

Lancashire UNISON

Retired Members Section

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Newsletter

EDITION NO. 70 - November 2005

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Diary Dates - 2005/06

County Hall Talk - 2pm

Friday 25th November

Mrs Anderson will demonstrate how to hand paint beautiful silks.

Christmas Carol Service

Tuesday 13th December

12.30pm - in the County Hall Chapel.

Walks

Wednesday 11th January 2006

11 am - meet in Anglezarke Car Park off Moor Rd Anglezarke Nr Chorley.

Social Evening and Dinner

Monday 16th January 2006

at Barton Grange Hotel.



Northern Sub Group

Christmas Lunch

Thursday 8th December

At the Elms Hotel



Talk - 2pm Headway Hotel

Tuesday 13th December

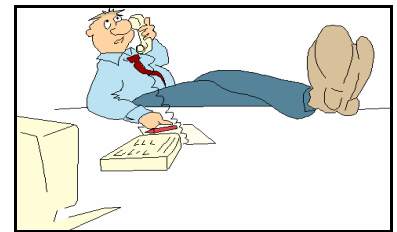
Mrs Hurst talks about the House of Windsor

Valentines Day 2006

Headway Hotel

Afternoon Tea Dance

Chairman's Remarks



2006 Pensions Increase

The inflation increase in local government pensions which will be paid from next April is based on the annual rate of inflation as at the previous September. The published rate for September is 2.7% and **Roger Rymer** reports that, therefore, that will be the increase which members can expect with proportionate reductions for people who retired after April 2005.

You will probably have heard that the Government has done a deal with certain public sector unions over the retirement age. Existing civil servants, teachers and National Health Service workers will be allowed to retire at 60 with an unreduced pension, while new employees will have to work till 65 if they want an unreduced pension. This is a significant concession and recognises the

expectations that existing employees will have had when they joined these services. The Government maintains that it will be able to afford this concession because of the high turnover of staff in these work areas.

Separate talks are being held about Local Government workers at the beginning of November with **John Prescott, Deputy PM**. The expectation was that a similar deal would have been struck by the time you read this newsletter. However, discussions are still continuing during November. The wider review of Pensions, which Roger mentioned in the September newsletter, is currently expected to be published at the end of November.

Annual Social Reunion

As mentioned in last month's Newsletter further details of our annual "do" are contained in the booking form included with this Newsletter. See you there.

I am happy to report that we have found a driver for the Lancaster and Morecambe group. He is under 70, we have checked with his birth certificate, his mother and MI5, so he can drive a minibus. Even more important the finance of the arrangement has been approved by our Treasurer **Ray Rudge!**

Incidentally, Ray will be playing at the **Northern Group Christmas Lunch** on 8th December as well as our **Social Reunion** on 16 January. It's worth going just to hear Ray on the keyboard!

Newsletter by Email

Complications continue, the latest is the unreliability of the Spanish telephone system. The idea was always a bit speculative so it has been temporarily abandoned in favour of providing the Newsletter on a website which is easier to arrange and access.

The *web link* is www.unisonlancs.org.uk/retired.asp and wait for the pages to load. We have also arranged a direct link with the Branch Committee minutes; not only can you read our minutes (the Executive will have to watch its attendances from now on!) but also by looking at the Departmental minutes you can see how your old Department is doing. **Let me know if this is useful.** The *web link* has been set up with some speed so it is hoped to improve as we go along.

Dave Sergeant"



News from the Executive Committee

At our meeting this month, we had a further discussion about our **Annual Dinner** which will take place on 16 January 2006 at **Barton Grange Hotel**. The menu has now been agreed with the hotel and Ray, our treasurer, will once again provide the evenings entertainment. The cost will be £19.50 per person.

From our report to your Committee on Conference, it was decided that attention should be drawn to the legal services provided by Unison for retired members. These include a free personal injury service to union members & their family, holiday injury cover, conveyancing, & a free wills service. If anyone wants further information please telephone me.

Maureen Vass"

Secretary



Retired Members Conference – Cardiff:

11-12 October 2005.

