

the **Gazette**

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FOR PENSIONERS OF IMPERIAL TOBACCO



DAVID'S NEW CAREER IS ON TRACK

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A new non-executive appointment to the Board brings a wealth of commercial understanding that will help oversee Imperial's strategy and transformation


EXPERIENCED GLOBAL LEADER JOINS THE BOARD

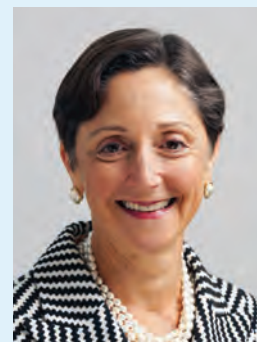


JULIE HAMILTON, pictured above, has joined the Imperial Brands PLC Board as a Non-Executive Director. She also joins the People and Governance Committee. Julie was Chief Commercial and Global

Sales Officer at Diageo until August 2023 and has over 30 years' experience in marketing, strategy and digital transformation. Prior to Diageo, she spent 25 years at the Coca-Cola Company where she held a range of leadership positions, including Chief Customer and Commercial Leadership Officer.

Invaluable to the Board

Chair Thérèse Esperdy said: "Julie is an experienced global leader who brings deep knowledge of delivering commercial change in multinational consumer businesses. Her understanding of digital transformation and global brands will be invaluable to the Board as it continues to oversee Imperial's strategy and transformation." 



Thérèse Esperdy

Response to announcement on vaping and smoking

◆ IN JANUARY 2024 the UK Government made a wide-ranging announcement about smoking and vaping following a formal consultation.

Included in the Government's proposed approach is legislation to restrict vape flavours and packaging, ban the sale of disposable vapes and change the age of sale for tobacco products so that anyone born after 01 January 2009 will never be able to legally buy them.

"We do not tolerate youth vaping and strongly endorse action to prevent the marketing and sale of nicotine products to young people," said Oliver Kutz, General Manager UK and Ireland at Imperial Brands.

Significant progress

"It is important, however, that new restrictions do not compromise the ability of vaping products to transition adult smokers away from combustible cigarettes. Disposable vapes are currently used by more than half of adult vapers, and a ban threatens to undermine the country's significant progress to reduce smoking.

"We remain committed to rapid innovation within our blu brand portfolio to ensure that this continues to offer adult nicotine users a range of quality, satisfying and responsibly marketed alternatives."

As stated in its response to the Government's consultation, Imperial also believes that a generational smoking ban – untested anywhere in the world – would be unworkable and unenforceable and that a proven, immediate, and far simpler alternative would be to raise the legal age of sale for tobacco products to 21.



blu bar moves to next level

Imperial has launched its new and improved blu bar vaping device, which benefits from a range of upgrades and new features.

blu bar 1000 offers up to 1,000 puffs and features blu Flavour Tech mesh heater technology to deliver strong bursts of flavour that really lasts. The redesigned casing also means that the liquid level is visible through the translucent mouthpiece, making it much easier to see when the

liquid is running low. It also includes a security lock and a removable battery, making it easy to safely dispose of the used battery at a local collection point. blu bar 1000 has initially been launched in the UK in eight flavours – Blueberry Ice, Strawberry Ice, Watermelon Ice, Banana Ice, Mint, Grape, Tropical Mix and Blueberry Cherry.

blu bar 1000 products will also be rolled out in further markets in Europe.

NEW PENSION RATES FOR 2024

Pensioners are set to receive letters confirming this year's RPI-based pension increase

THE RISE in the Retail Prices Index (RPI) for the 12 months to December 2023 – the basis of the Fund pension increase from 1 April 2024 – was 5.16 per cent.

Not all members will receive this amount as pensions for those pensioners and dependants who joined the Fund on or after 1 April 2002, or who joined the Sinclair Collis section of the Fund between 1 October 2001 and 31 March 2002, are subject to an increase cap of five per cent per annum so this is the increase that will be awarded to these members in April

Increase in RPI was **5.16%**

2024. None of the increases described above apply to any GMP (Guaranteed Minimum Pension) element of your pension, which receives increases in line with statutory requirements until GMP age (60 for women and 65 for men).

From GMP age, the Fund is not required to increase any GMP in payment built up prior to 06 April 1988. Any built up after this date increases in payment in line with the rise in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), subject to a maximum of three per cent per annum, which is the case this year. For those with 'notional' GMPs, increases only apply to your Fund pension

in excess of the 'notional' GMP. Pensioners will receive a letter towards the end of April 2024 confirming this year's increase and the revised amount payable, including any GMP and/or notional GMP amounts.

P60s for the 2023/24 tax year and payslips for April 2024 will also be issued by the end of April. **G**

Paperless contact

In an increasingly digital world, the Pension Fund Office (PFO) is moving towards paperless forms of communication as it adopts new ways of communicating with members.

It is hoped this will provide a fast, convenient and environmentally friendly way of providing

information about the Fund and access to future notices and publications, such as the Gazette.

The PFO team is working with the Fund's advisers, Willis Towers Watson, to introduce this change and more information will follow in the summer.

We will give you the choice to opt-in to receiving general communications from us electronically, or you can still receive communications in paper format if you prefer.



Are you receiving a small pension?

In late spring/early summer the Trustees intend contacting pensioners and dependants (widows/widowers) who are being paid small pensions by the Fund – those valued at £30,000 or less – and offer them an option to exchange their regular pension payments for a one-off taxable lump sum. A similar exercise was run a couple of years ago.

The £30,000 limit is based on the capital value of your pension. This is the cash value that is put on your pension, which depends on your age among other factors. It is not your annual pension amount.

Please note that you will only hear from the Trustees if you are eligible to receive this offer. Unfortunately, the Pension Fund Office (PFO) cannot deal with individual requests from pensioners in advance of this offer, so please do not contact us if you think you may be eligible.

