

the **Gazette**

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FOR PENSIONERS OF IMPERIAL TOBACCO

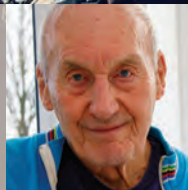


ESCAPE TO THE LAKES

Page 6 – Caroline and Steve living their best life in Cumbria



New Chair for the Board
page 3



Interview: Gordon's passion for two wheels
page 8



Great turnout at Player's reunion
page 16

MEET CEO LUKAS PARAVICINI



Lukas Paravicini became Chief Executive Officer of Imperial Brands on 1 October 2025, succeeding Stefan Bomhard. He was previously the company's Chief Financial Officer and played a key role in developing the refreshed 2030 strategy and driving the business' ongoing technology and data transformation. Here, Lukas discusses his ambitions for Imperial Brands, as well as his leadership style and thoughts on the wider industry.

Q How did you prepare for your new role?

In the six months between the announcement of Stefan's retirement and my succession, I visited every region of our business and met many of our people. I shared my thoughts on our refreshed strategy and our vision for 2030, and – just as importantly – I listened to my colleagues' insights, concerns and aspirations. Spending time with our global teams is what I love doing most – and I found the experience really energising.

Q Over the past few years, Imperial Brands has consistently grown revenue and profits – and has seen a big upward rerating in its share price. Is this success sustainable?

As a management team, we are highly focused on sustainable growth in revenue, operating profit and consistent cash for shareholders. During the next strategic period we expect overall to see growing revenue pools in the markets where we focus. And we have clear plans to ensure we outperform in those priority markets.

Q Imperial Brands likes to say it is a challenger business. What does this mean to you?

Our challenger approach has been key to our recent successes and it continues to be the unifying theme for how we do business. As the smallest of the global businesses in our sector, we have to do things a little differently to our larger competitors. For us, being a challenger means three things. First, we need to get really close to our consumers. Second, we need to stay focused on our biggest opportunities. And third, we need to invest for agility.



“...we have a unique opportunity to make a big positive difference as many of the world's one billion smokers seek potentially less harmful smoke-free alternative products.”

Q How do you describe your leadership style?

That is perhaps for others to judge, but I have learned the hard way that the best leaders aren't the strikers scoring all the goals. Instead, they are the coaches who nurture match-winning talent in others. And the best coaches get results by listening actively, asking powerful questions and celebrating the success of their teams.

Q You work in what is considered by many to be a controversial sector. Do criticisms of the industry trouble you?

In every industry, it's important to respect

and listen carefully to critics. Serious dialogue and finding common ground are the only ways to develop robust policy and enforceable regulation.

In our sector, we have a unique opportunity to make a big positive difference as many of the world's one billion smokers seek potentially less harmful smoke-free alternative products. And Imperial Brands is committed to playing an important and distinctive role in this transition.

We talk about forging a path to a healthier future for moments of relaxation and pleasure. And it is this exciting purpose which first attracted me to join the company four years ago.


Q What will Imperial Brands look like in five years' time?

First, our next generation products business will be significantly larger than it is today. And in this way, you will see us making significant progress towards that healthier future purpose I mentioned just now. But in terms of value – as opposed to volume – our tobacco business will also be delivering higher revenues.

The investments we are making now will mean that in five years' time we will have completed our long transformation from a patchwork of businesses assembled through acquisition to a fully integrated, data-led global consumer organisation.

And, importantly, our people will be spending their time focused on high-impact work which is rewarding and purposeful.

To read the full interview, and to subscribe to the company's new LinkedIn newsletter 'The Challenger' for similar content, visit:

 bit.ly/IB-Challenger

An experienced former Chair and Chief Executive will take over from Thérèse Esperdy in July.

IMPERIAL BRANDS APPOINTS NEW CHAIR

IMPERIAL BRANDS PLC has appointed John Rishton as a Non-Executive Director and Chair Designate.

John will join the Board on 13 July 2026 and will succeed Thérèse Esperdy as Chair on 1 December 2026, when Thérèse will retire.

Thérèse was appointed to the Imperial Brands Board in July 2016 and became Senior Independent Director in May 2019 before being appointed Chair in January 2020.

Leadership experience

John is currently Chair of Informa PLC and a Non-Executive Director of Diageo PLC. He has significant board and executive leadership experience across diverse industries and a reputation for guiding complex transformations.

He served as Chair of Serco Group PLC between 2021 and 2025 and was a Non-Executive Director of Unilever PLC and Allied Domecq PLC. John's previous executive positions include Chief Executive of Rolls-Royce Group PLC from 2011 to 2015 (having been a Non-Executive Director since 2007),

Chief Financial Officer and then Chief Executive and President of Royal Ahold NV and Chief Financial Officer of British Airways PLC.

Exceptional candidate

The appointment was approved by the Board and follows a thorough succession process undertaken by the People, Governance & Sustainability (PGS) Committee, led by Sue Clark, the company's Senior Independent Director, in which all the Non-Executive Directors participated.


Sue Clark said: "The Board is delighted to appoint John as Chair. He is an exceptional candidate and has impressive experience of senior non-executive roles and complex, highly regulated, international businesses. His deep understanding of transformation and sectors experiencing strategic shifts will be invaluable as he leads the Imperial Brands Board.

"On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Thérèse for her outstanding contribution over the past decade. She has been pivotal in making Imperial Brands the strong, challenger business it is today. Thérèse will remain as Chair



▲ John Rishton, Non-Executive Director and Chair Designate

until 1 December to facilitate an orderly succession to John."

John Rishton said: "It is a great honour to have been asked to succeed Thérèse as Chair of Imperial Brands. I look forward to working with the Board and CEO Lukas Paravicini and his leadership team to support the delivery of the company's ambitious strategic objectives." 

New appointment to Pension Fund Trustee Board



▲ Layla Malt is the newest appointment to the Trustee Board, replacing Ross Parker

Dr Layla Malt has been appointed to the Imperial Tobacco Pension Fund Trustee Board as the Employee Nominated Trustee (ENT), replacing Ross Parker, who has left the company.

