

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year



What a way to end the year

THANK you for the many donations and grants that have been received by VIC in the last month to secure the services and support we provide.

A Christmas fundraising stall, which included a raffle, was held at Tesco Clitheroe with the proceeds benefiting VIC.

Administrator Amy Thompson collected a fabulous cheque for £502.20 from the store and we would like to say a huge thank you to Shelley Bergman, who is pictured third left with store manager Paul Blackburn, and volunteer Carol Barlowe.

A video highlighting the work of VIC has been made for Lancashire County Council who provided a £750 Warm Space Grant to ensure the VIC Centre is there and open when ex-service

personnel and the wider community need us.

We also received £600 from the ASDA Foundation and a large donation of hamper items from Rawtenstall Community Champion Laura Saxton.

Operations Manager Phil Speddy said: "This will go a long way to help with supporting our veterans over the next few months."

"Every year we distribute around 70 food hampers over Christmas and were able to add more items to each hamper."

The Flag 5 in Wardle, who arrange and maintain a flag display in the village, presented funds raised to VIC.

We were visited by Phil Richards (Taffy) one of the five members of the Wardle community group that organises the display, and he donated £500 to VIC as a thank you and in support of the work VIC's

outreach team provides in Rochdale

Hilton Jones Accountants, matched this donation bringing the total to £1,000.

Operations Manager Phil Speddy said: "This is a very generous donation from both the organisation and the accountants, and we are very grateful."

We would like to thank The Hoghton Players who selected VIC to benefit from a four-day staging of Blackadder Goes Forth.

VIC Chief Executive Amanda Walton was delighted to receive £900 from Stuart Lockhart, who directed the production, and Millie Santus, Chairperson of The Hoghton Players. The money was raised from ticket sales and a raffle.

Amanda went to see the play herself and said it was well received and enjoyed by all.

Throughout the festive period, the VIC Choir has been singing in Asda and Tesco Supermarkets and staff and customers have given generously.

We were fortunate to have volunteer collectors.



Pilotlight visit

THE VIC Centre will be visited by representatives from Pilotlight 360 Mentoring and Coaching Service in January.

The company is working with VIC to help develop a strategic future for our charity.

VIC members will be invited to discuss their involvement with us and their input will help to shape our future plans.

The aim is to make VIC less reliant on grant funding and more socially sustainable.

VIC was fortunate to win the business support by The Weston Charity Awards.

Opening hours

The VIC Centre will be open over the festive period.

Between Christmas and New Year, the centre on Bury Road, Haslingden, will be open from 10am to 4pm for anyone who wants to call in.

The centre will only be closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.





Tony Wolfenden



IT IS with great sadness that we are reporting the passing of VIC member Tony Wolfenden.

Tony, who served in the Royal Irish Rangers and had been a VIC member for 8-9 years, passed away peacefully on November 29.

He was a regular at the Sandbag Cafe in Heywood and nothing was too much trouble for Tony when it came to veterans.

He used to pick up some of the older veterans and would take them to the Sandbag Cafe and Rochdale Veterans' Breakfast Club.

He helped deliver our Christmas food hampers and we are very grateful for his support over the years.

Tony's funeral was held at Rochdale Crematorium on December 10 when 11 Royal Irish Rangers escorted the hearse, three Standards were paraded and more than 40 veterans were waiting outside at the crematorium.

Our sincere condolences go out to his family and friends.

Can you help veterans' museum?

AN APPEAL for help is being made by our friends from the Veterans Living History Museum.

The charity's van was written off following an accident, fortunately everyone involved was safe. Although they have bought it back

from the salvage company, they now need help to get it back on the road.

The charity is reaching out to see if any vehicle repair centres or skilled individuals might be able to lend a hand.

Anyone who can help can contact Wayne at hello@vlhm.co.uk



Bob Ross

THERE was a fabulous turnout for the latest Painting in the Style of Bob Ross class when this stunning painting was created.

Volunteer Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell was joined by seven artists who created this stunning classic Bob Ross scene, with trees, a hut and lake set in an oval.

Our next class is on Sunday January 25 and the cost is £45 with all materials and brews included, a packed lunch is recommended. A £15 non-refundable deposit needs to be paid please contact Administrator Amy Thompson to book a place on 01706 833180.

