

THE GRASSHOPPER PENSIONERS' CLUB



**MARTINS
BANK** 

Website: www.martinsbank.co.uk

© gut informiert!

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CHAIRMAN: Bernard Lovewell

TREASURER: Robert Bunn

WELFARE OFFICER: Susan Sutcliffe



DESPITE COVID-19 (AND ACCELERATED BRANCH CLOSURES) WE'RE STILL HERE



LUNCHESES UPDATE.

I imagine that it will not come as a surprise but, as the saying goes; *'it is difficult for anyone to hit a moving target'*, which is what we are attempting to do and will continue to do. Whilst we realise how much everyone looks forward to our lunches and meeting their former colleagues we can and will ensure everyone that we will all meet again when there is no longer any risk from contracting COVID-19.

Ken Quirk has confirmed that all cheques which he has received in respect of our now-postponed London and Liverpool lunches have been destroyed and cannot nor will not be banked. I can also confirm that every cheque that I have received for the December, Northern Powerhouse lunch in Keighley have also been destroyed. Reservations for the various re-arranged lunches will be circulated with the last 2020 Newsletter or first Newsletter of 2021 when up-to-date knowledge of the COVID-19 situation will be known.

A CHANGE TO MORE LOCAL LUNCHESES?

The COVID-19 Pandemic has brought into focus the fact that none of us is getting any younger and that travelling distances to central locations

can be difficult. Consequently, we hope that more local lunches or afternoon teas can and will be arranged. But it is up to you, our members. Don't worry about the organisation; we will take care of that, the only thing that we need is your continued support.

It was hoped that a lunch in Exeter could be arranged for our south west members and their guests but the pandemic put paid to that.

THE CURRENT SITUATIONS ARE:

London:

Once again, I am afraid to report that the November Lunch has had to be postponed as a result of the pandemic and social-distancing. The Lunch was going to take place on Thursday, 4th March 2021 at The Union Jack Club but, with the current situation we have had to postpone it to **Thursday 4th June 2021**, with reservation forms being included in a future Newsletter.

Keighley

(for the second Northern Powerhouse Lunch):

As is the case with everywhere in the UK, who knows what will happen in the future? But whatever happens, please be assured that we will meet again! Social distancing measures will be implemented should they still be required when we meet and are detailed later in this Newsletter.

Liverpool:

Despite the fact that the date has been revised twice, with the current situation in Liverpool, not to mention the rest of the country including the majority of West Yorkshire the revised date, reservation slip and deadline will be detailed later in this Newsletter.

OUR LIVERPOOL LUNCH VENUE

Having mentioned Liverpool, here is some information about the venue which you might find of interest:

**The Hargreaves Building, Chapel Street
1859 Grade II Listed**

It is dated 1859 and was designed by the local architect Sir James Picton and was designed for the banker Sir William Brown as his headquarters. The name Hargreaves was the

surname of Brown's son-in-law who ran his Liverpool business. The building continued to be the headquarters of the Brown Shipley Bank until 1888, when it moved to London. It continued to be used as offices until the 1980s. Following the Toxteth riots of 1981, when their building in Upper Parliament Street was destroyed, the Liverpool Racquet Club was looking for new premises. At this time, the lease for the Hargreaves Building was available for sale, and the trustees of the Club negotiated a 150 year lease from Liverpool City Council. The building was converted for the Club, and it reopened on 20th May 1985. It included a dining room, bar, and lounge, a billiards room, two squash courts, a small swimming pool, a gym and changing facilities, and rooms for overnight accommodation. By 2001 the membership of the Club had declined and the lease was sold. It has since been converted into a hotel and restaurant named the Racquet Club Hotel and Ziba Restaurant.

UPDATE re WILLIS TOWERS WATSON

The sorry saga continued but has finally been resolved by the son of our former member who writes:

Since producing the previous email:

Exactly two weeks after we know they received all the documentation from me.

I understand the pension money has to be repaid but the fact that they paid it in the first place is down to their inefficiency.

(Editor: Personal references have been omitted for obvious reasons)

Thank you for returning the Personal Information form regarding your late father's pension with the UKRF.

