

# ***Pensioners' Newsletter - February 2025***

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## **News from the South**

So, we start another year full of optimism which no doubt will not remain for long. We are faced with yet more storms although not only was the one towards the end of January pretty severe but was also unpronounceable!

The future of what we knew as Vauxhall seems grim although, on a selfish note, I guess those of us in the VPA age group had what may have been seen as the best years with the company. Nevertheless, it is totally sad to consider how the plant closure will impinge on the future of Luton and its population. The council is quick to highlight the benefits of the airport expansion but swapping the type of jobs that will be lost when the plant shuts for baggage handlers and burger servers hardly seems a fair exchange.

On a more positive note you will see elsewhere the trips proposed for this year and I urge you to book early as, since the Covid lockdown, it is evident that these trips are more popular than ever.

Well, that is it for this issue, sorry for the depressing tone to this article, but I really do not like January and February as they are miserable months at best. Next issue will find me more upbeat as the early bulbs will be flowering and spring will be well on its way

*Norman McGregor*

## **Annual General Meeting - Southern plants**

This year's AGM will take place on Tuesday, March 18, starting at 2.15pm and situated in the Juniper Suite in Venue 360, 20 Gipsy Lane, Luton, LU1 3JH.

This is your opportunity to find out what is happening with Vauxhall and to ask any questions you may have that need an answer. As if that is not enough, free refreshments will be provided before the meeting.

Hope to see you there.

## **News from the North**

Dear members,

May I begin by wishing you all a very happy new year. I hope you all had a good Christmas, wherever you spent it. Ours was lovely, slightly manic, but lovely - 10 people, 2 dogs and 1 cat but everybody mucked in to help.

You will remember last time I wrote we were preparing for our club Turkey & Tinsel to Tenby. It was, as usual, a success. The hotel looked right across north beach, the weather till Thursday was kind enabling people to get out and about without

getting wet. We had a lovely sunny day in Carmarthen followed by a visit to a love spoon carving studio. The staff, food and hospitality were great.

“Christmas Day” was a day of food, food and more food, and companionship, a thoroughly lovely day. Sadly the break went all too quickly, as it always does, and too soon we were on our way home. Our Christmas lunch was held at the Cheshire View, the setting and meal were superb, with entertainment rounding off a thoroughly lovely day.

Regrettably due to the adverse weather the January social had to be cancelled, but fortunately as we were being transported by coach the panto trip was able to go ahead.

Well folks I think that's all, so until next time cheerio and stay safe.

*Dave Williams*

## **VPA Treasurer Position**

Dick Mumford, the current VPA Treasurer, has elected to stand down from the position with effect from March 2025. There will be an appropriate article regarding Dick in the April newsletter.

Meanwhile this gives the VPA the task of finding a replacement. Initially it would be ideal if anyone who worked in Finance or has a keen interest in this area of knowledge could get in touch with me at [nigelpsmith@outlook.com](mailto:nigelpsmith@outlook.com) or 07880855603 so we can have a chat.

If the prospect of going solo is something you find daunting, then I am sure that the position could be a shared one. Equally I am sure that Dick would be on hand to help you through the initial stage of your assignment.

*Nigel Smith*

## **Beat the Chancellor**

When we were members of the National Trust Sue and I would add up the cost of each individual trip we took and deduct it from the annual membership cost. When the aggregate costs exceeded the membership there was much joy in the McGregor household!

I suspect we were not the only people who played this game. In a newsletter of some time ago I highlighted the benefits of not accepting, for example, the first offer that you were given for an annual insurance cover. This would also apply to all quotes you receive over various activities.

It does not always work but I can say from personal experience when it does there are good savings to be made. If you target your savings to exceed what

the Chancellor stripped us of by stopping the Winter Fuel Allowance you have the gist of a splendid new game.

To make it even more interesting can I ask that those who do this inform me of your savings and, if suitable, we can give a prize to the Saver of the Year.

*Norman McGregor*

### **Understanding ‘Use By’ and ‘Best Before’ stamps on food and beverages**

Because many consumers of edibles are confused by the labels of ‘Use By’ and ‘Best Before’ they quite naturally err on the side of caution to avoid a case of the trots. The outcome of this is that an extra-ordinarily amount of food, etc. is discarded unnecessarily. Sources have indicated that 10% of all food and drink purchased is needlessly wasted. One significant area we can reduce waste through uncertainty over date labelling is around fresh juices, chilled meat and fish, and yoghurt. This is mainly due to the difficulty in visually judging the edibility of these products. So what do these labels actually mean?

