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FOR PENSIONERS OF IMPERIAL TOBACCO



TAKING A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

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CELEBRATING 125 YEARS OF A CHALLENGER BUSINESS

IT IS 125 YEARS since the creation of Imperial Tobacco Ltd, which was set up in 1901 to save the British tobacco industry from the threat of takeover by the Americans.

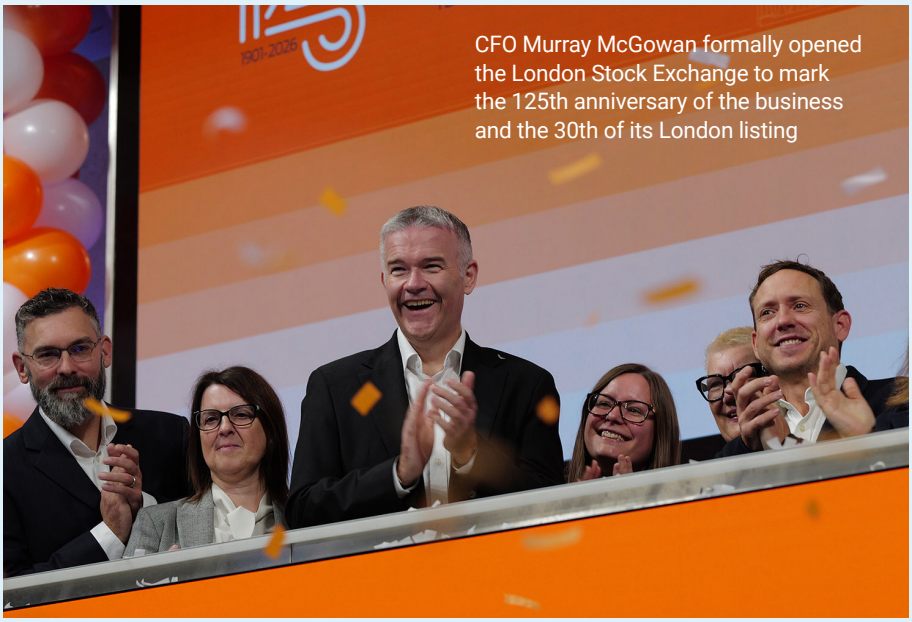
Over the last century and a quarter the company has seen expansion, diversification and rationalisation, mergers, demergers and acquisitions, but it has always been a challenger business, evolving with confidence to ensure it delivers the best products for consumers.

As part of its 125th anniversary celebrations, the company developed an exhibition which honours its heritage.

It charts the history of Imperial Brands in 10 objects that range from an original copy of the Articles of Association from 1901 and the prototype of the first modern e-cigarette, created by Chinese pharmacist Hon Lik in 2003, to a model of the JPS Lotus 79 F1 car.

The exhibition was showcased at Imperial's office in Hammersmith, London, as well as at the head office in Bristol and will be used as a backdrop for future events and conferences.

Imperial Brands Chief Financial Officer Murray McGowan also formally opened the market at the London Stock Exchange (LSE) on 20 October to mark both the 125th anniversary and the 30th of Imperial's London listing. Murray was joined by other Imperial Brands Executive Leadership Team members, as well as a group of employees who all began their career with the company in the 1990s.



CFO Murray McGowan formally opened the London Stock Exchange to mark the 125th anniversary of the business and the 30th of its London listing

"Together these anniversaries help shape the story of a company that has continued to evolve, grow and create value over more than a century," said Murray.

"Looking back over our history, one lesson stands out: long-term success comes from adapting to change while staying focused on what you do best."



ON TRACK TO DELIVER FULL YEAR RESULTS

Imperial Brands has reported a sixth consecutive year of tobacco net revenue growth in a trading update issued ahead of the release of it full results to 30 September 2026.

The Group also confirmed it has strong momentum behind its transformation towards becoming a more consumer-centric, data-led, agile and efficient challenger business.

"Our tobacco model continues to deliver sustainable growth in net revenue and adjusted operating profit," said CEO Lukas Paravicini. "This translates into earnings per share growth and robust cashflow, underpinning strong returns for shareholders.

"Tobacco net revenue is expected to show low-single-digit growth, driven by robust pricing and share gains in our target segments in US and Germany, and we continue to build scale in NGP across all three categories: heated tobacco, vape and modern oral."

Full year results, which were announced after the Gazette had gone to print, can be found at: imperialbrandsplc.com



CEO Lukas Paravicini

Setting new benchmarks in vaping and flavour innovation

Imperial has added two products to its blu vaping portfolio with the introduction of a new range of flavours as well as a 'big puff' device, both of which are available to consumers in the UK.

True Flavour 1000 has been developed to deliver a range of true-to-taste flavours in response to consumer research that too many vaping experiences felt synthetic and artificial.

It outperforms all previous blu flavours as well as leading competitors on authentic taste and is available in a range of layered, fruity blends. The range of pods, designed for use with the blu bar kit, includes: Zesty Strawberry, Bold Blood Orange, Fresh Citrus, Sour Berry and Fresh Grape.

The new blu MAX 6000 'big puff' device also reflects consumer demand towards a device that combines longevity, flavour intensity and convenience. The UK has seen rapid growth in the 'big puff' segment (those that offer a high number of puffs), which now accounts for around 40 per cent of the total electronic vaping category.

blu MAX 6000 integrates a 2ml pod with a 10ml liquid container into a single, sleek re-chargeable unit, enabling extended use while maintaining consistent flavour delivery. The unit also features dual intensity modes – standard and boost – giving consumers complete control of their vaping experience.



Imperial Brands has launched its blu Max 6000 device into the growing 'big puff' segment

ACQUISITION STRENGTHENS NGP PORTFOLIO

IMPERIAL BRANDS has acquired Swedish oral nicotine business Yoik Group AB, best known for its Helwit brand of flavoured tobacco-free nicotine pouches.

The deal broadens and strengthens the Group's next generation product (NGP) portfolio in Europe, and more than doubles its existing modern oral market share in Sweden, which is Europe's largest oral nicotine market.

Helwit also has a wider online European sales presence and is available in the Co-op and Waitrose in the UK, providing even greater choice for adult consumers seeking alternative non-combustible nicotine products.



