

# Lancashire UNISON Retired Members Section

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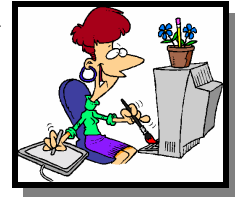
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# Newsletter

EDITION NO. 72 - January 2006

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## Diary Dates - 2006

### Social Evening and Dinner



**Monday 16th January 2006**  
at Barton Grange Hotel.  
Do come along & meet old &  
make new friends

### County Hall Talks

#### Friday 27th January

Mr George Dobson  
a very comical speaker will talk on  
"Caribbean Capers"

#### Friday 24th February

Mr Peter Dobson will relate his and others  
experiences in an amusing talk entitled:-  
"As Things Were"

### Next Walk

#### Wednesday 15th March

through the woodland to the Hodder  
Bridge and the old Cromwell's Bridge

### Northern Sub Group

#### Valentines Day 2006

#### Headway Hotel

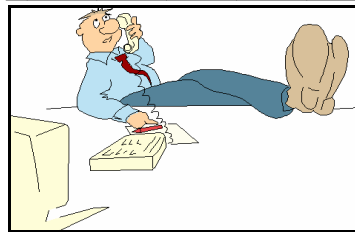
Afternoon Tea Dance  
do come along & join us

#### Next Talk - 2pm Headway Hotel

#### Tuesday 14th March

further details in the February newsletter

## Remarks from the Chairman DAVID SERGEANT



### 2006 and All That

Many of you reading  
this will be coming to  
the *Annual Social  
Evening* at *Barton*

*Grange*. The Social Evening used to be called the  
Annual Dinner with speeches and toasts but in the  
last few years we have made a deliberate effort to  
make the evening more relaxed and less formal.  
The numbers attending suggest that you appreciate  
the new approach, however, that is not the same as  
you telling us how you like it.

Obviously some events are better attended than  
others, maybe it's the weather, maybe it's the time  
of year or maybe you particularly like the nature of  
the event. Last month the *Christmas Dinner* at  
Morecambe was really well attended; this raises the thought  
that an event in Morecambe, even  
in December, is attractive if held  
in the afternoon. *Well, go on, is  
that a sensible thought?*



We have been indicating that one of the winter  
talks in 2006 would be on a serious subject  
relevant to older people such as pensions or wills,  
however, running in to trouble trying to organise it  
we have had to leave the idea until next year. Now  
seems a good time to ask if you would be  
interested. Our Social Secretary, *Fran Francis*,  
has organised for the first three talks of 2006 three

hilarious speakers, we would be interested in your reactions.

Perhaps we may send out a questionnaire later in the year but in the mean time if you have any



thoughts telephone or email **Maureen Vass** or myself.

Any comments by post can be sent to the Branch Office.

By the way, how do you like the Newsletter on our new website?

**Dave Sergeant**

### **A Way Forward on Pensions?**

So we now have the long awaited report on pensions.

#### **Main proposals**

1. A new national Pensions Savings Scheme in which all employees would participate unless they chose to opt out. Employee contribution rate could be 5% (or 4% after tax relief) with employers contributing 3%.

2. Basic state pension indexed to earnings not prices from 2010/11.

Pension age to rise to 66 by 2030, 67 by 2040 and 68 by 2050.

Entitlement to basic state pension for over 75s to become universal (based on residency not levels of contributions) by 2050

Everyone agrees that something needs to be done, but getting a consensus is quite another matter.

#### **What are some of the issues?**

(a) Actuaries (professionals who carry out the valuation of Pension Funds) say that the proposals do not go far enough in increasing the retirement age – in their view it needs to increase beyond 70 by 2050.

(b) Affordability of the proposals will be strongly debated – the

Treasury has already indicated that index linking the basic state pension to earnings is unaffordable.

(c) Employers currently contributing more than 3% to a pension scheme for their employees may seek to reduce their contribution to the 3% level.

(d) The proposals in the report would (it is claimed) stop the percentage of pensioners relying on means tested benefits from increasing to 75% by 2050 and keep it at about 30%.

(e) The deal struck in October between the government and public sector unions representing civil servants, teachers and NHS staff to allow existing staff to retire at 60 looks increasingly at risk of being reopened.