‘Use By’ is the most important of the two and is usually to be found on chilled meat and fish and dairy products. Essentially the label indicates that you should discard food past this date as it could be potentially harmful if ingested as these foodstuffs are potentially ideal breeding grounds for bacterial growth and a dose of the trots. However, if produce is nearing its ‘Use By’ date freezing does a good job of preserving the food.

‘Best before’ is a signal from the food manufacturers that they cannot vouch for the optimal quality of food beyond that date. This label does not mean you will necessarily get ill if you eat the food beyond the ‘Best Before’ date but that the taste or texture may not be the best it can be. What most food experts go along with is to apply the sniff and feel test. That is if it smells okay and feels okay then things look good. Interestingly ‘Best Before’ creates much confusion and most of the needless waste experienced.

Hopefully this article has cleared up some of the uncertainty surrounding these food dates for you.

### **Jim McCaffrey**

I asked for your Vauxhall memories in a couple of newsletters back and am pleased to advise that Jim McCaffrey has sent in the following article.

“I joined in 1962, aged 22, and retired early in 1997 aged 57.

Initially I worked in S block in Materials Progress as a Progress Chaser. This was an extremely busy department, with shortage reports having to be compiled daily to ensure critical line stoppages were

averted. Each Chaser was responsible for a “File” of supplier schedules which had to be gone through on daily, part number by part number, and annotated on the schedule. Section leaders were required to sit with the Chasers weekly to go through schedules with them and sign the front of the schedule to confirm the check.

It was here that I had the good fortune to have Freddie Burgoine as my section leader and to become a dear friend.

After over four years in the department, and whilst studying at evening college for my Higher National Certificate in Business Studies, I applied for a transfer to Purchasing, which came through quite quickly. I found myself as the new boy in Purchasing, duly presenting myself to my new home in AA block.

For the next 32 years, Purchasing would be my domain in the company, spread between stints in Production Purchase and Non-Product Purchasing.

I obtained my Higher National Certificate and progressed through the ranks from Buyer to Senior Buyer, and eventually Assistant Purchase Manager and Secretary of the GM Europe Creativity Team - Vehicle Lighting.

My mentor in my first years in Purchasing was David Bishop, whom I have never forgotten for his kindness, tenacity and help in pushing me forward. A good man indeed.

Others who stand out as being wonderful senior colleagues during that time were Terry West and Derek Page. These people also helped in a highly charged, high pressure atmosphere with their incredible senses of humour. We often pretended to make light of some pretty serious situations.

One of my most memorable projects was when John Gildea asked me to be his co-ordinator for the Supplier Conference 1989. This involved everything from selection of the venue, through to co-ordinating Agency meetings, our Directors attendance, when necessary, and rehearsals of speeches, etc. the evening before the event which was held at the National Motorcycle Museum in Birmingham.

The event was proclaimed a great success and Peter Johnson, our Director at the time, kindly sent an invite for my wife and I to an informal business dinner with other guests as a ‘Thank you.’”

I am sure that Jim has done what you can do, so please let me have a few more. Equally if anyone wants to get in touch with Jim then send me your contact details and I will forward them to him.

*Norman McGregor*

## **Lou Chadwick**

It is my sad duty to inform you that Lou Chadwick passed away in November 2024. Lou was born in March 1938 and retired in January 1997. He was a long-time member of the VPA committee, his main responsibility was organising the Golf Society events at which he excelled.

I first knew Lou from our time working together at what was then IBC Vehicles where he held the position of Director of Purchasing. However, this only scratches the surface of his activities and influence in the company.

In the beginning of IBC we produced the Isuzu Midi van and the Suzuki micro van, both with the Bedford badge. Very quickly Lou became popular with the Japanese companies we worked alongside and became the IBC man to go to for any help they wanted. One thing that stands out in my memories of Lou is how he initially travelled to Suzuki, on his own, when such a trip was definitely not on the beaten track, and that part of Japan was very much a foreign country! We both travelled together on many occasions, and I was often grateful for his support and sense of humour which helped get the team through some arduous meetings.

Lou is survived by his widow, Sandra, son Andrew and daughter Liz and the heartfelt sympathies of all concerned with the VPA go to them in this sad time.

*Norman McGregor*

## **The VPA Golf events for 2025**

Please note the following dates for VPA 2025 Golf events:

Thursday, May 15 - Texas Scramble at Abbey Hill Golf Centre

Tuesday, July 1 - Team Event at Stockwood Park Golf Club

Thursday, August 21 - Singles Championship at Harpenden Common Golf Club

Tuesday, September 16 - Pairs Championship at Aylesbury Vale Golf Club

All registered players will be sent an entry form by email, and should any other VPA Club golfer wish to join in these events please contact Mike Roberts – [mikerobertsverulam@msn.com](mailto:mikerobertsverulam@msn.com)

## **Monday, November 27 – Friday, December 1 Turkey and Tinsel**

After a weekend of torrential rain we set off for Hereford with some trepidation about what awaited us.