A number of ways to keep in touch

There are a number of ways to get information about the Pension Fund or contact a member of the team, depending on your needs.

Visit our myimperialpension.com website if you are looking for news about the Fund, how to spot a pensions scam or how to report a death. The site also has a library of documents such as annual reports, actuarial valuations and back issues of the Gazette.

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

We are also encouraging members to opt-in to receive generic communication electronically, to allow us to provide you with information in a fast, convenient and environmentally friendly way. This only relates to standard pension news updates and Trustee communications such as the Gazette, Pension Fund Report and bulk Fund news mailings – you would continue to receive all personal correspondence such as pension payslips and pension increase letters by post.

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.

pension.enquiries@uk.imptob.com

0117 953 0000

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

myimperialpension.com

FOUR DECADES ON AND REUNION IS STILL A BIG HIT



Former Pensions Manager Mike Paige (seated front), receives thanks from the attendees for organising the Imperial Group PLC Head Office reunion for the last four decades. He is now hoping someone will come forward to take his place so that the popular get-together can continue

THERE WAS A FANTASTIC TURNOUT for this year's Imperial Group PLC Head Office reunion, which marked 40 years since the closure of the former office on Lombard Street in Bedminster, Bristol.

Around 70 pensioners gathered at Knowle Golf Club for the annual event, which has been organised for the last four decades by former Pensions Manager Mike Paige.

Among the reunion regulars were also some new faces including three – Kim Davis (née Allen), Gill Flook (née Smith) and Debbie Wilcox (née Jacobs) – who Mike interviewed for their first jobs.

Gill started as a junior in the Pension Fund Office in 1972, a year before Kim joined in the same role, leading to the pair developing a lifelong friendship (see page 6). Debbie joined the company in 1977 aged 16 in the weekly wages payroll section of the Staff Secretary's Department. She worked in Mike's team for five years before leaving to go travelling and then pursuing a career in HR with the Audit Commission.

Talking point

Many of the attendees brought along photographs and memorabilia from their time with the company, which provided a great talking point. Mike was also able to present two more of the tennis trophies that had been given to him last year by former Accountant John Price, who used to be captain of the tennis section of the Imperial Athletic Club, one to Gill Flook and the other to Malcolm Barnes.

"I guess it's fitting that I play given my resemblance to former world number one player John McEnroe," said Malcolm, who is a member of his local club in Backwell, North Somerset.

Attended Wimbledon

"I have been mistaken for him so many times over the years, particularly when I've attended Wimbledon to watch the tennis. People soon realise their mistake when I speak without his American lilt."

Malcolm, who joined the Tobacco Intelligence Department (later renamed Commercial Marketing and Intelligence Department) in 1972, worked for the company for 37 years until he retired in 2009. He had attended the reunion on a few occasions previously, but not for a few years as Mike lost his contact details when his email address was hacked. However, a chance encounter with Kay Thatcher, who worked as a typist in the Legal Department from 1958 to 1969, while walking his dog, Rex, led to contact being reestablished.



Mary and Richard Jones look at an issue of Wills Magazine from 1954



You cannot be serious! John McEnroe look-alike Malcolm Barnes and Gill Flook were presented with tennis trophies they won three decades ago at the reunion

"I bumped into Kay who was with a mutual friend and we quickly established that we both worked for Imperial," added Malcolm.

"I remember her late husband, Brian – in fact we were in a horse syndicate together at one point – and through Kay, Mike was able to send me an invitation."

Veronica Rides (née Blackmore) and her husband Alan, also returned to the reunion after a few years of absence.

Veronica was a Secretary, first in the Legal Department and later to Board member Dr Herbert Bentley, working for the company for 13 years from 1968 until 1981, while Alan worked in the Leaf Department at Wills for 22 years. The couple live in Clevedon and have two children and four grandchildren.

Veronica's father, Bill Blackmore also worked at Wills as an Electrical Supervisor between 1950 and 1979 and, in 1981, was elected Lord Mayor of Bristol.

"My father was a councillor for many years before becoming an Alderman and then being elected Lord Mayor," said Veronica.

"At the time he was in office the Lord Mayor lived in the Mansion House on Clifton Down, which was such a wonderful building to visit."

> Veronica's father was Lord Mayor of Bristol after he retired from Wills.



Veronica and Alan Rides, who both worked at the company, enjoyed catching up with friends at this year's Group head office reunion

Continued support

Mike addressed the group and announced that this year's reunion would be the last one he organised.

"It is fantastic to be here to celebrate 40 years of this get together, which the company has consistently supported," said Mike.

"It is always a great opportunity to catch up and talk about the good old days but it's time for me to take a step back, while I'm still at the top of my game.

"I am keeping my fingers crossed that someone will step into the breech and take over organising the reunion and that I'll be receiving an invitation in the future, rather than sending them."



Cheers! Reunion newcomer Debbie Wilcox (back row centre) catching up with former colleagues (back row, from left) Karen Smith, Lynn Smith, Rebecca Randall and Philippa Nutt and (front row, from left) Theresa Moore, Heather Smith and Julie Rhodes

From colleagues at Imperial to lifelong friends



THEN: Gill Flook (left) and Kim Davis feature in the February 1977 issue of Imperial News



NOW: Best friends Gill and Kim recreate the photograph almost 50 years on at the Imperial Group PLC Head Office reunion

GILL FLOOK AND KIM DAVIS, who both attended the Imperial Group PLC Head Office reunion for the first time, met in the Pension Fund Office in the early 1970s and have been close friends ever since.

Both were clerks, working for the company for seven and eight years respectively, and featured in an article in Imperial News in 1977 about their hobby, scavenging for old bottles.

"We would put on old clothes and boots, grab spades and start digging at the site of an old Victorian bottle dump in Weston-Super-Mare," said Kim.

"Often we had to dig down eight feet and frequently came up empty handed, but we did find some really beautiful bottles that were quite valuable – worth around £8 then, which is about £55 today."

Among their discoveries were Codd bottles for carbonated drinks, which have a glass marble in the neck, as well as toothpaste jars, jam pots and china bed warmers, and the pair still have many of the bottles in their possession today.

