

THE GRASSHOPPER PENSIONERS' CLUB

MARTINS BANK

Website: www.martinsbank.co.uk

© gut informiert!

SECRETARY: David Baldwin, Lower Windle, Windle Royd Lane, Warley, HX2 7LY.

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CHAIRMAN: Bernard Lovewell

TREASURER: Robert Bunn

WELFARE OFFICER: Susan Sutcliffe



Christmas 2021 Edition

IN THIS EDITION:

LONDON, NORTHERN
AND LIVERPOOL LUNCHES

WERE YOU THERE?

HEAD OFFICE BUILDING
UPDATE AND MORE!

52 YEARS ON, THERE ARE STILL



NEWS FROM OUR LUNCHES

LONDON
MANCHESTER
BINGLEY
LIVERPOOL

is included in the Appendix to this edition.

As the Committee of YOUR CLUB, it is our wish that as many of you as possible are able to attend at least one Club function every year. With this in mind, we are considering that, in addition to our usual Lunches in London, Liverpool, Manchester and West Yorkshire, perhaps functions, not necessarily a lunch, possibly afternoon tea, could be arranged in the following locations during 2022:

BIRMINGHAM **BOURNEMOUTH**
COLCHESTER **EASTBOURNE**
EXETER **PORTSMOUTH**

and are always open to suggestions for alternative locations for the reason stated above. Will you please let the Club Secretary know if you would consider attending any such event or perhaps suggest an alternative location for which a response slip has been included at the bottom of the 'Lunches Supplement'? As you will appreciate, any event must always be subject to an appropriate level of support from you, our members.

MEMBERS WITH WHOM WE HAVE LOST CONTACT

For whatever reason, we have lost contact with the following members, who used to receive their Newsletters by Royal Mail deliveries and wonder if anyone can help to identify their current addresses which will enable us to resume our 'Normal Service'? Should anyone have any information at all then could I ask them to advise me by whatever method they feel most comfortable? As usual, my contact details are contained in the 'header' on Page 1.

Mrs A Brain Mr JH Collins
Mrs June Foster Mr Roy Foster
Mrs Carol Gill Mr Phillip Gill
Mr H Grice Mr NCR Lee
Mr B Woods

In addition, I also have some email addresses which have been corrupted and any assistance with identifying the correct address will, again, be appreciated. To comply with GDPR I have only provided the first part of the email address:

I had intended to list of email addresses in this section but my 'IT' gremlins have struck again!

LADY and NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following former colleagues who have recently registered their membership of our Club following the request in the previous Newsletter. Their maiden names, by which you may remember them, are in brackets:

LADY MEMBERS

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Ann Atkinson (WINCKLES) | Meryl Nichols (JONES) |
| Rosemary Davis (FARREN) | Pat Raymond (TIDY) |
| Iris Elizabeth Ellis (BROWN) | Pamela Sephton (GILKES) |
| Gail Elizabeth Hamilton (COOPER) | Jane Waters (PEARCE) |
| Janet Jones (TREADWELL) | Beryl White (DAVIS) |
| Jan Kippax (MARSH) | Sheila Winckles (MAYERS) |

If you worked for Martins before your marriage to an existing male member then please let me know by whatever means you feel appropriate.

NEW MEMBERS

I'm afraid that it's 'APOLOGY TIME' again as I have just realised that I have omitted to welcome our former colleagues as members of our elite Club for quite some time. There could



also working at **University** branch before joining the **Computer Conversion** teamworking out of **Juxon House**. 'Pat' Raymond (nee Tidy) was a 'late entrant' starting her Martins career at **Bexley**

branch, as a shorthand typist, in 1956 when **Mr SE Lawrence** was the manager. Pat continues: *I was the shorthand typist but my duties also included some clerical work. This was where I met Peter who worked at Crayford branch. In May 1959, I was transferred to Sidcup branch,*



where no duties other than shorthand typing, were expected of me. Mr. CC Richardes was the manager at time and I remember him as a fatherly figure. I left in August 1960 just prior to getting married, and look back on those

days with very many happy memories. Regrettably now, due to advancing years, Peter and I are no longer able to enjoy taking part in the Grasshopper Pensioners' Club activities.



