

the **Gazette**

MARCH 2025 | ISSUE 108

FOR PENSIONERS OF IMPERIAL TOBACCO



**STUART'S  
RETIREMENT  
BRINGS NEW  
ADVENTURES**

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Head of Pensions, **Jan Killick**, directs a spotlight at the ever-increasing cost of living and shows how careful planning can make your money stretch.

# PLANNING TO MAKE MORE OF YOUR PENSION...

**W**HILE THE rate of inflation is gradually easing, many people are still feeling the effects of the ongoing cost of living crisis, and you may feel your money is not stretching as far as it used to.

But with careful planning and the right resources, pensioners, particularly those on a fixed income like members of our Fund, can better manage these financial challenges.

There are plenty of perks out there for seniors, many of which you might already qualify for, so make sure to check for additional government support such as free eye test and free prescriptions for anyone over the age of 60.

Getting out and about also doesn't have to cost a fortune. Whether you're planning a day trip, visiting family or trying something new, there are plenty of discounts available that can help make your travel and entertainment more affordable, for example:

- In England, you're entitled to a free bus pass when you reach State pension age.
- If you're over 60, you can get a third off most train fares across the UK with a Senior Railcard. It's affordable and can save you a lot, especially if you enjoy travelling or visiting family.
- National Trust offers a 25 per cent discount on memberships for those who are over 60 and have been a National Trust member for three consecutive years.
- English Heritage also offers reduced membership rates for seniors.



Buckland Abbey in Devon, a National Trust property. The Trust offers discounts to over 60s

- Many cinemas, including Vue, Showcase and Odeon, offer discounted screenings for those over 60. These often come with a little extra, like a free cup of tea and a biscuit – perfect for a relaxing afternoon out.

Don't forget to take advantage of senior discounts at shops, restaurants and even online retailers – you'd be surprised at how many places offer a concession.

There are also charities that offer

support and advice, such as:

- Turn2Us: [turn2us.org.uk](https://turn2us.org.uk)
- Citizens Advice: [citizensadvice.org.uk](https://citizensadvice.org.uk)
- Age UK: [ageuk.org.uk](https://ageuk.org.uk)

Making use of these discounts and resources can help ease financial pressures, giving you more flexibility to focus on the things you enjoy most. **G**

## GroceryAid offers a helping hand

GroceryAid is a long-established UK charity that provides financial, emotional and practical support to those who have worked in the grocery industry, including retail, wholesale and manufacturing.

As of January 2025, GroceryAid has assumed responsibility for the Tobacco Trade Benevolent Fund's (TTBF) welfare fund. This change ensures that those who have worked in the tobacco industry and find themselves in need can continue to receive financial support, now with an enhanced range of services provided by GroceryAid.

The TTBF continues to support a range of charities through its general fund. For free, confidential support, contact the 24/7 helpline at: 08088 021 122 or [tobaccocharity@groceryaid.org.uk](mailto:tobaccocharity@groceryaid.org.uk)

For more information about the charity, visit: [tobaccocharity.org.uk](https://tobaccocharity.org.uk)

## Pension increase from April 2025

The rise in the Retail Prices Index for the last 12 months to December 2024 – the basis of the pension increase from 01 April 2025 – was 3.46 per cent.

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

# Kirsty is re-elected to the Board

KIRSTY GREEN-MANN has been re-elected to the Imperial Tobacco Pension Trustee Board as a Member Nominated Trustee for the pensioner and deferred member population of the Fund for a second term.

Her connection to the Fund spans many years, having previously served as the Employee Nominated Trustee prior to leaving the company in 2018 and she is a deferred member of the Fund.




## Twenty years of experience

Kirsty was Group Head of Corporate Responsibility at Imperial from 2008 to 2018, before joining Burges Salmon LLP as its first Head of Corporate Responsibility.

She is now Global Head of Sustainability at Hays, where she is drawing on her 20 years of experience to lead the global recruitment specialists' efforts in addressing environmental, social and governance issues.

As well as these accomplishments, Kirsty has an MBA from the Cranfield School of Management and is a Fellow of the Institute of Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability, the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

"It's a privilege to serve the pensioner and deferred member community for another term," said Kirsty. "I am passionate about ensuring the Fund is managed responsibly and sustainably and look forward to continuing this important work with my fellow Trustees."

 Do you know where to go to get information about the Pension Fund, read back issues of the Gazette or who to contact if you need to change your personal details?

