

# THE GRASSHOPPER PENSIONERS' CLUB



## MARTINS BANK

Website: [www.martinsbank.co.uk](http://www.martinsbank.co.uk)

© gut informiert!

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CHAIRMAN: Bernard Lovewell

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September 2021 Edition



**ONLY A SHORT PERIOD SINCE  
THE SUMMER EDITION MEANS**



**YOU COULDN'T MAKE IT UP,  
COULD YOU?**

Even before the ink was dry on the pages of our Summer Edition, in which I asked:

**A PERRENIAL QUESTION**

**What is happening to our building?**

**Dare I even suggest:**

**'WHAT GOES AROUND COMES  
AROUND'**

Read on as now we know: Gone has the FIVE STAR hotel and, guess what? Our former Head Office building is going to be converted to OFFICE accommodation! We can only say: ***What excellent news!***

This excellent and long-awaited news was revealed by The Liverpool Echo on 7<sup>th</sup> August by Tom Houghton, Business Editor and Lee Grimsditch in the following article:

*One of the country's most beautiful buildings which has been virtually unused for almost 15 years has finally been sold.*

*The historic former Martins Bank building on Water Street has been bought after years of grand plans that have fizzled out to nothing.*

*Much of the building has been empty for years, with the grand banking hall and vaults unused since Barclays finally left in 2007.*

*The 210,000sq ft building has been bought by Kinrise, a hybrid workspace provider.*

*The company said the building will now undergo a "significant yet sensitive" refurbishment retaining its original features while "showcasing its character".*

In 2016, a £50 million plan to turn the building into a five-star hotel was revealed but work never started.

Regarded by many as one of the country's *most beautiful buildings*, its interior and exterior have become a magnet for film companies looking for a touch of period class.

*Its grand banking hall inspired the one seen in Fantastic Beasts and Where To Find Them, and the bank itself has been used in several other productions including Foyle's War and ITV2's Timewasters.*

*Martins was the only national UK bank to have its head office outside London.*

*The group traces its history back to Tudor-era financier Thomas Gresham. In 1918 it was taken over by the Bank of Liverpool, creating a national banking group that expanded across the country.*

*The merged group needed a grand new headquarters and in 1932 opened its grand new head office in Water Street.*



***Look inside Martins Bank Building on Water Street, Liverpool. Pictured inside the Chairman's dining rooms (Image: Liverpool Echo/Colin Lane)***

*Historic England calls the Grade II\*-listed building a "masterpiece" and "one of the best interwar classical buildings in the country".*

It was designed by architect Herbert Rowse, who also designed the massive India Buildings across the road as well as the entrances to the Queensway Mersey Tunnel.

The most famous feature of the interior is its banking hall, with towering columns and arcades.

In 1940, with the threat of German invasion looming, much of Britain's gold reserves were moved to the bank's vault.



*Inside the vault where Britain's gold reserves were stored during World War Two (Image: Liverpool Echo/Colin Lane)*

A stone plaque in Exchange flags commemorating the bank's role in history is inscribed: "In May 1940 when this country was threatened with invasion part of the nation's gold reserve was brought from London and lowered through the hatch for safe keeping in the vaults of Martins Bank."

By the 1960s it had more than 700 branches, mostly in the north, and also owned the Lewis's Bank.

It was one of the first banks to use computers and in 1967 opened the North's first cash machine, in Liverpool's Church Street.

But in 1969 Martins was taken over by Barclays and the famous name slowly disappeared.



*The grand banking hall (Image: Liverpool Echo/Colin Lane)*

And now, with new owners, the refurbishment project will soon begin throughout the landmark building.

Alongside the transformation of private office space, **Kinrise** said it will also create a welcoming ground floor area open to the public and space for cultural programmes, as well as future local community events and exhibitions.

Sam Lawson Johnston, co-founder of Kinrise, said: "The acquisition of the Martins Bank Building marks a significant milestone for Kinrise as we expand into our fourth city."



*View from the Chairman's flat in the Martins' building (Image: Liverpool Echo/Colin Lane)*

"Liverpool is a richly diverse and vibrant city and we have been looking for a site here for a number of years".