Pamela Sephton (nee Gilkes)

started her career in 1956 at **Kensington, Liverpool** branch before transferring to **Wilmslow** following her marriage. **Jane Waters (nee Pearce)** *My father was Alan Pearce, who started working for Martins before the Second World War and, after returning from service in the Royal Navy, he entered the London Trust Company office in Gracechurch Street before becoming the Deputy Manager of the London Trustee Investment and Income Tax Department (West End) in Regent Street (left). I followed my father into the bank, beginning my career at Bromley branch under Mr Edward Cook and then moved on to Orpington branch where I met Peter. I left the bank when we married in 1963. Beryl White (nee Davis) writes: I joined Martins in 1953 as a shorthand typist at Kingsway branch where I met Don (White) but, whilst bumping into Ted Beany (right), one Saturday morning, I was temporarily moved to Waterloo Place and then to Chief Overseas in Gracechurch Street on 'Collections' under Mr Wagland (left) and Mr Jaggard for my last 6 months, leaving in April 1958 on my marriage to Don. Finally; Sheila Dorothy Winckles (nee Mayers) worked in Liverpool City Office.*

I hope that this is just the start for our previously 'invisible' lady members, who are married to their existing member husbands, and look forward to receiving more responses from all such ladies in the near future.

THEN AND NOW IN WELLINGBOROUGH

I recently had the need to visit **Wellingborough**



and took the opportunity to check the location of our former branch in the Northamptonshire town, which had only been opened in August 1967. You can check what has changed in the intervening 54 years; very little if the truth be known. OK, the door has been repositioned but the position where **MARTINS BANK** once proudly stood is clearly evident from the poorly-rendered area above the front windows of the building.

Our Thanks must also go to the eagle-eyed



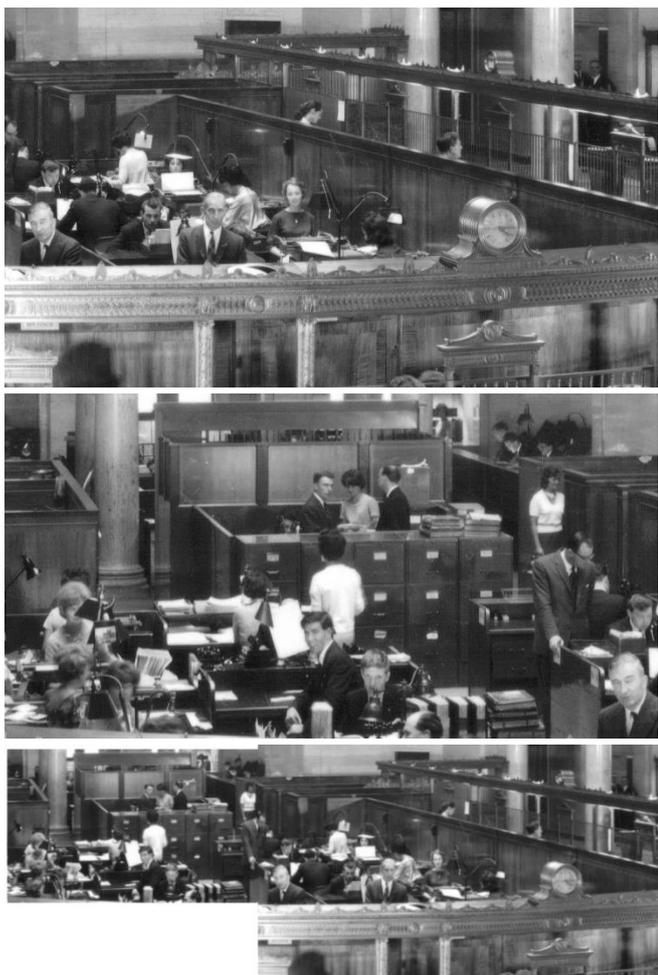
Robert Montgomery's photograph, following the closure of our former **Woolton** branch and the removal of the Barclays signage, confirms that our name is once again present in **Woolton** village. (Now; left; Before, right).

'And now, for something completely different...'

