



# MARTINS BANK

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## **GRASSHOPPER PENSIONERS' CLUB NEWSLETTER**

Annual General Meeting 2017 Edition

### **2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

This years' AGM was again held at Barnsgate Manor Vineyard on Thursday 18th May when Bill Webb, Mike Sharp and Ros Edwards stood down as our Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary respectively.

At the AGM, their roles were filled by Bernard Lovewell, Colin Redshaw and David Baldwin to ensure that our Club continues to exist with Sue Sutcliffe becoming our new 'Welfare Officer'. For those of you who know little about them, I thought that brief 'pen pictures' of their Martins' days would be of interest. Could they be our very own 'Northern Powerhouse' to coin a phrase?

**Bernard:** Joined Martins in 1961 at our 11 Soho Square branch, where he also met his wife and, as the saying goes; "the rest is history".

**Colin :** A 'Man from the North' who relocated to sunnier climes in Barclays' days.

**David:** Joined Martins at our 77 North Street, Keighley branch in August 1966 after being interviewed by Assistant Manager, Deryk Ingham the previous January who recommended to 4 Water Street that I should be taken on. Later that same January morning I attended a further interview, but with Barclays at their 61 North Street, Keighley branch where I was interviewed by their manager; in what must have been one of the shortest job interviews on record, as it lasted a mere 30 seconds.

I was asked if I had applied for other positions, to which I responded that I had; 'with Martins'. The next question was: 'First impressions, which do you prefer?' To which I responded: 'Martins'. 'Well Mr Baldwin, I think that it is pointless in continuing this interview' was the response. 'However, if you are unsuccessful with your application to work for Martins, give me a call and I will see what I can do for you'.

Anyway, 3 years and 5 months later 'The Eagle' got me, but I have never forgotten my Martins roots, nor ever will.

**Sue:** Before marrying, I was Susan Jane Warrington and joined Martins in 1964 at Mytholmroyd, a large village in the Calder Valley, 7 miles from Halifax. Despite its size, we also had a sub-branch in Luddendenfoot. Following my marriage, I was able to transfer to our Cheltenham branch and worked there when we merged with Barclays. I rejoined Barclays at Fareham and to my surprise the manager was someone with whom I had worked at Mytholmroyd (Kenneth Ingle). What a coincidence! My husband and I are great supporters of our Club's functions after discovering it via the Martins Bank Archive ([www.martinsbank.co.uk](http://www.martinsbank.co.uk)) and if you are not already aware of this wonderful website then I can certainly recommend it to you.

### **'Légion d'honneur' FOR A GPC MEMBER**



Don Evans being presented with his Légion d'honneur, France's highest distinction, during a ceremony at the French Ambassador's Residence in London, by the French Ambassador to the UK, Sylvie Bermann.

## OUR 2016 QUESTIONNAIRE and THE CLUB'S ORIGINS

(An accompanying letter from one of our Members)

*Whilst it would be nice for the Club to continue, one shouldn't forget that we started out as the LONDON DISTRICT GRASSHOPPERS. I suspect that now we are expanded to the rest of the country, any new Committee may well consist of members outside the 'London District' who, quite understandably, would wish to expand the geographical catchment area for function venues. Many of our current (and ageing!) former London District members probably wouldn't want to travel to Leeds, Liverpool or wherever. After 2017 it may well be that those who wish to meet-up with former colleagues organise their own get-together. It would be compulsory for any such gathering to invite Ros, Joe and Bill along in view of their past sterling service.*

Although the decision whether to remain part of the EU or leave was close, as Bill Webb wrote in our September Newsletter, the decision by our Members to continue our Club was overwhelming with a 2:1 majority. So here we go (again).