Gill was also part of Imperial's 'Newsdial' initiative, designed to improve communication within head office.

"It was the idea of the Group Public Affairs Department," said Gill. "There were a number of volunteers in both Bristol and London who were correspondents and, in addition to helping gather information for the company newspapers, we provided 'news of the day'.

"I was also chosen to be a newsreader and we received special training ahead of the launch to make sure the system was running properly."



The Bristol-based Newsdial newsreaders in 1979, from left, Sue Dye, Maria Davis, Mike Clark, Gill Flook, Andy Collins and David Lee

FRIENDSHIPS MADE AT OGDEN'S REMAIN

It may be almost 20 years since the Ogden's factory on Boundary Lane, Liverpool, closed its doors, but for those who worked there, the friendships made continue to this day.

Former colleagues from across the snuff department, machine room, flake room, test cutting room and office enjoyed an evening catching up at the May Duncan's pub in Everton earlier this year.

The reunion was organised by a group including Brian Tully and Chrissy Prendergast (née May), a former Machine Operator, and is one of several get-togethers held since the factory closed in 2007.

"We all enjoyed working for the company and have made lasting friendships," said Chrissy, who worked at Ogden's for 30 years until its closure. "It would be great to see even more new faces at next year's reunion, which will mark 20 years since the factory closed."



Anyone interested in attending a future event can contact Chrissy (pictured above, second left) for more information on 07780 117938.

‘WEST-COUNTRY’ COUNTRY

If you happen to be passing a pub in the south west of England and hear hollering and yee-hawing, there’s a good chance it will be caused by former Promotional Buyer ‘Jumping’ Jim Scadding and the other members of country band Tex Braithwaite and the Biryani Brothers.

The light-hearted, spoof cowboy band performs classic country songs by artists such as Hank Williams, Bing Crosby and Frankie Lane, as well as original tongue-in-cheek songs written and composed by Jim.

“The band formed in 1990 and has been seeking international fame (with very little success!) for the last 36 years,” said Jim, who lives in Weston-Super-Mare, North Somerset.

“I joined in 1991 as I knew a couple of the guys in the band and they were in need of a bass player. It is all very light-hearted with the character of Tex Braithwaite rumoured to hail from Micklethwaite, West Yorkshire, where they have a great liking for curry – hence the band’s name!”



Jim Scadding (centre) with fellow band members Sly Pickin’ (left) and Shane Arkwright

Regularly perform

They are now an established four-piece with everyone singing and playing an instrument, and they regularly perform at pubs in the area as well as folk festivals.

Jim joined Imperial’s head office in Bristol in 1968, initially working in the leaf department before roles in sales, sales development and, finally, purchasing. In his latter role he was the Promotional Buyer for the company, researching, negotiating, forecasting demand and controlling stock of merchandise for various in-pack consumer offers.

> “The job was both fascinating and demanding. It required research and growing expertise…”

“I remember that after running a particularly successful CD offer, I was invited to visit the studio in Soho, London, which had engineered and produced the compilation,” said Jim, who worked for the company for 32 years before leaving in 2000, when government regulations restricted tobacco advertising and promotion, making his job obsolete.

“The sound engineers gave me a fascinating tour of their recording equipment and mentioned they were just waiting for Paul Weller to arrive, who was planning a new acoustic style album called Wild Wood, which went on to be a best seller.”

The decision was made in the late 1980s to reintroduce a new version of the Embassy catalogue, which had been so successful in the 1960s and 1970s, called The Focus Collection.

The new catalogue worked the same way, with smokers collecting tokens from packets of Embassy and Regal cigarettes and exchanging them for gifts.

“The first version of the catalogue had about 45 different items, but this quickly grew to over 600 in subsequent editions,” said Jim.

“It became almost my full time job and, at its height, over three million copies were printed a year and merchandise turnover exceeded £16 million, equivalent to around £39 million in today’s money.

“The job was both fascinating and demanding. It required research and growing expertise into ever widening sections of the UK market for domestic products; close liaison and negotiation with suppliers; and increasing amounts of time to improve the quality of demand forecasting.

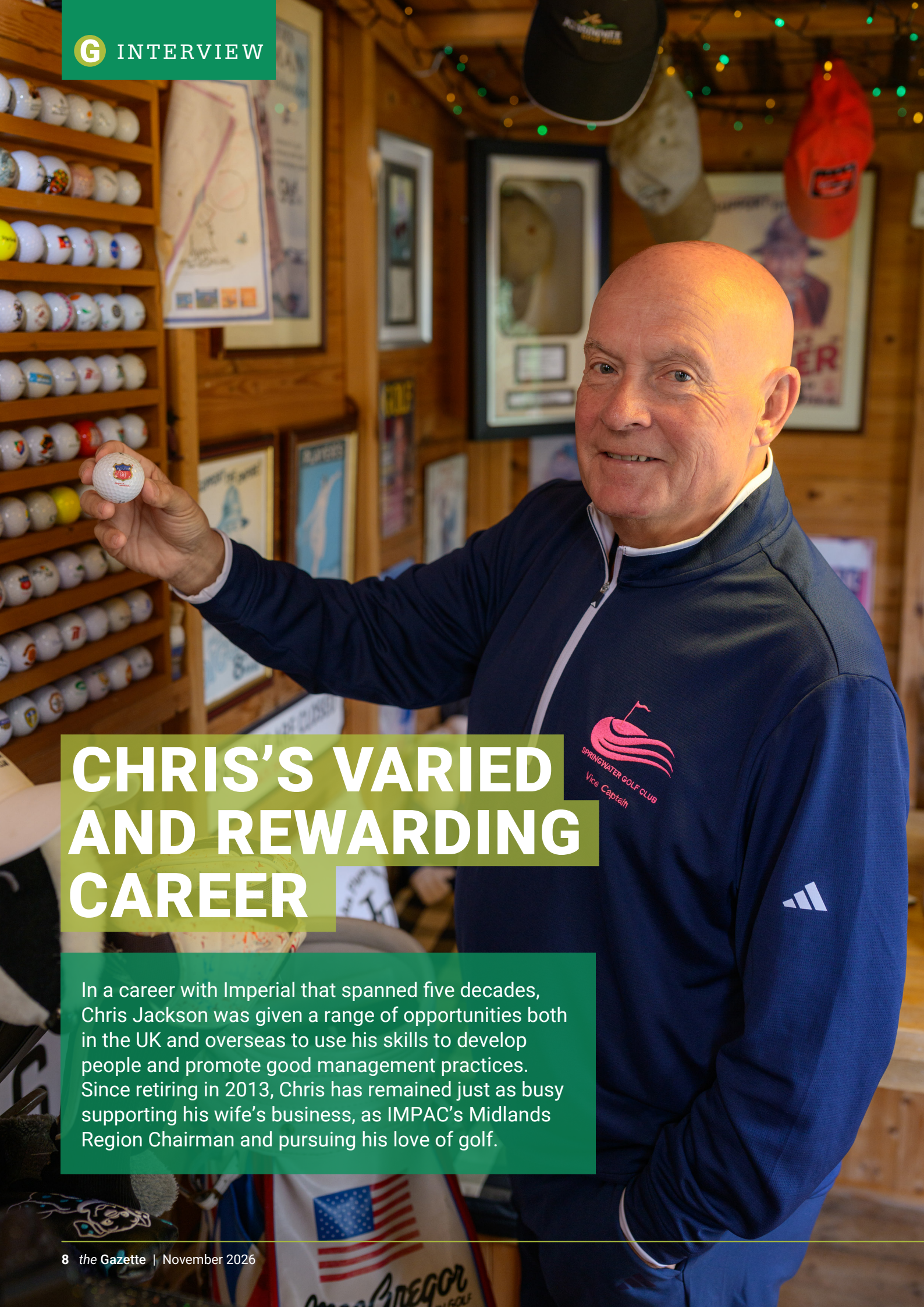
“Keeping abreast of the current market parameters of products as diverse as clocks, battery chargers, jewellery, garden furniture, cookware, cosmetics and bicycle accessories, was a very demanding task.”