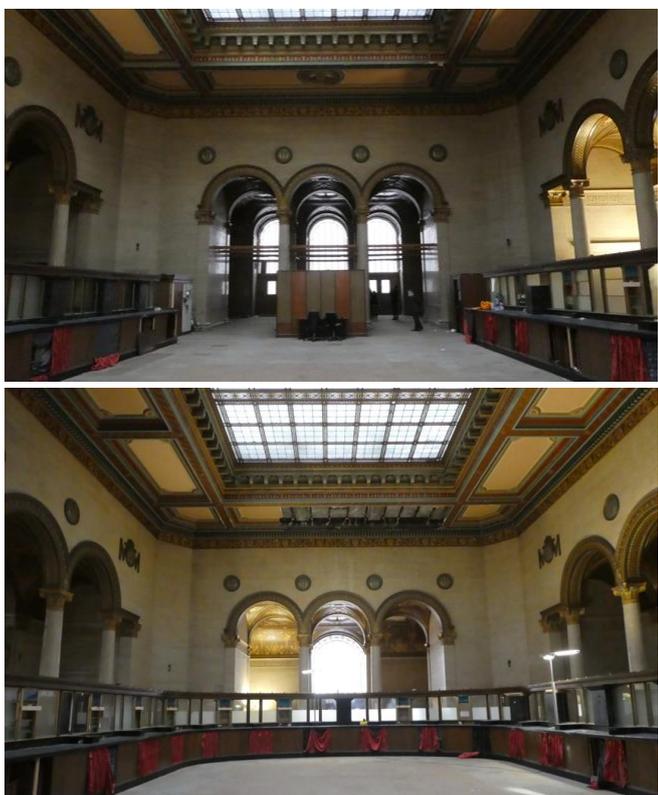
INSIDE THE HORSESHOE

Two images of 'The Horseshoe' in **Liverpool City Office** with staff completing their day's work. Reminiscent of the clock in New York's Grand Central station, the time on ours was 4.15 pm. Although the date is unknown they have the appearance of being taken in the early 60s and I wonder **if anyone can identify any of our former colleagues featured in either photograph** as well as the date on which they were taken? If you are reading the 'pdf' version then the photographs can be enlarged to assist identification. I have

managed to 'stitch' the photographs together to form a single image.



AND NOW ON FRIDAY, 10TH DECEMBER 2021



What a sight for sore eyes! Peacefully preserved in time and far from the frenetic, yet controlled,

place that those of us who ever walked through the front entrance loved and will never forget. However, you might have noticed that the ceiling above the main entrance is not as it should be. Unfortunately, as the result on a long-standing but unnoticed leak in a toilet, water ingressed into the ceiling and caused it to collapse. No need to worry though, as part of the restoration, the damaged ceiling elements have been saved and will be used to ensure that a faithful reconstruction will be completed. Everything that could have been damaged (such as the clocks above the Horseshoe grilles have been safely stored) to be refurbished before being reinstalled in their former position as part of the restoration project.

CAN YOU HELP JONATHAN SNOWDEN IMPROVE THE MARTINS BANK WEBSITE?

You can do so by digging-out, for scanning, any of the tickets or programmes to some of the many performances staged by the Bank's Operatic/Dramatic societies, that you might still have in your possession. Jonathan is currently compiling the most comprehensive list possible of performances across the different groups:

- 1: *Society of the Arts Music*
- 2: *Society of the Arts Drama*
- 3: *Martins Bank Operatic Society*
- 4: *The Argosy Players*
- 5: *The ArgFor Players*
- 6: *The Cicala Players*
- 7: *The Manchester Players*

There are quite a lot of programmes in the archive, so Jonathan will produce a list showing which he has and which are still needed. He is currently up to 1960, and already there are about 100 plays operas or other performances!

'MOBILE BRANCHES' (THEN AND NOW)

Recently, I was intrigued to learn that as



Barclays branches close that, in order to continue 'customer service', new 'mobile branches' have been introduced. To coin a phrase; *'these are no ordinary 'mobile branches', they are Barclays' 'mobile branches'*. Unfortunately, unlike our truly 'Mobile

Branches', their Barclays equivalents simply house a Personal Banker whilst, for 'banking services' local Post Offices continue to accept cheque deposits and branches, if you are fortunate to live near one, cash. As we are all aware; *Martins* (did) *go to extremes to be helpful*' and *what could be more helpful than*



providing a full banking service from a truly mobile branch? Brian Pearse (left), detailed his experiences when manning one of our mobile branches in a **Martins Magazine** article. (Sir) Brian was, in 1957, one of the staff chosen to

help run the mobile service on Kirkby and Croxteth housing estates and in our magazine wrote about his time with mobile branches:

During the war, large parts of central Liverpool were bombed. Very many houses were old anyway and few had inside toilets and so it was decided to build new towns in Kirkby and Croxteth. The remnants of the houses in Liverpool were demolished. Huge numbers of houses were built and also schools and, surprisingly, churches but hardly any shops. Martins decided that a mobile service was the answer until permanent branches could be built and so we started the Kirkby and Croxteth arrangement, Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings in Kirkby and afternoons in Croxteth. Platforms were built on both sites



with appropriate notices. "Head Office" for us was Clubmoor Branch (left) and with a clerk (Tom Gilkes, who now lives near

me) and a driver, we commenced operations. The police had a sweepstake to see who could guess the date when we would be raided but that never happened.

