

Lancashire UNISON

Retired Members Section

Newsletter

EDITION NO. 93 - November 2007

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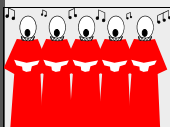
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Diary Dates 2007



County Hall

Carol Service 12noon
Tuesday 18th December

Chapel of Christ the King County Hall

Talks - 2pm

Friday 30th November

Mrs Irene Cottam a first hand experience
of *Christmas Day* in the *Work* house.

Friday 25th January

Mr Ken Dagger portraying
My Entertaining Life

Northern Sub-Group

Talks - 2pm

Tuesday 11th December

Edward Lawson, with a talk entitled
"Christmas Cracker"

Tuesday 8th January

entertainment from
a group of *Bell Ringers*

Christmas Lunch

Thursday 6th December

Festive lunch - now fully booked

Walks - Programme Meeting

Wednesday 7th November

25 The Howgills, Fulwood, Preston. 2pm

The Work House

The *Work House* is some distant scene from a *Dickens Victorian* novel isn't it? Well, in *Preston*, if you walked along a dim basement corridor of a huge building which would stretch into darkness before the end, you would come to a large black door, the paint still shiny from lack of sunlight, and across the door, in large shiny gold letters, was the word "**WORKMASTER**". The building was, and is still there, the *Preston Civic Hostel* in *Watling Street Road Fulwood* and was built in 1868 as the *Preston Union Work House*. In 1976 the *County*, which owned it as a home for the elderly, decided to sell and it was one of my earlier management responsibilities to close it down. I remember, every time I walked past that door, looking at that word "**WORKMASTER**". and wondering what on earth had gone on so recently in this place.



On Friday 30th November the *County Hall* talk by *Irene Cottam* is **FIRST HAND** experience of *Christmas Day in the Work House* so I am going to make sure that I will find out what on earth went on there. *Irene* is a great friend of ours and, as the arranger of the *Preston Health UNISON Branch* trips, her name has often appeared as the contact to ring in our Newsletter. She gave another very successful talk some time ago on the *Americans at Warton* aerodrome and is always worth listening to.

Morecambe Christmas Lunch

Ron Clement has informed us that, with over 50

UNISON BRANCH OFFICE - Christ Church Precinct, County Hall, Preston, PR1 8XJ.
Tel. 01772 533072 or email:- unison@unison.lancscc.gov.uk

members attending, there are no more places available for the *Morecambe Christmas Lunch* at the *Elms Hotel*. I am afraid, therefore, that there is no application form attached to this Newsletter. These lunches are always a success as demonstrated by the numbers of our members attending. Thanks, as usual, to *Ron* and *Jill* for their work.

Pensions Talk

I have, from time to time, gone on a bit about the complexity of pensions and how we need to learn as much as possible. It would appear members agree because forty members came to the talk at *County Hall* by *Elizabeth Barker* of the *Pensions Service* on 26th October. However, even I was taken aback by the complexities *Elizabeth* talked about. I guessed there were at least 15 separate subjects each would be worth a talk on their own. *Elizabeth* seemed to have lost count herself!

Hopefully we can provide information on each subject but, immediately, the *Winter Fuel Payment* is available to anyone over 60 and if you have a query the *Winter Fuel Payments*

Helpline is 08459 151515.

Throughout *Lancashire* there are local information points for pensions but you will need to arrange an appointment. The appointment telephone number is **0845 606 0265**.

Also at the talk there was information provided about the *Credit Union* organised within the *County*. *Maureen* has given more details under "*Executive Committee News*".

Dave Sergeant

Chairman

Executive Committee News



Y o u r
C o m m i t t e e
r e c e i v e d
r e p o r t s f r o m
o u r

delegates who went to the *Retired Members Conference* last month in *Plymouth*. We also discussed how we can keep you informed of how the structure of the *County Council* is changing without making it even more confusing. Watch this space.

Everyone is beginning to think about *Christmas*. The first event is the *Dinner* being arranged by the *Northern Sub-Group* which will be held on 6th December and is fully booked. The next event will be the *Carol Service* which will be held in the *Chapel of Christ the King* at County Hall at 12 noon on *Tuesday 18 December*. All are welcome.