I can confirm we have written out to X in relation to her spouse's pension.

I can confirm that the pension was overpaid after your father's death. This overpayment came to £X, as the Trustee has to claim back this overpayment, we are able to accept the monies via electronic bank transfer to the account details below:

Account Name: Barclays Bank UKRF

Account Number: 9xxxxxx8

Sort Code: 20-69-26

Payment Reference: X***** - 0*****7

I am sorry that you will have to be troubled in this manner, but we have to administer the Scheme in strict accordance with the Rules.

I would be grateful if you could contact us to confirm once payment has been made.

If you have any queries please contact us.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome:

Graham Ellis and **Sheila Brown** who writes:

I left school in July 1962 at age of 16 ½ and started straight away as a Junior at Martins Bank 211 Stanley Rd, Bootle, Liverpool. 20. After training there I then moved to the 99 Stanley Road Branch where I remained until the merger with Barclays Bank in December 1969.

DEATH NOTICES

It is with great sadness that we have to report the deaths of our former colleagues and our condolences go to their families.

Clark, John F on 23rd August 2019 aged 89

Foster, HB

Anthony, Gordon on 8th July 2020 aged 86

Smith, Eric

Webber, DJ

I must offer my sincere apologies but, as a result of a problem with my PC, I only have the details relating to John Clark and Gordon Anthony.

OBITUARY

Iris Clark writes: *My John would have reached his 90th birthday on February 12th last year and we would have celebrated our 60th wedding anniversary on 5th September of that year. Although it was all sad of course we did have a great deal to be grateful for. He had something like the best part of 40 years with Martins and of course Barclays latterly, and always spoke of them with great pride and affection for all the folk who were part of those years.*

He always read your Newsletter with great interest and would entertain me with stories of his connection with the contents.

If you do print the information, I would be grateful to have a copy for our sons, thank you so much and I do hope this doesn't cause you too much bother. Yours sincerely, Iris Clark.

Editor: It certainly is no trouble at all Iris.

LOST COLLEAGUES

Just as the last Newsletter had been printed, **Alan Dengate** wrote:

I wonder whether it is possible to trace a lady that I worked with in the late 1960's?

I worked at Martins Bank in Bruton Street in London at the time and this lady conspired to introduce me to a customer who has now been my wife for over 40 years!

My colleagues' name was Irene Margaret Baker and she started in the bank in 1954 at Chief Foreign and then to other London branches, ending in Bruton Street in 1967.

I don't know where she lived, or even if she married, but my wife and I have never forgotten her.

This is a huge long shot I know, but if you were able to help with this quest in any way it would be really appreciated.

Is anyone able to assist Alan with his search? If you are then please do not hesitate to contact me.

One response to date has been received from the former **Jean Wheeler** who wrote:

*I did work at **Bruton Street** for a number of years and **Irene Baker** was there in securities. As far as I can remember I recall that she lived at home with parent(s)? She wasn't married, She was a quiet, refined sort of lady but you could have a laugh with her. I was only in my early 20s but I thought she was about late 30s/early 40s then, slim with a shoulder length, fair, bob hairstyle. Maybe other staff members from then can help:- **Mike Summersgill** manager, **Clive C Willis** later manager, **Ralph Pearson** (lived in Otford, Kent, left to run a B & B), **John Buckley**, **Geoff Pond**, **Pat ??** secretary from Lancashire or **Alan Swabey** should anyone know of their whereabouts. **Bill Cottrell**, our messenger who would have been able to help but I know he has died. I think we are talking about the same person but a few years previously. **Irene** was first cashier, **Ken Postle** was the manager and **Bob Byles** was the pro manager. **Irene** was definitely **Martins** as I have traced her career from **Chief Foreign** in 1954 and she worked with me when **Bruton Street** was still **Martins!!** There were also lots of female members of staff but they were all much younger *Hope this might help, please let me know if anything comes of this.* **Jean Wheeler** (nee **Taylor**) (nee **Woodhouse**) I was **Woodhouse** then **Taylor** at **Bruton Street**.*

OUR LIVERPOOL COLLEAGUES MIGHT FIND THESE WEBSITES OF PARTICULAR INTEREST

With the nights drawing in again and in case you are not already aware of them, you might find these two websites of interest as they will certainly enable you to take a walk down 'Memory Lane'. Liverpool Picturebook:

www.liverpoolpicturebook.com

where the various Liverpool Post Codes are featured at the top of each page and also InACityLiving:

www.inacityliving.blogspot.com

amongst others. On the InACityLiving site, you will need to click on the Home 'v' which will enable you to scroll through menu in the white box.