I then moved to Liverpool District Office, and over the next couple of years, Kirkby branch was opened and both services were withdrawn. As far as I can recollect, we did not open a branch in Croxteth. When the driver was on holiday, I had to drive the vehicle which frightened the life out of me!

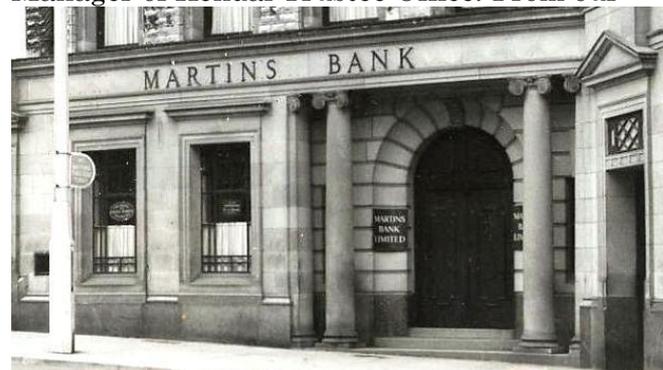
For members who have internet access, the following link will take you to our 'Mobile Branches' page with photographs of our staff who manned them:

www.martinsbank.co.uk/Mobile Branches.htm

OBITUARY

JOHN LANE: 1951 saw John become a *Martian*'

joining the Bank in London and had completed Part I of his Institute of Bankers examinations that year, rapidly followed by Part II in 1952. Transferred to our Trustee Division, John had completed his Part II Trustee exams in 1957! London Trustee in 1958 and appointed Pro Manager in 1961 1964 Trust Controller at our Middlesborough Trustee Office and 1966, Manager of Kendal Trustee Office. From our



website, Kendal is described: *By 1969 Kendal has one of the largest Trustee and Investment departments in the North, situated on the floors above the branch at 9 Highgate. This is something of a coup for Kendal branch which already acts as banker to a number of large national companies. The area also benefits from a considerable amount of local wealth, so immediate friendly advice on taxation and investment are just the right services to offer here.*



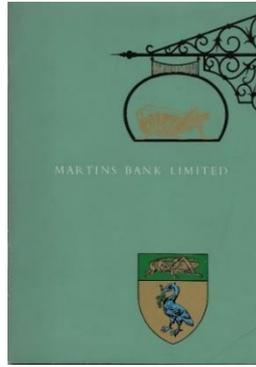
Stephen Lane, John's son writes: *'He was involved with the early Pools winners and attended some presentations as a representative of the Bank. He always told us the story about confusing Bruce Forsyth (seen above with the infamous Viv Nicholson of 'Spend, Spend, Spend' fame) for the winner and mistakenly congratulating on his win. I presume it was at this one on the attached photo where they are holding a Martins Bank cheque.'*

TONGUE-IN-CHEEK (OR MARTINS) SENSE OF HUMOUR?

Deryk Ingham was the manager of our Bingley branch in December 1969 and, as anyone with whom he worked will understand, Deryk's (extremely) dry sense of humour. I



have re-discovered what we will all remember him following his son, Ralph, sending me Deryk's copy of the 1963 booklet, produced by the bank to commemorate the 400th Anniversary of its founding. Although Deryk presented it to Charles Abbott, the manager of Barclays, Bingley (which was directly across Bingley Main



Street), it would appear that, following Deryk's short move (across Main Street) on the merger of the two branches, his comments were not appreciated by Charles and the booklet found its way back into Deryk's possession when he assumed his new managerial position. If you are

unable to read Deryk's handwritten comments, they are: **'Caveat Emptor. This is the best buy you've ever had!!'** and signed: **D Ingham**. Dare I say that the comment (about Barclays' purchase of Martins) was quite prophetic to say the least? It would appear that Charles didn't share Deryk's (or the Martins') sense of humour as the booklet was left in Barclays' Bingley branch following Charles' departure for pastures new.