Need to return decision form

We are giving advance notification of this communication so that eligible pensioners will not think the offer is a scam when they receive a letter about it. The Trustees and the PFO will be working with Willis Towers Watson on this exercise. Eligible members may or may not choose to accept this offer, although for pensioners with pensions valued between £10,000 and £30,000, their eligibility will depend on the value of any other pensions they have.

If a member decides not to accept, they don't need to do anything – their pension will continue to be paid each month. If they choose to accept, they need to return the form enclosed with the offer. On receipt of the lump sum, future pension payments will cease.

G LETTER

Two players recognised in netball photo

◆ I worked in the Legal Department of Imperial Tobacco in Bedminster, Bristol, from February 1980 to November 1984. At the time, I wasn't married and my name was Rosemarie Reeves.

I recognise some of the people on the netball match photograph (Gazette, issue 104, page 8) and think I can fill in a couple of the gaps for you. The girl behind Alan Slapper (fifth from left) is Carole Millar, and

the man fourth from the right (facing to his right) is Glanville Lewis. I do recognise the girl in front of him but just can't remember her name.

I would love to hear more about this photo and hope you are planning an update of names in a future issue.

Rose Taplin



Rose has identified two colleagues pictured in the last issue of *The Gazette*: circled, above left, Carole Millar, and right, Glanville Lewis

There are many benefits to planning ahead and setting up a Lasting Power of Attorney. Head of UK Pensions, **Jan Killick**, explains some of the advantages and how to go about setting one up.

SHOULD YOU SET UP A LASTING POWER OF ATTORNEY?



Jan Killick

N ONE OF us wants to think that there might be a time when we are unable to make our own decisions. But, if that time should come, having a lasting power of attorney (LPA) in place can make things much easier for you and those around you.

Q What is a lasting power of attorney (LPA)?

An LPA is a legal document that allows you to give one or more people you trust (your 'attorneys') the power to make decisions on your behalf and manage your money and property and/or your health and welfare.

You can list any specific powers you wish your attorney(s) to have, and an LPA gives you more control over what happens to you if you lose the mental capacity to make your own decisions.

It is important to note that the instructions you include on your LPA determine when your attorney(s) can use those powers so, setting one up now does not mean you are instantly giving up control. For example, you can decide that an LPA for financial decisions can be used while you still have mental capacity, or you can state that you only want it to come into force if you lose the capacity to make your own decisions.

Q Why do I need to have an LPA?

If you don't have an LPA in place and you lose the ability to make your own decisions, even your husband, wife or long-term partner would not be able to manage things like your finances (including your pension) or health for you.

Without an LPA your family or friends would have to go to court to get authority to make decisions on your behalf, which can be a costly, complicated and time-consuming process.

Q How do I choose my attorney(s)?

You can choose one or more people to be your attorney. If you appoint more than one, you need to decide if they will make decisions separately or together. Each attorney must

be 18 or over and could be a relative, friend, partner or professional such as a solicitor. Most importantly they should be someone you trust to have your best interests at heart.

printer and want to use the online service but need some help, you can call the Office of the Public Guardian on 0300 456 0300. The Alzheimer's Society can also help you fill in the LPA form online. The number to call is 0300 222 1122. Calls to both numbers are charged at the local standard rate.

It is slightly different in Scotland and Northern Ireland. In Scotland (www.publicguardian-scotland.gov.uk/power-of-attorney) it is called continuing power of attorney and in Northern Ireland (www.nidirect.gov.uk/enduring-power-of-attorney) enduring power of attorney. What they cover differs slightly, but the principles are the same wherever you live.

Q How do I tell the Pensions Office that I have an LPA?

You can either email a copy of your LPA to: pension.enquiries@uk.imptob.com or send a certified copy to us at: Imperial Tobacco Pension Fund, PO Box 3242, Winterstoke Road, Bristol BS3 9GY.

If your LPA was registered after July 2020, you may also have an activation key or access code which will allow us to view your LPA online. This should be 13 characters long and begin with a 'V'. It will be valid for 30 days, and if your code expires, you'll need to request a new one from the Office of the Public Guardian. You may notify us of the activation key by completing a form available on the Pension Fund's website at: www.myimperialpension.com/library/power-of-attorney-registration-form/. Please remember to include your Pension Fund member reference number with your correspondence.

Q Where can I go to find out more information?

There is a lot of information available on the government's website at: www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney and Age UK has a useful guide Power of Attorney – Planning for the Future on its website at: www.ageuk.org.uk You can also speak to the charity by calling 0800 055 6112 (free to call on most landlines and mobile phones). **G**



Without an LPA your family or friends would have to go to court to get authority to make decisions on your behalf

Q How do I set up an LPA?

If you are in England or Wales, the easiest way is online or by downloading paper forms, both of which can be found at: www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney/make-lasting-power. Either way, the attorney(s) and witnesses will need to sign the forms, and they must then be registered with the Office of the Public Guardian, PO Box 16185, Birmingham B2 2WH, which takes up to 20 weeks.

If you don't have access to a computer or

REUNION RAISES MONEY FOR 'TERRIBLE ILLNESS'

Player's pensioners raised £460 for MND



T

HERE WAS a fantastic turnout for the Player's pensioners' Christmas get-together at The Stage pub in Nottingham.

Almost 200 enjoyed catching up over drinks and a buffet, with former Horizon engineer Lenny Hall the oldest in attendance at 86 years of age.

The event is promoted through the Facebook group *Imperial Tobacco...Past and Present*, a private group that has over 1,800 members and was set up to allow former colleagues to keep in touch.

Personal experience

The pub provided a buffet and a collection raised £460 for Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Association; a charity close to reunion organiser Dave Clay's heart as he lost his mother to the illness.

"I have had personal experience of this terrible illness and also organised collections for MND at the Horizon factory before I retired," said Dave, who worked as an engineering mechanic at Player's for 37 years from 1969.

"Everyone in this area has seen the amazing charity work former England rugby league player Kevin Sinfield has done for the cause, so we decided it should be this year's collection.

"It was great to see such a fantastic turnout, which goes to show how much we all enjoyed working together at Player's."