Lifelong enthusiasm

Outside of work Jim still found time to pursue his lifelong enthusiasm for music, playing in several bands and performing in the early days of the famous Old Duke in Bristol, which became a dedicated traditional jazz venue in the late 1960s.

Following his retirement, Jim dedicated even more time to his work as a musician. As well as the Biryani Brothers, he’s played bass with Swing Fever, a six piece jazz band, for about 20 years and also performs solo in hotels and clubs around Weston-super-Mare.

You can find out more about Tex Braithwaite and the Biryani Brothers at: texbraithwaiteandthebiryanibrothers.com



CHRIS'S VARIED AND REWARDING CAREER

In a career with Imperial that spanned five decades, Chris Jackson was given a range of opportunities both in the UK and overseas to use his skills to develop people and promote good management practices. Since retiring in 2013, Chris has remained just as busy supporting his wife's business, as IMPAC's Midlands Region Chairman and pursuing his love of golf.

Chris Jackson was born in Nottingham and, on leaving school in 1969, was keen to pursue an apprenticeship in mechanical engineering. His father Norman, who was head of the John Player & Sons internal fire brigade, suggested he apply to the company – a decision that led to a varied, successful and rewarding career spanning almost 45 years.

Chris joined Player's on a five-year Technical Apprenticeship, completing his engineering studies at Nottingham Trent Polytechnic in 1975. He then took a diploma at the South East Derbyshire College which enabled him to lecture in engineering part time at colleges of further education.

"I remained in mechanical engineering until I qualified and in production until 1979 when I became a Technician in the company's newly-formed filter rod production unit," said Chris, who lives with his wife Sally in Calverton, Nottingham.

"Two years later I was appointed Training Advisor (Production and Technical) within the Player's Group, which included John Player Ipswich and Odgen's in Liverpool, before progressing to Training Officer as part of the Imperial Tobacco Central Training Department based at Chewton Place, near Bristol.

"Training was key in the late 1970s and early 1980s as the company embarked on the transition to high-speed manufacturing through its New Generation Machinery Programme."

Frequent travel

In this role Chris worked with suppliers like Hauni and Focke to arrange training programmes on the new machinery, which involved frequent travel to Hamburg and Bremen in Germany and Bologna, Italy. He then coordinated in-house trainers to carry out on-site activity where new machinery had been installed.



Chris sits on IMPAC's National Council and is its Midlands Regional Chairman



Chris and Sally Jackson, who met at Player's, with their 'timeshare' Cockapoo Minnie

Additionally, Chris managed the technical apprenticeship scheme within the Player's Group. As part of this, apprentices were required to attend Outward-Bound training, which was open to all employees aged 16 to 21, which Chris coordinated.

He was also responsible for implementing the Government's YTS (Youth Training Scheme) when it launched in 1983, recruiting 39 trainees to the scheme.

He wrote training programmes and liaised with colleges to support the off-job educational element of the scheme, including coordinating a shorter Outward-Bound element within this.

Following the acquisition of Imperial by Hanson in 1986 Chris transferred to the Central Trading Division of Sales and Marketing, based in Nottingham, and worked on several training projects within the area as well as cross-divisionally in both Northern and Southern Trading Divisions.

One of the key projects he was involved with was the implementation of a Security Code of Practice for the transportation of high value loads, initiated due to the number of financial losses incurred by the company through theft and vehicle hijacking.

The scope of this project included training all of Imperial's own HGV drivers as well as those from outside carriers in the understanding and use of the policy.

In 1990 Chris was appointed Area Sales Manager managing a team of 13 Sales Reps covering approximately 14,500 square miles of North Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, Humberside, North Lincolnshire and the Peak District.

New opportunity

Training also formed a key part of this role as did the organisation of recruitment and the running of assessment centres and sales training courses and inductions.

In April 1996 a new opportunity presented itself and Chris transferred to Imperial Tobacco International Limited as International Developments Manager. His first project was introducing JPS American Blend cigarettes into the German market working with Imperial's German license partner, Reemtsma, which Imperial acquired in 2002.

> "My ability to speak German was a great asset…"

"The launch took place in Stuttgart and lasted 12 months during which time I made weekly visits to Germany," said Chris.