FROM OUR LONDON LUNCH

'Grasshopper' Speech by Robin Holland-Martin
in the Union Jack Club on Thursday,
25th November 2021

Chairman: *many thanks for that introduction: I am honoured to be included in today's gathering. I'm really an interloper. But David Baldwin accepted that my short internship in Martins in 1959 does allow me to qualify. And certainly, my heart is in the right place. I started young, when I was shipped off from Liverpool to the USA as an evacuee with some of my family in June 1940. A few years ago, I was amused to find that the Cunard's passenger list showed I was 11 months old and my home address was: **Martins Bank, Liverpool**; even **Water Street** was not deemed to be necessary! Martins and Cunard had a very close working relationship, of course. And I have been involved in the bank's archives and the checking of some aspects of the bank's history over the years.*

*I am really delighted to see everyone here: **the flame of the Grasshopper is burning bright, fanned by all your memories of an exceptional company: a strong team spirit, a great sense of loyalty and with a warm heart. It brought the best out in people.***

Here's an historical story and a few follow-up remarks:

*It was a foggy wintry Friday near closing in **No 68 Lombard Street**, in the mid 1800's.*

The cashiers were tallying up the coins to balance the books when a stranger came through the door, walked up to the counter (a simple long beard at that time) and grabbed a money bag and then ran out and disappeared into the foggy gloom.

*A successful robbery well executed, **BUT** the robber had failed in his planning regarding one key element: he had not studied the habits of the senior cashier on Fridays in his lunch break; each week the cashier strode along **Lombard Street**, giving scarcely a nod to **Glyn Mills** and he certainly ignored the **Spread Eagle** on the last corner. He skipped across **Gracechurch Street**, into **Fenchurch Street** (I only mention those streets to remind Grasshopper Pensioners of branches where they might have worked!), and then he turned first left into **Lime Street** and plunged into the throng of **Leadenhall Market**. There he bought a pair of plump chickens, and selected some spuds, onions and a rasher or two of bacon. That was a heavy load and he had no basket, so he pulled out a hessian bag from his pocket and returned to **No 68**, pleased with the food he was providing for his family's Sunday dinner. He placed the bag under the counter, but near to closing time he placed it on the actual counter, in order not to forget it when he started for home.*

Yes, you've all guessed it! The thief found he had stolen some food, not sovereigns, in a heavy swag bag!

SO, what was fall out? I trust that:

My forebears were totally forgiving and did not give the cashier a wiggling for misusing bank property in the shape of a money bag!

And that the bank partners were delighted regarding the very low value lost and therefore they slipped two or three florins to the cashier, so that he could replace his lost Sunday dinner and add some extra morsels for his growing family.

BUT a week later the staff arrived at work to find a gleaming brass grille erected along the counter, possibly the first in the City of London. So that is how history is made and traditions evolve.

Maybe one of you faced an armed hold-up in your day, and this was followed by a bullet-proof glass screen a week or two later!

This story is a long-winded way of stating that our memories are so important:

All of us are tending to live longer;

Covid-19 has caused such a dislocation in our lives, and it is even more important now for us all to meet up with friends and relations and nurture human contact;

We must aim to leave amusing written descriptions of our working lives in our day;

Memories of the 1940's onwards, even before, are of real interest both to us and to subsequent generations;

My early memories date from say 1945, which is over 75 years ago, and if I extrapolate that length of period backwards from 1945 we get back to 1870; that is nearly the era of that first brass grill I just mentioned! If we regard the Victorian era as a very different world, then just think what today's young must wonder about what we, the old wrinklies, got up to in our early lives. We must describe to them what we did get up to! And the regular Grasshopper Newsletter is a great vehicle for carrying those descriptions.

And we were the lucky generation?

Tough times (all that rationing and restricted life during WWII and for 15 years or so afterwards) on low salaries, but we had lots of laughter at work in those disciplined days, but plenty of fun woven into those working days; they included Saturdays but the hours per week were less than many are required to work today.

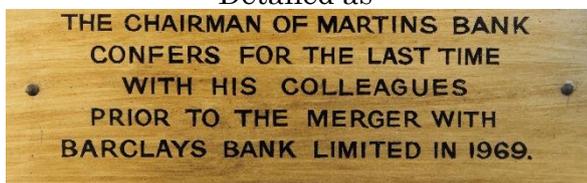
Nowadays, some of the bankers are paid huge sums but they have miserable jobs trying to run unmanageable businesses - there is much less job satisfaction, in my view.