Our [myimperialpension.com](https://myimperialpension.com) website contains useful information about the Fund, pensions tax information, how to spot a pensions scam, and so on. It also has a library including annual reports, actuarial valuation reports and the Gazette.





To contact the pensions office, email or telephone is quickest and easiest. However, if your bank or address details have changed, you will need to provide the new information in writing, accompanied by your signature.





To help us provide you with information in a fast, convenient and environmentally friendly way, why not opt-in to receive generic communication electronically? This only relates to standard pension news updates and Trustee communications such as the Gazette, Pension Fund Report and Fund news. You would continue to receive personal correspondence, such as pension payslips and pension increase letters, by post.

To opt-in and access the latest Fund news on your mobile phone, tablet or computer, please email the Pensions Office.

 [pension.enquiries@uk.imptob.com](mailto:pension.enquiries@uk.imptob.com)

 0117 953 0000

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

 [myimperialpension.com](https://myimperialpension.com)


## 'ESG: People and Planet' summary is published

IMPERIAL BRANDS has published its annual ESG: People and Planet Performance Summary, which sits alongside its 2024 Annual Report and Accounts to demonstrate how the company is meeting its environmental, social and governance (ESG) targets, in addition to its operational and financial objectives.

Important elements of the People and Planet strategy include its Triple Zero initiative, which highlights aspirations for zero carbon, zero waste and zero injuries.

This year's ESG report shows that Imperial is making progress against all eight of its People and Planet ambitions, which include Consumer Health, Climate Change, Packaging and Waste and Employee Health Safety & Wellbeing.

The annual ESG report, as well as the Annual Report and Accounts, can be viewed and downloaded at:

 [imperialbrandsplc.com](https://imperialbrandsplc.com)



### Capital Markets Day

Imperial Brands is holding a Capital Markets Day on 26 March 2025, where it will announce its updated five-year strategy to continue to drive sustainable growth and deliver for all its stakeholders.

# TWENTY YEARS REUNITING



Now and then: MVR reunions in December 2024 and, right, the first one which took place in December 2005, as featured in the March 2006 Gazette

**T**HE POPULARITY of the Player's Garage and Motor Vehicle Repair (MVR) reunion continues with more than 20 pensioners getting together at the Bell Inn in Nottingham for the group's 20th annual event.

The inaugural reunion took place on Monday 05 December 2005 and was the first time some of the former colleagues had seen each other since the Leenside garage closed in 1990.

"A small group of us former Player's drivers used to meet regularly for a few drinks in the years after the garage closed," said Phil Bradley, who worked for the company as a driver between 1961 and 1987.

"Former garage foremen Les Revill and David Lowe also used to meet with others for a drink and between us we decided

to see if we could get as many people together as possible at one big reunion." The result was the first official Player's Garage and MVR reunion, which was held at The Bell Inn 20 years ago, which Phil organised with Les, who died in 2012, and Dave, who was also manager of the Northampton depot from 1964 to 1986 before returning to Nottingham.

### Memories and photographs

The reunion is an opportunity for former colleagues of the Leenside site, which handled the repair and maintenance of Player's van fleet, to catch up and share their memories and old photographs.

More than 50 people attended the 2005 event and it has continued to take place at the Bell Inn on the first Monday of December ever since.



"It was fantastic to see some faces I hadn't seen since retiring in 1990," said Les, who left as a garage supervisor when the garage closed, and who clocked up 50 years with the company. "We were pleased with the impressive turnout and are already planning a similar event for December this year." Fellow organiser Phil Bradley added: "It was a successful evening and I am grateful to all those who brought along old photos for everyone to share."

Enjoying the beer. From left: Tim Wainhorn, David Hartingham, Chris Shaw, Colin Wardell and Ron Coxon.

Right: from left: Gordon Jenkins, Steve Collins, Chris Shaw, Les Revill, Alan Rowbotham and John Towson.

Below: from left: The organisers

At this year's event, which saw 23 regulars take a trip down memory lane, former driver and foreman Bob Pilch gave a toast to absent friends and shared his memories of some of the old characters from the garage while reminiscing about the past.

"The Garage and MVR department only had about 100 employees, many of whom are sadly no longer with us, so to get more than 20 to still come along to the reunion so long after the garage closed shows the strength of the friendships that were made there," added Phil.

"This year's event will be the 21st and it would be great to see even more friendly faces there."

## Christmas reunion raises £800 for Dementia UK



▲ Raising a glass: former electricians from left, Graham Heels, Rick Straw, Tony Longdon

ALMOST 200 Player's pensioners enjoyed a Christmas get-together, which was again held at The Stage pub in Nottingham.