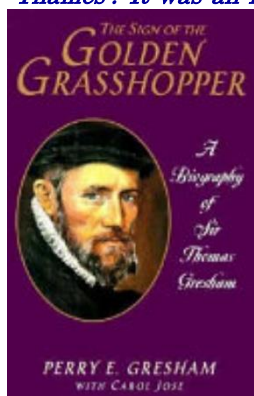
#### IT IS A SAD FACT .....

That it is only when one of our male members dies that we finally learn that their widow also used to work for Martins. With this in mind, can I ask all of our married lady members who used to work for Martins to contact and advise me of their name and contact details? This will enable me to rectify the situation and add them to our database of members? An amended application form can be found on the last page.

#### THE GRESHAM SHIP

In our previous Newsletter, I asked: *Did anyone watch the recent Channel 5 documentary: 'Draining the Thames'? It was an interesting documentary which part-* featured 'The Cherabin' an armed Elizabethan merchantman which sank in the Thames estuary. More in the next issue ...'

If not then I can tell you that it shed more light on the person deemed to have founded our bank. We tend to think of him as a goldsmith, but he also owned an iron foundry where cannon were cast for the British navy and 'merchantmen', who also



acted as 'privateers'. Cannon with Gresham's crest were discovered on 'The Cherabin'. An interesting part of a documentary which can be viewed again on YouTube.

However, in the January 2014 Newsletter, **Geoff Taylor** wrote about Thomas Gresham: *'The Sign of the Golden Grasshopper, a biography of Sir Thomas Gresham'*.

Digging deeper, it appears that he was far more than simply a goldsmith. He was the financial advisor to all the Tudor monarchs, Gresham twice saved England from bankruptcy.

He served as diplomat, spy, royal smuggler, financial wizard, and founder of the Royal Exchange. Whilst we all are aware of the date of 1563 in Lombard Street, I must admit that I had never realised that his initials 'TG' separate the 15 and 63 of the date.



Gresham also worked with base metals, as previously mentioned, and had an iron foundry where he cast cannon for Royal Navy ships as well as merchantmen.



This cannon, recovered from the Thames wreck, was cast in his foundry as can be seen by his initials. An interesting person, to say the least, and worthwhile further investigation given time.

## MEMORIES OF FORMER COLLEAGUES

### Robert Dewhirst

On reading about the death of Robert Dewhirst, Pam Pennington wrote: *So sorry to see the name of Robert Dewhirst in the Obituaries. When I joined Martins at Keighley branch as a Junior in 1962, Robert was a member of staff. What a lovely man, really easy to get on with, and understanding when it came to the many mistakes that I must have made in my first job. Like some of the other young female staff, "baby sitting" for other married members of staff was popular, as boyfriends were included. Robert and his lovely wife Sheila gave the best suppers! Luckily, I met up with them both at the Grasshopper lunch in Ilkley (before Covid). It was a pleasure, as always, to chat with them.*



### Ken Marsden

*I was saddened to learn of the death of Ken Marsden and send my condolences to his family. It was in the early 50's whilst doing my National Service that there appeared in our billet a fresh-*



*...faced young airman straight from squarebashing. He had a Yorkshireman's directness which was engaging and I, together with 20 others at RAF Weeton, saw our time out there. We quickly realised we had a common background in being Martians and, of course, we met up again after our demob and his transfer to the Liverpool District. How the enclosed has survived the 67 years since it was taken (28/4/54) and furthermore my being able to find it is a miracle! Ken is standing on the left of the second row and I am third from the right. Sorry I can't get a better image.*



*Regards to you all David Winckles (David and Ken arrowed)*



*It is photographs such as the one featured above that bring our Newsletters to life and also bring back happy memories. I am certain that most of you will have at least one such photograph tucked away in some safe place. **If you have, could I ask you to share them with your fellow members and the story behind them?** If you are unable to scan your photograph then just post it/them to me and I will scan and return them to you before publishing them in future editions.*

## HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY GHOSTLY APPIRITIONS RECENTLY?

My regular route to the local recycling centre takes me past two of our former branches in Sowerby

Bridge, which are less than 100 yards apart. On one such trip I



noticed that the semi-derelict building had been placed on the market once again. However, since the signage above the windows facing the A58

Rochdale Road has been removed, revealing the ghostly outline of one of the former identities of this branch: **MARTINS** as can be seen below.