Layla joined the company in 2017 and now leads the Scientific Affairs and Behavioural Sciences function within the Harm Reduction and Engagement Department.

She oversees a team that informs the business on emerging scientific developments and generates the behavioural science evidence to substantiate the tobacco harm reduction potential of Imperial Brands' next generation products.

Layla was appointed to the Board following a rigorous selection process and brings a wealth of skills to the role,

including evidence-based decision making, complex data analysis and objective critical thinking.

Sustainable governance

"I consider it a genuine honour to serve as the ENT and I'm committed to ensuring members' voices remain central to the Fund's decisions," said Layla, who holds a doctorate in biochemistry from the University of Bristol and is a Chartered Biologist with the Royal Society of Biology.

"I am motivated by the opportunity to contribute to the long-term, sustainable governance of one of the UK's oldest pension trusts, an organisation with a significant legacy and responsibility, and I look forward to supporting its continued success."

How to keep in touch with the Pension Fund

There are a number of different ways to find out information about the Pension Fund or contact the Pensions Office, depending on your needs.

If you are looking for news about the Fund, how to spot a pensions scam or how to report a death, myimperialpension.com is a good place to start. It is also home to documents such as annual reports, actuarial valuations and back issues of the Gazette.

Email or telephone is the quickest and easiest way to reach a member of the pensions office team unless your bank or address details have changed. If that is the case, please provide the new information in writing, accompanied by your signature so we can ensure the alteration is genuine and that no mistakes are made.

Electronic communication

If you are happy not to receive a



Head of UK Pensions: Robert Egginton

hard copy of the Gazette, we would encourage you to receive generic communication electronically.

To opt-in and have access to the latest Fund news on your mobile phone, tablet or computer, please email the Pensions Office with 'opt-in to electronic communications' in the subject line.

Robert Egginton, Head of UK Pensions, said: "This only relates to standard pension news updates and Trustee communications such as the Pension Fund Report and bulk Fund mailings as well as the Gazette.

"You would continue to receive all personal correspondence such as pension payslips and pension increase letters by post but it would allow us to provide you with general information in a fast, convenient and environmentally friendly way."

✉ pension.enquiries@uk.imptob.com

☎ 0117 953 0000

📍 Imperial Tobacco Pension Fund
PO Box 3242
Winterstoke Road
Bristol BS3 9GY

🌐 myimperialpension.com

Ho Ho Ho! Guess who?

Can you guess who's dressed as Father Christmas, seen below collecting money for local charities? To help, here are three clues:

1. This person will be known to many pensioners – particularly those based in Bristol.
2. He retired in 2010 after nearly 40 years with the company.
3. He is well known for his love of running.



Do you know who it is? Turn to page 11 to see if you are right.



Centenarians celebrate

Congratulations to the following Fund members who are marking their 100th birthday:

Edith Nuttall, who worked for Robert Fletcher & Son for 28 years from 1944 until 1972, celebrated the occasion with a dinner cooked by friends at her home in Manchester.

Phyllis Risby, widow of Player's pensioner Douglas, who worked for the company for 42 years from 1942 until 1984 and died in 2001.

Betty Ryall, widow of Kenneth, who worked at Wills in Bristol from 1971 until 1985. He died in 1999.



Pension increase from April 2026

The rise in the Retail Prices Index for the 12 months to December 2025 – the basis of the pension increase from 1 April 2026 – was 4.18%.

Any GMP (Guaranteed Minimum Pension) earned after 6 April 1988 increases in line with the rise in the Consumer

Price Index, but is capped at a maximum of 3% per annum, which is the case this year.

Where applicable, these increases will appear on April payslips. *Please note that P60s will be sent with this payslip to minimise postage costs.*

► The Wills Newcastle factory on Coast Road is now home to luxury apartments

This year marks 40 years since the closure of the **Wills Newcastle factory** which, at its peak, produced six million Woodbines a day.

Wills factory still an iconic Newcastle landmark decades on

The former Wills cigarette factory on Coast Road, Newcastle, opened in Spring 1950 and, in the 36 years that followed, produced hundreds of millions of cigarettes and cigars and was home to 600 employees.

It was the first cigarette factory in the city and was designed by Imperial Tobacco Architect Cecil Hockin.

The foundations were laid in late 1946/ early 1947 and it opened its doors to employees in April 1950.

The site was very large with various departments as well as a canteen, theatre and other leisure activities for employees. It was originally built with the office block facing on to Coast Road, with the factory forming the wings and rear of the building.



In 1985, the downturn in the tobacco trade led to the majority of the factory's workforce leaving, with others transferring to other Imperial branches such as Bristol and Nottingham.

Luxury apartments

The following year production ceased and the impressive Art Deco-style frontage, which once displayed the names of popular brands such as Castella, Embassy and Capstan, was given Grade II listing status to prevent it from being demolished.

It stood empty for a number of years until the main building's former front wing was converted into 114 luxury apartments by Wimpey Homes, opening

to residents at The Wills Building in November 1999.

The building still remains today as an iconic Newcastle landmark and an important example of Art Deco architecture.

In 2013 an online Facebook group was set up to provide a platform for ex Newcastle Wills employees to share stories and photographs and now has 285 members.



■ **Did you work at the Newcastle factory? Do you have memories and stories to share? Please write to the editor (details on the back page).**

The Harry's work up an appetite on Christmas walk



The Harry's got together for their annual five-mile Christmas walk, decked out in festive jumpers for the occasion. A bit of wet weather didn't slow the Player's walking group as they made their way through the Nottinghamshire countryside, before heading back to the Queen's Head pub in Watnall for lunch.

Caroline Bate and her husband **Steve** recently settled into their dream home in the Cumbrian countryside after appearing on the BBC's *Escape to the Country*.

LURE OF OUTDOOR LIFE LED TO AN 'ESCAPE TO THE COUNTRY'

THE COUPLE are both passionate about the outdoors and were drawn to the Lake District where they could enjoy hiking, wild swimming and cycling.

"We were struggling with our house hunt and had viewed around 20 houses, but none of them were quite right for us," explained Caroline, who worked in production planning and purchasing at Player's in Nottingham from 1995 to 2005.