The bi-annual reunion is organised by Dave Clay and has become an important date on many pensioners' calendars.

"It is always great to see so many smiling, friendly faces," said Dave, who worked as an engineering mechanic at Player's for 37 years from 1969 until 2006.

"Everyone really looks forward to

reminiscing about our time at Player's."

The Stage provides the buffet free of charge with donations collected for its chosen charity instead. A fantastic total of £800 was raised for Dementia UK.

Former Horizon engineer Lenny Hall, 87, was the oldest in attendance with his wife Margaret. 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 allows former colleagues to keep in touch.

## Diary dates

- ◆ The Player's summer reunion will be held on Wednesday 18 June from 3.30pm at The Stage pub, Wollaton Street, Nottingham NG1 5FE. Contact Dave Clay.

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- ◆ Plans are in place for the 2025 Group Head Office pensioners' reunion. More details to follow in the July issue of the Gazette. Contact Mike Paige

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- ◆ The Player's Garage and Motor Vehicle Repair reunion will take place on Monday 01 December from 2.30pm onwards at the Bell Inn, Nottingham. Contact Phil Bradley or David Lowe for more information.

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- ◆ Plans are in place to hold the annual Classic Golf Society golf day in June and organiser Dave Lee will be in touch with pensioners on his list soon. Anyone new interested in taking part can contact Dave in the Pension Fund Office during working hours



## Accounting colleagues meet

■ **CATCHING UP:** Former colleagues from the ITL Head Office Accounting Team enjoyed their annual get together in Bristol. The event, organised by Colin Lippiatt since he retired in 2002, provides a great opportunity to keep in touch and recount stories from the previous year and their time working at Imperial.

From left are: Martin Hedges, Maurice White, Roy Jacobs, Deb Harding, Jane Davey, Ken Thorne, Robin Saunders, Mike Tudor, Dave Lee, Trevor Williams, Colin Lippiatt and Dick Hannaford.



■ **THE HARRY'S** got together for a festive-themed walk through the Nottinghamshire countryside, donning an array of Christmas jumpers for the occasion. The weather was perfect for the Player's group's five-mile winter walk from the Hog's Head Hotel, through Answorth Cossall and Bennerley and back to the Hog's Head for lunch. Top contenders for best outfit were Christmas elves Dave Shelton and Colin Burton!

## IMPAC

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



Website: [www.impact.org.uk](http://www.impact.org.uk)

### IMPAC members' helpline:

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

### For membership queries

IMPAC membership agency (to update membership details only):  
email: [impact@dmb.org.uk](mailto: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](http://www.impact.org.uk)

Membership is free for the first 12 months.

"...always great to see so many smiling, friendly faces."

► The girls are back for their twice-yearly get-together, enjoying a catch-up at The Stage pub: from left, Jane Watts, Pat Aplin, Sharon Matthews, Colleen Sufirini, Ann Jowett and Carol Jones



Stuart is a walk leader with the Portishead Strollers, guiding groups around the town

**Stuart Roberts** built a successful career in IT at Imperial and later NatWest, before he traded the hustle and bustle for a more laid-back life in Portugal, soaking up the sun while tending to his garden. After returning to Bristol to be closer to his family, Stuart remains active leading walks and volunteering.

# NO SLOWING DOWN FOR STUART IN RETIREMENT



BORN IN Northampton in 1953, Stuart spent much of his early life in Ghana and Nigeria, where his father headed up the West African operations of footwear brand, Lennards Shoes.

"I had an interesting childhood and was educated at several schools in Ghana and Nigeria, and later in England," said Stuart, who lives in Portishead, North Somerset.

"In West Africa, school started at eight in the morning and finished at 12:30pm, so afternoons were usually spent on the beach. It was a great experience, but the education standards were limited, so when I was 10, my parents decided to settle in Bristol, where I attended Bristol Grammar School until I completed my A-levels in 1971.

"I knew I wanted a career in computing so, on leaving school, I worked for BT for a year, initially in a clerical role before taking an opportunity to work at their Data Centre in Horfield."

### Computer programming

Stuart joined Imperial's head office in Bristol in 1973, as a computer operator in the Group Management Services department based in Lombard Street, where he spent three years working on a two-shift day and night basis operating the ICL mainframe. He later moved into computer programming, working as an analyst for 10 years until the Hanson takeover in 1986.