So, my strong plea is: Keep the Grasshopper Pensioners' Club going: nurture the key players who battle away to 'keep the show on the road', so that the Club remains vibrant and a conduit for good company with lots of 'memory lane' stimulus. Your stream of stories is, in fact, creating key social history for future generations to marvel at.

Thank you all very much for having me and I would like to end by proposing a toast: 'To the memory of Martins Bank and the Grasshopper'.

YET MORE INFORMATION REQUESTED

Detailed as:



The portrait by renowned Liverpool artist, **Edward Irvine Halliday**. Born in Garston in 1902. He first attended Liverpool College of Art and continued his studies attending life drawing classes at Académie Colarossi between 1922 and 1923; the Royal College of Art (1923–1925), and the British School in Rome (1925–1928). He was awarded the Prix de Rome for Decorative Painting in 1925. (Source Wikipedia) However, no



L to R: Sir John Brocklebank, Sir Douglas Crawford, **Unknown**, Sir Cuthbert Clegg, Denis Maxwell, **Unknown**.

mention of the above portrait can be found. Colin Skelton has provided some names but can anyone provide those that are missing? Even more-important, does anyone know where the picture is currently hanging?

DOES ANYONE REMEMBER

AUDREYJENNINGS nee BLACKSTOCK?

I recently received a letter from Tom Gilkes in which Tom wrote: *I spoke with you a little time ago with a number of general comments and have now gleaned some information if it is of interest to you.*

I discovered from their son, Martin, who has lived in Australia for over 40 years, that Audrey Jennings, widow of JH Jennings, General Manager, who died in 1997, was a former member of Martins' staff as Audrey Blackstock. Audrey was on the staff of Wallasey Village, Liscard and Seacombe branches in the late 40s, early 50s. Although it seems unlikely, but still possible, that some of her contemporaries are still alive but, as a matter of record, she died aged 98 in November 2020.

Editor: Should any member remember Audrey Blackstock and/or Jennings will they please contact me with their memories of her? *(To be continued in the Spring 2022 edition).*

MORE, RECENT DISCOVERIES!

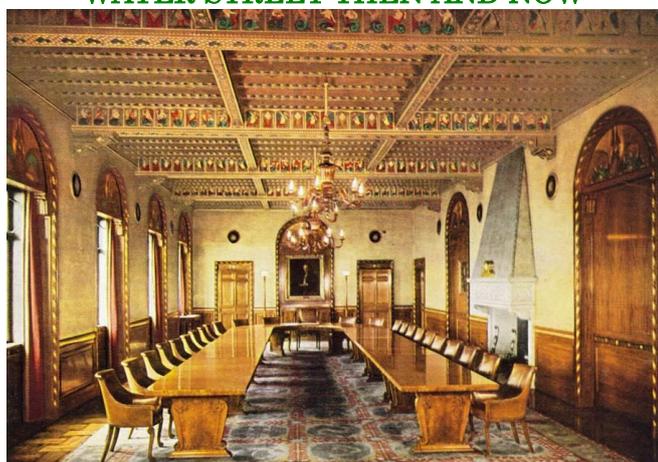
Another letter from Tom (Gilkes) brought with it photographs of one of our Mobile Branches and more memories of those long-gone happy days. From this photograph, it would appear that Tom

had been attempting to disperse the young 'scallies' who had been targeting our mobile branch in Croxteth during the winter of 1958.



The other person in this photograph is the (immaculate) driver cum messenger **John Holliwell** (I hope that is correct).

WATER STREET THEN AND NOW



The Board Room 'Then' (above) and 'Now' (below) with its contents safely stored;



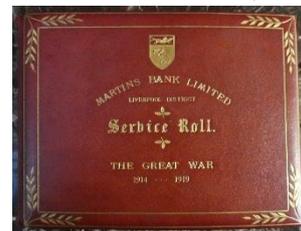
In the top photograph it is difficult to appreciate the vibrant colours in the arch of the niche in which a portrait used to hang. However, as those of us who were fortunate enough to gain access to our building can confirm, they have not suffered at all over the intervening 90 years, as is evident from the above photograph.

At long-last, our magnificent Grade II* Listed Head Office building is in safe hands and will be restored to its former glory and its original use by its new owners 'Kinrise Limited'. The following link will take you to their website:

[\(Company - Kinrise | creating spaces that inspire and enable\)](#)

which is well-worthwhile visiting and registering your interest in the Water Street project.