"I didn't know too much about the programme, but a friend suggested we might be a good fit and we were delighted when the producers chose us."

Following a series of screening interviews, the pair joined TV presenter Jules Hudson for three days of filming, where they were shown four properties, including a 1940s detached bungalow in the village of Levens, near Kendal.

"It was quite difficult to focus on the smaller details of the properties while we were being filmed, but we could both see the potential of the Levens house. It ticked a lot of our boxes, including potential workshop space for Steve to set up his new woodworking business," said Caroline, who married Steve in 2012. "Being on the programme was a wonderful experience and, when filming wrapped up on the second day, we sat and had pizzas by the lake with the film crew, and I even managed to go for a dip in Windermere!"

The couple put in an offer and

moved into their new home in September last year, and have since been renovating the workshop, house and garden.

Caroline has enjoyed the outdoors for as long as she can remember; even during her 10 years working in the Nottingham factory, she spent weekends volunteering with Peak District Mountain Rescue. So, when she left the company in 2005 to move to North Scotland, she decided to turn her passion into a career.

Outdoor learning

She completed her Master's degree in Outdoor Education at Edinburgh University and went on to work with two local charities: Outfit Moray, which provides accessible and affordable outdoor learning for vulnerable and disadvantaged children, and Elgin Youth Development Group, hosting after-school activities in a Youth Café for young people.

It was during her time with Outfit Moray that she met her husband Steve, a decorated Paralympic cyclist who shares her love of outdoor adventure. In 2011,

"...when filming wrapped up...we sat and had pizzas by the lake..."

► Enjoying the outdoors: Caroline and Steve on top of the world in the Lake District





Caroline and Steve's new home in the village of Levens

the Manchester Velodrome, where Steve trained in track and road racing.

"It was a gruelling training programme for Steve, but completely worth it when he won two gold medals and a bronze in Rio," said Caroline, who enjoyed travelling around the world to support Steve's career.

Following his retirement from competitive cycling last year, the couple began preparing for the next chapter of their lives with the dream of moving nearer to the mountains.

Caroline has continued her work in the charitable sector and now works part-time as a fundraising consultant for a small West Yorkshire organisation called Futurekraft.

Woodworking business

"Now we're settled into the new house, I'll be continuing my fundraising work and also supporting the admin side of Steve's new woodworking business," she said. "He is a joiner by trade and already has a few commissions for coffee tables and desks, which is really positive."

Despite having moved away, Caroline has remained in close contact with friends from her time at Player's. She is godmother to the daughter of her friend and former colleague, Lisa Cooper (née Wells), who worked in the IT department for nine years, and they see each other regularly.

She also recently travelled to Nottingham to celebrate the 50th birthday of Charles Hazel, a former colleague in the Planning and Purchasing Department, and enjoyed catching up with many familiar faces. **G**

Steve was diagnosed with a degenerative eye condition, retinitis pigmentosa (RP), and was told he could be blind in just four years.

"It was a really difficult time, but Steve was determined to make the most of the sight he still had," said Caroline. "Around that time, a friend who was involved in para cycling mentioned that British Cycling were looking for tandem cyclists, so he went along to a talent day in Glasgow, and that's where it all began."

Despite never having raced competitively, Steve was recruited for the British Cycling development team and began following a professional training programme with a coach. He set his sights on the 2016 Paralympics in Rio, and the couple relocated to West Yorkshire to be closer to Caroline's family as well as

Cover photo: Steve and Caroline with Escape to the Country presenter Jules Hudson



NOTICEBOARD

Diary dates

- ◆ The Player's summer reunion will be held on Wednesday 10 June from 3.30pm at The Stage pub, Wollaton Street, Nottingham NG1 5FE. Contact Dave Clay.
- ◆ Plans are taking place for the 2026 reunion for former Imperial Group PLC Head Office employees. 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 07 December from 2.30pm onwards at the Bell Inn, Nottingham. Contact Phil Bradley or David Lowe for more information.
- ◆ The annual Classic Golf Society golf day will be held on Tuesday 26 May 2026 at the Oake Manor Golf Club near Taunton, Somerset. Organiser Dave Lee will be in touch with pensioners on his list but anyone new interested in taking part can contact Dave in the Pension Fund Office during working hours before Thursday 14 May.

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: impactmembers@outlook.com 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.

Back in the saddle: cycling has always been Gordon Booty's favourite sport



GORDON, THE PHYSICIST WITH A PASSION FOR CYCLING

Gordon Booty joined Player's Research and Development department in the early 1970s and was an instrumental member of the product development department when it was first introduced. Now retired, Gordon, 87, enjoys a quieter life catching up with friends and is determined to get back to his lifelong passion of cycling after a recent break.

GORDON BOOTY was born in Peterborough in 1938, but grew up in Stapleford, Nottingham, where he and his older brother Ray took up cycling, a hobby that would stay with Gordon throughout his life.

The brothers cycled competitively with their local club, Ericsson Wheelers, where they won the National 100-mile Team Championship in 1959 and 1960.

Ray, who died in 2012, went on to become British Cycling Champion from 1955 to 1957 and became the first rider to beat four hours for the 100-mile individual time trial in 1956. He also won gold in the 1958 Commonwealth Games road race in Cardiff.

Gordon later changed clubs to join Long Eaton Paragon, where he won the Club Best Allrounder several times and again won the National 100-mile Team Championship with his new club in 1966. He continued riding competitively and socially, later clocking up thousands of miles each year commuting to work.

Gordon began his career as a Quality Control Tester for Boots in Nottingham, while also attending night school at Trent College, where he initially studied chemistry.

...was responsible for testing cigarette making materials, such as tipping paper...

Research position

However, while working for Boots, he decided that his preferred subject was physics, so he transferred to the newly built Derby College of Advanced Technology to complete his ONC and HNC qualifications.

To complete his qualification and become a Member of the Institute of Physics, Gordon took a research position with Rolls Royce in Derby, working on carbon reinforced composites.

This was a new development scheduled to be used on Lockheed's TriStar passenger plane, and although his research was accepted by the Institute of Physics, the material failed the early bird strike tests and required further development.