"Imperial was a really good company to work for in terms of a good salary, pension, benefits and an excellent canteen as well," said Stuart, who married Jan in 1973. She sadly died in 2011. The couple shared twins, Lee and Nikki, who were born in 1978.

"But it wasn't just the benefits that made the company stand out: there was a great crowd and I'm still friends with many of them today, which speaks volumes for

"I want to keep my mind active and physically fit..."



Since retiring in 2015, Stuart Roberts has built himself a life full of interest and activity, as well as a busy social calendar

the camaraderie." Sport was also a huge part of life at Imperial and Stuart spent many hours at the company's sports ground in Knowle, playing tennis, squash, table tennis and skittles. He also played weekly for a 5-a-side football team that played against Imperial teams and other organisations.

"We played at the Whitchurch Sports Centre every week for over two decades, and we won most of our games," Stuart recalled.

"We played under the title of Imperial Registrars, having taken over from the original team that included Martin Haines and Dennis Baker.

"Martin continued to play for us; Bob Evans and Roy Jacobs joined later, and Dennis filled in when we were short."

Following the Hanson takeover, Stuart moved to NatWest Insurance Services as an IT Manager, where he worked for 15 years until NatWest was taken over by RBS in 2000.

By this time, Stuart and Jan had bought a villa in Pera on the Algarve in Portugal, where they regularly went on holiday. They had plans to eventually retire out there but decided to take the plunge early, and purchased another property further inland, with over two acres of land. The couple embraced the Mediterranean lifestyle; they grew orange, lemon and other fruit trees

*continued on next page*

## A dream come true

Among Stuart's most cherished memories in recent years is the trip he took to New Zealand in February 2024 with his partner of two years, Christine, fulfilling a lifelong goal.

"It's something I have wanted to do since I did a school project on the country when I was just 14," he said.

During the three-week trip, the couple spent time exploring both the North and South Islands, visiting scenic Queenstown for mountain views and wine tasting, and the glacial lakes of Lake Tekapo and Mt Cook National Park. They also cruised around Milford Sound and even experienced a helicopter landing on the Franz Josef Glacier.

"The only place left on my bucket list is Machu Picchu in Peru," he said, "but we'll have to see if that happens!" he said.



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in the garden, and Stuart picked up some work in pool and garden maintenance.

However, after four years in Portugal, they made the decision to return to the UK to be closer to their children and grandchildren, Molly, Stan and Lewis. They quickly settled back into Bristol, where they enjoyed spending time with family, before Jan's death.

Stuart returned to full time work, this time in the pensions industry, managing a team in a growing organisation that provided self-invested personal pensions (SIPPs).

### Guiding groups

When Stuart retired in 2015, he had no intention of slowing down. In fact, he has created a retirement filled with fun and purpose, and plenty of activities to keep him busy, both physically and socially.

"I've never been bored," he laughed. "I want to keep my mind active and physically fit, as well as keep up the social aspects of life. I became a walk leader with the Portishead Strollers, guiding groups of around 25 people through scenic routes in the town every Monday morning.

"The aim is to encourage walking for



▲ Stuart tends his garden at home and meets with the Portishead Horticultural Society

health, but it is also a very important social interaction for many of the attendees."

Stuart has nurtured his love for gardening since his years in Portugal and enjoys tending to his garden at home, as well as meeting regularly with the Portishead Horticultural Society. He is also a member of the Gordano Civic Society and volunteers as a room guide once a week at the National Trust's Tyntesfield House.

"I decided to volunteer at Tyntesfield as it is a great way to be social, while also learning something new, he said. "I particularly like the Chapel room; it's a fine example of the craftsmanship that existed in Victorian times and reflected the family's faith."

Stuart joined his local Probus Club over nine years ago as a way of exploring new interests and staying engaged in the local community. He became the Vice Chairman of the club two years ago and, in September last year, was appointed Chairman.

"Probus Clubs were originally set


up in the mid-1960s for retired male professionals and business people to promote fellowship, but nowadays the entry requirements tend to be more relaxed," he explains.

### Lifelong sports fan

"My goal as Chairman is to attract younger and more diverse members to the club – apart from one woman, it's an all-male group with an average age of 81!"

A lifelong sports fan, Stuart is a season ticket holder with both Bristol Bears rugby and Gloucestershire County Cricket Club, and attends all of the home games and T20 matches, as well as some of the away games.

His social calendar is equally full, with regular quiz nights providing a chance to connect with old colleagues.

"I'm in a quiz team with some of my old work friends, Lynn Smith, Julie Rhodes and Kath Baker, and I've been a member of another team called the Numeric Assemblers for over 25 years," he said. 