The continuing closure of our former branches and the removal of the Barclays signage means that our name is being restored to high streets throughout the country. We have already been

reminded that branches including **Hebden Bridge**, **Wooler** and **Dartford** have now had their **Martins** identity revealed once again.



**Now, here's yet another request: *Do you have***

***any more ghostly photos in your local area?***

## DEATH NOTICES

**Cannon, Frederick** on  
**Doyle, Robert** on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021  
**Holland, Anthony** on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Other non-members, but former colleagues, whom we have lost and you might remember are: **Geoff Brogden**, **Tony Robertshaw** and **Keith Nuthall**, who died on 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2021 Aged 91

## OBITUARIES (CONTINUED)

**Harry Williams:** Harry, or 'BIG H', as he was affectionately known by his colleagues, was born in Walton in 1932, joining Martins in 1949. Initially placed on 'Head Office Relief' he started his National Service in 1950, which was mostly spent in Egypt. Completing his 'tour of duty', a transfer to **Liverpool Speke and Hunts Cross** in 1952 and then **Victoria Street**, Liverpool in 1953 followed as a 'general clerk'. After 9 years at 'Vic Street', Harry was transferred to **Liverpool District Office** then **H O Superintendents of Branches and Head Office** in 1963, where he obtained his first 'appointed' position in 1965, before joining the **Inspection** team.



Following the takeover, Harry's only time outside Liverpool was his three years as manager of Barclays in Warrington before returning to 'home ground' as Manager of 'Vic. Street' and in 1981 he became the Branch Director of Liverpool Business Centre (aka Liverpool City Office in Martins days).

Harry was a true gentleman in every sense and was greatly respected by all his colleagues and

friends. He was a keen sportsman and badminton player and met his wife Margery whilst playing. They married in 1957 and had a daughter, Lesley. Harry was a loving grandfather to his three grandchildren and a life-long Everton football club supporter. He will be hugely missed.

## IMPORTANT NEWS RE LUNCHESES

Our reservation/booking agreements with the venues of our Lunches, require that we need to confirm final numbers three weeks before the actual date of the function. With our lunches being subsidised by the Club, via our annual grant from Barclays, we regret that **no refunds will be possible after the dates stated on the individual Reservation Slips for cancellations** and appreciate your understanding of this requirement.

## AND YET MORE HISTORY STILL EVIDENT TODAY!

It isn't only our former colleagues who keep our name and memories alive but also the wider 'MARTINS FAMILY'.



Last week, whilst Sue McClay, (daughter of Margaret Mc Clay and



the late 'Mick', was in **Sedbergh**, Sue took this photograph of our former branch (**detail right**) from which our carved Coat of Arms is still evident for all to see both now and in perpetuity.



## THE BANK WORKERS' CHARITY

It might seem too early to be talking about winter, but it's never too early to prepare for it. It can be a difficult time for some, with the increase in fuel bills and Christmas putting pressure on finances. That's why as well as our specialist advice and support, we offer a Christmas grant to all Barclays' pensioners who could benefit from financial support in the winter months. email [winter@bwcharity.org.uk](mailto:winter@bwcharity.org.uk) or call our free and confidential Helpline on **0800 0234 834**, we're open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

## RESERVATION FOR THE LONDON NOVEMBER LUNCH 2021

To be held on **Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2021** at **The Union Jack Club, Waterloo.**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT NUMBERS ARE RESTRICTED TO 100 SO PLEASE DO NOT DELAY IN RESPONDING**

**The deadline for returning your reservation is 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021**

### STARTER

Rosette of Scottish Smoked Salmon with Traditional Garnish

### MAIN COURSE

Truffled Duxelles Stuffed Supreme of Chicken with Charred Leeks and Carrots, Herb Crushed Potatoes

### DESSERT

Apple Tart Tatin, Calvados Crème Chantilly

### Tea or Coffee

Please tick the appropriate box if you require an alternative option:

Diabetic	Gluten Free	Vegetarian	Other (please state)

**Pay Bar available from 12.00 Noon until 4.00 p.m.**

Luncheon will be served at 1 p.m.

