



## Ring of Red pledge to VIC



**A FANTASTIC £5,000 was donated to VIC from the funds raised by the Ring of Red M60 Remembrance bike ride 2023.**

Veterans In Communities was the charity to benefit from the Remembrance ride which encircles the M60 with red-clad motorbike riders and pillion passengers on Remembrance Sunday.

Organisers Jeanette Kiely and Mandi Latham-Jones visited VIC's base to pass on the cheque and they also made a surprise announcement.

Normally, the Ring of Red M60 supports different charities each year, but Jeanette and Mandi were so impressed with the work of the VIC, they have agreed to support the charity each year going

forward.

VIC Chief Executive Amanda Walton said: "We are extremely grateful to Ring of Red M60 for their support this year and the very generous continued support in years to come."

"The money raised will be used for projects and activities for veterans to get involved with; it will support our art group, the allotment, our railway club and other projects.

"Last year, was the first time I have been able to attend the Ring of Red and the atmosphere was electrifying. As a biker, it took me back into that era and it was just the best.

"Several members of VIC now have bikes and have gone on to pass their motorcycle test."

Although the weather was horrendous for last year's event, 2,000 bikers

turned up, one pillion passenger came from Canada and sat behind her son, others travelled from Scotland and Cornwall just to take part.

Jeanette said: "We decided, because it was the 10th anniversary, we would look back on charities that we had supported in the past and select one to benefit.

"I had been to VIC before, but Mandi hadn't so I brought her along to see what the charity is all about."

Mandi said: "Jeanette spoke about the charity with a lot of passion, and when we visited I heard all about the work the charity did during Covid to support the veterans. Some charities stopped work but VIC found different ways to continue working and I thought it was amazing how they kept

everyone together."

The sale of online merchandise, mostly ahead of the ride, raised £3,966 and further money was raised by the sale of photographs by Enivision Images, a bucket collection and breakfasts provided by Castleton Motorcycle Club.

Jeanette said: "We only pick charities that rely upon grants or donations - so 100 per cent of the donation goes to benefit veterans.

"Birch Hill is run by Moto Services and they have been really supportive of us over the 10 years; we could not do the Ring of Red without them.

"Our first event had 600 bikers, the most we have had was in 2022 when 6,000 came along. Everyone gives their time for free, police, highways agency and the staff at Moto Services."



## Choir seeks new voices

**OUR popular choir is looking for new members**

The VIC Choir rehearses on a Thursday and it is an informal activity.

The benefits of singing can include: socialising with others, exercise, reducing isolation, improving confidence, motivation, fostering a sense of

self-worth and it is a place where the Armed Forces community and blue light veterans, along with members of the local community, come together.

You also don't need to be able to sing to join a choir. For more information contact the office on 01706 833180.



# Delivering for veterans

## Sleep out for Tommy

**VETERANS are invited to join The Great Tommy Sleep Out being held at Accrington Stanley.**

Youth Worker Corporal Matt Booth said: "This March, individuals, groups, and communities across the UK will come together for The Great Tommy Sleep Out.

"Throughout the month they will sleep outdoors for one night or more to raise awareness of the issue of veteran homelessness, drawing attention to the fact that an estimated 6,000 veterans are homeless in the UK right now.

"Accrington Stanley Veterans, friends and family will be sleeping rough on the terraces at the Wham Stadium, home of the mighty reds."

The event will be raising money for the Royal British Legion Industries.

For more details contact Matt on 07975 975573.

**VIC has been a partner in a two-year programme that concluded with a showcase event in Wigan.**

Chief Executive Amanda Walton and Operations Manager Bob Elliott attended the Veterans' Places, Pathways and People (VPPP) celebration event.

Amanda delivered a resume of the work undertaken by VIC on the Places section and also showed a small excerpt from a short film that was made by Anglian Ruskin University about VIC's work to help transform the lives of veterans.

The VPPP

programme aims were to give veterans a safe and welcoming place to go in their local community, support veterans to access mental health support and treatment, and ensure access to good quality training for staff and volunteers.

Each of the delivery partners: Armed Forces Community HQ CIC Advocacy Focus, Burnley FC in the Community, Fighting with Pride, Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust, Tom Harrison House, Broughton House – Home of Salford and Greater Manchester's Veterans' HQ, Walking With The



Wounded and VIC were funded under one of Places, Pathways and People groups.

A number of presentations showcased the tool kits which will be a legacy of the programme where any organisation working

with veterans and the Armed Forces community can access.

We are waiting to hear about the legacy of the VPPP programme and how it will continue in the future. The North West Portfolio was one of the stronger ones in the UK.