POTENTIAL LOCATIONS FOR FUTURE LUNCHESES

With everyone growing older by the day, we believe that we need to ensure that they are made as accessible as possible for everyone and especially those of you who live away from London. This is the reason why, following the demise of Barnsgate Manor Vineyard and Restaurant our London Lunches will continue to be held in central London as all railway lines in England terminate at one of the termini.

However, we have not forgotten our members in the rest of the country and in response to our request for suggestions about potential future venues, Mike Long suggested:

South West of England . Anywhere in Devon , or Dorset would be nice. Maybe Sussex or Hampshire as well.

So, it's over to you; what do our members who live in the South West think about a lunch in Exeter once COVID Lockdown regulations permit?

As you will read later, we will be holding lunches in **Liverpool** and **Keighley** during 2021 and **George Hamilton** will be arranging his **Manchester** Lunch, that's not to say that you cannot have one closer to your location.

Although London is easily reached by train from the south coast and other locations within 100 miles, should you know of any former colleagues closer to another location then please don't hesitate to make contact with me and I will publicise your proposed event in forthcoming Newsletters.

IT WAS SIMPLY GOING TO BE A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE MARTINS BANK BECAME INVOLVED

It's a nod to the shipping lines and the exploited who formed the basis of the bank's wealth.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/extra/3k9u8lh178/Searching_for_my_slave_roots

MEMORIES OF HAPPIER TIMES

from **John Cain**:

Country Department, Lombard Street

Whilst working in Country Department in 1951 I occasionally had to supervise the post which was generally picked up in the evening by postmen from King Edward Street in the City. On a very busy day it was difficult to get the post ready in time. King Edward Street closed on the dot and if you were running late, you had to take the mailsacks outside and call for a taxi to take the post to the Mount Pleasant sorting office which was some way off.

The first time I had to do this when I was in charge of the post (there was a rota), I went with the sack in the taxi to Mount Pleasant. After

delivering the mail I went on with the taxi to catch my train home from Euston.

The following morning, I went into the office of Mr Thrift (!) who at that time was the manager of the clearing department. You had to report to him to claim the expenses of the taxi fare. I told him it had cost me six shillings and sixpence (remember this was 1951).

He looked at me, sat back in his chair, shook his head slowly and said, *"Six and sixpence, hmm? We can't have that. Oh no."*

I was a bit confused because six and sixpence was exactly what it had cost me, and I said so.

Mr Thrift leaned forward. *"Oh, no."* He said again. *"We can't have this. Everyone else claims eight and sixpence."*

As Eric Morecambe used to say: *There's no answer to that!*

Gracechurch Street, Trust Company

The manager of the Trust Company's office in Gracechurch Street when I was there in the late 50s/early 60s was Mr HL Roberts. At that time, we used to get daily visits from Grenfells our allotted stockbrokers and one of the partners would call in occasionally to pick up orders and brief us on what the market was doing at the time.

One day HL came out to me in the office and asked if Mr Wethered, a Grenfells partner, would be coming in. I said, yes, this was his usual day for a visit. HL informed me that, although he had several customers to see, it was "vital" that he saw Mr Wethered. He told me to interrupt him, even if he had clients at the time. When Mr Wethered came in, I said that HL wanted to see him urgently and remarked that it must be important as he had asked me to interrupt him. I knocked on HL's door and went in to see him. At the time he was talking to two customers, a husband and wife, but he immediately apologised to them and rushed out into the office clutching his umbrella.