However, in 1971, Rolls Royce collapsed into receivership and Gordon, along with thousands of other workers, was made redundant.

► Gordon being handed a bottle of water from his brother Ray at the National 100-mile Championship in 1963



▲ Gordon with some of the cycling medals and a cup won by his late brother, Ray

Rolls Royce's demise coincided with a national postal strike, making it almost impossible to send out job applications.

Fortunately, a friend, Irene Wagstaff, was a secretary in the Player's laboratory and offered to take his application and deliver it directly to Doug Lockwood, a manager in the Research and Development (R&D) department, who invited him for

an interview. At the time, Doug had purchased an Instron testing machine for the department, which was used to test the physical properties of cigarette and tipping paper (the paper that wraps around the cigarette filter), but he was struggling to find someone with experience to operate it.

"During my interview, I told Doug they had 10 Instron machines at Rolls Royce, and I used them every week," said Gordon, who lives in Allestree Derby. "He couldn't get me to start quickly enough!"

Public health awareness

Gordon joined the company as Physics Laboratory Manager and was responsible for testing cigarette making materials, such as tipping paper, for strength and quality.

Around the early 1970s, public health awareness was increasing, and the Government became interested in reducing the tar levels of cigarettes. "Up until that time, manufacturers had free reign to produce whatever they, and their consumers, wanted," said Gordon, who was married to his wife, Mary, for 56



continued on next page

continued from page 9

years until she died in 2021.

"Player's Navy Cut was a good example of this. It was incredibly popular, but it was ranked among the highest tar cigarettes on the market. So, Peter Roper, who was then Research Manager, decided to form the Cigarette Product Development Department, comprising Dick Shephard (filters), Bernard Rayner (tobacco), Mike Lord (cigars) and me (materials).

"We put a lot of work into making cigarettes as safe as we could, while retaining an acceptable taste. This involved using a special type of perforated tipping paper and cigarette papers, as well as more efficient filters to control the tar levels."

Another one of the team's major jobs was the development of John Player Special (JPS) cigarettes, which remains a highlight of Gordon's career with the company.

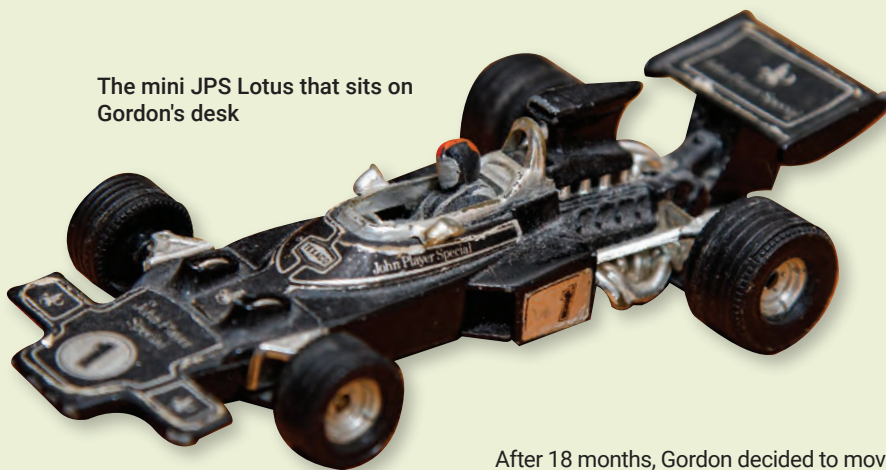
Best-selling

"JPS cigarettes were the first 100mm long cigarettes that the company made and were identifiable by their fancy gold banded tipping and premium black and gold packaging," explained Gordon. The product became one of the company's best-selling cigarettes, and the JPS brand went on to sponsor Team Lotus in Formula 1 for over 10 years.

"It was a wonderful project to work on, and we formed a very good rapport with the marketing department, as they had to sell the products we were developing," said Gordon, who still has the mini JPS Lotus model on his desk, which was gifted to employees after Mario Andretti's 1978 Formula 1 World Championship win.

In 1979, rumours began to circulate that the Player's R&D department was being merged with Wills and moved to the new

The mini JPS Lotus that sits on Gordon's desk



Hartcliffe branch in Bristol.

"We were told that if you got a big envelope, it means you're on the list to move, and sure enough, when I got home, there was one waiting for me," said Gordon.

Gordon loved his time at the new factory, enjoying the modern facilities, glass offices and underground tunnels leading straight to the factory floor. He

also enjoyed cycling the eight miles up the steep Dundry Hill to work every day.

A move to the Chew Valley suited the family too; the boys enjoyed sailing on Chew Valley lake on a weekend, and Gordon and Mary made friends in the village, joining in 'safari dinners', where they would go to a different

house for each course of a meal.

Gordon spent 10 years at the Hartcliffe branch until the Hanson takeover in 1986, by which time he was approaching his 50s. Much of the senior management was made redundant and, two years later, he took redundancy after 18 years with the company.

It was a difficult time to find new work, and Gordon applied for 87 jobs before securing a role as a quality control manager at a paper mill in Bathford that made watermarked Euro check papers.

"...the team I worked with was a very happy one."

After 18 months, Gordon decided to move on and, thanks to an old connection, he found work with a company in Derby that supplied carbon fibre material for race cars to manufacturers like Lotus and McLaren, and he and Mary moved to Allestree in Derby.

In the years following the couple's retirement in 1997, Gordon and Mary enjoyed lots of travelling; spending summers walking in Austria, where Gordon's sister Sue lives, and winters at their holiday rental property in Nerja on the Costa del Sol.

Their house in Allestree sat in an acre of formal gardens and the upkeep of these, together with Mary's love of flower arranging, Gordon's cycling, and walking in the Peak District, kept them fully occupied.

In 2010, the couple moved back to the Bristol area, as their sons had both stayed in the area and had families of their own, and settled in Horton, a village just outside Chipping Sodbury.


Keen to stay active, they joined the local U3A group (University of the Third Age), a nationwide network for retired or semi-retired people. Mary took part in the walking and flower arranging groups, while Gordon continued to cycle, enjoying the peaceful countryside lanes.