## Art show

**ARTWORK created by members of the VIC art group is currently on display at The Whitaker Museum and Art Gallery in Rawtenstall.**



## Photography talks

**THE first of two talks were delivered by professional photographer Duncan Phillips.**

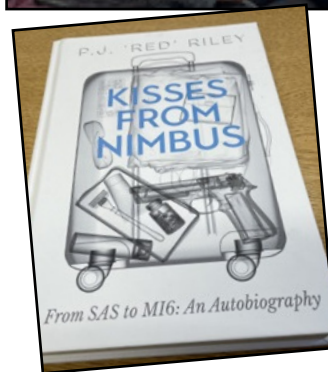
Army veteran Duncan, one of our members from Clitheroe, owns Knowle Top Gallery in Clitheroe.

He gave a short talk at the VIC Centre in Haslingden on a recent visit to southern Africa where he photographed many beautiful wildlife scenes. The talk was well attended.

Duncan and his wife

regularly get commissioned by the National Geographical Magazine.

His second talk, about a visit to the Arctic, is on Thursday February 29 at the VIC Centre, Haslingden, at 1pm.



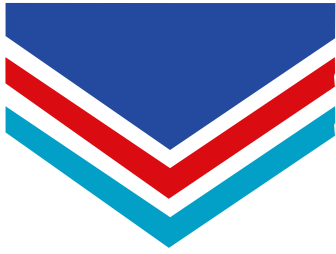
## SAS memories

**A FORMER SAS soldier Peter 'Red' Riley delivered a short talk at the VIC Centre.**

Peter, from Accrington, served in the Army Air Corps and SAS and then went onto be recruited by MI6.

Ten members of VIC attended to listen to his account and his nephew Russ brought in a copy of his uncle's book – Kisses from Nimbus – to the VIC Centre so veterans could find out more.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "He said he particularly enjoyed talking to veterans afterwards because their questions were relevant."



# Planning begins for trips

## Veteran card

**AFTER a successful testing, the Armed Forces Veterans Card is now available for all military personnel to apply for.**

Veterans who left the Armed Forces before December 2018 can verify their veteran status online with a new digital application service to receive a Veteran Card through the post.

A paper-based application process is also available as an alternative to the digital system.

To apply for a Veteran Card visit [www.gov.uk/veteran-card](http://www.gov.uk/veteran-card)

## Road works

**MAJOR highways work on the top of Deardengate in Haslingden has impacted on car parking around the VIC Centre.**

The usual car park spaces near Bury Road are being used for the works, which are set to last 12 months. Parking is still available on surrounding side streets.

## Nordic walks

**A DIFFERENT style of walking it being organised in Rossendale.**

VIC was visited by Hamish Willis who runs Nordic Walking and Strength and Conditioning/Fit Kids at Marl Pits in Rawtenstall, or starting from there.

Nordic walking increases average walking speed by up to 25 per cent compared to ordinary walking.

For more information, contact Hamish on 07967 318501. There is small cost per session.

**A HOST of social inclusion trips are being planned by VIC and anyone with ideas of a venue is asked to make suggestions known.**

Our Social Inclusion Activities Volunteer Pat McEvoy is on her Florida sabbatical, but she is planning the agenda for her return.

One venue veterans wanted to go back to was the Hot Ice Show in Blackpool, which starts in July. Last year's trip went to the matinee, but veterans were interested in seeing the full show and having fish and chips at the seaside.

Other trips being considered include a return to Embsay Bolton Abbey Steam Railway, a visit to the National Railway Museum, the Jewish Museum, a trip on the Mersey Ferries and a visit to Lancaster Castle.

As a number of VIC members now have their motorbike licence, there is also discussion about having a few ride outs from the centre as a group, and hopefully entering the Ring of Red M60 Remembrance Ride as a group.

Anyone wanting to suggest a trip location, can contact the office on 01706 833180.

## Vulnerable veterans

**A NEW protocol is making searching and finding missing veterans easier.**

VIC Chief Executive Amanda Walton and Operations Manager Bob Elliott attended a briefing to learn more about the Greater Manchester Police Forcer Protocol pilot. Since its launch in November, 42 veterans have been found who had been reported as missing.

It ensures key information is available to police when they are searching for service veterans who are lost or have gone missing.

The information is stored on a Safe and Found Online platform and UK Police Forces are encouraging carers of vulnerable people, who are a risk of going missing, to compile useful information about them.

The Herbert Protocol is a similar nationwide scheme aimed at reducing the risk of harm to someone living with dementia if they go missing.