## Former Ogden's secretary, Alicia, reaches 100

Alicia Graham, who worked at Edwards, Ringer and Bigg, part of Imperial Tobacco, for almost three decades, is celebrating her 100th birthday.

Alicia, née Cunnington, started work as a shorthand typist at the Redcliff Street factory in Bristol in July 1946, where she was quickly promoted to the post of Sales Manager's Secretary.

During her 29 years with the company, it saw a number of name changes – from Edwards, Ringer and Bigg, to Churchman, Lambert & Ringer, to Churchmans and,



in 1973, Ogden's – and Alicia eventually became the General Manager's Secretary for the Bristol factory.

Imperial decided to sell the Redcliff Street factory in 1975, and Alicia took the option of early retirement at the age of 50.

In 1971 she married widower Clifford Graham, who died in 1985. Alicia has lived in a

retirement village in Downend, Bristol, for the past 18 years and celebrated her milestone birthday with a family lunch as well as a birthday party with the other residents.

### Other pensioners celebrating their 100th birthdays:

**Doris Elsley**, widow of Ross Foods pensioner John, who died in service in 1980.

**Pamela Judge**, widow of Wills pensioner P Judge, who worked for the company for 17 years from 1943 until 1960.





Over almost three decades after leaving Ogden's, **Margaret Dunford**, pictured inset left, fondly recalls working at the Boundary Lane factory in Liverpool and shares some of her favourite memories.



**M**ARGARET DUNFORD was born in Liverpool in 1947, and started working at Ogden's as a tobacco weaver when she was just 15.

“I grew up in post-war Liverpool; I didn't have much, but Ogden's changed that. My weekly wage packet was £3.76, and I remember feeling proud to take that home.

I used to love walking down the streets of beautifully kept houses on my way to work, past Barker and Dobson's sweet factory and into Ogden's, where the clock tower was always the first thing you'd see.

It was truly an unforgettable time. I made lots of friends; many I remain friends with to this day.

### The pub was packed

I remember one Christmas in the 1970s in particular, the smell of tobacco and peppermint filled the air as factory workers spilled onto Boundary Lane, eagerly making their way to the pubs as they finished for the Christmas break.

The pub was packed, and I was elbow to elbow with my workmate, Pauline Wright, trying not to spill our drinks. As we sat down by the window, we saw Mr Hayes from the furniture shop next door, The Olympia, loading up his trailer with his latest shipment.

All of a sudden, Pauline, who had probably had one too many drinks, cheekily shouted, 'Mr Hayes, when are you delivering my three-piece suite!' Later, I was standing at the bus stop to go home when she passed by, sitting on Mr Hayes'



▲ Ken Dodd visits the Boundary Lane factory



Ogden's Boundary Lane factory workers in the 1960s

## FOND MEMORIES OF OGDEN'S

trailer on her settee, party hat on, waving at everyone. She gave us all a right laugh!

Life at Ogden's was never dull. Every day there was something to laugh about, and we were always playing pranks on each other.

I remember one time I got my finger caught in a machine, and it was pouring with blood. My old boss Bob Lea rushed over and wrapped it with a clean duster before quickly taking me to the surgery. What Bob didn't know was that I had already lost half of the finger next to it when I was two years old, in an old-fashioned washing mangle. So when I peeled the duster away to see the damage, Bob thought I had lost my finger in the machine.

His face was a picture! He looked so faint that the nurse had to come out to help him, thinking it was him we'd brought in for treatment!

“Life at Ogden's was never dull.”

### Sense of community

The area around the Boundary Lane factory had such a strong sense of community, made up of familiar spots like St Michael's church, Mill Road maternity hospital and Grafton dance hall, which was just down from Locarno dance hall on West Derby Road. Many of these are sadly gone now but hold so many memories for us Scousers.

Ogden's played a big part in the prosperity of the area; it was well known around Liverpool for being a good employer and there was a real sense of pride in working there.

### Timeline history of Ogden's:

- 1860** Thomas Ogden opens a small retail shop in Liverpool's Park Lane. Within six years, he has his own factory in St James' Street.
- 1870** More premises are acquired in Cornwallis Street and, by 1890, Ogden's has six factories and stores in Liverpool.
- 1899** Construction begins on the Boundary Lane site. In 1901, all activities are concentrated there.
- 1902** After a brief ownership by the American Tobacco Company, Ogden's becomes a branch of Imperial Tobacco.
- 1962** Ogden's stops making cigarettes and concentrates on pipe tobaccos.
- 2007** Ogden's closes its doors in March after which the building remains vacant for eight years.
- 2019** Work is completed to transform the former factory into 19 apartments. The iconic clock tower is restored.