"Roger! Roger!" he said. *"I'm having terrible trouble with my swing."* Adopting a sporting stance, he began to swing the umbrella like a club. To our amazement, Mr Wethered then conducted a golfing lesson which lasted for about ten minutes.

Apparently, Roger Wethered had been a very famous amateur golfer in his day, winning the Amateur Golf Championship in 1923 and also competing in several Walker Cup matches through the 20s and 30s.

I very much doubt that you'd see characters in the office like HL these days!

GONE AWAY

A Newsletter envelope which was addressed to:

Mr M H Courtenay of Orpington. Does any member know Mr Courtenay or his new address?

OUR HISTORY

I was pleased to receive a letter, about the history of our Club, from **Brian Hubble** (right) in which he wrote:

Having read the Easter edition of the Newsletter, one name caught my eye in the article: 'More Memories from **Pauline Stringer**' included **Peter Cawsey** (left) and **Dick Purkiss** (right) intimated that he



wanted to stand down after ten years as Secretary of the then 'LONDON DISTRICT (GRASSHOPPER) CLUB'. At the Annual General Meeting in March 2000, no one was willing to assume the duties of the Secretary, so the Chairman at the time, Ray Fuller, wrote to all members saying that, without a Secretary, it would be necessary for a resolution to be submitted at the next meeting to dissolve the Club.

Fortunately, a solution was found with the job being split three ways.

Jean Lovering would print and despatch the Newsletters. **John Pearce** would arrange the Annual Dinners and **Peter Cawsey** would fill the role of Membership Secretary, which position he held until the 2003 Annual General Meeting when **Ros Edwards** took over.

At that meeting it was also decided to leave out of the name of the Club: "LONDON DISTRICT", so the Club was now:

"THE GRASSHOPPER PENSIONERS' CLUB".

So we owe him a vote of thanks for keeping the Club alive and which is now open to all ex-members of Martins staff.

And memories:

From 1955 until after the takeover, I worked at Oxford Circus, London branch with, among others, **Bob Bunn**, **Bas Bush**, **Dan Butler**, **John Peters** and **Ray Waterson**.

We were the main bankers of Great Universal Stores who paid a dividend twice a year when our clearing was swelled, every day for about a week, with up to 10,000 Dividend Warrants which, with the normal clearing, had to be listed, called back from the words to figures. Before 'posting' the warrants had to be 'serialised' and finally stamped 'PAID'.

At these times, Staff Department found us 5 to 6 persons on relief. So over the years I got to know quite a few of the London staff. At some

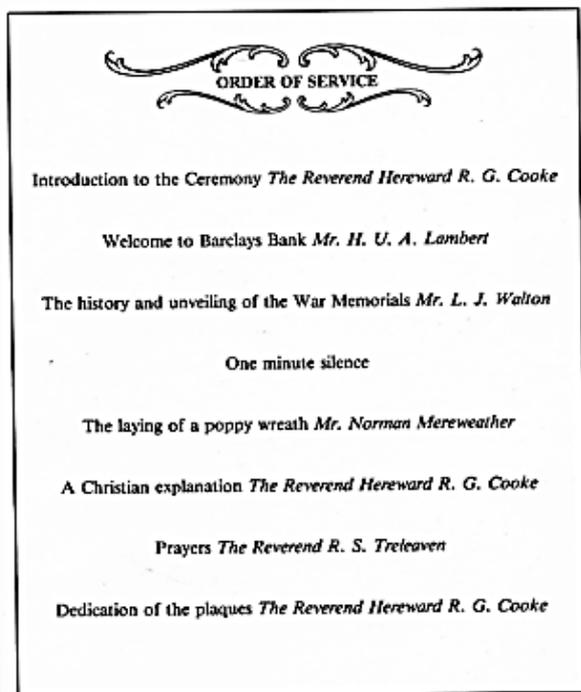
stage we had a canteen (the legendary 'Mrs. Boudi') also used by nearby branches.

Possibly you are aware of all this, but it did fill my time in this 'Lockdown'.