The summer reunion will be held on Wednesday 12 June from 3:30pm at the same venue.



▲▲ Top and above: Player's Nottingham pensioners enjoying their Christmas get-together

MVR pals still meeting 34 years on

Poor weather conditions didn't stop 20 pensioners from attending the annual Player's Garage and Motor Vehicle Repair (MVR) reunion.

It was the 18th time the get-together has taken place and the former colleagues enjoyed catching up over a drink at the Bell Inn in Nottingham.

It's 34 years since the department closed its doors but the lasting friendships made there endure.

"The Garage and MVR department only had about 100 employees so to get 20 along to the reunion was great considering that the department closed in 1990," said former garage driver Phil Bradley, who organises the event with Dave Lowe. "Unfortunately, I wasn't able to attend this year due to illness, but we are already planning the next one and will continue to do so for as long as there is the desire to meet up."



ALL ABOARD! DAVID'S NEW CAREER ON THE RAILWAY

As a platform inspector David's role focuses on the safety of the station, passengers, trains and colleagues

Imperial pensioner **David Barnett** is realising his childhood passion with a new 'career' volunteering at the Great Central Railway (GCR) in Loughborough.



▲ David enjoys passing on his knowledge to the public as one of the station tour guides

THE GCR is the UK's only double track mainline heritage railway; and the only place in the world where full-sized steam engines can be seen passing each other.

David moved back to the East Midlands area in 2020 and, as soon as the railway was operating again after the Covid pandemic, began training as a porter. He has now almost completed his training to become a platform inspector.

His passion for trains began aged seven or eight when his older brother John, already an avid trainspotter, took him to Beeston station near his home in Nottinghamshire to watch the trains.

"I remember an express roaring through the station, whistle shrieking, and the noise, smoke and clatter of the carriages positively terrified me, but I was hooked," said David, who worked for Imperial in various sales roles for 38 years before taking early retirement in 2006.

"I spent many a day as a boy on Nottingham (Midland) station, jotting down numbers. There is something truly hypnotic about steam engines and even today, having been a volunteer at Loughborough

Diary dates

- ◆ The **Player's summer reunion** will be held on Wednesday 12 June from 3.30pm at The Stage pub, Wollaton Street, Nottingham NG1 5FE. Contact Dave Clay.
- ◆ Plans are in place for the **2024 Group head office pensioners' reunion**. More details to follow in the July issue of the Gazette. Contact Mike Paige.
- ◆ The **Player's Garage and Motor Vehicle Repair reunion** will take place on Monday 2 December from 3.30pm onwards at the Bell Inn, Nottingham. Contact Phil Bradley or Dave Lowe for more information.
- ◆ The annual **Classic Golf Society golf day** is being held on Monday 8 July 2024 at Bristol Golf Club in Almondsbury. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the event and pensioners are invited to take part. For more information contact Dave Lee in the Pension Fund Office.



"I love being part of a 'living museum'..."



▲ Working among some of the mightiest machines ever created

for almost two years, I can stand and gaze in awe at our locomotives."

The GCR was saved by a group of volunteers following its closure by British Railways in 1969 and is run as a not-for-profit organisation with around 40 paid staff and over 400 volunteers. All station staff are trained in basic safety and help ensure passengers enjoy the experience of a heritage steam railway.

Platform inspector

Porters keep the station clean and tidy and, in the winter, light the coal fires in the two waiting rooms, refreshment room and Station Master's office, tending them throughout the day. David's new role as a platform inspector focuses on the safety of the station, passengers, trains and colleagues as well as managing the porters and assisting the Station Master in dispatching trains.

"I learnt that when the dispatcher blows his whistle to indicate that it is safe for the train to depart, this is not the signal for the train to leave, which is what I previously thought," explains David, who lives in Long Bennington, Lincolnshire, with his wife Audrey.


"The signal is actually a raised arm, and the whistle is to draw the guard's attention, as they are at the opposite end of the train,

that 'the tip', as we call it, is being given. The guard will then similarly blow his whistle to draw the train driver's attention to the fact that he is waving a green flag, giving the 'all clear' for the train to depart. The train driver will acknowledge this with a 'toot', and off he goes!"

David has almost finished his platform inspector training and, once he has 'passed out' can deputise for the Station Master. As a result, the training covers everything from staff management and fire drills to incident reporting and accident procedures.

Loughborough station is set as a 1950s British Railways Eastern Region station with the decor, equipment – such as trollies, weighing scales, piles of suitcases and posters – as well as the uniforms all reflecting that era.

David added: "I love being part of a 'living museum', helping the public, who are usually enthusiastic and interested, putting on my uniform and stepping back in time, working among some of the mightiest machines man has ever created.

"The sights, noise and smells can be found nowhere else, and yes, I still get a kick every time I raise my arm, blow my whistle and send another train up the line to Leicester. I am also one of a small team of station tour guides, so have researched the history of the railway and enjoy passing on my knowledge to the interested public." 

IMPAC is a pensioners' organisation which has been supporting Imperial Pension Fund members for over 30 years.



Website: www.impact.org.uk

IMPAC members' helpline:

email: helpline@impact.org.uk or write to IMPAC, PO Box 10486, Oxton, Southwell NG24 9NL