#### **Where now?**

The Government has said that they want a national debate on the proposals and have promised to issue a White Paper in the Spring setting out their intentions.

#### **Local Government Pension Scheme**

The Local Government Minister has published draft regulations, which would scrap the rule allowing local government workers to retire on full pensions before age 65 in October 2006. Unison is challenging the basis of this proposal. The consultation period has started and will continue until the end of February 2006. John Prescott has also said that discussions on the transitional protection arrangements for existing employees may continue into the summer. In this case it could form part of the discussions on the wider reform of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

**Roger Rymer** ”

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**



At our meeting this month we were

finalising our arrangements for our **Annual Dinner** which will take place on Monday 16 January 2006 at **Barton Grange Hotel**. If you decided not to come to this function you will have missed an excellent meal and an enjoyable evening.

We are now at the start of a new year for **Unison** and will soon be in the **Annul General Meeting** season. The first one is the **Regional Retired Members Committee** and **Kath Montgomery** and I are once again standing for election.

This will take place on **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January** at **County Hall**. The Branch will hold its **AGM** in March and our **AGM** will be in April. More on these to follow in later Newsletters.

I hope you all had a Happy Christmas and that 2006 brings a healthy and prosperous time for all.

**Maureen Vass**”

Secretary

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### **Northern Sub Group**

**14th February - Valentines Day**

**Afternoon tea dance**

**2pm – 4pm Headway Hotel**

The Ballroom in the Headway Hotel has been booked for an **afternoon tea dance** live music to be provided by **Ray Rudge** on his keyboard.

Light refreshments will be provided including cakes and scones for which there will be a

small charge of £4.00.



Even if you are unable to dance do come along and enjoy the music we listened to in our younger days!

**For this new venture to be a success we will need support from members & friends outside the Sub Group Area**

there is ample free car parking on the promenade near the hotel, at Marine Road, East Promenade, Morecambe.

Please complete the slip at the end of this newsletter and return it to **Ray Rudge 9 Blythe Ave Clevelys FY5 2LL** (01253 855784). No tickets will be issued, just complete the slip.

**Talk 2pm - 14<sup>th</sup> March**  
**Headway Hotel**

Details to be announced in the February Newsletter.

**Ray Rudge”**

Treasurer  
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**Activities & Social**  
**Events**

I have tried to get a good mixture of speakers again this year to try and entice more of you to come along and enjoy what I am sure is going to be a rather light hearted season of talks. Hopefully it will help lift us out of the gloom of the winter months.

**January 27<sup>th</sup>** is the first talk in the New Year; it will start with a very popular speaker **Mr George Dobson**, relating one of his many experiences called:-

**“Caribbean Capers”**

**February 24<sup>th</sup>**. **Mr Peter Dobson** will relate his and others experiences in an amusing talk about times gone by entitled:-

**“As Things Were”**

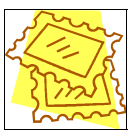
**Next the usual information** for our new members, the talks will

be held on the last Friday of the month on the dates shown above. **Talks** commence at **2:00p.m** in **COUNTY HALL PRESTON** and they usually last for 1 to 1½ hours. Please use the **County Hall entrance in Pitt St** and sign in at the reception area, obtain a visitors badge and tell the security person you are a retired member: they will direct you to the relevant cabinet room where the talks are to be held. You are welcome to use the **New Staff Cafeteria** for a meal or snack before the performance, this is situated near the main entrance in Pitt Street; the security person on the door will direct you. Hopefully we will again see many of our Members & their friends. Do come along, not only to enjoy the afternoon’s performances but also to make new friends and renew old acquaintances. It’s a pleasant way to spend a winter’s afternoon.

Hope to see many of our members and their guests at **Barton Grange on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2006**, we will start the New Year as we mean to go on.



At this time of year we receive many envelopes that get thrown away, it only takes a minute to tear the stamp off the corner of an envelope (please leave 1 inch around the stamp). Please keep sending your stamps to; **Derian House Stamp Appeal, The Appeals Office, Derian House, Chancery Road, Astley Village, Chorley, Lancs. PR7 1DH.**



***Fran Francis”***

Social Secretary  
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**Retired Members**  
**Walking Group**

**Lancashire County Branch of Unison**

**Group Correspondent:** Don Windle, 25 The Howgills, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire PR2 9LX Telephone No. (01772) 713820 Ref: walk 14

**Dear Member, January 2006**  
**PROGRAMME BRIEFING**  
**WALK 2006**

We have once again managed to produce a varied programme for our 2006 walks. Many thanks to everyone who volunteered to lead the walks, which will be something for us all to look forward to.