Editor: Many thanks for your most interesting memories Brian and the history of our Club. I seem to remember that 'The legendary Mrs Boudi' has been mentioned previously but, for those who did not work in London, perhaps someone will enlighten us about this 'Legend'.

MARTINS BANK WAR MEMORIAL

MARTINS BANK WAR MEMORIALS RE-DEDICATION AT
BARCLAYS BANK HEAD OFFICE, 54 LOMBARD STREET, LONDON, EC3
ON MONDAY, 12th DECEMBER, 1983 AT 3.30 p.m.



Originally located at our London Office (68 Lombard Street), the memorial was moved to 54 Lombard Street in 1983, but does any member remember the rededication and/or was actually present?

"WE ARE ALL MARTIANS"

Was a headline under 'Quotes of the Week' in The Sunday Times on 30th August. However, I must disagree with this statement made by Martin Ward, Professor of Astronomy at Durham University. He was referring to 'the unearthly implications of research showing that certain bacteria could survive the journey the journey from Mars to Earth'. But we all know that the true earthly 'Martians' are those of us who actually worked for Martins Bank.

To emphasise this belief, following the Liverpool Remembrance Lunch, you might remember that Mike Cadwallader commented:

'There is an incredible emotional attachment to Martins Bank. Just think of that emotionally attached to a bank!!'

and I am certain that we all continue to share Mike's feeling. With that in mind, and Jonathan Snowden's never ending and continuing

commitment to do whatever is necessary to develop the history of our bank, if any members or their former colleagues have any previously unpublished photographs of themselves, colleagues and/or branches during Martins' days then can I ask them to contact either Jonathan or myself so that they can be added to the website? New photographs are being discovered by the day with some recent ones being featured in this Newsletter, which brings me to:

BOOTLE, LINACRE BRANCH

Until the end of August, Jonathan Snowden did not have an exterior view of our Bootle, Linacre branch. That was until a member came across one and by comparing the design of the windows



It is easy to become confused by Martins Bank's four Bootle Branches - three of them are in the same road, and they all become part of Martins Bank through the various mergers and amalgamations that take place around the turn of the Twentieth Century. Linacre is opened in 1898 by the Bank of Liverpool, and so never really changes hands as the bank itself is renamed a couple of times before becoming the Martins we know today. By the early 1960s, the Branch at 508 Stanley Road, known as Linacre Branch is the biggest of the four, in terms of business and number of staff. The Summer 1964 edition of Martins Bank Magazine pays a visit to Linacre, and each of the other three Bootle Branches...



Image © Barclays Ref 0030/1633

in the Barclays photograph with those in the photograph at the top of the next column, which was confirmed by another member who used to live in Liverpool and knew the area. So now we have an exterior view of another branch; and this is where every member can help Jonathan to complete his never-ending search for photographs of branches which are currently lacking from his website:



It is easy to become confused by Martins Bank's four Bootle Branches. For a start, there were FIVE of them, until Strand Road was put out of action by a bomb in the Second World War. Of those that remain, three are in the same road, and they all become part of Martins Bank Limited, through the various mergers and amalgamations that take place around the turn of the Twentieth Century. Linacre is opened in 1898 by the Bank of Liverpool, and so never really changes hands as the bank itself is renamed a couple of times before becoming the Martins Bank we know today. By the early 1960s, the Branch at 508 Stanley Road, known as Linacre Branch is the biggest of the four, in terms of business and number of staff.



Image: Owner unknown. (Thanks to Keith Jones for his assistance)

We were delighted to find this atmospheric view of Linacre from its early days under the Martins Bank signage, which features in the collection of Keith Jones on Flickr. At the moment we do not know the exact origin of the photograph, and if anyone can shed light on the ownership of the image, please do get in touch with us at the usual address - paul@linacreforum.com. Whilst no external view of Linacre Branch was left to Barclays in the Martins Branch Photos Collection, there are a number of interior shots, some of which are shown here. For our Linacre feature, we look to the Summer 1964 edition of Martins Bank Magazine which pays a lighting visit to Linacre, having also visited each of the other three Bootle Branches...

A picture paints a thousand words and they really do. Just look how Linacre's page (above) has been enhanced by the addition of the external view the branch.