Our *Reunion and Annual Dinner* will be held, once again, at *Barton Grange Hotel*, but will not be until *April*. More information will be given in our Newsletters in the *New Year*.

Credit Union

In our *April Newsletter* I brought to members' attention the *Credit Union* which several members of the *Branch* had been involved in setting up for the benefit of everyone who receives a regular payment (salary/pension) from the *County Council*.

Our *Credit Union* is still here and growing, although in the future it will be different as we are in the process of merging with a larger *Credit Union – The Blues and Twos Credit Union* – which has its offices at *Police Headquarters, Hutton*.

The merger will give our members even more benefits than at present. Larger loans will be available over a longer repayment period, a dividend payment on shares, and access via the internet on the state of your account. The merged *Credit Union* hope to continue with the office at *County Hall* (01772 532296) and will be manned each day at lunch time.

Many members of our *Credit Union* have told me how much they appreciate the service we give them, and find it a very pleasant way to save for *Christmas*, special occasions and holidays.

Maureen Vass

Secretary

Pensions Update

The *Retail Prices Index* (RPI) annual increase to September was published last month and this is the increase that will be applied to your *Local Government Pension* with effect from *April 2008*. The percentage increase was 3.9%. Although this is a slight reduction on the previous month's increase because of falling energy prices, it is more than the current pay offer to *Local Government staff*.

Funding Adult Social Care

The *Government* has promised an early review of the way in which social care of adults is funded. Given the current confused situation over how personal care and nursing care are presently financed this is in principle to be welcomed. One imagines that the proposals will be somehow based on the *Wanless Report* which talked about a minimum basic care package which could then be topped up by personal contributions matched by

additional *Government* funding (with special provision for those people in receipt of benefits).

Free Off- peak Local Transport for Over 60s and Disabled

This concession which will come into operation in *April 2008* will apparently be administered via the *NoWcard* system so current *NoWcard* holders who have changed their address since their card was issued should contact the *NoWcard* helpline on 0845 0581096 to ensure that your *National Concession* travel pass is sent to the right address.

Roger Rymer"
Vice Chairman

Conference 2007

Plymouth is smart *University City*, full of top departmental stores, major chains and fashionable boutiques. The *Barbican* is an essential first port of call where *Drake* and *Raleigh* once weighed anchor. You will find a bustling community of shops, restaurants, café's and world attractions in a harbour setting. You can stand where the *Pilgrim Fathers* stood before they embarked on *The Mayflower*. It has a natural harbour and the spectacular *Plymouth Hoe*. Our hotel overlooked *The Hoe*, and whilst the Hotel was not the best the views were out of this world.

Over *240* delegates attended conference and after receiving the *Standing Orders Committee Report* and the very full and interesting *Annual Report* from the *National Retired Members Committee* we moved on to the motions. *Conference* was determined to get through all the agenda and to support the motions.

The motions I was most interested in were the ones on *National Pensioners Charter, Pension, Pensioners Holiday Insurance and Travel Pass*.

Stella Talbot"
Conference delegate

The two motions submitted by the *North West Regional Retired Members Committee* on *Utilities v Pensions* and *Clinical Assessment Treatment & Support Services (CATS)* were both carried. There was an interesting discussion on *The Role of Retired Members in Unison*. This centred on the inability of retired members to continue to be active within the Self Organised groups after retirement. The *National Retired Members Committee* were requested to have discussions at *National* level to try to facilitate this. Many delegates felt it was inappropriate to split retired members into separate groups.

Another important issue was raised regarding insurance cover for retired members when they were undertaking duties on behalf of both their Branch and the retired members sections.

Kath Montgomery"
Conference delegate

Northern Sub Group

Christmas Lunch Elms Hotel
Thursday 6th December

Unfortunately there are *no more* places available for this lunch as it is now fully booked.

Talk 2pm Headway Hotel
Tuesday 11th December

We welcome the return of *Edward Lawson* who, playing his *oboe* will entertain us with a seasonal programme called "*A Christmas Cracker*" – he is a professional musician well worth listening to. Please come along, bring your

friends and enjoy free coffee/tea and biscuits.

Talk 2pm Headway Hotel
Tuesday 8th January

Continuing with the musical theme we will be entertained by a group of *Bell Ringers* – more details next month.