For membership queries

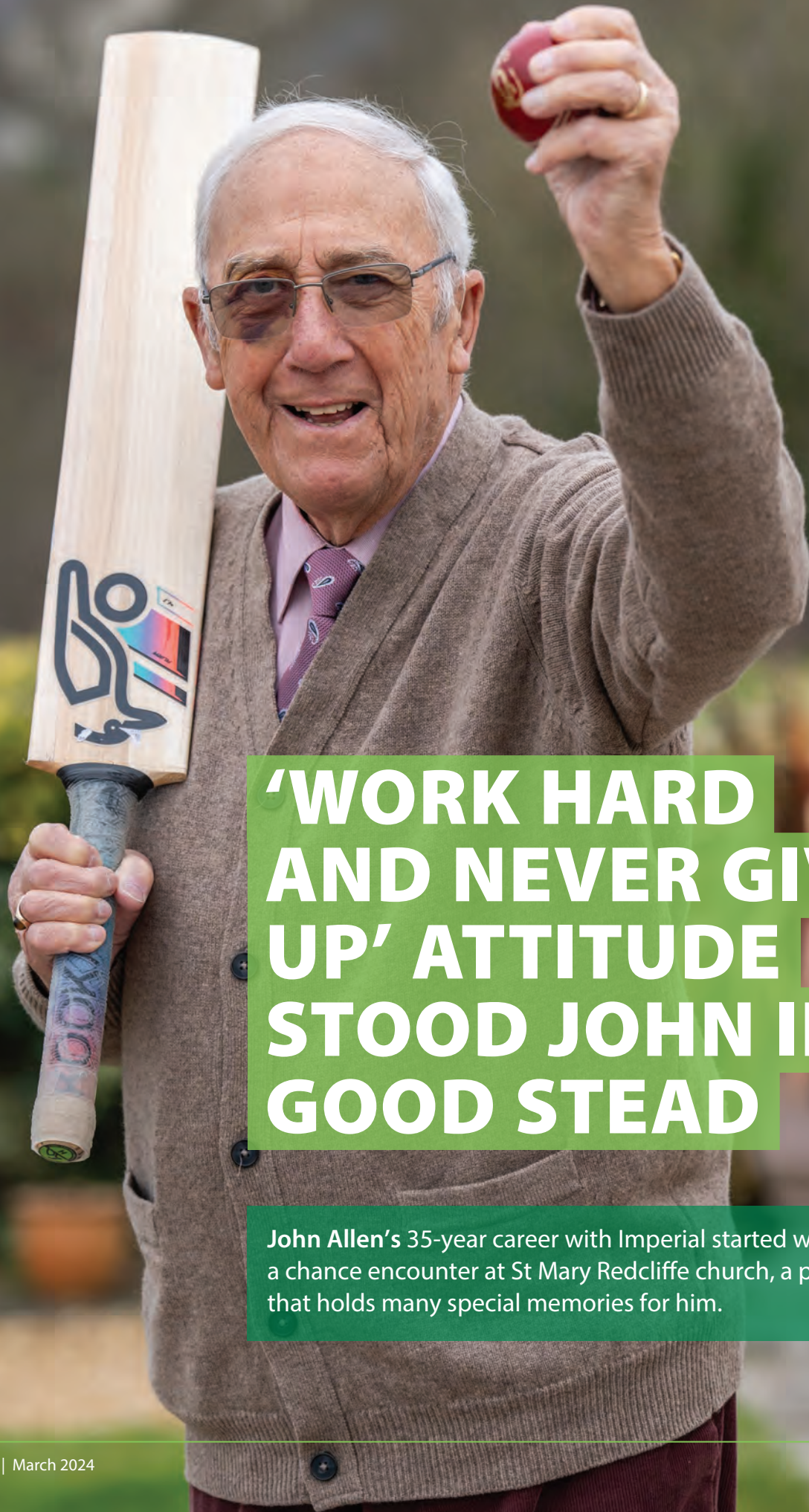
IMPAC membership agency (to update membership details only): email: impact@dmb.org.uk; phone: 01438 840247 or write to:

IMPAC
c/o DMB,
18a Reynards Road,
Welwyn,
Herts AL6 9TP

New members welcome

Any Imperial pensioner who would like to join IMPAC please contact the helpline or apply online at: www.impact.org.uk

Membership is free for the first 12 months.



'WORK HARD AND NEVER GIVE UP' ATTITUDE STOOD JOHN IN GOOD STEAD

John Allen's 35-year career with Imperial started with a chance encounter at St Mary Redcliffe church, a place that holds many special memories for him.

J

JOHN ALLEN was born in Bristol in 1935, the youngest of six, before being evacuated with his sister Margaret to Wales during the Second World War.

They were placed with a family, but John was moved to an isolation hospital because he was so ill with diphtheria that he lost his hair and nails.

At the end of the war he returned to Bristol, attending St Mary Redcliffe boy's school when he was well enough to do so, and his mother took him to services at St Mary Redcliffe church.

"I didn't know it at the time, but that decision to attend church changed my life in so many ways," said John, 88.

"I missed much of my education due to illness and could hardly read. I say that I had a guardian angel looking after me because someone heard me singing and I was asked to attend an interview to join the choir. I was offered a place and that's where my schooling really started, learning to read from the hymn sheet."

Applied for a job

When he was 16, John was talking to the church warden, a factory manager at Imperial, who suggested he applied for a job at the company's head office in Bedminster as a door boy.

He was successful and joined in 1953, remaining in the role for two years until he was called for National Service in the Army. In 1957 he returned to the company, but in the stores department as he was then too old to be a door boy.

"Working in the stores department was wonderful," John remembers. "I had a trolley and would go around to all the offices delivering anything they needed, so I knew the building like the back of my hand and got to know everyone.

"The one room I wasn't allowed in was the typing room as I would distract all the young ladies with my jokes!"

John would also cover for Ernie Harris in the catering department when he was ill or on holiday and was taught how to tap the barrel of Worthington ale served with lunch.

"I remember Ernie telling me that I must ask the catering manager if he would like to try the ale before it was sent out for lunch," John recalls.

"The manager would always ask if I

John and Penny are enjoying their time together



▲ John and Penny moved into John's bungalow in Stockwood during lockdown in 2020

wanted one with him so most mornings when I was covering for Ernie, I had a glass of Worthington with the boss!"

John's guardian angel was again looking over him when, in 1961, he was told by colleague Dougie Deft about a clerk's position, based at the new Western Depot behind Temple Meads railway station. He got the role, swapping his brown coat for a suit.

John managed the office at the depot, which distributed Player's cigarettes throughout Wales and the south west, so when the admin section was looking for a typist, he knew exactly who the right person for the job would be – his wife, Janet.