"My ability to speak German was a great asset and culminated in me making the launch meeting speech on behalf of the company, which was a highlight of my career."

Chris's next project was introducing Route 66 cigarettes and roll your own tobacco into 18 countries and markets within six months. It was a complex project as each country had different product conformity requirements which had to be met, including health warnings, and involved extensive travel to Europe, the USA and Central Asia.

continued on next page

"The intensive number of brand launches involved in developing our rapidly expanding international business identified the need for us to formalise our product launch processes," said Chris.

"The need to adopt internationally recognised project management techniques to structure the process came quickly after the acquisition of Reemtsma.

"A cross-functional project team created a Product Introduction Process and workshops were carried out to ensure it was adopted worldwide.

Market management was an integral part of Chris's role and, through the Route 66 introduction period, he also had market responsibility for Austria, Switzerland and Denmark.

Following the finalisation of the Reemtsma acquisition, he was appointed Head of Project Control and Coordination based between Nottingham and Hamburg, and had responsibility for the control and coordination of all product launches, across all product groups, worldwide.

He had active teams in Nottingham, Hamburg, Joure (the Netherlands) and Poznan (Poland), which expanded to include Madrid, Paris, Radom (Poland) and the USA following the acquisition of Altadis in 2008.

He then took on the role of Integration Programme Manager for the manufacturing and supply chain functions, which involved monitoring and steering integration projects through three key steering groups handling up to 105 work streams.

"My time in training and development was very rewarding," said Chris, who retired in 2013. "It was very pleasing to see people develop in their roles and move up through the business and many of those I trained still hold key roles in the business today.

"I enjoyed the international work the most and have so many great memories of working overseas, although spending extended periods away from home was very challenging and I am grateful for the constant support of my wife.

"Travelling extensively to so many different locations gave me a great insight into other cultures and working practices within the tobacco industry."

"My time in training and development was very rewarding"

Charity golf event

While working at Imperial Chris regularly took part in the annual golf match between Bristol and Nottingham and, in retirement, plays regularly. He is Vice Captain of Springwater Golf Club in Calverton and starts a year as Captain in February.

He also organises an annual charity golf event at Skegness, Lincolnshire, which attracts around 40 players and is based on a modified Ryder Cup format. Next year will mark the 40th anniversary of the event, through which the club raises funds for national and local charities.

Chris met his wife Sally at Player's in 1982, where she worked in the Cashiers Department for 13 years. The couple married in 1985 and Sally left the company to have the couple's eldest son, Christopher, three years later.

In 2012 Sally set up Shoestring Promotions, a marketing promotions company, and, when Chris retired, he became its Company Secretary, which continued until the couple both fully retired in 2023.

When he retired from Imperial Chris also joined IMPAC, taking on the role of



Chris and Sally Jackson reminisce with old copies of Player's Post

Midlands Regional Chairman and sits on the National Council, where he recently coordinated the recruitment of three new Council members.

"The Midlands region is now the only active region within IMPAC and has the largest number of members," he said. "We organise two open meetings a year for our members to share National Council meeting information and Pension Fund updates. There is also a social element where members can enjoy each other's company rather like a reunion."

Chris is in regular contact with many ex-Imperial friends both in the UK and in Hamburg and meets up with Russell Pickering and David Scurlock, who both held senior management positions at Imperial International, each month for lunch.

Chris and Sally have three children, Sarah, who lives in the British Virgin Islands, and sons Christopher and Tom who both live in Nottingham. They enjoy spending time with their six grandchildren and joke that they have a timeshare Cockapoo as they provide regular dog sitting services for Tom's dog Minnie.

SUN TIMES FOR THE WALKING HARRY'S



The sun shone again on the Harry's for their annual memorial walk at Skegness, Lincolnshire.

The Player's walking group took the train from Nottingham to complete the six-mile walk along the coast from Skegness to Chapel St Leonards.

The annual event is a chance to catch-up while honouring and remembering friends and colleagues no longer with them. The 19-strong group enjoyed a lovely meal at Woody's restaurant in Ingoldmells before heading back to Skegness to catch the train home.

The Harry's meet up regularly throughout the year to walk and catch-up and the annual memorial walk has become a key date in the calendar of events organised by former engineering mechanic Dave Clay.

Centenarians celebrate

Three Imperial pensioners, who clocked up over 90 years' service between them, are celebrating their 100th birthday.

Betty Anderson joined Chipmunk Crisps at its Station Road factory in Long Buckby, West Northamptonshire, as a packer in 1968. Her late husband George also worked as a driver for the company.

Chipmunk became part of Golden Wonder in the early 1970s and Betty went on to work as a Laboratory Assistant for 13 years until 1986, when she retired. She still lives independently, with support from family, in the village next to the location of the Chipmunk factory, which is now a housing estate.

Betty marked her 100th birthday with a family party which saw three generations get together, including her son John and wife Lesley, grandson Gary and wife Kerry, and two great-grandchildren Elliott and Ava.

Maurice Francis joined St Anne's Board Mill in August 1941, one month before his 15th birthday, in the Coating Department Packing Shop and, when he turned 16, began shift work on the coating machines.

In 1944, aged 18, Maurice was called up into the Coldstream Guards and, after training, spent some time guarding German prisoners in Scotland before being sent to Palestine during the escalating troubles.

He returned to St Anne's in 1948 working on coating and poly-plastic machines, later becoming Shift Superintendent in the coating and then finishing departments.

Milestone birthday

Maurice retired when the factory closed in 1980 and enjoyed holidays in Cyprus and Malta with his wife Babette, who died in 2016, as well as spending time with his family at homes in Cornwall and Scotland.

With the support of his daughter Annette and her husband Roger he lives in his own home and still enjoys a short walk outside each day. Maurice celebrated his milestone birthday with a lunch with his extended family including Annette, his son Paul, four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Edwin 'Ted' Wood, who worked for Imperial for more than four decades, also celebrated his 100th birthday with family and friends.

Ted joined the company in 1941, aged 15, as a Temporary Junior Clerk in the Statistical Office, where he earned £1 a week plus six shillings war emergency payment.