After a lunch stop at Stratford on Avon we noticed that as we got nearer to our destination the fields were becoming more flooded. When we approached Hereford our coach was forced to make a detour as

the bridge over the river Wye was closed due to the high level of the water.

Luckily the Warners hotel is on higher ground and was unaffected by the floods. The rain stopped and we enjoyed dry weather for practically the remainder of the week. They say that the sun always shines on the righteous!

Sylvia kept us amused with daily excursions to a cider museum, a large garden centre and a visit into Hereford. All too soon our 'Christmas' celebrations were over and we drove home to reality.

## **Thursday, December 5 – Christmas Cockney Show**

The Christmas Cockney Show went down very well. 45 people enjoyed their two-course lunch and show.

All were singing along to the old songs and dancing with the Pearly Kings and Queens. Everyone had a great time.

## **February Quiz**

The topic this issue falls under the heading of World Tour.

1. The capital of Western Australia shares its name with which Scottish city?
2. How is Peking known nowadays?
3. In which country is Afrikaans spoken?
4. If you were visiting the home of Parmesan cheese which country would you be in?
5. Which country was formerly known as DDR?
6. In which city would you find the Wailing Wall?
7. How many consonants are there in Mississippi?
8. Which major Moroccan town is also the title of a famous film?
9. In which country is Bavaria?
10. On which African river is the Aswan Dam?
11. Which Spanish city hosted the 1992 Olympics?
12. In which city is the University of Essex?
13. Andorra lies between which two countries?
14. Which country has Sumo wrestling as its national sport?
15. The Cape of Good Hope is at the tip of which continent?
16. Where would you locate the cathedrals of Notre Dame and Sacre Coeur?
17. Which Falls lie on the Zambesi River?
18. Tallin is the capital of which Baltic state?
19. Which is the only country in the world that begins with Q?
20. Which currency would you spend in Pakistan?

As per usual enjoy the challenge and answers will be posted in the next newsletter.

## December Quiz answers

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. 2             | 2. Mean          |
| 3. Lettuce       | 4. Naval flag    |
| 5. Even          | 6. Fan-dabi-dozi |
| 7. Avocado       | 8. 8             |
| 9. Watermelon    | 10. Penny Black  |
| 11. Judas        | 12. Half crown   |
| 13. Zulu         | 14. 1            |
| 15. Alps         | 16. Gold         |
| 17. Pepper sauce | 18. Knot         |
| 19. Coffee       | 20. Victory      |

## Upcoming Events in the South

Confirmed bookings must be made in writing to the quoted VPA address, together with the necessary deposit(s). When a meal is included in the trip price, any special dietary requirements must be declared at the time of booking. Enquiries made by telephone can be used to register your interest in a trip, but the booking will only be confirmed on receipt of your letter and deposit(s). A stamped addressed envelope is no longer required. If you use email please provide your email address.

All day trips will require a non-refundable deposit of £15 per person per trip to confirm the booking. Trips of two days or longer will require a non-refundable deposit of £50 per person. In the event of your late cancellation of a booking you will be required to pay for the coach fare and any event ticket that we are unable to re-sell.

Our trip prices do not include insurance. For your own peace of mind please make your own arrangements.

The VPA will write to you approximately four weeks before the event to request payment of any outstanding balance for the trip.

**Thursday, February 13** – Rushden Lakes Shopping Centre. Visit large shopping centre Rushden Lakes, where you can purchase New Year bargains.  
£15.00 members/£17.00 non-members.

**Wednesday, March 12** – Matinee Performance of The Lion King. Matinee performance of this iconic show, preceded by a Carvery Lunch.  
£58.00 members/£62.00 non-members.

**April (tba)** – Tulley Tulip Fields. See the wonderful display of thousands of blooms in West Sussex, with a guided tour.  
£30.00 members/£33.00 non-members.

**Thursday, May 15** – Black Country Living Museum. Relive your memories of the 60's at this authentic reproduction of shops, pubs, houses and transport. You will be surprised by what you remember.

£35.00 members/£38.00 non-members.

**Thursday, June 5** - Brighton (coach only). Day trip to this popular seaside resort.  
£20.00 members/£23.00 non-members.

**Friday, June 27** – Steam train. Visit to Mid-Norfolk Railway in Dereham for a steam train ride with a Fish & Chip lunch served on board.  
£40.00 members/£44.00 non-members.

