

Steve now uses his woodturning skills to make penguins, gonks and pens for the volunteers who make the scarves as his way of saying thanks.

Rachel said: "My 11th birthday was on the 27th of April and it was a huge day because that was when the

Argentine's took away and locked up a number of the local civilians.

"That was also the day that the Argentine's decided that overnight we would have to have blackouts over our windows and there was to be a curfew so no one was allowed to walk on the streets.

"We didn't have blackout and I remember my favourite purple blanket was taken away and hammered up on the window until the end of the war; that was pretty horrible when you were 11.

"For the duration of the war we lived in Stanley and we experienced all of the horrors of war. What a joy when the liberators arrived and came into Stanley. There was cheering and excitement and that feeling of joy and gratitude really has never left me. So, in 2017 I made my first scarf and I gave it to a Royal Marine friend. Now more than 1.500 have been made.

"The veterans do not just receive a scarf, they receive recognition of what they did; they receive a thanks when they didn't even get thanks. It is recognition of what they did and permission to be a veteran."



Allotment plea

PLANS are being drawn up to change the VIC Allotment on Holcombe Road, Helmshore, into a sensory and relaxation garden.

The area would be available for members and the community to use. We are seeking anyone who can offer help and advice on the best plants to introduce and also gardening tips and donations of plants or shrubs.

If this is something you would like to be involved with, or can offer help, please contact Steve on 01706 833180 or email stevebutterworth@vic.org.uk

Mentor scheme

VETERANS are being sought to become learning mentors with Lancashire County Council.

The opportunity provides veterans with a 12-month intensive training period during when they will be paid, and at the end of which, there is a very good chance of full-time employment.

Visit <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/in/jobs/mentor-8632>

Bike delight

D-DAY veteran dispatch rider Lewis Banham's face was a picture when he came face-to-face with the same make and model of bike he rode in the war.

Veterans Living History Museum is recreating the liberation ride made by VIC member Lewis, 98, and brought the BSA M20 500cc bike, they are renovating to his home.



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

ON ZOOM

VIC Choir (weekly)

6.30-8.30pm

FRIDAY

Art Group

10am-3.30pm

Cost £6 places limited book on 01706 833180

SECOND SATURDAY REOPENS JUNE 12

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 restricted numbers see Facebook or website for details

10am-noon

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

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

12.30pm-2.30pm

Middleton Gardens, M24 1AB

The Mess Tin - ~~Cancelled~~ drop in

1pm-2.30pm

The Lighthouse Project, Middleton Shopping Centre, M24 1AB.

THURSDAY

Rochdale Veterans; Breakfast Club

9am-10.15am Touchstones Cafe, The Esplanade OL16 1AQ.

10.30am-noon

VIC Outreach

Touchstones Cafe, Rochdale OL16 1AQ.

SUSPENDED

RIBBLE VALLEY

Coffee Morning FROM JUNE 22

TUESDAYS

VIC – 01706 833180

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07961 554 006

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Project Worker Ray Sharkey

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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

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Outdoor Activities Co-ordinator Ivy Limbrick

ivylimbrick@vic.org.uk

Sessional Worker Bernard Tighe

bernardtighe@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

0808 278 7975 (freephone)

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

Armed Forces Support Group

01282 613132

HYNDBURN

Outreach Service and drop in

FRIDAY

10am-3pm

VIC Shop, Accrington Arndale Centre, BB5 1EX.

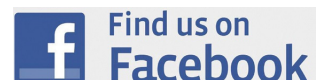
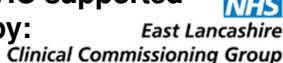
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www.veteransincommunities.org/donate.html

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