Married for 60 years

"Our son, Richard, was old enough for her to take on part time work," said John, who met Janet at a youth club when they were teenagers. The couple married at St Mary Redcliffe in 1955 and were married for 60 years before Janet died in 2017.

"She was interviewed for the role and got the job and, from then on, I didn't run the office, Janet did!"

During his career with Imperial, John played cricket for the company – an achievement he was very proud of. He went on to be the club's chairman for five years.

"Imperial's cricket club was one of the best in the south west and the facilities were second to none and were used by Somerset County Cricket Club," he said. "I was chairman

continued on next page



I treasure many happy memories with the company, and I am grateful for those that I got to share with my late wife, Janet.

John and his first wife, Janet, who also worked at the Western Depot, were married for 60 years



continued from page 9

at the cricket club when a young Australian cricketer called Shane Warne was invited to join us for a year.

"We didn't know anything about him and weren't entirely sure where we would house him but luckily Imperial had an amazing Victorian clubhouse with a flat above it, which we spruced up for him.

"When he went back to Australia, he got into the national cricket team and went on to be the best bowler in the world. Whenever he came back to Bristol, he never forgot about us. He was a lovely chap to be around."

John became foreman of the Western Depot in 1981 before being invited to attend an interview in Nottingham to become its manager two years later.

Didn't stop talking

"I remember the interview well," said John. "There were four or five other people waiting to be interviewed for the role all dressed very smartly and there was me in my green suit looking very countrified.

"Distribution manager James Gunn interviewed me and, much to my surprise, knew who I was due to me being chairman of the cricket club. We didn't stop talking and my guardian angel worked her magic again and I was offered the job."

John's time as Depot Manager came with many benefits but also stressful moments, such as the time the building's alarm went off in the middle of the night and John received a phone call asking him to make his way over straight away.

"When I arrived, there were police surrounding the building," he said. "Thieves had smashed the wall at the back of the building and loaded a lorry with cigarettes.

"The police needed to gain access into the building to make sure no one was inside. I led the way up to my office but, as we arrived, an officer grabbed my shoulder to stop me as the door was swinging open instead of being locked as I had left it.

"The officer led the way in and checked but thankfully no one was there. The whole ordeal frightened me to death!"

John remained Depot Manager until his retirement in 1985, when he and Janet enjoyed travelling and spending time



"I will always be proud to have been part of Imperial..."

▲ John and Penny married in 2021 at St Mary Redcliffe church in a ceremony that was filled with their closest friends and family

with their three grandchildren.

When Janet died, he found himself in a dark place but kept himself occupied by

attending church services at

St Mary Redcliffe, where he got talking to Penny, whose husband had died a few years prior to Janet.

"Penny and I had mutual friends, but we didn't know each other very well," said John. "We got talking and she was ever so kind to me. As time went on, we got to know one another better and she kindly offered me lifts home, especially when it was pouring with rain, saving me walking to the bus stop and waiting for the bus.

"I kept thinking of ways I could repay her kindness so I plucked up some courage and asked if I could take her out for dinner which, luckily, she accepted."

When Covid hit in 2020 and lockdown restrictions started, both John's son, Richard, and Penny's daughter, Fiona, weren't comfortable with either of them isolating alone and suggested they do so together.

As a result, Penny moved into John's bungalow in Stockwood, and the couple formed an amazing bond.

"As the restrictions started to ease, Penny's birthday was coming up and I wanted to buy her something really special," said John.

"I asked her if we could pop to the shops

and she quickly reminded me that I don't like shopping, but I persuaded her to go and took her to a jewellery shop in Union Street, Bristol," said John.


"A young man took us inside the shop where he sat us down and asked if he could assist in any way. I said: 'yes please, I would like to buy this lady an engagement ring'. The poor man and Penny were both in shock, he stood up and span around while Penny's jaw had hit the floor!"

Family orientated wedding

John and Penny were married the following September in 2021 at St Mary Redcliffe church. The ceremony was filled with 160 of their closest friends and family and was a very family orientated wedding, with Penny's daughter, Fiona, giving her away, John's son, Richard, the vicar and his grandson, Joshua, his best man.

John and Penny are now enjoying their time together, travelling to different countries and embarking on weekend adventures. He no longer plays cricket but enjoys golf at Knowle Golf Club.

"I will always be proud to have been part of Imperial Tobacco and the company's cricket team, from my days as a young door boy to becoming a manager by working hard and never giving up," said John.

"I treasure many happy memories with the company, and I am grateful for those that I got to share with my late wife, Janet." 

Pensioners Joan Short and Margaret McDonald have both celebrated their centenaries, Joan in Newcastle and Margaret in Stirling.



Joan is great-grandmother to two great-granddaughters



The Wills factory, Newcastle, soon after opening in 1950



PENSIONERS JOAN Short and Margaret McDonald are celebrating their 100th birthdays.

Joan worked in the admin offices at the Wills factory in Cochrane Park, Newcastle (pictured as it is today), from 1967 until her retirement in 1983 and made many friends among her work colleagues.

She was fortunate to live a few streets



▲ Joan, here aged 21, worked in the admin offices at Wills, Newcastle, for 17 years from 1967

TWO PENSIONERS CELEBRATE 100 YEARS

away from the site and would often run home at lunchtime to prepare the evening meal for herself, her husband Fenwick, and sons David and Anthony.

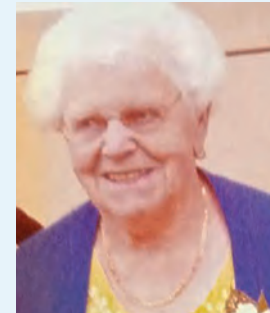
Joan enjoyed travelling with Fenwick in her retirement and often took care of her three granddaughters. She is now also a great grandmother to two great-granddaughters, with another expected in May.

She enjoyed a celebratory get together with her family at the care home in Heaton where she now lives.

She loved her job

Margaret joined John Player & Sons in Stirling, Scotland, as a cleaner in 1966 and worked for the company until the site closed in 1982. Her brother, Hamish Bridges, also worked at the factory.