**Wednesday, July 16** – William Morris Gallery and Cruise. Enjoy viewing this leading designer's work on textiles, etc. before free time in Walthamstow, followed by a 90-minute cruise, from Broxbourne while eating a cream tea.  
£56.00 members/£59.00 non-members.

**Thursday, August 14** – Visit to Chartwell House. Visit the family home of Winston Churchill in Kent and gain an insight into the private life of the war-time Prime Minister. There is no meal included in the price.

£32.00 members/£35.00 non-members.

**Thursday, September 11** – Poppy Factory visit. A morning visit to explore Richmond before touring the Poppy Factory where we will have a cream tea.  
£28.00 members/£31.00 non-members.

**Thursday October 16** – Millbrook Garden Centre in Gravesend. Very large Gardening Centre supplying all your gardening needs and more. The Gravesend site has a large restaurant where all tastes are met.

£16.00 members/£18.00 non-members.

**Monday-Friday, November 3-7 - Turkey and Tinsel.** A festive 4 night break at the Warners Hotel, Studley, near Stratford-on-Avon. The stay will be on half board basis with daily excursions. (£50 pp deposit required).

£360.00 members/£370.00 non-members.

**Thursday, November 27** – **Brick Lane Christmas Show.** Top class entertainment with festive 3 course lunch, followed by a tour of the West End's Christmas Lights.

Members £65.00 pp/Non-members £68.00 pp

**Wednesday, December 17** – Christmas Celebration Event – Details to be confirmed.

£65.00 members/£68.00 non-members.

## Upcoming Events in the North

**Tuesday, February 4** – February social at 1.00pm.

**Tuesday, March 4** – Social and AGM at 12 noon.

**Tuesday, April 1** – Social back to evening.

**Thursday, 24** – Day trip Elan Valley £15 pp.

**Tuesday, May 6** – Social evening.

**Thursday, May 22** – Stumble Inn £20 pp.

For those going to Melrose may I remind you the balance of your holiday must be paid by March 4 at the latest.

**Monday, December 1** – We have now booked our 2025 Turkey & Tinsel. We are returning to the Norfolk Royale Hotel in Bournemouth. The cost will be either £335 pp or £365 pp, depending on numbers. If you wish to book please do so at the February social with your £50 pp deposit.