The next few paragraphs are mainly for the information of prospective members. All the walks are scheduled for



Wednesdays to fit in with our other commitments. As the morning starts seemed to give a more relaxing day, the walks will commence at **11.00 am** with a stop to eat a picnic lunch and other breaks to look at points of interest. The pace is leisurely, routes are circular returning to the start point by mid to late afternoon, diversions may be necessary due to missing footbridges, broken stiles or similar problems and no definite finishing times can be given.

The walks are planned to suit mature walkers. When a total ascent of less than 60 metres is required the walk will be referred to as almost level. Undulating walks will involve a series of moderate inclines. Should the route include ascents or descents steeper than 1 in 5 for more than 100 metres reference will be made to steep banks. Walking sticks are very useful on slippery banks and for testing the depth of mud in heavily used gateways. To ensure everyone has an enjoyable day out please note the following recommendations:

**Leave your dog at home.**

Arrive in good time and lock up your car carefully.

Listen to the weather forecast and bring suitable clothing, plus



dry socks.

Wear stout footwear, footpaths and bridleways can be muddy and eroded at any time

of the year.

Height barriers at 2 metres elevation and Parking Charges are a regular feature of rural car parks, please assume they may be present at the meeting points as they have not been specially noted.

If there are any queries for a particular walk, please contact the person leading the group for that day.

Looking forward to the pleasure of your company.

**2006 WALKS**

**GRID REFERENCES GIVE LOCATION OF MEETING POINTS**

If you are not familiar with grid references the meeting points can be located from most regular 4 miles to 1 inch motoring maps.



The *Ordnance Survey Map Outdoor Leisure 41*, Forest of

Bowland and Ribblesdale, has distinctive blue arrows pointing to several of the rendezvous points we regularly use and is referred to where applicable.

**Diary Dates are:-**

**15th March, 19th April, 10th May, 14th June, 19th July, 26th July - (For Roy's long walk please note a 10.00am start), 16th August, 13th September, 11th October & in 2007 the 10th January .**

**Programme meeting will be 2.00pm on the 1st November.**

The next walk is Wednesday 15th March. Start is at 11.00am. Walk leader is Don Windle, you can contact him on 01772 713820.

Meet at the Village Hall Car Park Hurst Green. The B6243 links Hurst Green to Longridge, Clitheroe and Whalley via B6246. Each link is approximately five miles of twists and turns, plus odd speed restrictions.

Explorer Map 19 Grid Reference SD 683 380. Approximately 6 miles. Toilets in village

Our walk goes through the grounds of Stonyhurst College through the woodland to the Hodder Bridge and the old Cromwell's Bridge and follow the Rivers Hodder and Ribble back to

Hurst Green.

**Flo & Don Windle"**

Walk Coordinators  
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**Membership**

**Secretary's Report**

Since our last meeting we have had one new member. We offer him a warm welcome. He is:

RG Eckersley (Environment)  
Southport.

**Deaths of Members**

Sadly four of our members have died, we offer condolences to their families and friends.

Mrs K Budge  
Blackpool;

Mrs E Challender  
Southport;

Mrs D Jones (Education)  
Preston;

Mr G Webb  
Preston.

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**Our membership is 1816,  
(including 41 associate members)**

**FOR SALE**

Garage up/over white metal door measures 6ft 8ins high by 6ft 10ins wide. Bargain at £50:00 must collect. Tel:- 01772 742459.

**Northern Sub Group**

**Valentines Day - Afternoon Tea Dance**

**Headway Hotel, Morecambe.**

I/We will attend the above tea dance for which I enclose a cheque for £..... (£4 per person)

Please make cheques payable to:- **'Lancashire Unison Retired Members Section'**.

Signature .....

**Enter your Name & Address:**

Please send to:-  
**Ray Rudge, 9 Blythe Ave,  
Clevelys. FY5 2LL**

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Contact Number:- 01253 855784

Tel No. ....