A photograph of yet another former branch ... could this house (on Page 6) be our former: **311, POULTON ROAD, WALLASEY, branch?** So, can someone help to confirm whether this belief?

We all know our local area better than anyone



so who better to ask than one of our local members?

MARTINS BANK LIMITED - BRANCH NETWORK
11-853 Wallasey (POULTON ROAD)
 811 Poulton Road Wallasey Cheshire

WALLASEY 311, POULTON ROAD F. H. CARLISLE - Manager.
 Branches have been opened at Altrich, Mool (Cheshire), Woolton Road, Liverpool, and York; and Sub Branches at Chapel Allerton (Leeds), Colne Auction Mart, Dalston (Carlisle), Emington Lane (Botton le Hole), Fulwell (Sunderland), Skipton Auction Mart and Road (Padiham). Premises for new Branches have been acquired at Beverley Road, Hull, Colwyn Bay, Hoole (Cheshire), Maidstone, Oakwood (Leeds) and Poulton Road, Liscard.

Extract from Martins Bank Limited Annual Report and Accounts for 1927 - © Barclays

Martins Bank's own first round of branch cuts is made in the early 1930s, the likely cause being the amount of money to be spent on a new Head Office and a rebuilt London Office. The spotlight is thrown onto many tiny offices of the bank, some of which open only for an hour or two each week, others whose footfall of customers is not enough to sustain them long term, and the axe falls many times between 1931 and 1935. Poulton Road lasts until the end of March 1934.

Its appearance leads you to believe that it could have been a former bank and I have worked back from the property last sold in the area (using Street

View), on the 'Rightmove' website, and believe that this could be one of our long-lost branches, but can anyone confirm my thoughts? To be more-precise, the property is located at the junction of Broughton Road and Poulton Road can be seen in the previous *'Street View'* screen. We now move on to our **Aigburth** branch and yet again remember Mike Cadwallader's comment: *'There is an incredible emotional attachment to Martins Bank. Just think about that.... emotionally attached to a bank!!'*

Well Mike, it would appear that someone did become *'emotionally attached'* well before you passed your comment, as evidenced by this Post



Card.



The photograph below is care of Barclays, but



compare it with this recent photograph from the 'Flickr' website and see how little has changed



over the years. But what is even more amazing is this latest find! Words fail me! Discovered on an Edwardian postcard of 'Aigburth Vale' on the 'Pinterest' website, for whatever reason, it features our Bank of Liverpool branch shortly after being opened (and possibly constructed) in 1903. My personal belief is that the postcard is from the Edwardian era, based on the dresses worn by the ladies on the left (opposite column), the tram waiting by our branch, the tram conductor and driver (?) who are standing next to a policeman in the bottom right hand corner. But what is more amazing is that there is very

little difference between the Post Card, which is over 100 years old, and that from the 'Flickr' website which appears above (and from the Post Card enlarged below).



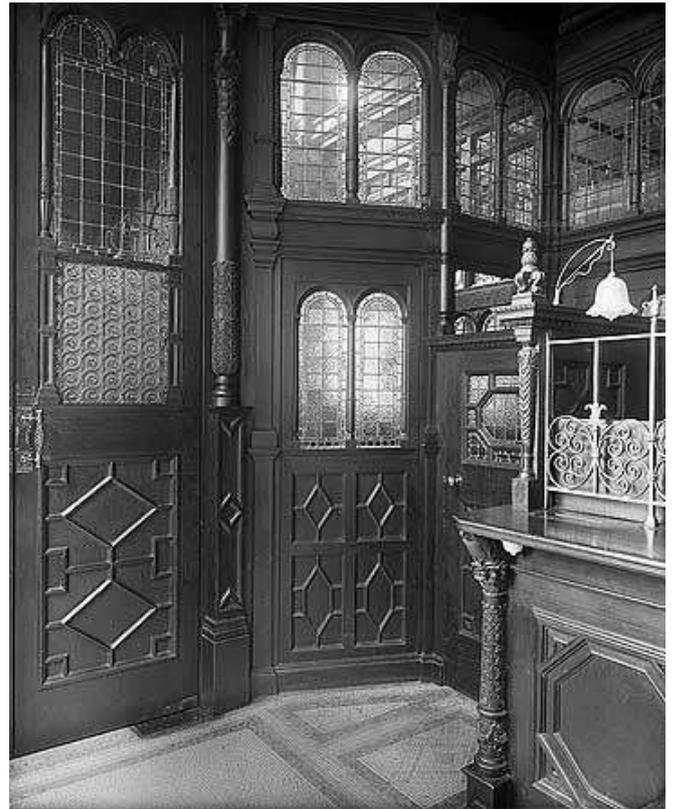
And there's even more: Our magnificent **Castle Street** branch as it is now and not much different