"My aunt now lives in a care home in



▲ Margaret worked for Player's in Stirling

Cornton, Stirling, as she has dementia, but she is happy in herself," said her niece Helen Parkes.

"I know that she loved her job and made many friends there, including her best friend, Mag Bundy."

New bank or address details need to be received in writing

Please continue to contact the pensions office by email or phone, if possible, as the team continues to work flexibly, splitting their time between office and home working.

The service to members remains unaffected

and postal correspondence will still be dealt with in a timely manner. Jan Killick, Head of UK Pensions, said: "While email or telephone is our preferred method of communication, it is important to remember that if your bank

or address details have changed, we will need to receive the new information in writing, accompanied by your signature.

"This is so we can ensure the alteration is genuine and no mistakes are made."

Imperial Tobacco Pension Fund, PO Box 3242, Winterstoke Road, Bristol BS3 9GY 0117 953 0000 pension.enquiries@uk.imptob.com

Fund's oldest member was a wartime code-breaker

Finlay & Co pensioner John Berry, the Pension Fund's oldest member, has died aged 107.

He was born in Heaton, Newcastle, in 1916 and attended Heaton Grammar School where he excelled academically and in sports.

On leaving school at the age of 16 John joined The Great Northern Telegraph Company, which installed undersea telecommunication cables.

He worked through the ranks before the outbreak of the Second World War when he was selected for intelligence/code-



▲ John in his army uniform

breaking due to his sharp mind and knack for completing crosswords. He was stationed mostly in India and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka),

demobbing as Captain and returning to The Great Northern Telegraph Company.

It was here he met his wife Eileen and the couple married in 1950. They had three children, Julian, born in 1952, and daughters, Nichola and Joanna born 12 and 13 years later.

After his father 'JJ' died, and having lost his brother in action, John stepped in to run the family business – three tobacconist shops in Newcastle town centre.

After nearly 20 years the decision was taken to close the family business and John and Eileen then ran the Queen Victoria pub in Gosforth for two years before he joined Finlay & Co in 1972.

Finlay retail outlets

He worked as regional manager for the north, looking after the Finlay retail outlets between Sheffield and Inverness.

John retired in 1982 and he and Eileen focused on supporting Nichola, who has special needs, and relocated to Wiltshire where Nichola joined a residential home in Devizes. The move also meant they saw more of Julian (a captain in the Merchant Navy who then became an insurer in the City) and his family, and Joanna, a solicitor working in London.

John and Eileen settled in Gillingham, Dorset, and met many like-minded retired



▲ John and Eileen celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in 2020

couples through their local bridge club.

John enjoyed cooking, classical music and a good novel and rarely missed a Cricket Test match or snooker tournament on television.

During the 1990s and early 2000s John and Eileen, still remarkably fit, took their card playing prowess abroad and combined sightseeing in places such as Malta, the Algarve, Tunisia, Slovenia and Bulgaria with winning bridge tournaments and making more friends.

In 2020 John and Eileen celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary before Eileen died peacefully later the same year.

John accumulated a collection of cards from the late Queen Elizabeth and, in August 2023 from the King and Queen, congratulating him on the age he achieved.

He is survived by his three children, three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Display specialist met his future wife while up a ladder

Born in Honiton, Devon, in April 1945, Peter was sent to join some of his sisters at Saint Leonard's children's home in Hornchurch, Essex, due to family



circumstances. He lived there until he was seven years old, when he was fostered by Jim and Lottie De Hailes, who lived in Stepney in London's East End with their two daughters.

After leaving school Peter completed

an apprenticeship to become an electrician, which is how he met his wife, Christine, in 1965.

"Peter was up a ladder outside a first-floor window at my place of work installing a new electric sign," said Christine, who now lives in Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire.

"We were married 18 months later and shortly after that, in 1968, he joined Imperial as an electrician at the City Road Works Depot in east London."

Six years later Peter moved to the sign maintenance department and, in 1979, he joined advertising display services. He became merchandising and display specialist in 1996, remaining in the role until his retirement in 2005.

During his 37 years with the company Peter amassed a large collection of Imperial memorabilia including a rare Gold Flake jug from the 1940s and an



▲ Peter De Hailes meeting Prince Charles at Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth, in 1992

original copy of the Daily Mirror from 1911 which includes an interesting article about the company at the time.

In retirement Peter enjoyed driving and spending time with his family.

He is survived by Christine, their two children, Steven and Anna, and six grandchildren.

The deaths are reported, as at 31 January 2024, of the following retired employees:

HEAD OFFICE AND ITL

James Anderson, 89;
Isabel Maria Bonifacio, 84;
Ernest James Bullock, 94;
Patricia Mary Graham, 80;
Terence Frederic Jones, 91;
Ralph Ramsay, 93;
Lionel Brian Riley, 87;
Madeleine Laura Williams, 91.

WD & HO WILLS

Robert William Allen, 89;
Jacqueline Ann Baynham, 75;
Lera Brown, 96;
Dorothy Brown, 84;
Alan David Burgess, 85;
Una Burt, 73;
Geoffrey Cave, 74;
David Cleland, 76;
Rachel Crawford, 69;
Lily Dagger, 99;
Jean Eileen Davis, 87;
Michael Peter Day, 89;
Peter De-Hailes, 78;
Ann Dewey, 80;
Mary Donnelly, 81;
Diane Evans, 76;
Rosemary Ann Garrett, 83;
Henwood Ebenezer Glynn, 85;
Brian Trevor Gough, 74;
Elizabeth Mitchell Haining, 70;
Francis Burns Hay, 82;
William David Hayward, 92;
Russell Hinchliffe, 90;
Arthur Herbert Hopegood, 83;
Terence Anthony Hussey, 92;
Meirion Joseph, 87;
Christopher Patrick Joy, 84;
Diane Joyce Lenko, 62;
Margaret Leonard, 74;
Mary Lerway, 85;
Michael Raymond Lloyd, 78;
Shirley Virginia Logan, 88;
Bridget Kathleen Long, 88;
Betty Diana Malone, 95;
Colin James McKellar, 66;
Sandra Alice McPhail, 79;
John Melley, 93;
Terence Moore, 88;
Clive Octavius Morrell, 94;
Michael Edward Munby, 86;
Audrey Rose Nash, 96;
Leonard Roy Ostler, 88;
Hannah Pescod, 92;
Brian Gilbert Phillips, 93;
Donald Edward Philpott, 94;
Salvatore Puntrello, 92;
Davi Radmore, 91;
June Edith Rose Randell, 87;
Derek John Robinson, 88;
John Rooney, 86;
Vernon John Staples, 95;
Elsie Watkinson, 93;
Douglas Ian Wilson, 62;
Robert Eric Wingrove, 78.