Ray Rudge"
Treasurer

Activities at County Hall

The new season of talks started off extremely well with *40* members attending. *Elizabeth Barker* who works for the Pensions and Benefits Office gave some good advice on various benefits and how to contact various departments. Hopefully the number of members who attended will continue to support our other speakers throughout the season.

The *NOVEMBER* speaker will be very familiar to a lot of our members, *Irene Cottam* is one of the officers for the *Preston Health Branch Retired Members Section*, she will relate her time working at *Sharoe Green Hospital*, which was, then classed *THE WORK HOUSE*.

The first speaker in the new year *JANUARY* we welcome once again *Mr Ken Dagger* who will entertain us with a nostalgic talk full of humour and song.

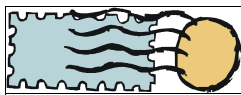
I hope to see many of our usual members at the talks, and hopefully some of our new members and friends would like to join us. I will take this opportunity to thank everyone who comes along to support these events for making them more enjoyable for the speakers.

The usual reminder for our *new*

members, the talks are held on the last **Friday** of the month, they start at 2.00pm finishing approx 3.15pm. and are held in the cabinet rooms at **COUNTY HALL**, unless directed elsewhere by the security person on the day. The entrance is from the **Pitt Street Main Door**, please ensure you sign in and receive a visitor's badge. The talk's start at 2.00pm finishing approx 3.15pm, they are open to members and their friends so come along and enjoy the afternoon, finishing with free tea/coffee and biscuits. You are welcome to use the staff cafeteria, situated near the main door before the talk begins, for a snack or meal, again the security person will direct you.

Derian House Stamp Appeal

Please keep sending your stamps to **Derian House**, many envelopes 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 the address below this is an on going stamp appeal for a worthwhile cause.



**Derian House Children's Hospice,
The Appeals Office,
Derian House, Chancery Road,
Astley Village, Chorley,
Lancs. PR7 1DH.
Fran Francis**

Talk Organiser
Contact No. 01772 742459

**Retired Members
Walking Group**

**Lancashire County Branch
of Unison**

Correspondent: Don Windle,
There will be a **Programme**

Meeting at 25 The Howgills, Fulwood, Preston at **2.00pm** on Wednesday **7th November 2008.**
Contact Don on (01772) 713820.

The next walk will be in **2008** on **Wednesday 9th January**
Walk leader is Peter Kilgour you can contact him on 01257 279650. Walk starts at 11am.

Meet at the National Trust Car Park (Free) Park Road, SILVERDALE.

Park Road National Trust Car Park is ¾ mile north of **Silverdale Railway Station**. Keep left and the car park is on the right, immediately after the junction. There are No Toilets.

Landranger Sheet 97. Grid Reference 471 759.

An Undulating walk of approximately 6 miles, taking in woodland, mossland and open country via Leighton Moss.

Flo & Don Windle

Walk Coordinators

Membership Secretary's Report



Since our last report we have had 3 new members, and 1 associate member. We offer them a warm welcome.

Mrs MV Hutton (Care Services)
Preston;

Mrs A Kay (Libraries)
Freckleton;

Mrs M Thomas (Schools)
Fleetwood.

Associate Member
Mrs Kathleen Bowyer
Longridge.

Deaths of Members

Sadly 4 of our members have died; we offer our condolences to their family and friends.

Ivy Victoria Barton

Fulwood;

Dennis Bowyer (Resources)

Longridge;

Irene Helen Smith

Blackpool;

Mrs Alice Turner

Fulwood.

**Our membership is 1853
(including 32 associate members)**

and to finish...

The <http://> address below is a link to the online blog's of **Sir Bill Taylor** one of your Members who writes for the **Lancashire Telegraph**.

Copy & Paste - <http://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/blogs/billtaylor/index.ph> into the address line of your browser, to read them.

His most current one is titled :-

Remember all the fallen

when you buy a poppy.

The following poem "**In Flanders' Fields**" was written in 1915 by a **Canadian - John McCrae**, a doctor and teacher, who served in both the **South African War** and the **First World War**, and was first published in England's "**Punch**" magazine in December, 1915.



**In Flanders' fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.**

**We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders' fields.**

**Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high,
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders' Fields.**

"Lest we forget"