In 1966, we had a visit from the comedian, Ken Dodd and production came to a near standstill as we were all so excited about the chance to meet a celebrity.

On another occasion, reporters from the Liverpool Echo showed up and picked out some of the girls to have their photos taken for the newspaper's pin up section – I was chosen, and my photo ended up getting printed. The bosses were proud that Ogden's girls were featured, but I was quite embarrassed about it; in those days vanity wasn't such a good look.

Looking back now, it was just one of many moments that made my time at Ogden's so special. It really was a great place to work, full of good people and plenty of laughs. 🗨️ 📱

# Player's pensioner became the oldest paper boy in Aspley

Player's pensioner Denis Walker, renowned in his Nottinghamshire home town as the oldest paper boy in Aspley, has died aged 91.

Born in Nottingham in 1933, Denis was the youngest of seven children. After leaving school, he started work in a factory before being called up for National Service. He served in the Army for two years, mostly stationed in Egypt around the time of the Suez Crisis, and rose to the rank of Lance Corporal.

When he returned home, Denis joined Player's in the Radford factory's primary department before moving into cigarette production. Over his 33 years with the

company, he worked his way up to section leader on the production line and retired in 1987.

It was also while at Player's in the 1970s that Denis met his wife, Dorothy. The couple enjoyed holidays with friends to the English Riviera, Spain and Jersey.

### Delivering newspapers

Denis was known for his love of golf. He was a member of the Player's club, and went on many golf trips around the UK. Even after he retired, he continued to meet up with friends from Player's for regular golf and snooker games, as well as weekly catch ups at The Nuthall pub.



In his eighties, Denis became the oldest paper boy in Aspley, delivering newspapers to the elderly in the area and helping out with gardening where he could.

He also spent many enjoyable hours at the allotments in Aspley, where he was also the secretary for 30 years. He continued his trips to the allotments well into his nineties, mostly to catch up with friends and drink coffee.

## June found true love at St Anne's Board Mill

St Anne's Board Mill pensioner Iris June Knill, known as June, has died, age 92.

June grew up in Bristol and, on leaving school in 1946, began working in the office as an Admin Clerk at St Anne's Board Mill at age 14.

Several years later, while working at St Anne's, she caught the attention of Gerald, who worked as a carpenter in the factory, and would often find reasons to visit the office, hoping to bump into her. On one occasion, he was brave enough to ask her out on a date, and they made plans to go dancing.

When Saturday arrived Gerald's Foreman told the team they needed to work overtime into the evening but when Gerald said he had a date with June, the Foreman replied:

"What our June? Well, we can't stand in the way of true love" and he allowed Gerald to miss the overtime.

This was the beginning of a long and happy marriage, and the couple enjoyed nearly 70 years together, until



Gerald died in 2020. In 1953, June left St Anne's to raise their daughters, Hilary and Hazel at their home in Kingswood. The couple enjoyed ballroom dancing and big band music such as Glen Miller. As a family, they also enjoyed many beach holidays in Devon and Cornwall.

### Friends all over England

As the children grew up, June worked as a dinner lady in the local school for five years, and later as a cashier at Sainsbury's, where she

made lasting friendships with both colleagues and regular customers. She was also an active member of her church and enjoyed many holidays at Methodist Guild Hotels, making friends all over England, remaining friends with them for many years.

June is survived by her two daughters Hilary and Hazel, four grandchildren, Oliver, Gregory, Richard and Becky, and five great granddaughters.

## Centenarian Jack's 30-year post war career with Wills

Ernest Jack Taylor, one of the Imperial Tobacco Pension Fund's oldest members,



has died aged 105.

Known as Jack, he served during the Second World War with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME). He later joined WD & HO Wills, in Bedminster, Bristol, in 1947 while the country was recovering from the aftermath of the war.

### Hartcliffe factory

He began his 32-year career with the company as a universal grinder in the maintenance division and later moved to

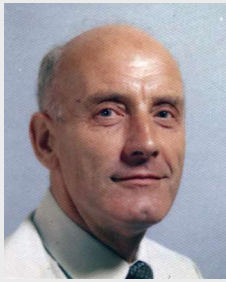
the Hartcliffe factory, where he remained until he retired in 1979.