Happy years

"We enjoyed living in Chipping Sodbury but, even after five years, Mary never fully settled there, so we moved back to Allestree and spent several happy years together until Mary died in 2021," said Gordon.

Over the years, Gordon's love for cycling has never faltered and, despite a recent break due to health issues, he would love to get back in the saddle, although he is wary of the huge increase in traffic.

"Cycling has always been my favourite sport, and I still attend reunion dinners with people I used to race with nearly 60 years ago," he said. "Ironically, my current racing bike is made of carbon fibre, which shows how far the development of this material has come since I first worked with it in the 1970s."

Recalling his time with Player's, he added: "Player's was the best employer in Nottingham, and I really landed on my feet when I got the job there. The company gave me so many opportunities, and the team I worked with was a very happy one." 



The T-shirt worn by Ray Booty at the 1958 British and Commonwealth Games

Everyone in R&D photo is now accounted for

All of the faces in the Player's Research and Development (R&D) Department photograph printed in the November issue of the Gazette have been identified thanks to the help of a number of readers.

The photo, taken in the late 1970s/early 80s, was provided by Steve Bone, inset, who also shared some of his memories with the company in an article titled: Valuable lessons learned at JPS (Issue 110, page 7).

For Elaine Brumpton (formerly Barrowcliffe), former Secretary in the Data Services Unit, the photo brought back happy memories of life at the Radford factory in Nottingham.

Fun times

"This photograph is a classic!" said Elaine, who lives in Nottingham with her husband Martin. "I'm not sure who took it, but it depicts the fun times we had in conjunction with working very hard. It was taken at my old desk, and you can even see paper in the electric typewriter. Everyone must have arrived at my desk for some reason, and the situation turned into one of our silly moments."

Elaine would be delighted to hear from any former colleagues.

Player's pensioner Nigel Booth also reconnected with Steve Bone to help identify colleagues in the photo and share some memories of his time with the company.



▲ The full line-up (from left): Jane Weedon, Secretary; John Bugler, Product Development Manager, Cigars; Andy Curzon; Elaine Brumpton (formerly Barrowcliffe), Secretary; Steve Bone, Filter Design and Manufacture; Christine Spencer; Howard Foster; Maureen Handley

"This photograph is a classic!"

He worked as a Filter Design Assistant in the R&D Department for six years between 1982 and 1988, until the Bristol factory purchased its own filter machines and the company brought all R&D activities under one

roof. "At that time I was offered the opportunity to move down south, but turned it down as my wife, Patricia (née Swallow), who also worked for Player's in Data Services, and I had all of our friends and family in the Nottingham area," said Nigel.

"Instead, I became Packaging Material Supply Controller at the newly opened Horizon factory, which involved purchasing cigarette materials such

as tipping and filters. I think I got the role because of my knowledge of filter design!

"The job was very busy, and we worked long hours, especially during the first year of setting everything up at the Horizon factory, but it was enjoyable even if a little stressful.

Good memories

"After 15 years, I moved into technical purchasing, buying machine spares and everything else needed to keep the factory running, before I jumped at the opportunity to take early retirement in 2009 at the age of 51.

"Patricia and I love to travel and have never been happier, but I will always have lots of good memories of my time at Player's."

Identity of the mystery Santa Claus is revealed!

Did you guess correctly that the Santa on page 4 was Mike Paige, former Pensions Manager and organiser of the Imperial Group PLC Head Office reunion?

In the run-up to Christmas Mike spent several Friday and Saturday evenings dressed as Father Christmas on a 'sleigh' trailer being towed around the areas close to his home village of Whittington near Worcester.

He was joined by his bucket-bearing 'elves' and collected £2,400 in donations, which was then matched pound for pound by delivery company DPD, to be shared by local charities. Among them was the Elizabeth Stephens & Fanny Clifton Charity,



which dates back more than 350 years and aims to relieve financial hardship and support wellbeing in the Whittington community.

"The 'sleigh' was lit up, played Christmas carols and had an on-board snow machine that the children and families who lined the streets absolutely loved," said Mike, who was asked to wear the big red suit through his involvement with the Whittington Events Group, which organises a range of events throughout the year to support local good causes.

"We're getting a new sleigh for this Christmas which will include all the existing features but is being upgraded by our local Men's Shed group to look more like a traditional sleigh."

Living with memories of Ogden's in your home

IN THE early 1980s, Peter Martin built an extension on his home in the Wirral using oak beams from a large advertising board that stood outside of the Ogden's factory on the corner of Boundary Lane and West Derby Road.

"One of the adverts featured a giant tobacco pipe, and the clever part was how it was made to look like it was smoking, with steam coming out the end of it," recalls Peter, who began his career with Ogden's in 1963 as a salesman and later worked under the JPS brand until he retired in 1986.

"That, combined with the smell of tobacco from the factory, made it very memorable.

"There was also another one for St Bruno's tobacco, which was manufactured at Ogden's, and it had the well-known St Bernard dog alongside a giant glowing pipe.

"When the board was being taken down, I asked if I could have the beams, and they became part of my house extension. To this day,

whenever I look at them, I'm reminded of many happy times at the company, and the camaraderie among the staff who worked there."

Peter and his wife, Jean, (inset) recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary surrounded by family and friends.



G LETTER

Can you identify the three unnamed colleagues in this 1964 management course photo?



▲ Back row, from left: J Watts, N Holmes, W Leyland, P Berry, L Trundle, E Clare, C Smedley, C Senior; middle row: R Shearer, P Whitstone, H Mitchum, E Doyle, J Cooper, S Glover, J Furlong, C Turnock, J Asken; front row: J Craig, R Dixon, B Redzior, Unknown, Unknown, I Harris, K Atherton, F Ingham, W Allmark.



◆ My father, Norman Holmes, worked at Ogden's in Liverpool all of his working life, joining the company straight from school in 1947. He started in the stripping room and became manager of the blending room, where he managed a team of over 150. He retired in 1982 and died in 2016, aged 87.