**Cost: £20.00 for each Full Member and Associate Member and Co-habiting guest of each Full Member and £20.00 for each Guest who does not fall into one of these categories. Maximum 1 Guest per Member**

These prices include table wine or fruit juice and gratuity. Please state your preference to ease administration:

Red	White	Fruit Juice

## RESERVATION FOR THE LONDON NOVEMBER LUNCH

Please return your Reply Slip to arrive **before the closing date of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021** to:

Mr K W Quirk,  
119 Fernhill Road,  
Cove,  
Farnborough, GU14 9DS.

### Contact details:

kenneth.quirk@sky.com or 'Phone: **01252 521044**

Please reserve me ..... place(s) for the December Lunch at **The Union Jack Club**, on Thursday, **25<sup>th</sup> November 2021** for which I enclose my cheque payable to The Grasshopper Pensioners Club for £..... and confirm that **I was a member of Martins Bank Staff on or before 12<sup>th</sup> December 1969**. Please tick this box to confirm

**I am /am not a member of The Grasshopper Pensioners' Club. (Please delete whichever does not apply)**

**I am a member of a Barclays Pensioners' Club**  Please tick this box to confirm

Names of those attending (capital letters please)

..... (Member/Guest)

..... (Member/Guest)

My contact number: .....

My email address: .....

Seating preference (This cannot be guaranteed but I will make my best effort to ensure that it is.)

Name(s): .....

.....  
To assist with catering do you have a wine preference for yourself and guest(s)? Numbers: Red ..... White ..... Fruit Juice .....

**AS THE RESULT OF THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF OUR BOOKING WE REGRET THAT CANCELLATIONS FOR REFUNDS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER WEDNESDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER**

**RESERVATION FOR THE LIVERPOOL GRASSHOPPERS LUNCH**

on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at The Racquet Club

5 Chapel Street, Liverpool, L3 9AG

**PLEASE NOTE THAT NUMBERS ARE RESTRICTED TO 100 SO PLEASE DO NOT DELAY IN RESPONDING**

Please select your food from the alternatives below.

The deadline for returning your reservation is **31<sup>st</sup> October 2021**

**STARTER**

Smoked Salmon with Potato Salad and Crème Fraîche	<b>OR</b>	Fruit Juice
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**MAIN COURSE**

Roast Chicken Breast served with Vegetables and Roasted Potatoes & Traditional Gravy	<b>OR</b>	Vegetarian Lentil Shepherd's Pie.
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**DESSERT**

Profiteroles	<b>OR</b>	Lemon Tart served with Chantilly Cream
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**Tea or Coffee**

Please tick the appropriate box if you require an alternative option:

Diabetic	Gluten Free	Vegetarian	Other (please state)
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**Coffee and Pay Bar available from 11.00 a.m. until 4.00 p.m.**

Luncheon will be served at 1 p.m.

**Cost: £20.00 for each Full Member and Associate Member and Co-habiting guest of each Full Member and £20.00 for each Guest who does not fall into one of these categories. Maximum 1 Guest per member**

These prices include table wine or fruit juice and gratuity. Please state your preference to ease administration:

Red	White	Fruit Juice
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Please return your Reply Slip to arrive **before the closing date of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021** to:

Mr K W Quirk,  
119 Fernhill Road,  
Cove,  
Farnborough, GU14 9DS.

**Contact details:** kenneth.quirk@sky.com or 'Phone: **01252 521044**

Please reserve me ..... place(s) for the December Lunch at **The Racquet Club, Liverpool**, on **Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2021** for which I enclose my cheque payable to The Grasshopper Pensioners Club for £..... and confirm that **I was a member of Martins Bank Staff on or before 12<sup>th</sup> December 1969**. Please tick this box to confirm

**I am /am not a member of The Grasshopper Pensioners' Club. (Please delete whichever does not apply).**

**I am a member of a Barclays Pensioners' Club .**  Please tick this box to confirm

Names of those attending (capital letters please)

..... (Member/Guest)

..... (Member/Guest)

My contact number: .....

My email address: .....

Seating preference (This cannot be guaranteed but I will make my best effort to ensure that it is.)

Name(s): .....