Three years later he was called up and, after training, became a Sapper in the Royal Engineers. He was then recommended for a War Office Selection Board at Bletchley Park and was commissioned from Sandhurst as a Second Lieutenant in the Gloucestershire Regiment in 1946.

Ted met his wife, Althea, while on leave from the Army. The couple married in 1950 and had two sons Jonathan and Andrew, who lives in the USA with his children Charlotte and Matthew.

Permanent employee

Ted was demobbed from Chiseldon Camp as a First Lieutenant and returned to the Statistical Office in 1948, this time as a permanent employee. Over the years, he rose through the ranks to become Manager of Commercial and Marketing Intelligence, representing Imperial at trade and government bodies in the UK and Europe.

He later became Director of the Distribution Division and a member of the ITL Management Committee. He also sat on the joint ICI/ITL Committee in the pursuance of new smoking material, where he discussed European Economic Community (EEC) matters in Brussels and gave evidence on the effect of EEC harmonisation to a House of Lords select committee.

"When I retired in 1986, I was given a splendid retirement dinner where John Bloxedge, Managing Director at the time, described me as 'One of a Kind'!" said Ted. "A year later I was asked to consult on EEC tobacco affairs for a much smaller tobacco firm, which I did for four years."

When he completely retired, Ted and Althea, who died in 2001, moved to Backwell Farleigh in North Somerset.

Ted was a member of St Andrew's Parochial Church for 30 years, acting as Chairman of its finance committee and church warden during this time, and chaired two local charities for 15 years. He was also instrumental in gaining Conservation status for Backwell Farleigh in 1991.



Maurice Francis


Edwin 'Ted' Wood,

NOTICEBOARD

Diary dates



IMPAC

is a pensioners' organisation which has been supporting Imperial Pension Fund members for over 30 years.
Website: www.impac.org.uk

IMPAC members' helpline:
email: impacmembers@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: impac@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 should contact the helpline by email at: impacmembers@outlook.com

Membership is free for the first 12 months.

Former John Player & Sons Engineer **Phil Dobson** and his wife **Sue** have spent more than a decade exploring every one of the UK's 8,000 miles of accessible coastline by car and caravan.

COASTING THROUGH RETIREMENT

Phil and Sue's adventure led from Phil's love of camping and caravaning holidays with his first wife, Dianne, who died in 2013 aged 63, and their children Richard, Andrea and Gemma.

"Di and I had often discussed the idea of going around the whole of the UK coastline but it didn't get any further than that," said Phil, who joined Player's in Nottingham in 1965 as a Mechanical Engineering Apprentice. After completing his apprenticeship he was seconded to the team of fitter's based in the Engineer's Department in Number 4 factory at Radford before moving to the Horizon factory, where he stayed until taking early retirement in 2004.

"When Di passed away following a brief battle with breast cancer and I was on my own, I decided that if I was ever going to embark on the project, now was the time."

Struck up a friendship

Following Di's death, a doctor suggested that Phil might benefit from bereavement counselling and recommended Maggie's Cancer Centre based at the Nottingham City Hospital.

It was here he met Sue a few months later, who had also recently lost her husband to cancer. The pair struck up a friendship which resulted in them marrying this July at a country house hotel in their home village of Woodborough, Nottinghamshire.

"At the beginning of our new relationship, I wondered how Sue would take to caravaning," said Phil.

"I was aware that the last time she had slept in one was as a child with her parents but I need not have worried as she took to it like a duck to water.

"I told her of my plan and she didn't need any encouragement!"

The couple's coastal journey began in 2014 with no preparation or forward planning. They set off from Scarborough and ended the day at Whitby: a journey of only 20 miles, but the beginning of a wonderful adventure.

They spent the next 12 years, which included a break due to the Covid pandemic, taking trips using only public roads that followed or went down to the sea. They never wanted to begin the next leg where they had finished the last so started using Ordnance Survey maps to track their progress.

> "…so many happy memories of the adventure, meeting some wonderful people…"

"One problem we encountered was agreeing where a coastal estuary ends and a river bank begins," explained Phil.

"For convenience we decided that that would be at the first bridge we came to. Because Anglesey and the Isle of Skye are both connected to the mainland by bridges, we decided to include them in our journey and I'm so glad we did because Skye has become one of our favourite locations.

"It was always our intention to cover every possible mile of accessible public road looking for the quirky and unusual.



Phil and Sue Dobson at Ord on the Isle of Skye with the painting they commissioned a local artist to paint. It now has pride of place on their dining room wall

Things like the Baked Bean Museum and the Lawn Mower Museum in Southport, the David Hockney sculpture 'Verity' on the harbour at Ilfracombe and the 100 life-sized sculptures of Sir Anthony Gormley entitled 'Another Place' on the beach at Crosby near Liverpool."

The couple have so many happy memories of the adventure, meeting some wonderful people and discovering some stunning places.

"Our three favourite are all in Scotland," added Phil. "Cove, a tiny village between Dunbar and Eyemouth in the Borders is an absolute gem of a place: access to the beach is down a footpath and through a tunnel that leads out to a stunning little bay.

"The second is Kinloch Hourn in the West Highlands. There is nothing more than a B&B and tearoom at the end of a 26-mile single track but the scenery is stunning. If you're lucky, you can see otters, seals, white tail sea eagles, red deer and even golden eagles. It's a long way to go for a cup of coffee but it is absolutely worth it.

"And probably our favourite place (at the moment anyway!) is the tiny hamlet of Ord on the Isle of Skye. There are just a couple of houses close to a beautiful beach on the shore of Loch Eishort which is overlooked by the Cuillin Mountains.

"It is so special to us that we commissioned a local artist to paint the scene, which now has pride of place on our dining room wall."

Wherever possible, the couple also took trips on different modes of transport, including trains, boats, a paddle steamer, seaplane and a tuk-tuk!

They finally completed the last leg of the journey early this year, from Bridlington to Scarborough; finishing where they started.

The whole journey covered 7,975 miles and took a total of 143 days. Phil kept a journal and, when he can find the time, is keen to write a book about the experience.

Next challenge

"We enjoyed the journey so much that we have already started the next challenge to attempt to visit all the inhabited islands surrounding the UK mainland," said Phil.