As many comments, both 'for' and 'against', were included in the responses to the Questionnaire, I felt that you would like to read some of those received from our members:

*I would favour an orderly winding-up and It will struggle to survive as Members die. A clean break now would be preferable as well as The end is inevitable. Let's do it gracefully.*

However, the majority of our members had a different opinion: *Martins Bank was part of my younger years and many happy memories.*

*..... It would leave a big hole! Like a 'first love' gone!!* and: *It would be a pity to lose this historic link* whilst another member commented: *It would be a shame if the Grasshoppers Club closed* and someone else wrote: *I love participating in the Grasshopper do's. We travel a long way to all of the lunches but we love it'* and finally: *Whilst it is obvious that the Club is time limited, it would be sad if it folded whilst there are still people who are prepared and able to run it. I do hope that the Club does continue and that you are able to form a new committee.*

Some comments about the venues for our functions were also received: *I would prefer the Christmas Lunch to be at a different venue. Not sure why there is an annual event (AGM) south of London. This is surely a limiting factor for attendance.* and: *Suggest alternative venue for London Lunch - Royal Overseas now too expensive. I can help with other venues. Use more-accessible venues for other lunches and/or events.* Additionally, with the ever-

increasing age of our membership and age-related illnesses, the difficulty of accessing remote locations was also mentioned and there were some calls for: *'London-based functions'*.

Following the change to our Constitution to open Membership to any former member of Martins Bank staff in receipt of a Barclays pension there were also calls for: *'Local functions'*. Unfortunately, and whatever your feelings are about the future of the Club, as there have been no new members of Martins Bank staff since December 1969, it is inevitable that the Club will have to be terminated at some time in the future. However there are still hundreds, if not thousands, of former 'Young Martians' (not forgetting to mention 'Old Martians') out there who could boost our Membership.

So there we have it. Now it's over to you to 'spread the word' and encourage any of your former colleagues, who are not yet Members of our Club, to join us. Where else can you obtain 'Life Membership' of a unique Club for a one-off payment of a mere £5?

After reading it, please feel free to give your copy of this Newsletter to one of your non-member former colleagues.

## THE ANUAL GENERAL MEETING

Once again, our AGM was held at Barnsgate Manor Vineyard near Uckfield before the 'Spring Lunch' which was attended by 30 Members and their partners. The former Officers; Bill Webb, Ros Edwards and Mike Sharp, formally tendered their resignations and were replaced by Bernard Lovewell (Chairman), Dave Baldwin (Secretary), Colin Redshaw (Treasurer) and Susan Sutcliffe (our new Welfare Officer).

## LARGE PRINT NEWSLETTER?

This Newsletter has been produced in font size 11, which is (apparently) the mid-point of 'Regular Print'. 'Large Print' is acknowledged as being a significantly higher, font size 16 or 17, which might be helpful for our members who have impaired vision. However, to produce a Newsletter in a larger font size would create difficulties but, if anyone would like to increase the size of their Newsletter, to make it easier to read, then this can be achieved by simply increasing the size of their emailed

copy after opening it in their 'Adobe Acrobat Reader'. For those members who do not have internet access, or have said that they do not want to receive their Newsletters by email, they can rest assured that 'hard copy' Newsletters will continue to be posted to every Member, unless they contact me stating that they would prefer to receive theirs by email in future.

### ARE YOU ON THE CORRECT TARIFF?

I don't know why I decided to check our latest BT bill but I did and couldn't understand why it appeared to be so high! My investigation still didn't reveal much, as our broadband and line rentals have been merged by BT (a 'cunning plan' to confuse methinks?), so I decided to have a 'Web Chat' with BT's 'local helpdesk' which is obviously based in India, and included the phrase: 'I am considering moving to an alternative provider'. After a short discussion, it emerged that I was on their 'Standard Tariff' for the services which were being provided and was offered the opportunity of speaking with their 'Sales Team' in Newcastle. An even shorter discussion revealed that were I to sign-up for an 18 month contract I could save the princely sum of £12 per month! So, that's an annual saving of £144 after tax out of my Martins and Barclays Pension. A sum not to be sneezed at as far as I'm concerned! So what's the message? Simply, think about shopping around for basic services and it could save you a decent amount which could go towards some 'creature comforts' for you and your family.

The same goes for so-called 'Staff Rates' when buying foreign currency. Another outsourced 'service' where it is well worthwhile checking those rates offered by supermarkets, which I find are generally better than those 'special rates' offered to staff.

### DEATH NOTICES

At the time of writing, the only details received relate to the deaths of our following Members:

**Ken Bromley; Betty Salmon** (nee White) and **Geoff Taylor**. Our condolences go to their partners and family members.

We generally only discover that a former colleague has died when we receive the Newsletter or read the latest copy of

'Connection', however, and my apologies once again for being morbid, Willis Towers Watson collate the deaths of both current and former staff members. This is the extent of the service and no-one is notified, but the details are available for everyone to see on their personal log-in for the Willis Towers Watson site, at the **bottom of one of the drop-down menus**. There are different ways of seeing the list: Click onto the tiny arrow at the top of the column in which you are interested. However, not everyone's death is listed because people are given a choice about publication when they leave the Bank.