Following over three decades of dedicated service to the company, Jack enjoyed his retirement holidaying with friends, mainly in Spain.

Jack also loved dog walking and watching his grandsons play football, as well as spending time with Gwen, his wife of 57 years, who died in 1998.

Jack is survived by his daughter Trish and son Robert, as well as three grandsons and five great-grandchildren.

# Travel-loving Horizon foreman visited 40 US states



Peter Spencer, who was a familiar face at Player's for three decades, has died, aged 92.

He was born in Nottingham in 1932, and began working in the Player's Radford

factory after completing his National Service, at age 20.

### Proud grandparents

Peter's career with the company spanned several decades. In the 1970s, he was promoted to Foreman at the newly built Horizon factory, which opened in 1972. He really enjoyed this role and continued until his retirement in 1988.

Peter was married to Shirley for 63 years and together they raised two children, John and Heather, and were proud grandparents to two grandchildren, Caitlin-Mae and Cormac.

Outside of work, Peter loved to travel and enjoyed many trips to the USA, visiting 40 different states. He spent much of his retirement enjoying the sun, and took frequent holidays with his family.

Peter remained in good health throughout his retirement and kept in touch with many of his friends from work. He was a regular at the Player's Recreation Centre, where he loved to dance and also regularly attended IMPAC meetings.

"He loved his career with Player's, and he really valued the time he spent at the Rec, catching up with friends and former colleagues," said Shirley.

The deaths are reported, as at 31 January 2025, of the following retired employees:

### HEAD OFFICE AND ITL

Shirley May Clark, 89;  
Peter John Cleeves, 74;  
Kenneth Dover, 88;  
Richard Brian Fishenden, 80;  
Ronald McCulloch Fisher, 78;  
Janet Gabrielle Gardner, 91;  
Peter Matthews, 88;  
Noel John Roy, 85;  
Catherine Whittles, 61;  
Philip John Williams, 73.

### WD & HO WILLS

Margaret Anderson, 92;  
Anna Bird, 93;  
Michael William Bolitho, 80;  
Colin Broadhurst, 86;  
Brenda Lee Gordon Cobb, 77;  
Beryl Mary Coombes, 94;  
Mary Ann Forsyth Dawson, 95;  
Elizabeth Ann Delap, 76;  
George Dunbar, 89;  
Donald Garnet Gill, 90;  
Maureen Ann Glasgow, 77;  
Rodney Herbert Gough, 92;  
Mavis Hatter, 89;  
Richard John Hillier, 77;  
Gilbert Isom, 92;  
Mary May Kates, 91;  
Annette King, 78;  
Victor Michael Legrix, 64;  
Patricia Irene Lovell, 84;  
Thomas Lynn, 78;  
Kathleen McAndrew, 93;  
Joyce Mitchell, 94;  
John Murray, 85;  
George Nobbs, 93;  
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Valerie Margaret O'Conner, 69;  
Arthur John Page, 88;  
Eileen Parsons, 81;  
Malcolm Reid Paul, 95;  
Joan Elsie Payne, 89;

Keith Graham Purnell, 78;  
Christine Ann Ryan, 78;  
Keith John George Simmons, 93;  
Ernest Jack Taylor, 105;  
Margaret Sheila Tennear, 84;  
Sylvia Elizabeth Treherne, 93;  
James Winning Wallace, 84;  
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Raymond George Noble Wheeler, 92;  
Gordon Royston Winfield, 95;  
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John Hutton Beresford, 86;  
Lillian Daisy Bowry, 98;  
Carole Ann Chapman, 80;  
Roy Coupe, 77;  
Laura May Gerrow, 93;  
Edward Jeffrey Gough, 73;  
Hannah Jane Graham, 86;  
Yvonne Reid Grant, 85;  
Shirley Ann Hawkins, 89;  
Lewis Harold Hayball, 90;  
Mary Veronica Hislop, 84;  
Graham Frederick Howell, 80;  
Satira Howell, 97;  
Albert Ivatt, 88;  
Deborah Kirk, 92;  
Mavis Long, 91;  
Anne Gwendoline Mann, 85;  
Alan James McCubbine, 76;  
Lawrence Offiler, 90;  
David Ronald Osborn, 77;  
David Edward Page, 84;  
Janet May Preston, 91;  
Enid Ermeta Sinclair, 88;  
Cecile Marjorie Smith, 80;  
Peter Spencer, 92;  
George Starling, 88;  
Andrew John Charles Thorpe, 81;  
John William Tomlin, 93;  
Gary Tomlinson, 64;  
Denis Walker, 91;  
Sheila Walker, 85;  
Barrie Weatherbed, 87;

Samuel Wright, 98;  
Elizabeth Hewitt Wyllie, 92.