"We have already ticked off the Outer Hebrides, which was our honeymoon trip this September. The islands have so many stunning white sand beaches: if they were 1,000 miles further south, they would be a tourist paradise." G



Phil and Sue Dobson celebrating their wedding day in July 2026

Photo: Luskentyre Beach, Isle of Harris in the Outer Hebrides, was one of the stunning beaches Phil and Sue visited on their honeymoon this September.

Don was among the last to leave when the Wills Newcastle factory closed its doors

WILLS NEWCASTLE pensioner and TV quiz champion Don McLeod has died, aged 89.

Don began working at the Wills factory on Coast Road in Newcastle in 1962 and spent more than two decades as a Production Manager and Laboratory Researcher.

When production ceased in 1985, he was one of the last employees to leave, overseeing the clearance and final closure of the factory a year later.

He then went on to work with an education charity that helped adults with learning difficulties find employment, until he retired in 1997.

Don and his wife Nancy, who also worked for Wills for almost three decades as a Laboratory Supervisor, spent the following years enjoying holidays abroad, particularly to Spain and Greece, where Don took sailing trips around the Greek islands on a friend's yacht.

In retirement Don also pursued a number of hobbies including tending to his allotment, watching his local team, Morpeth Rugby Club, spending time in the Northumberland countryside as a beater on shoots, and sea fishing and lobstering in the summer.

Don was also a formidable quizzer, earning him the title 'Brain of Morpeth' among his friends. This led to appearances on TV quiz shows including the Weakest Link, 15 to 1, Tipping Point and Pointless, which he won with his sister Marjorie.

Don is survived by Nancy, daughters, Alison and Catherine, six grandchildren and a great grandchild.



Don and Nancy McLeod

Wages clerk Joan found love at Robert Sinclair





Joan (second right) with colleagues in the wages office in the 1970s

ROBERT SINCLAIR pensioner and devoted grandmother Joan Cook has died, aged 90.

Born in Gosforth, Newcastle in 1936, Joan worked as a wages clerk for a number of local businesses before joining Robert Sinclair (renamed Sinclair Collis in 1981) in the mid 60s.

She worked in the wages office, where she met her husband, Reg, who also worked for the company as a Sales Rep out of the Newcastle office.

The couple married in 1970, and Joan left the company three years later when their daughter, Amanda, was born. Reg's career with the company took the family to Leeds and, later, Northampton, where they settled down until Reg retired in 1985.

In retirement, Joan and Reg travelled with friends, visiting countries all over the world, as well as taking lots of short breaks around the UK.

Joan also loved being a grandma to their three grandchildren, Harriet, Isabelle and William.

She played a big part in their lives, helping out with cooking meals and babysitting, and the whole family enjoyed holidays together.

Joan is survived by Reg, Amanda, Harriet, Isabelle and William.

LAURA WINES, who worked for John Player & Sons from 1971 until 1983 and was one of the oldest members of the Fund, has died aged 103.

Skilled organiser with a passion for singing

FORMER WILLS SECRETARY Ruth Bwye, who worked for the company for 34 years, has died aged 89.

Born in Bristol in 1937, she lived in the city all her life, attending Fairfield Grammar School and then the College of Commerce for a year where she gained shorthand/typing, bookkeeping and other office skills.

Ruth joined WD & HO Wills as a Clerk in 1954, aged 17, starting in the CDC (Customers' Dissection Cards) Department, where each customer had a hand-written card charting every tobacco product they had purchased.

After 18 months, she transferred to the advertising department and then, in 1958, the newly formed Sales Promotion Section, later known as Special Events. Here she helped organise company events such as the Round the Island Yacht Race in the Isle of Wight, the British Grand Prix at Silverstone and the World Snooker Championships at the Crucible in Sheffield.

Ruth's skill for organising did not go unnoticed and she was head-hunted to become a Secretary in the Personnel Department in 1968, which included taking on the role of Secretary to both the Staff Council and the Factory Central Council.

Wills Magazine

She later moved to the Human Resources Department, retiring in 1988 as Office Administrator and Secretary to the Human Resources Director, John Game.

During her career, which also included a spell as a correspondent for the Wills Magazine, Ruth made time for her hobby, singing.

She was a member of The Silver Ring Choir, a Bath-based mixed voice choir, for over 50 years and had the opportunity to perform all over the world including Canada, Norway, Sweden and New Zealand. And, in 2018, she was awarded the Mayor of Bath's Citizen of the Year award for her 'outstanding' contribution to the choir over the years.



Ruth's dedication to secretarial work also continued during her retirement through her role as Secretary to the Wills Staff Pensioners' Association, which began in 2002 and lasted until the club disbanded in 2021.

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

HEAD OFFICE AND ITL
Richard Ian Griffiths, 78;
Anthony John Haines, 88;
Peter Edward John Jackson, 89;
Jill Rosemary Lake, 87;
Peter John Poole, 80;
Barbara Jean Rubas, 96;
Bryan Slann, 94.

WD & HO WILLS
Carol Ann Blackmore, 68;
Maureen Hughes Blyth, 75;
Walter Francis Buckley, 83;
Ruth Eleanor Grace Bwye, 89;
Josephine Ann Byrne, 74;
Jennifer Pauline Clark, 86;
Philip George Cooper, 88;
Rosemary Hatherly, 96;
Robert Stephen Hayden, 76;
Jennifer Susan Hill, 78;
David Royston Hillman, 74;
Rachel Scotland McGilp, 78;
Donald Hansen McLeod, 89;
Elizabeth McManus, 74;
Janet Mary Merritt, 87;
Joan Gwendoline Moon, 86;
Jean Lily Phelps, 94;
Edith Mary Russell, 98;
Wilhelmina Thomson Slesser, 77;
Terence Frank Staniforth, 82;
Elizabeth Thomson, 77;
June Cynthia Daisy Wallace, 95;
Gerald Squire White, 89;
Roy Winn, 90;
Alan David Wright, 73.