### OBITUARIES

#### HOW TO CONTACT US:

My contact details are contained in the header of this newsletter in which you will also see that we now have our own personalised email address.

Just like Ros, I will be pleased to receive your news and comments to whatever they relate and will attempt to make future Newsletters as interesting as those produced by Ros.

### PLEASE ADVISE ME IF YOU ARE HAPPY TO RECEIVE YOUR FUTURE NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL:

Send me a confirmation email to:

[grasshoppers@btinternet.com](mailto:grasshoppers@btinternet.com)

This has the added benefit of enabling you to increase the size of the pages and font and thereby make reading it easier.

### ANOTHER KEEN-EYED SPOT BY JONATHAN



Whilst watching 'The Fifteen Billion Pound Railway' on BBC2, Jonathan Snowden thought that he had spotted our long-lost branch on Regent Street so he purchased the DVD set of London Transport DVDs and his hunch proved to be correct! Jonathan

comments: *'You will see that the Westminster Bank was actually on the corner – something I did not know, with Martins Bank next door.'*

With the complete set of DVDs to watch, Jonathan is hoping that he will uncover other photographs of our former branches

### Grasshopper Thames Cruise July 2<sup>nd</sup>

The weather Gods smiled on the efforts of Mike and Elaine Sharp, our brilliant organisers for our third cruise along the Thames, whilst we all enjoyed an excellent three course meal accompanied by a delightful jazz ensemble. 49 intrepid voyagers boarded the Bateaux Symphony at 12.30 at Embankment pier using the executive group booking arrangement which made finding our reserved party seating at the bow end of the boat extremely easy.

Our day turned out to be one of the hottest days of the year and was a blessing as the vessel got under way the open windows at the bow allowed a cooling breeze to make the whole experience the more comfortable and enjoyable.

The actual itinerary of the voyage is to some extent tide dependant and we were fortunate that the first part of the trip took was able to take us up stream passing some notable landmarks including the Houses of Parliament the Royal festival hall and County Hall before finally going about within sight of Battersea Power Station and retracing our steps and thence continuing downstream to within sight of the Cutty Sark at Greenwich.

The timing of the whole event was perfect so that the meal could be savoured without haste. The on board staff were well trained and attentive and the anecdotal evidence from our party was that the day had been a complete success. Our grateful thanks to *Mike and Elaine*

### And finally:

I must apologise for any omissions and/or inaccuracies in this first Newsletter and no offence has been intended or caused. My thanks go to my Proof-Readers David Baxter and Jonathan Snowden and David Baxter (again) for formatting the newsletter.

## LONDON LUNCH Thursday 2nd November 2017

**Venue:** Royal Overseas League, Park Place, St James's St, S W 1

**Time:** (Pay Bar from) 12.00 noon for Luncheon at 1.00 pm. (The bar will be situated in the Princess Alexandra Hall.)

**Cost:** £23 each member and £23 for one guest; £56 for extra guests & associate members

### MENU

**Starter:** Prawn and crab rillette with brown crab mayonnaise, toasted bread, crisp lettuce

**Main Course:** Slow cooked beef cheek with bourguignon garnish green beans, rainbow carrots and fondant potatoes

### Vegetarian option to be confirmed

**Dessert:** Pear frangipane tart, hazelnut fool, pear and vanilla puree

### Tea or coffee

**Apply to:** John Charlton.

**Closing date Friday 20th October**

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**PLEASE DETACH AND REPLY TO:**

**J Charlton, Chanctonbury, Manor Drive,  
Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5BT**

Please reserve.....place(s) for the London Luncheon on Thursday 2nd November. I enclose my cheque payable to "Grasshopper Pensioners' Club" for £.....

If you or any of your guests require the vegetarian option please indicate the number in the box [ ]

**Seating Preference:** Name(s) not Branches please:

.....  
.....

Name(s) of those attending: (Capital Letters please)

.....  
.....

**Contact Telephone Number:** .....

**STOP PRESS: Though not a member, we have learned of the death of Frank Shuttleworth, who spent his career in Craven District. Some readers may remember him.**