The conference was held in **Cardiff City Hall**, which stands,

on what has been acclaimed one of the finest civic centres in Europe. The buildings are of Portland stone, much ornately carved and separated by broad avenues and parks. It is the fifth building to serve as the centre of Local Government in Cardiff. The exterior view is dominated by the 194 foot clock tower and dome with its fierce welsh dragon. The statues, sculpted by **HC Fehr**, at the top of the clock tower represent the four winds. Our hotel was about 10 minutes walk away, close to the pedestrianised shopping area.

On Tuesday we both attended the workshop on **Unison Legal Services – Wills and Probate**. This was undertaken by a representative from Thompsons Solicitors, and she gave a very interesting and informative talk. In the evening we went to the Social Evening which, whilst a little noisy, was great if you enjoy the Big Band Sound.

We were welcomed to Conference by the **Lord Mayor** of Cardiff, **Mrs Freda Salway**, who had been a member of Unison prior to her retirement but had never joined the Retired Members. The conference, of 250 delegates, was held in the Assembly Room. The agenda consisted of a wide variety of motions including The High Cost of Utilities, A Charter of Rights in Law for Citizens of Pension Age, Elder Abuse, Optical and Dental Provision, Travel Insurance, ID cards. All these were carried; however the one on the abolition of the **Life Retired Members Payment**, which was opposed by your delegates, was lost. Even though there was little opposition to most motions it was obvious that we would not get through the agenda, even after reducing the speakers time. Two of the

motions discussed will be submitted to next year's Annual Conference from the Retired Members.

Maureen Vass & Stella Talbot"



Northern Sub Group

Christmas Lunch - Elms Hotel Thursday 8th December

Following the success of the last two summer Lunch-Talks at the Elms Hotel, this years **Christmas Lunch** will be held in a private room at the same venue. A three course choice meal, including coffee & mints, will cost £13.75, a little dearer than in recent years, but in addition **Ray Rudge** will bring along his keyboard and play Christmas & other music for after-lunch entertainment.

Application forms are available from **Ron Clement**, contact him on 01524 35860.

Talk 2pm Headway Hotel Tuesday 13th December

Mrs Hurst will talk about the **House of Windsor** and will bring along lots of very interesting memorabilia. Please bring your friends and support the sub group.

Valentines Day 2006

Headway Hotel - Tea Dance

The ballroom has now been booked for an afternoon tea dance at the headway hotel. Live music

will be provided by **Ray Rudge** on his keyboard and there will be refreshments including cakes & scones. A small

charge will be made and a booking form will be included in the next newsletter.

The sub group will also need support from Outside its Area for this new venture to be a success.

Ray Rudge"

Treasurer



Activities & Social Events

I have been gathering names for our programme of winter talks and we are looking forward to some excellent speakers this season. The first talk will be held on Friday November 25th **Mrs Valerie Anderson**, will relate the **History of Silk** by going back nearly 5000 years, and how silk has evolved through the ages. She will demonstrate how she hand paints all types of silks: making some rather nice and unusual Christmas presents, which you will be able to purchase after the demonstration.



Finish the afternoon with a complementary cup of tea or coffee and a social chat. See future newsletters for more information.

Next the usual information for our new members, the talks will be held on the last Friday of the month - *the dates to jot down in your diary are:-*

25th Nov 2005, 27th Jan 2006, 24th Feb 2006, 31st Mar 2006, and 28th April 2006.

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 STREET** 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. The cafeteria is now situated near the main entrance in Pitt Street; again the security person on the door will direct you. Hopefully we will

again see many of our members who support these talks and hopefully they will bring along their friends who will be most welcome. 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.



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). Save the stamps in a container till you get a few to send on to an extremely worthy cause - **Derian House** - this is an on going stamp appeal. 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



Trip to Blackpool - 26th October 'We'll meet again'

Forty-three members & friends enjoyed a superb matinee show at the **Winter Gardens in Blackpool**, where 1 female and 6 male artists reminded us of the music & comedy which were pre-eminent in the **1940's** - an afternoon of nostalgia performed by a very talented cast. This was followed by an equally good 3 course meal at a restaurant just across the road, after which the coach from **Preston** travelled through the lights on its return journey.