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Lillian Henney, 90;  
Patricia Sweeney, 89;  
Robert Walker, 87;  
Frank Wood Willis, 87.

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### FINLAY & CO

Brian Shaw, 90.

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### ROBERT FLETCHER & SON

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### SINCLAIR COLLIS

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Maureen Shipley, 71;  
Daphne Spain, 80;  
Rhoda Jane Thomson, 86;  
Marjorie Woods, 92.

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John Ernest Evans, 87;  
Iris June Knill, 92;  
Shirley Rose Mills, 90;  
Edward George Parry, 81;  
James Emanuel Patterson, 90;  
Brian Colin Pereira, 80;  
Kennedy Anthony Sheehy, 89;  
Jean Mildred Mary Williams, 99.

### IMPERIAL FOODS LIMITED

**HEAD OFFICE**  
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Dennis Crooks, 96;  
Michael Anthony Dodd, 82;  
Margaret Elizabeth Holmes, 91;  
Harold Nix, 93;

Frederick Tyson, 80;  
Brian Whitehead, 87.

### CHIPMUNK

Joan Barr Pryke, 78.

### GOLDEN WONDER

Elaine Ann Whitfield, 66.

### ROSS FOODS

Vera Evelyn Kay Allison, 96;  
John William Burgess, 89;  
Margaret Rae Coton, 80;  
David Ekins, 75;  
Mary Gamble, 93;  
James Hopkinson, 80;  
Brian Langsdale, 84;  
Margaret Maxted, 95;  
Mary McCarthy, 101;  
John Christopher Millen, 71;  
Eric John Waters, 88;  
Patricia Ann White, 83.

### SMEDLEY-HP FOODS

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Ruth Pauline Banister, 90;  
Ronald Arthur Barden, 96;  
Olive Irene Cooper, 98;  
Alan Frederick Greener-Smith, 86;  
Barbara Florence Jones, 92;  
Sonny Mohammed, 73;  
Sheila Joan Pirrie, 85;  
Eric Plaxton, 71;  
Albert Frederick Silk, 83.

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.*

Former Wills Newcastle employee, **Margaret Storey**, has received an MBE in the New Year Honours List in recognition of her work with disadvantaged children in Nicaragua.



◀ ▲ Margaret with some of the children she works with for six months every year in Bluefields, Nicaragua

# MARGARET'S WORK GIVES A CHANCE TO MANY

**F**ORMER WILLS Newcastle employee **Margaret Storey** has been awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours List for services to the local community.

She has worked with Seed International Fund Trust (SIFT), a Christian charity which supports disadvantaged children and families in Nicaragua, Central America, for over 16 years.

Known locally as Miss Margaret, she spends six months of the year working in Bluefields, a city on the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua, helping to provide access to education and healthcare. Her work with SIFT has helped create opportunities for hundreds of children, particularly through a school and university sponsorship programme that has allowed young people to pursue further education.

Margaret's trips to Nicaragua are self-funded, and she also fundraises to pay for projects, such as building wells, providing medication and feeding the homeless in the village.

Every year when she returns to

Newcastle, Margaret hosts meetings and coffee mornings with presentations to show supporters how the money is being used in the community.

"I believe it is what I'm meant to do, and I'll keep doing it as long as I'm able," said Margaret, 76.

## New Year Honours List


Margaret's MBE nomination was put forward by the Chair of SIFT's board of directors, and she was made aware of the award just three weeks before the New Year Honours List announcement when she received a phone call – having missed the initial email notification.

Despite spending much of the year in Nicaragua, she plans to return to the UK for the ceremony and hopes to attend with her two children and two grandchildren.

"...I'll keep doing it as long as I'm able!"

Margaret joined Wills in 1964 as a costing and production control clerk based in the Newcastle factory. Her job involved calculating the tobacco duty owed based on the amount of tobacco bales brought into the factory each week.



"The duty fees would often amount to nearly half a million pounds, so I would have to be privately chauffeured to the Customs and Excise Office to deliver the cheque," said Margaret, who worked for the company for eight years.

Looking ahead, Margaret plans to settle in Newcastle when she feels she is no longer able to travel to Nicaragua. She remains committed to staying active in her community where she is already involved with two local foodbanks, visits housebound elderly residents and participates in church activities. 

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