While clearing out the house, I came across a couple of promotional T-shirts, see picture below, for St Bruno Flake. They must be at least 40 years old!

I'd like to know more about them, if any of your readers can shed any light on why they were produced and when. Also, if any collectors are interested in them, I would be happy to pass them on.

I also found this photo of my father with a group of Imperial colleagues, who all attended a supervisory management course at Burton Manor College in 1964.

My father had identified most of the people in the photo, apart from three in the middle of the front row. I wonder if anyone can identify them?

Graeme Holmes

✉ Graemeholmes200@gmail.com

Photos are a glimpse of the past in Liverpool

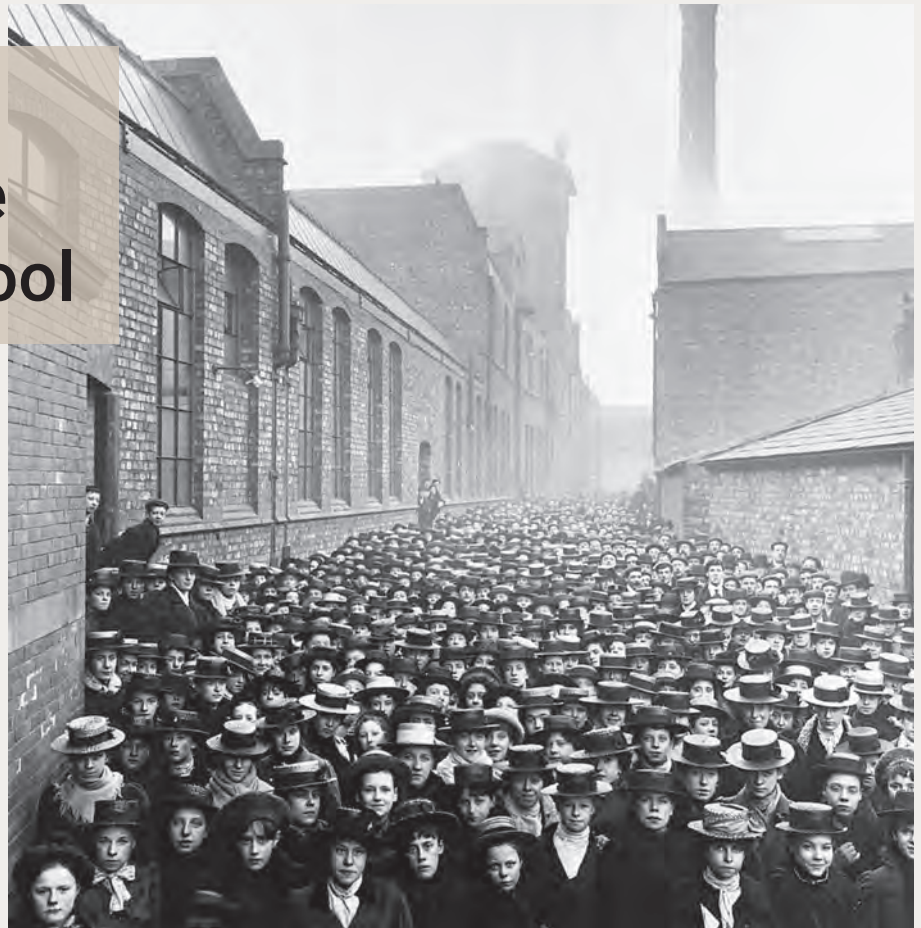
Sorting through his digital library, Imperial's former Head of Photography, **Peter Casaru**, has found pictures showing life at Ogden's from early in the last century.

PETER HAS revisited hundreds of images taken during his time with the company as well as those from its archive.

Before joining the company, Peter worked as a press photographer for *The Daily Mail* in London and also as a freelance photographer for *The Sun* and other national newspapers. He initially joined Imperial's sales force as a rep in 1976 before taking over as head of photography, based in Bristol, following Don Loader's retirement in 1980.

Imperial's archive

During his career, Peter spent a decade photographing everything from company conferences and events to advertising and point of sale materials for a range of Imperial brands. His work also featured regularly in internal publications such as *Player's Post*, *Wills' World* and *Imperial News*.



Among the photographs in Peter Casaru's collection are the three on this page taken at the Ogden's tobacco factory on Boundary Lane, Liverpool. They are thought to date from 1905

Alongside his own photography work, he was also involved in organising and maintaining Imperial's archive, so had access to photographs going back many decades. Following the Hanson takeover, Peter was made redundant but continued

his association with the company as a freelance contractor for several years.

"This worked well for a while, but the move to digital changed everything," said Peter, who lives in Brecon, mid Wales. "Mobile phone cameras advanced, and the need for a dedicated photographer reduced, so it felt like the right time to move on."

Peter then ran his own photography business for many years until he retired in 2016.



His work with Imperial lived on after leaving the company

FORMER SECURITY Officer John Powell, who had the longest known working relationship with Imperial Tobacco, has died aged 94.

Born in Bedminster, Bristol, in 1931, John attended his local primary school before being evacuated to Devon at the height of the bombing during the Second World War.

His career at WD & HO Wills started in 1945, aged 14, in the cutting room of the No. 4 factory on Raleigh Road where he filled in doing any job he was asked to do, working 48 hours a week over five-and-a-half days.

He was called up for National Service in 1948, serving on HMS Vanguard, the Navy's biggest warship, before being demobbed and returning to the company in 1951, when he was offered the chance to join its fire brigade; a part time

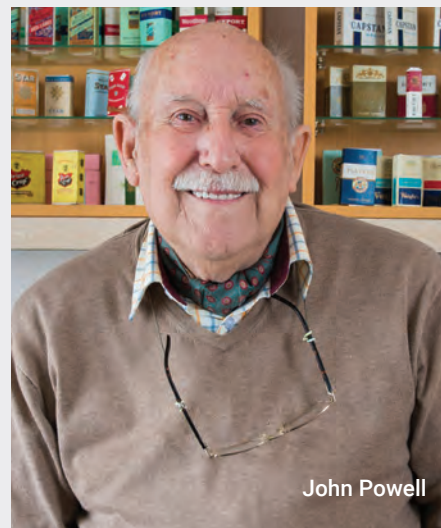
responsibility he shared with 11 other employees.