Many thanks to **Fran** for organising this event which proved somewhat complex and not without a "**headache**" or two!

French Chateau & Wines

What a lovely trip this four night break organised by Stella Talbot proved to be.

Three of us set off from Preston in the early hours for a slick journey via the tunnel to Calais.

On to Paris for an overnight stop to enable us to enjoy a city tour the following morning. This was very well organised, our courier being absolutely superb (as she was throughout the trip) then time for lunch and shopping.

We then carried on to *Château d'arc en Barrois* which was situated in a very attractive typical French Village. On first sight it was

all that we had imagined. The public rooms were most



impressive with such ambience – gracious living at its best! The bedrooms had been very well adapted to modern living.

Prior to our evening dinner we were welcomed by the management (on a lovely sunny terrace) with a *Kir Royale* – very nice! The next evening was the wine tastings both informative & entertaining – if only we could indulge in such quality wines all the time!

Our outings were to *Langres* – an interesting walled old town; *L'Abbaye de Fontenay* – one of the oldest Cistercian monasteries in Europe now in private hands and *Dijon* – home to mustard and cassis.

What a treat many of you missed.

Margaret Duckworth”



Walk at Caton

14th September 2005

On the 14th September 2005 a

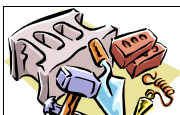
party of nine met at the Bull Beck Picnic site adjacent to the A683 approximately half a mile east of Caton. Turning away from the *River Lune* we climbed a grassy bank to Brookhouse village where we joined another field path to *Anna's Ghyll* farmhouse almost hidden amongst some trees.

Emerging from the farm access road at approximately 100 metres above sea level, we joined Quarry Road, which would take us to *Moorcock Hall* on *Claughton Moor*. A steady pace up the hill allowed several people to collect almost unpolluted blackberries from the roadside bushes.

The quarry site some 250 metres above sea level has provided many thousands of tons of shale for brick making. Then for several years a site for Lunesdale District Councils refuse, but the current use is a wind farm generating electricity which does not seem too intrusive. However viewed from Cockerham Sands in the Lune Estuary they appear as another nail in the coffin of the *Lancashire Landscape*.

Moorcock Hall is now being rebuilt as a substantial dwelling house and commands a panoramic view from the fells around Sedbergh to Walney Island set in the Irish Sea off the Cumbria Coast.

As we descend from the old quarries we walk below an aerial ropeway used to transport shale from



the current quarries to *Claughton Brickworks*. A field boundary gives us a measure of shelter from the autumn wind to eat our lunch.

The track continues downhill alongside the *Claughton Hall* woodlands enclosed by a high wire fence, probably to keep the pheasants in or possibly to keep us out!!

Eventually we cross the A683 and the dismantled railway track which once served the valley community up to *Sedbergh*. The final part of the walk was across the level land bordering the current course of the River Lune. The river's gathering grounds are in the fells of the western *Pennines* where the porous limestone permits the rapid run off of up to 2.5 metres of rainfall per year. Each century the Lune endeavours to change the course within its restricted valley producing an interesting series of bends. Unfortunately a brisk wind on our faces prevented us lingering to study the intricacies of the rivers course.

Our route concluded with a long stride and almost a wet foot across a feeder stream. Then a short distance along the railway track bed, with a welcome cup of tea in the car park tea cabin, now a permanent concrete construction.

Don Windle”

Walk Leader/Coordinator



Our membership is 1816,
(including 41 associate members)

Membership Secretary's Report

Since our last meeting we have had 2 new members. We offer them a warm welcome. They are:

Mrs E Ashton (Greaves Park
Nursery School)

Lancaster;

Mr TA Carter (Environment)
Penwortham.

Deaths of Members

Sadly one of our members has died, we offer condolences to her family and friends.

Mrs Ethel Coward (Resources)
Blackpool.