Remembrance Walk total

A HUGE thank you to everyone who supported the Rossendale Walk of Remembrance in 2025 and helped to raise nearly £690 for VIC.

Operations Manager Phil Speddy said: "Thanks to your incredible generosity, after counting all online and cash

donations, we are proud to share that we raised a total of £688.85.

"Every step walked and every donation given, means so much. Together you helped make this year's Walk of Remembrance truly special."

The Remembrance Walk is available

online for anyone who would like to complete all, or parts of it.

Phil said: "This can be done as a personal act of Remembrance, not necessarily as a fundraiser for VIC, and could be completed over several days or weekends."

For the map, please email info@vic.org.uk

Battlefields Tour 2026

IF YOU want to join the next Battlefields Tour, being planned for later in 2026, please contact VIC as soon as possible and register your interest.

Two tours have taken place so far, and the trip is always oversubscribed so please get your name down early.

The tour cost will be approximately £500pp for a 5/6-day tour with all transport, ferries, accommodation, lunches and museum/venue entries included. Savings plans will be available through VIC.

Can anyone who would like to go on the trip, please contact Administrator Amy Walton on 01706 833180 to express their interest.



Support for Bury art shop

THANK you to everyone who has supported our Bury shop at The Mill Gate Centre.

The shop has sold an incredible amount of artwork and VIC produced memorabilia.

This was all thanks to

Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth and volunteer Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell and the many volunteers who have helped to run the shop.

The VIC shop is near B&Ms and will remain open until January 24.



It's Christmas



Middleton



A Christmas lunch was organised for members of the Middleton Mess Tin at The Boar's Head.



Members of VIC enjoyed a fabulous Christmas celebration meal and quiz at Baxenden Golf Club.



Wreath making

BEAUTIFUL wreaths were made in a free workshop held at Burnley Football Club in the Community's outdoor resource at Whitehough.

The free workshop was offered to VIC members by Burnley FC in the Community and Administrator Amy Thompson and VIC member Ann Wilkinson attended.

Amy said: "We all had a great time with people sharing their knowledge and their time to ensure we had a great day."

"Thanks to all involved. If you get offered the chance to be involved in some of these experiences, grab it."



Congratulations to our volunteer Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell who won the special Christmas hamper that was kindly created by Chris Smethurst.



Clitheroe

Santa popped into Clitheroe outreach to deliver a special quiz.

What's On and Where



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

Parson Lane, Clitheroe, BB7 2JY.

Sandbag Cafe

10am-12.30pm

St George's Church, off Lune Street, Preston PR1 2NP. This is a joint session with Lancashire Armed Forces Association.

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 & PRESTON

TUESDAYS

Redoubt Coffee Morning and Outreach

10am-noon

Trinity Methodist Church, Wesleyan Row,

VIC – 01706 833180

Chief Executive Amanda Walton

amandawalton@vic.org.uk

Operations Manager Phil Speddy

philspeddy@vic.org.uk

Administrator Amy Thompson

amythompson@vic.org.uk

Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth

stevebutterworth@vic.org.uk

Project Worker Ray Sharkey

raysharkey@vic.org.uk 07741 902 188

Community Capacity Builder

John Pluckwell

johnpluckwell@vic.org.uk

Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator

Darren Horsnell

darrenhorsnell@vic.org.uk

VIC Choir Bookings Barry Hyde

b.hyde@ntlworld.com

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

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

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

Veterans In Communities
Charity Number 1151194

Outreach / Drop-In/ Model Railway Club/ Art Group

FRIDAY 10am-3pm

VIC Hyndburn, Accrington Arndale Centre, BB5 1EX.

Accrington Stanley Breakfast Club/ Drop-In

LAST SATURDAY EVERY MONTH

10.30am-noon

Stanley Sports Hub, Thorneyholme Road, Accrington, BB5 6BD.

BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN

Veterans' football

MONDAY 8-9pm

Blackburn Rovers Indoor Centre, Ewood Park, Blackburn BB2 4JF. A cost applies.

Outreach Service

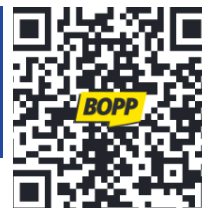
TUESDAY 10am-noon

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

Contact Chris McGrail 07787 585109

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