On 10th December, we were also privileged to see the Liverpool District's 'Roll of Honour' from the First World War and understand that every day a new page was turned, presumably by one of our Messengers and, yet again, wonder if this can be confirmed by any of our members?



Does anyone remember the original carvings in the frieze surrounding the light-well being replaced with

replaced with

Barclays' Eagle roundels and the reason for the originals being replaced?



Barclays' Eagle roundels and the reason for the originals being replaced?

FINALLY, WE HOPE THAT AS MANY OF YOU AS POSSIBLE WILL BE ABLE TO ATTEND OUR FUNCTIONS DURING 2022

LONDON: Thursday, 24th November

MANCHESTER: Wednesday, 7th December

LIVERPOOL: Friday, 9th December

Further dates and locations will be advised but will be subject to your support.

OUR BEST WISHES FOR GOOD HEALTH TO ALL OF OUR MEMBERS AND A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR.

© Jonathan Snowden



PLEASE CONTINUE TO: 'SPREAD THE WORD', PROVIDE ME WITH YOUR MEMORIES AND ENCOURAGE AS MANY OF YOUR FORMER COLLEAGUES TO BECOME MEMBERS OF OUR ELITE CLUB

2021 LUNCHESES SUPPLEMENT
LONDON, THURSDAY 25TH NOVEMBER



Left to Right: Bill Webb; Robin Holland-Martin; Marilyn Lovewell; Valerie Tuskin; Brian Hubble; Dee Mutter; Dan Butler; Pat Styant; Robert Bunn; Joe Edwards; Bernard Lovewell; Carmell Bradley; John Charlton; Pam Charlton; Patricia O'Brien; ?; Sue Sutcliffe; Michael Widdup; Neil Mathews; Arthur Rowe; ?; Ros Edwards; Bryan Barnes; Pat Wilson; Alan Bradley; David Baldwin; Nick Kingan; Barrie Brookes; Ken Richardson; ?.

Please accept my apologies if I have omitted, or mis-named any of our former colleagues.

MANCHESTER, WEDNESDAY 1ST DECEMBER



Left to Right: Gerry Carey, Colin Mitchell, Michael Darlington, Hugh Oldham, Michael Horwood, Alan Tunna, Gail Hamilton, Tony Higgs, Ian Cooper, George Hamilton, Alan Thomond, David Holt, Guy Taylor, Barbara Hannah, Brian Cook, Susan Benfield, David Pinnell, Graham Tickle, Christine Cain, Vivian Liddiard (obscured), Margaret Ashworth, Roger Smithson, Maureen Walkden, Denise Reid, Ken Quirk, Kathleen Pattinson, Maureen Thomas and Avril Lawson (in wheelchair).



THE GRASSHOPPER PENSIONERS' CLUB
MARTINS
BANK

Website: www.martinsbank.co.uk

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After completing this slip, please cut along the above line and either return it with your function and location preference(s) for future Lunch locations or email it to me at: grasshoppers@btinternet.com

BINGLEY, WEDNESDAY 8TH DECEMBER



Left to Right: David Baxter, Peter Hole, Peter Helliwell, David Baldwin, Pam Pennington, Roger Overend, Brenda Northrop, Jean Overend, Maureen Cooper, Elsie Altass, Jeremy Bauer, John Robertshaw, Lynn Pckles, Sue Sutcliffe, Barry Kay.

LIVERPOOL, FRIDAY 10TH DECEMBER



Left to Right: David Moore, Tom McBride, John Robertson, Ian Coulthard, Janice Jones, Malcolm Jones, Ken Quirk, Mike Cadwallader, Sue Sutcliffe, Barry Hopkins, Bruce Allen, Sheila Brown, Joan Jones, David Baldwin, Sue Williamson. **Seated:** Peter Whitehead, Terry Mudd, Myra Sutton, Peter Starkey, Ann Ashcroft, Lesley Crombie.

***Please delete whichever is inappropriate**

I am happy with the four current main locations of London, West Yorkshire, Manchester, Liverpool *

As I am unable to travel to any of the four main Lunch locations and would, if at all possible, subject to sufficient support being available, prefer to attend a Grasshopper Pensioners' Club Lunch*/Buffet*/Afternoon Tea* in, or close to:

.....
Name and Post Code:
.....