JOHN PLAYER & SONS
Ada Josephine Baines, 86;
Ernest Edward Bend, 94;
Allan Brooke, 82;
Barbara Mary Brown, 94;
Julian Ford Brown, 76;
Michael Chapman, 82;
Gary Clifton, 81;
Christine Elizabeth Cole, 83;
Samuel Ernest Connington, 95;
Glenis Irene Elliott, 80;
Michael John Fowler, 79;
Alan Hayes, 82;
Beryl Hilda Howett, 89;
Patricia Kane, 75;
Gary Leister, 56;
Derek Robert Marsden, 81;
James Alfred Minns, 98;
Michael Arthur Mitchell, 83;
Robert George Nelson, 83;
Douglas Palmer, 93;
Alfred Price, 87;
Ephraim Reid, 87;
Brenda Reynolds, 95;
Joyce Carmelda Richards, 92;
Terence John Savage, 75;
Elsie May Tennant, 93;
Laura Wines, 103.

OGDEN'S
Jean Curzon, 75;
Kenneth Ronald Judge, 71;
David Leslie Keenan, 66.

BONDS DELIVERY SERVICE
Brian Gamble, 70;
Leslie Leap, 79;
Derek McMahon, 73.

FINLAY & CO
Marion Elsie Clutton, 91;
Keith Carter Hallam, 83;
Peter Walker, 93.

LOWFIELD DISTRIBUTION
Max Brian Arlett, 88.

ROBERT FLETCHER & SON
Leo Nelson, 77;
Brian Robinson, 68.

SINCLAIR COLLIS
Joan Cook, 90;
Colin Deaville, 71;
Michele Kavanagh, 63.

ST ANNE'S BOARD MILL
Jeremy Matthew Corfield, 74;
Tony Ronald Elson, 91;
Michael James Fitzgerald, 96;
Rupert Baldwin Kerr, 91;
Brian David Meek, 81;
Michael Dennis Pullin, 75;
Donald George Sparkes, 89.

IMPERIAL FOODS LIMITED HEAD OFFICE
Frank Trevor Bewley, 67;
Margaret Helen Bremner, 91;
Bernard Norman Cooper, 90;
Malcolm John Day, 78;
Kenneth John Temple Hilling, 87.

GOLDEN WONDER
Margaret Kate Dixey, 96;
Paul Gautrey, 67;
Janet Wood, 92.

ROSS FOODS
Ian Douglas Appleyard, 75;
Robert Wilson Martin, 79;
Jack Noble, 87;
Ruby Maureen Reeson, 83;
Samuel Thomas, 91.

SEVEN SEAS
William Dodder, 87.

SMEDLEY-HP FOODS
Brian Leonard Black, 78;
Michael Harcourt, 82;
Maureen Ann Jenkins, 81;
Geoffrey Marshall, 92;
Olga Vivian Rivett, 99;
Michael Joseph Ryan, 87;
Jean Lillian Sharp, 87;
Doreen Olive Skinner, 92;
Patrick Sullivan, 80;
Willam Henry Wilcox, 71.

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.

Roberta Webster, who worked for Player's for 13 years and is about to publish her first book, credits her career with the company and the support of her colleagues for helping build her confidence as a young woman to overcome personal struggles.



PLAYER'S MODEL TURNED AUTHOR

Roberta Webster (née Czerwak) joined John Player & Sons in Nottingham as a Machine Operator when she was 17 after leaving St Bernadette's Catholic School.

She was trained on the cigarette making machines where she was taught to carry out regular checks, and only a few months into the job she spotted a mistake.

"I noticed that the wrong cigarettes were being loaded onto our machine, so I hit the emergency stop button," said Roberta, who lives in Heanor, Derbyshire. "I was terrified that I'd be in trouble, but it turned out I was right and I'd saved the company from losing lots of money.

"A few weeks later, I was offered the chance to move into the Marketing and General Services Unit as a Marketing Agent, which I loved."

Personal development

In 1984, Roberta was chosen by the company to go on a 17-day sailing trip organised by the Sail Training Association (now the Tall Ships Youth Trust) and The Prince's Trust (now the King's Trust), the youth charity founded in 1976. The company sponsored one place for an employee every year as a personal development opportunity.

"My bosses put me forward from our department and I was lucky enough to be chosen out of all the employees at the Nottingham factory," she said. "I couldn't believe my luck."

Roberta joined 39 other people from all walks of life to form an all-female crew on the Sir Winston Churchill, a three-mast schooner. They raced against an all-male crew aboard its sister ship, the Malcolm Miller. The ship departed from Southampton and docked in European ports including Amsterdam and Cherbourg.

"When we docked in Amsterdam, there was a Dutch frigate next to us and they were holding a party on board" recalled Roberta. "The Captain picked me and one of the other girls to go over as our ship's guests, so we got all dressed up and went to join in – it was great fun.

"The trip was not without its challenges though. Working four hours on and four hours off was mentally and physically draining and I dreaded climbing into the 30ft tall crow's nest for look-out duty.

"But all in all, it was an incredible opportunity that helped build my confidence and I'm so grateful to Player's for making it happen."

On her return, Roberta's confidence continued to grow and she began taking on new opportunities with the company, even modelling the new promotions uniforms for the rep catalogues and Player's Post.

In October 1986 Roberta appeared on the front page of the Player's Post with three colleagues, Michelle Lomax, Jane Adams and Diane Spencer, modelling JPS branded clothing, as well as the Embassy suits designed for the 'Wonders of the World' promotion.

"It all felt very glamorous," she said. "I took part in photoshoots four times a year, which were always followed by a fancy lunch, and we even got to keep some of the clothes.

"I took early redundancy in 1993 but am eternally grateful to the company for the opportunities it gave me.

"Going to work every day offered a respite from a difficult home life and I made lots of great friends that I'm still in touch with today."

First book

After leaving Player's Roberta took some time to raise her two children, Jamie and Heather, and now works as a store assistant for a global retail company. She has also spent the last two years writing her first book, which she has written to help those struggling with mental health. The book is due to be published by the end of the year, and she is already preparing to write a sequel.

"Working for Player's was an amazing part of my life," Roberta added. "I found my independence and it gave me the confidence to believe in myself and to say 'yes' when opportunities came along."



1 Diane Spencer (left) and Roberta Webster modelling one of many outfits designed to promote Imperial Tobacco brands
2 Roberta Webster shows off a tuxedo

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