Happy years

John met his wife Thelma at a Wills dance on East Street, Bedminster, in 1949 while on leave from the Navy and the couple married four years later at St Oswald's Church, Bedminster Down, enjoying 72 happy years together.

By the 1960s John was working in the offal and returns department where tobacco sweepings – on which high duty had already been paid – were collected, weighed and returned to the bonded warehouse where the appropriate amount of duty was reimbursed.

When the No. 4 factory closed in 1985, transferring production to the Hartcliffe site, John was left looking after empty buildings, which led to him leaving the



John Powell

company and setting up Trust Security Services. He went on to provide security services to Imperial until he finally retired in 2009 at the age of 78 after a 64-year association with the company.

John is survived by Thelma, their three children, three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Chemist whose projects involved leaf research

WD & HO WILLS pensioner Michael Passey has died, aged 94.

He was an associate of the Royal Institute of Chemistry and joined the Imperial Tobacco Research Department in 1958, becoming group leader of the Leaf Analysis Group.

In 1968 he travelled to North Carolina and Washington D.C. in the USA and to Montreal, Canada, for over a month on company business in this role, while his family at home charted his progress on a wall map.

He later moved to Wills Research and Development Department, where he managed various projects relating to leaf research and, later on, the links between smoking and health.

For most of his working life he was based at Raleigh Road in Bristol and latterly at the Hartcliffe facility. Michael took early



Michael Passey

retirement in 1984 to care for his wife Pauline, who had leukaemia.

After Pauline's death in 1985, Michael lived alone for a while, then remarried in 1989 to Jane. They enjoyed travelling to visit friends in Austria and Germany in their camper van and hosted many family gatherings at their home in Nailsea, near Bristol. Jane died of cancer in 2005.

Michael's hobbies included walking, vegetable gardening, sailing, photography and painting. He was also an active member of Nailsea Methodist church, serving as a steward, a member of several church committees, arranging transport for church services and organising the annual Christian Aid collection.

Michael is survived by his two children, Susan and David, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Football referee dedicated over 50 years to the game

WELL-KNOWN football referee, Maurice Washer, has died aged 95.

Born in Bristol in 1930, Maurice joined the Cost Accounts Department at WD & HO Wills after leaving Bristol Cathedral School in 1948.

During his 37-year career with the company, Maurice was a bowler, and sometimes captain, for the Imperial cricket's B and United teams that played at the Imperial Athletic Club.

Maurice took up football refereeing

in 1946 and progressed through the Gloucester and Somerset leagues, joining the Western League in 1955. He was promoted to the Football League at the age of 34 and, six years later, was listed on its refereeing full class 1 list – the equivalent of a Premier League referee today.

During the course of his career, he ran the line at the San Siro stadium in Milan at a European Fairs Cup game, officiated at places like Arsenal and Manchester United, and was once responsible for the sending

off of well-known footballer for England and Manchester United, Nobby Stiles, during a match against Burnley.

Maurice retired from Wills in 1985 but continued his work in football refereeing and its administration and became the General Secretary of the Western League in 1988. In 1996 he was recognised by the Football Association for achieving 50 years active involvement with football. In

continued on page 15

addition to football, he enjoyed playing skittles and gardening with his wife, Brenda, who passed away in 2011, and was a member of the Nailsea Horticultural Society.

More recently, Maurice was featured on the BBC TV programme *The Travelling Auctioneer* due to his extensive sports memorabilia collection, which included a range of items from the former speedway team, the Bristol Bulldogs.

He is survived by their three children, Gary, Rita and Lorna, four grandchildren and a great-grandchild.



Maurice Washer (second from left) officiating at the San Siro stadium in Milan in 1969

The deaths are reported, as of 30 January 2026, of the following retired employees:

HEAD OFFICE AND ITL

Paul Anthony Cannard, 79;
Christine Joan Frances Challenger, 86;
Barry Stuart Exon, 78;
David William Jennings, 83;
Patricia Rosemary Richardson, 67;
Georgina Smith, 68.

WD & HO WILLS

James Brown Nickisson Adam, 92;
Carrole Bacon, 81;
Norma Ruth Barron-Fox, 79;
Peter Rodney Trevor Berney, 84;
Richard Thomas Bielby, 60;
Marguerit Jean Biggins, 75;
Rita Joyce Bishop, 83;
Robert Kay Bruncker, 94;
Wilfred Desmond Brunt, 97;
Margaret Rose Buck, 95;
Shirley Mary Buckley, 90;
Dawn Dorothea Burrows, 85;
Muriel Campbell, 91;
Alfred Thomas Donald Clark, 94;
William Arthur James Clark, 82;
Deborah Ann Clifford, 66;
Alan Graham Curtis, 90;
John Walter Davis, 92;
Margaret Edbrooke, 91;
George Forsyth, 90;
Sylvia Gailey, 83;
Laura Wray Garrett, 89;
Colin George Goodall, 89;
Jean Margaret Goodger, 85;
Michael Gray, 83;
Neville John Hacker, 66;
Nellie Halsall, 96;
Mary Harris, 88;
Bryan Frederick Hodge, 87;
Nigel Paul Hurley, 77;
Janet Pamela Hurley, 87;
Agnes Kelso Kellie, 88;
Richard Norman Lamb, 88;
Joyce Marina Lea, 90;
Ena Maguire, 89;
Gordon William McLellan, 84;

Lynn McLeod, 63;
Kathleen Mabel Millard, 94;
Mavis Rose Morgan, 85;
Gwyn Nichols, 98;
Peter Michael Osborne, 75;
Brian Wallace Parker, 97;
Michael Leonard Passey, 94;
Mary Margaret Peacock, 93;
Alice Maud Pearce, 100;
Geoffrey Richard Pearce, 73;
Mary Venum Pearson, 93;
John Ernest Charles Powell, 94;
Mildred Louisa Lilian Price, 93;
Joan Shirley Purchase, 90;
Alfred Quilt, 85;
Helen Melville Reddie, 85;
Lorna Elizabeth Rossiter, 78;
Mary Phyllis Saunders, 95;
Peggy Maureen Stadden, 92;
Geoffrey Albert Stevens, 88;
Cynthia Ann Sykes, 83;
Muriel Rita Taylor, 95;
Gavin Easton Angus Walters, 78;
David John Warren, 86;
Maurice Edward Washer, 95.