JOHN PLAYER & SONS

Wendy Baker, 76;
Barbara I Barker, 71;
Albert Birkin, 89;
Jeffrey Black, 71;
Pamela Irene Blackburn, 77;
Wendy Jean Brown, 65;
Kathleen Lesley Brown, 65;
Betsy Burrows Browning, 66;
Ada Maria Ciaurro, 91;
Brenda May Daldry, 82;
Sarah Horsburgh Drummond, 81;
John Robert Dunne, 80;
Mary Wills Flockhart, 91;
Maureen Foster, 79;
Richard Maurice Garside, 81;
Carole Geeson, 72;
Luna May Graham, 87;
Maria Gramaglia, 88;
Patrick Gunn, 77;
Patricia Elsie Hender, 88;
Percy Edwin Herrod, 94;
Nancy Eseltia Johnson, 98;
Jean Margaret Judd, 93;
Brenda Joan Lineker, 96;
Janet Oliver, 99;
Carol Joyce Parkin, 76;
Susan Margaret Pears, 70;
Margery Kathleen Robinson, 87;
Dennis Patrick Seaton, 91;
Betty Pearl Smith, 89;
Timothy Stanton, 76;
Betty May Stevenson, 90;
Ellen Teresa Stokes, 93;
Patricia Rose Swift, 74;
Olive Veronica Thompson, 84;
Joseph Patrick Vipond, 82;
Kenneth Whyman, 87;
Martin John Willson, 76;
Doris Winn, 93;
Sandra Wright, 70.

OGDEN'S

Peter Bolger, 89;
Robert James Buckley, 94;
Margaret McManiman, 93;
Norah Philbin, 86.

FINLAY & CO

John James Berry, 107;
Terence Conroy, 88;
Doreen Holt, 90;
Iris Markham, 86;
Brian William Newby, 86;
Anthony Zanellotti, 88.

IMPERIAL TOBACCO INTERNATIONAL

Jan Samuel Daybell, 84.

LOWFIELD DISTRIBUTION

William Patrick Bersantie, 87;
Jack Ronald Pitchers, 96.

ROBERT FLETCHER & SON

Adrian John Broadbent, 73;
Michael Johnson, 73.

SINCLAIR COLLIS

William Bernard Bingham, 97;
John William Bowes, 86;

Alan Gregory Broadhurst, 79;
Richard Michael Dobson, 77;
June Nicholson, 97.

ST ANNE'S BOARD MILL

Linda Mary Donadel, 74;
Clive Edwards, 81;
Ronald Alfred Jones, 91;
Egbert Rose, 84.

**IMPERIAL FOODS LIMITED
HEAD OFFICE**

Ronald Thomas Burke, 88;
Hazel Margaret Compton, 88;
Eric William Horscroft, 85;
Louise Andrea Nicholson, 64;
Gladys Ross, 90;
Patricia Singleton, 77;
John Alexander Stirling, 87.

FLORAPAK

Mary Carter, 83.

GOLDEN WONDER

Margaret Cohen, 84.
Brenda Margaret Gautrey, 72;
Barbara McGuire, 77;
Elizabeth Meikle, 83.

ROSS FOODS

Robert Arthur William Barnes, 81;
Edward George Chambers, 88;
Geoffrey Cutting, 94;
Raymond James Dacruy, 76;
Raymond Eric Garner, 95;
Muriel Catherine Graham, 88;
Keith Edwin Hale, 93;
Fay James, 87;
Nicholas Kokuciak, 69;
Jean Hilda Annie Leeks, 89;
Ronald Robertson McDonald, 77;
Charles Royce Phillipson, 98;
Neil James Ross, 66;
John Richard Saunders, 86;
John Frederick Williams, 79;
Barry John Woods, 85.

SEVEN SEAS

Alan Badley, 72.

SMEDLEY-HP FOODS

Thomas Alfred Edwards, 92;
Pasqualina Rosa Everton, 87;
Lorice Irene Fenton, 100;
John Derek Goode, 77;
Joseph William Gresswell, 95;
Hugh Hughes, 91;
David Benjamin Runicles, 87;
Heather Mary Taylor, 66;
David Frank William Young, 72.

YOUNG'S SEAFOOD

Daniel Victor Abbott, 82;
Maureen Joy Gear, 91;
Barry John Grover, 77.

We offer our sincere condolences to the family and friends of our former colleagues.

SPARK LED TO A NEW LIFE IN BRISTOL

A spur of the moment decision and a chance meeting in Bristol, 350 miles away from his home in Scotland, changed St Anne's Board Mill pensioner **William Graham's** life forever.



W

ILLIAM GRAHAM grew up in Penicuik, in Midlothian, eight miles south of Edinburgh. The town was known as the paper making town and he started working in Alex Cowan's Valleyfield Paper Mill in 1968.

In August 1972 William and a friend were driving back to Scotland from a holiday on the south coast of England and Wales when they decided to break their journey, stopping over in Bristol.

"That evening we went to the Mecca Locarno in Bristol city centre where I met a girl named Christine Lyons," said William, who lives in Bristol.

"There was an instant spark and chemistry between us and, from that first meeting, we wrote to each other every week for a year and I would travel down to visit her, and she would come up on the train to visit me.