from how it used to be in Martins and even its



Adelphi Bank days (externally at least). But take a look at the counter in its Adelphi Bank days (below left) and the exit/entrance (below):



A REQUEST FROM BARCLAYS

Although we already have one volunteer, would you be willing to be our second? Is anyone willing? If so then please make contact with me.

Barclays Bank UK Retirement Fund (UKRF)

The UKRF Trustee is continually looking at ways we can improve how we communicate with our members. As part of this we are working with our advisers, Aon, to learn more about the best ways to communicate with members, what pension related subjects they are interested in and how best to engage with them.

To this end, we are asking for representatives from our pensioners' clubs to take part in a series of focus groups, which will be a good opportunity for us to hear directly from this key audience. The output of these sessions will help us develop our future communications. We would like to have a good representation across our pensioners' clubs and we would like you to ask for volunteers from your own group to take part.

*We are looking for **two volunteers from each club** if possible. Although this email is being sent to club secretaries and club chairmen we are asking that volunteers are primarily regular club members rather than Chairs or Secretaries, to ensure we get a mix of viewpoints.*

If you are willing to help (the session will only take around one hour) then will you please contact me by 'phone or email, whichever you prefer and I will provide you with further details.

Memories of the late Gordon Anthony

Joining Martins London Foreign branch in September 1950, Gordon was an all-round sportsman playing both football and cricket for the bank. Photographed in 1959, where the Martins Bank football team played against the BNCI, *Banque nationale pour le commerce et*



l'industrie our French correspondent bank, which was one of four banks that combined to form Banque Nationale de Paris and obviously where this photograph was taken. Although Robert Bunn has been able to identify some team members can anyone identify those who Robert was unable to identify? From the left, **Doug Ford** (goalkeeper) who sadly died some years ago, Doug's widow Marion is still a member. **Gordon Anthony**, then **Ken Quigley** who left shortly after the merger, tall one at the back, **Mike Pettit** who has also died but was a regular in times past and then come five faces that I do not recognise. Next is **Ron Ebenezer** (with the banner) but I feel he died some while ago. The one on the far right with his tongue sticking out maybe **Dennis Simms** but I am not sure. Further memories of Gordon will be included in our next Newsletter.

OUR POSTPONED LUNCHES

In every case, all cheques and reservation slips received to date have been destroyed and cannot be presented for payment. New reservation slips for our Lunches will be included in future Newsletters during 2021.

London:

Although the November Lunch has had to be postponed we sincerely trust that it will eventually take place on **Thursday 4th June 2021**, at The Union Jack Club, with reservation forms being included in a future Newsletter.

Keighley

(for the second Northern Powerhouse Lunch):

This Lunch will certainly take place but no date has yet been fixed. Updates will be provided in future Newsletters.

Liverpool:

Currently, this Lunch has been booked to take place once again at The Racquet Club on **Tuesday 11th May 2021**.

AND FINALLY; A PRICKLY SUBJECT



CAN WE TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WISH EVERYONE A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING AS

MANY MEMBERS AS POSSIBLE AT OUR 2021 LUNCHES.



In the meantime: Whilst we are here to help as far as possible, should that not be possible then the Bank-Workers Charity could be an alternative and their confidential Helpline number is: **0800 0234 834** on which you can speak with one of their specially-trained staff about your situation and/or problems.