<https://safeandfoundonline.co.uk/index.html>



**MEMBERS of VIC attended the official graduation Passing Out Parade at the Army College in Harrogate, alongside veterans from Burnley Football Club in the Community.**

Six members of VIC, including Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth, attended. Last time, the veterans witnessed a

dress rehearsal, but the feedback from seeing the 'real thing' was that the parade was fantastic and they were impressed with the new soldiers.

There was a fly-over by an Apache helicopter and Navy veteran Steve was pleased to see an Admiral carrying out the inspection and taking the general salute.

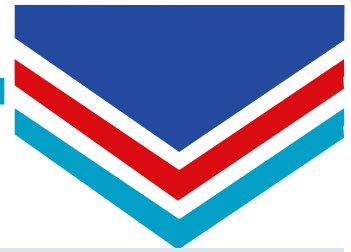


## Bob Ross

**A PACKED art room saw nine people taking part in the latest Bob Ross-style painting class.**

The classes are run held every month and run by volunteer Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell. They cost £45 which includes all materials and instruction. For more information contact Administrator Amy Thompson on 01706 833180.





## ROSSENDALE

Activities 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**

### Greggs RV

1pm-3pm

**THURSDAY**

### VIC Choir (weekly)

6.30-8.30pm

**FRIDAY**

### Art Group

10am-3.30pm

Cost £6 places limited book on

01706 833180

**SUNDAY**

### Drop-in

10.15am-12.30pm

**SECOND SATURDAY IN THE MONTH**

### Rossendale Armed Forces and Veterans' Breakfast Club

10am-12.30pm

Haslingden Community Link Cafe, Bury Road, Haslingden BB4 5PG (book in advance)

**EVERY MONTH**

### Painting in the Style of Bob Ross art classes

Contact Darren 01706 833180

### Walking Groups/ Social Inclusion trips

see Facebook or website for details

## BURNLEY AND PENDLE

### Outreach Service

**MONDAY**

10am-noon

Breakfast Club at Burnley Miners' Social Club, Plumbe Street, Burnley, BB11 3AA.

Contact 01706 833180 for dates of outreach at: Burnley FC in the Community; Pendle Armed Forces Support Group, Holmefield House, Gisburn Road, Barrowford; Morrisons in Nelson and Asda in Colne.

## HEYWOOD, MIDDLETON AND ROCHDALE

### 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 Flying Horse Hotel, Packer Street, Rochdale, OL16 1NJ.

## RIBBLE VALLEY

**TUESDAYS**

### Redoubt Coffee Morning and Outreach

10am-noon

Trinity Methodist Church, Wesleyan Row,

Parson Lane, Clitheroe, BB7 2JY.

### Sandbag Cafe Longridge

9.30am-noon

Christ Church Methodist Church, Berry Lane, Longridge, PR3 3JA.

## VIC – 01706 833180

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Operations Manager Bob Elliott

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Administrator Amy Thompson

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Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator

Darren Horsnell

darrenhorsnell@vic.org.uk

VIC Choir Bookings Barry Hyde

barryhyde@vic.org.uk

### Veterans at risk of homelessness

or organisations working with them are encouraged to contact OP FORTITUDE

0800 952 0774 or visit [riv.org.uk/opfortitude](http://riv.org.uk/opfortitude)

### 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@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:Lancashire@ssafa.org.uk)

01772 260 462

### Citizens Advice East Lancashire

0808 278 7975 freephone Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

### The Samaritans

01282 694929 Mon to Fri 9am-9pm

Freephone 116 123

### Op Courage

0300 373 3332 email

opcourageNORTH@cntw.nhs.uk

### Veterans UK Free Helpline

0808 1914 218

### East Lancashire Single Point of Access via

GP or self-referral

0800 0130 707

### Armed Forces Support Group

01282 613132

## HYNDBURN

### Outreach / Drop-In/ Model Railway Club

**FRIDAY**

10am-3pm

VIC Hyndburn, Accrington Arndale Centre, BB5 1EX.

### Accrington Stanley Breakfast Club/ Drop-In

**LAST WEDNESDAY EVERY MONTH**

9.30am-11am

Lancashire Carers Link, 54-56 Blackburn Road, Accrington, BB5 1LE.

## BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN

### Outreach Service

**TUESDAY**

10.30am-noon

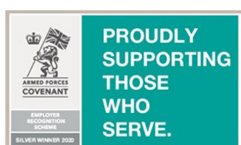
Rovers Breakfast Hub, Legends Lounge, Darwen End, Blackburn Rovers FC, Ewood Park, Blackburn, BB2 4JF.

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