## In Memoriam

**Allen**, Christopher Michael, Vauxhall  
Died 20.11.2024, Aged 86, Retired 1992

**Bailey**, Edward, Vauxhall  
Died 1.11.2024, Aged 92, Retired 1997

**Benjamin**, Charles, IBC  
Died 10.12.2024, Aged 88, Retired 1994

**Bernard**, Delsser Augustus, Vauxhall  
Died 2.11.2024, Aged 96, Retired 1993

**Blade**, Carl Douglas, Vauxhall  
Died 26.11.2024, Aged 88, Retired 2001

**Byrne**, Patrick, Vauxhall  
Died 29.10.2024, Aged 74, Retired 2002

**Chadwick**, Louis, Vauxhall  
Died 12.11.2024, Aged 86, Retired 1997

**Currums**, Leslie Thomas, Vauxhall  
Died 6.1.2025, Aged 84, Retired 2002

**Davies**, John, Vauxhall  
Died 30.11.2024, Aged 95, Retired 1989

**Davies**, Roger Edwards, Vauxhall  
Died 16.12.2024, Aged 76, Retired 2005

**Deakin**, William, Vauxhall  
Died 13.12.2024, Aged 90, Retired 1993

**Dermody**, Patrick, Vauxhall  
Died 3.12.2024, Aged 86, Retired 1998

**Gorton**, Albert Phillips, Vauxhall  
Died 23.12.2024, Aged 89, Retired 1996

**Hammond**, Basil Kendrick, Vauxhall  
Died 18.11.2024, Aged 90, Retired 1993

**Haughton De Lopez**, Marilyn Elizabeth, Vauxhall  
Died 17.10.2024, Aged 75, Retired 2009

**Herbert**, Alan, Vauxhall  
Died 10.11.2024, Aged 91, Retired 1998

**Heydon**, Stanislaus Eugene, Vauxhall  
Died 25.12.2024, Aged 65, Retired 2001

**Hooper**, John, Vauxhall  
Died 11.12.2024, Aged 78, Retired 2001

**Hughes**, David, Vauxhall  
Died 26.12.2024, Aged 87, Retired 1991

**Hughes**, Ronald Thomas, Vauxhall  
Died 26.12.2024, Aged 82, Retired 2004

**Innes**, William, Vauxhall  
Died 5.12.2024, Aged 89, Retired 1995

**I'Ons**, George Edward, Vauxhall  
Died 7.11.2024, Aged 88, Retired 1990

**Jarvis**, Arthur, Vauxhall  
Died 18.11.2024, Aged 87, Retired 2002

**Jarvis**, Brian, Vauxhall  
Died 19.12.2024, Aged 75, Retired 2002

**Killick**, David J, Vauxhall  
Died 5.1.2025, Aged 85, Retired 2018

**Large**, Raymond John, IBC  
Died 21.11.2024, Aged 88, Retired 1994

**Laws**, Stephen, Vauxhall  
Died 3.1.2024, Aged 80, Retired 2003

**Maddock**, Derrick Roy, IBC  
Died 29.12.2024, Aged 90, Retired 1994

**Maltman**, David Michael, Vauxhall  
Died 11.11.2024, Aged 84, Retired 1997

**McKenna**, James, Vauxhall  
Died 26.10.2024, Aged 86, Retired 2002

**McKoy**, Bernhardt, IBC  
Died 12.11.2024, Aged 70, Retired 2016

**Modak**, Safiya, Vauxhall  
Died 19.2.2024, Aged 83, Retired 2006

**Mooney**, Paul Alan, IBC  
Died 29.11.2024, Aged 74, Retired 2006

**Moynihan**, Denis Joseph, Vauxhall  
Died 16.10.2024, Aged 90, Retired 1995

**Palmer**, Istance Ismay, Vauxhall  
Died 11.10.2024, Aged 89, Retired 2000

**Patel**, Vanmalibhai Govindji, Vauxhall  
Died 12.12.2024, Aged 90, Retired 1992

**Paul**, Hayden Chares, IBC  
Died 5.12.2024, Aged 78, Retired 2008

**Smith**, Alfred George, Vauxhall  
Died 22.12.2024, Aged 81, Retired 2002

**Taylor**, Francis David, Vauxhall  
Died 12.11.2024, Aged 81, Retired 2002

**Tobin**, John, Vauxhall  
Died 28.12.2024, Aged 80, Retired 2002

**Varley**, John David, Vauxhall  
Died 26.11.2024, Aged 78, Retired 2003

**White**, Christopher Stephen, IBC  
Died 23.11.2024, Aged 79, Retired 2006

**Wiggett**, George Brian Newton, Vauxhall  
Died 3.12.2024, Aged 92, Retired 1991

**Williams**, Dwight Albert, IBC  
Died 22.11.2024, Aged 71, Retired 2010

**Williams**, Patricia, Vauxhall  
Died 23.10.2024, Aged 76, Retired 2002

**Williams**, Ralph, Vauxhall  
Died 14.1.2025, Aged 90, Retired 1999

**Wilson**, Henry, Vauxhall  
Died 21.12.2024, Aged 72, Retired 2012

## Contact Information

### VPA South

Dave Linney Email: [d.linney@btinternet.com](mailto:d.linney@btinternet.com)  
Sylvia Pemberton (for trips only) 01582 759851.

### VPA North

Dave Williams 0151 608 8701

### VPA Website – Southern/Northern Plants

<https://www.vauxhallpensioners.org>

### Facebook

[www.facebook.com/groups/VauxhallPensionersAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/groups/VauxhallPensionersAssociation)

### Pensions Enquiries

#### Aviva:

Defined Benefit Solutions  
PO Box 3331  
Norwich NR1 3WH  
Telephone: 0800 1584 194  
Email: [bpainc@aviva.com](mailto:bpainc@aviva.com)

#### Rothesay Life:

Rothesay Life  
PO Box 545  
Redhill  
Surrey RH1 1YX  
Telephone: 0800 916 8090  
Email: [pensions.help@rothesaypolicy.com](mailto:pensions.help@rothesaypolicy.com)

**Aon:**

General Motors (VML) Pension Plan  
Aon, PO Box 196, Huddersfield, HD8 1EG  
Tele: 0330 808 5226  
Email: [GMPensions@aon.com](mailto:GMPensions@aon.com)

**Employee Fleet**

0151 350 3250  
[Email: employeefleet@stellantis.com](mailto:employeefleet@stellantis.com)

**Welfare Fund**

07460 171565  
Email: [vauxhallwelfare@vwcharity.com](mailto:vauxhallwelfare@vwcharity.com)  
[Website: www.vauxhallwelfarefund.org](http://www.vauxhallwelfarefund.org)

If you have a story you would like to tell, then  
please get in touch with Norman McGregor  
Email: [normanmcgregor3@gmail.com](mailto:normanmcgregor3@gmail.com)

The views expressed in this Newsletter are not  
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