"Neither of us had a phone in our house, so I would go to a local phone box and call

at a specified time. After a year she asked me to move to Bristol to be with her, so I left my job and packed up my life.

"My family and friends thought I had lost the plot, especially leaving my beloved football team, Heart of Midlothian!"

Number 5 machine

Following William's life changing decision, he wrote into Imperial Tobacco seeking a job at St Anne's Board Mill and was successful, starting with the company in January 1974.

He joined the reeler crew on the Number 5 machine with Dave Haberfield, Ernie Ratcliffe and John Prodger and stayed there until the mill closed in 1980.

"I had the best time working at St Anne's," he recalls. "It was often very heavy work but the camaraderie with all my workmates was great.

"I remember well good friends Dennis

Butler, the Number 4 machine man, who shared my enthusiasm for Ford Cortina cars, Colin Wilkins the Number 6 reeler man, Derek England, Tom Quinn, Steve Brooks and Dave Haberfield.

"We worked hard and often socialised outside of work. On Friday mornings after our night shift, we would go out for breakfast and then head to Ashton Court for a game of pitch and putt, which was always a laugh as none of us were very good."

William and Christine married in 1975 and had their son, Stuart, in 1983. They enjoyed 26 years together until Christine died unexpectedly in 2001. Three years later he met Julie, and they married in 2006.

"Julie's son lives in a house built on the site of the old board mills, which I thought was ironic," William added. "Julie also worked for Imperial Tobacco in the shares department at Temple Way in 1970 for around 18 months after she had left school.

"I am eternally grateful to St Anne's for giving me the opportunity to work in an environment I was already familiar with, which undoubtedly helped me settle into life in Bristol.

"To this day St Anne's holds a very special place in my heart with many happy memories from my time spent there and the people who made it what it was. And, of course, remembering the main reason why I started working there, my late wife Christine. My love for the girl I met on that chance meeting in 1972 was extremely strong." **G**

"I am eternally grateful to St Anne's..."



William Graham, left, with colleague, Frank, at St Anne's Board Mill

IMPERIAL HAS PLAYED A BIG PART IN SIDONNA'S LIFE



Sidonna Van Win's
father John Pearson...



...and her late husband
Ken Robertson

A traditional long house
in Sabah, such as John
Pearson might have
stayed in while working
as an engineer in British
North Borneo

SIDONNA VAN WIN (formerly Robertson) has enjoyed reminiscing about her family history with Imperial Tobacco, which spanned five decades.

Her father, John Pearson worked for the company for more than two decades, travelling the globe, while her late husband Ken Robertson retired as John Player and Sons managing director in 1982 after 32 years with the company. "My father had the time of his life working for Imperial and had many amazing stories to tell," said Sidonna, 91. "He was lucky enough to experience extraordinary places such as Africa, Europe and British North Borneo, which is now Sabah, Malaysia, through his work for the company."

John joined Imperial Tobacco in 1947 as overseas engineer. At that time the company had set up a cigar leaf tobacco farm in Lahad Datu, British Northern Borneo, where he was based for a time.

Electricity was needed to run the machinery at the farm and supply the native Dayak tribe, so John stayed with the locals in their long houses nestled deep in the jungle with Orangutans as neighbours.

John retired from Imperial in 1966 and enjoyed his retirement with his wife, Lucy, his childhood sweetheart, before they both died in 1988.

Sidonna met Ken in 1949 and asked her father to put in a good word for him when he eventually applied for a job at Player's in Nottingham. His first appointment was as assistant electrical engineer in 1951 but he quickly

progressed to electrical engineer and, in 1962, was sent to America to learn more about the tobacco trade. He later became chief engineer, then technical director before gaining experience as production, accounting and personnel director. In 1978 he was appointed managing director of John Player & Sons.

"Ken's life and work was Imperial, until he retired from the company in 1982," said Sidonna, who was married to Ken for 34 years until his sudden death, aged 64, in 1986.

"Although I never worked for the company myself, it has been a huge part of my life. I travelled first with my father and then Ken and helped at Player's and Wills sponsored events in the 1970s.

"I made lots of good friends through the years and remain in contact with those who are still around today."



Ivor has published eight books of poetry, plus two crime novels and his autobiography

IVOR: THE POET WHO CAN'T STOP WRITING

“...after I am gone, someone may discover them...”

IVOR KING has always had a creative flair and a love for music but discovered his passion for writing when he started developing his love songs into poems two decades ago.

He published his first book *Reflections and Images: An Anthology of Poems in 2006*, which included memories from his childhood such as taking the train from Pill, North Somerset, to the coast in Portishead.

Life experiences

Ivor has since published seven further books, many inspired by his wife, Doreen, who died in 1998, as well as two crime novels and his autobiography.

“Most of my material is based on my life experiences but Doreen has always been my number one inspiration,” said Ivor, who

worked in the research department at St Anne’s Board Mill for 15 years until it shut in 1980.

“I don’t appear to be able to stop writing: my brain is always working overtime, which usually results in me getting up in the middle of the night following sudden inspiration and putting pen to paper.”

By 2020 Ivor’s eyesight was deteriorating, making it difficult for him to write so he began to type directly into his computer, allowing him to continue unhindered.

“During the Covid lockdowns there was little else to do but write as all of my regular activities had shut down,” said Ivor, 95, who still lives in Pill.

“As a result, I completed my first crime novel *The Spectre and the Terror* and also decided the time had come to finally

complete my autobiography, which I had started in 2001, picked up again in 2009 but ultimately had given up on as my poetry left me little spare time.”

Number of new poems

Ivor published his final book of poetry in 2022: *Nonsensical Notions for Nonplussed Nonagenarians*, which he thoroughly enjoyed compiling.

Since then, he has composed a number of new poems that are purely for his own pleasure; not for publication.

“Writing poems keeps my brain active,” added Ivor. “Now and then I will go back to my computer and add a few more verses and that is where they will stay; unless after I am gone, someone may discover them and do something with them.”

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