JOHN PLAYER & SONS

Barrie Hubert Easom Barnes, 83;
David Rodney Byrne, 84;
Jeanne Florence Andree Cattermole, 98;
David Alan Cross, 79;
Theresa Cunningham, 83;
Graham Leslie Curtis, 82;
Gillian Fisher, 86;
Dennis Foster, 84;
Geoffrey Lancelot Frith, 88;
Doreen Muriel Gauld, 87;
Audrey Freda Grundy, 97;
Cheryl Lynn Horne, 76;
Derrick Horsley, 99;
Rita Hubbard, 91;
Robert Terence Ingle, 80;
Constance May Macdonald, 90;
John McClumpha, 81;
Emily Elizabeth McLuckie, 77;
John Leslie Munton, 72;
Geoffrey Murton, 87;
Thomas William Oldham, 80;
Alan George Oliver, 81;

John Alfred Quantrill, 89;
Mary Kathleen Robinson, 94;
Dennis John Smith, 71;
Elizabeth Stewart, 84;
Janet Twells, 90;
Menda Maud Welch, 90;
Barrie Leonard Weston, 88;
Shirley Wheatley, 76;
Patricia Ann Whitehead, 81;
Lauris Carman Williams, 86.

OGDEN'S

Irene Barr, 85;
Barbara Graham, 83;
Francis John Halford, 95;
Amy Louisa Ley, 96;
Michael Anthony Mulrooney, 71;
Joan Ellen Ramsdale, 93.

BONDS DELIVERY SERVICE

John Duckenfield, 75.

FINLAY & CO

John Bernard Christian, 75.

LOWFIELD DISTRIBUTION

Malcolm John Fairhurst, 85;
Francis Gerard Greenan, 78.

ROBERT FLETCHER & SON

Barry Carr, 77;
James Heathcote, 94;
Andrew Lake, 67.

SINCLAIR COLLIS

Andrew Callow, 90;
Anthony John Harris, 72;
Paul Christopher Hayton, 67;
William George Herbert, 83;
Bryan Lawrence Loades, 82;
John Bernard Mickler, 86;
Patricia Mulligan, 71;
Ian M Smith, 85;
Olwin West, 90;
David Andrew Whyte, 61.

ST ANNE'S BOARD MILL

Arnold Bailey, 96;
Alan Hedges, 86;
Terence Kenneth Hollier, 96.

IMPERIAL FOODS LIMITED HEAD OFFICE

Anthony Patrick Bunce, 71;
Arnold Robin Bursell, 86;
John Henry Bylett, 86;
George Carberry, 85;
Susan Elizabeth Cousens, 69;
Michael Dimpleby, 78;
Peter Everatt, 85;
Kenneth Gordon, 84;
Tony Harradine, 82;
Tony Harrison, 89;
George Brian Hinch, 82;
Patricia Hopper, 83;
Anthony Peter Mills, 77;
Sylvia Frances Parkhouse, 84;
Albert Pinder, 93;
John Richardson, 97;
Vera Doris Sparks, 93.

GOLDEN WONDER

David Grimstead, 75;
Ian McDonald, 69.

ROSS FOODS

Paul Andrew Beasant, 73;
Walter Samuel Fretwell, 79;
Martin George Saunby Gray, 86;
Frank David Harris, 80;
Michael Keith Oliver, 76;
Trevor Charles Quantock, 83;
Maisie Jean Vivers, 96.

SMEDLEY-HP FOODS

Joyce Florence Engley, 91;
Margaret Linda Goldsby, 76;
Ann Elizabeth Maggs, 72;
William Ernest Mason, 89;
Ronald Peter Miller, 93.

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

Please note that names appear under the company worked for at end of service, which is not necessarily where they spent the majority of their career.

GREAT TURNOUT AT PLAYER'S GATHERING

THERE WAS a great turnout for the Player's Christmas get-together at The Stage pub in Nottingham. Around 120 enjoyed catching up over drinks and a buffet,



▲ Cheers! From left, Pat Heverin, Ian Sisson, Ade Pavier

reminiscing about their time at the company. The bi-annual reunion, organised by former engineering mechanic Dave Clay, has become an important date on many pensioners' calendars.

The Stage always provides the buffet free of charge and collects donations for its chosen charity instead, which this time was the Ukraine Charity. A total of £350 was collected for the UK-based charity, which supports various projects for disadvantaged children and adults in Ukraine.

Both the Christmas and summer events are promoted through the Facebook group *Imperial Tobacco...Past and Present*, a private group that has over 2,000 members and was set up to allow former colleagues to keep in touch.

The group's summer reunion will be held on Wednesday 10 June from 3:30pm at the same venue. **G**



▲ Picking up where they left off: Colleen Sufrinie, Pat Aplin and Jane Watts

▼ Enjoying a catch-up: Margaret Miles, Phil Dobson, Alison Martin and Andy Hart



Plenty of friendly faces show up for MVR reunion

Former employees of the Player's Garage and Motor Vehicle Repair (MVR) team enjoyed their annual reunion at the Bell Inn in Nottingham.

It was the 21st time the get-together has taken place at the pub, with 16 former

colleagues catching up and sharing old memories.

The Leenside garage closed in 1990 but the lasting friendships made there have stood the test of time.

Former garage driver Phil Bradley, who coordinates

the event, said: "A few of our regulars were missing due to illness and bad weather, but it was great to see so many friendly faces.

"Bob Pilch, a former driver and foreman, has taken over the role of speech maker

from Dave Lowe and gave a short address, which ended with us raising our glasses to absent friends.

"The next reunion will be on the first Monday in December: come along and catch up with old colleagues."



The Gazette is published by the Imperial Tobacco Pension Fund. For pension information, please call the pensions office on 0117 953 0000.

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