To assist with catering do you have a wine preference for yourself and guest(s)? Numbers: Red ..... White ..... Fruit Juice .....

**AS THE RESULT OF THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF OUR BOOKING WE REGRET THAT CANCELLATIONS FOR REFUNDS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THURSDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER**

**RESERVATION FOR THE NORTHERN LUNCH 2021**

To be held on **WEDNESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2021** at **OAKWOOD HALL, BINGLEY**  
Lady Lane, Bingley BD16 4AW

**PLEASE NOTE THAT NUMBERS ARE RESTRICTED TO 60 SO PLEASE DO NOT DELAY IN RESPONDING**

The deadline for returning your reservation is **6<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

**TO START:** Smoked Salmon with Pickled Cucumber

**MAIN COURSE:** Roast Turkey, Chestnut Stuffing, Bacon Wrapped Chipolata, Cranberry Sauce, Roast Potatoes,

Vegetarian Option ~ Wild Mushroom Gnocchi, Goats Cheese, Pesto

**DESSERT:** Traditional Christmas Pudding, Rum Sauce

~Freshly Filtered Coffee & Chocolates~

Please tick the appropriate box if you require an alternative option:

Diabetic	Gluten Free	Vegetarian	Other (please state)

**Pay Bar available from 12.00 Noon until 4.00 p.m.**

Luncheon will be served at 1 p.m.

**Cost: £20.00 for each Full Member and Associate Member and Co-habiting guest of each Full Member and £20.00 for each Guest who does not fall into one of these categories. Maximum 1 Guest per Member**

These prices include table wine or fruit juice and gratuity. Please state your preference to ease administration:

Red	White	Fruit Juice

**RESERVATION FOR THE NORTHERN DECEMBER LUNCH**

Please return your Reply Slip to arrive **before the closing date of 6<sup>th</sup> November 2021** to:

**Mr. D Baldwin,  
Lower Windle,  
Windle Royd Lane,  
Warley,  
Halifax,  
HX2 7LY**

**Contact details:** [grasshoppers@btinternet.com](mailto:grasshoppers@btinternet.com) or 'Phone: **01422 832734**

Please reserve me ..... place(s) for the December Lunch at **The Oakwood Hall**, on Wednesday, **8<sup>th</sup> December 2021** for which I enclose my cheque payable to The Grasshopper Pensioners Club for £..... and confirm that I was a member of **Martins Bank Staff on or before 12<sup>th</sup> December 1969**. Please tick this box to confirm

**I am /am not a member of The Grasshopper Pensioners' Club. (Please delete whichever does not apply**

**I am a member of a Barclays Pensioners' Club .  Please tick this box to confirm**

Names of those attending (capital letters please)

..... (Member/Guest)

..... (Member/Guest)

My contact number: .....

My email address: .....

Seating preference (This cannot be guaranteed but I will make my best effort to ensure that it is.)

Name(s): .....

To assist with catering do you have a wine preference for yourself and guest(s)? Numbers: Red ..... White ..... Fruit Juice .....

**PLEASE NOTE THAT NUMBERS ARE RESTRICTED TO 60 SO PLEASE DO NOT DELAY IN RESPONDING AS THE RESULT OF THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF OUR BOOKING WE REGRET THAT CANCELLATIONS FOR REFUNDS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER SATURDAY 4th DECEMBER**



**MARTINS  
BANK** 



Dear Dave,

**UPDATING CLUB RECORDS (FOR LADY MEMBERS)**

As the wife of a member of The Grasshopper Pensioners' Club I can confirm that I met my future husband when I was a member of Martins Bank staff and worked for Martins Bank before 12<sup>th</sup> December 1969.

Will you please add my name to your database of members as detailed below:

My Name: .....

My Maiden Name\*: .....

My Husband's Name (to assist with identification): .....

Address: .....

Post Code: .....

email Address:  
.....

**Brief details of my career with Martins** (this can be as short, or as long, as you wish and could be published in our newsletter):

- **Only required to enable Jonathan Snowden to further enhance his and our [www.martinsbank.co.uk](http://www.martinsbank.co.uk) website by populating the staff database. Please email or post to me at my addresses in the header of this Newsletter.**