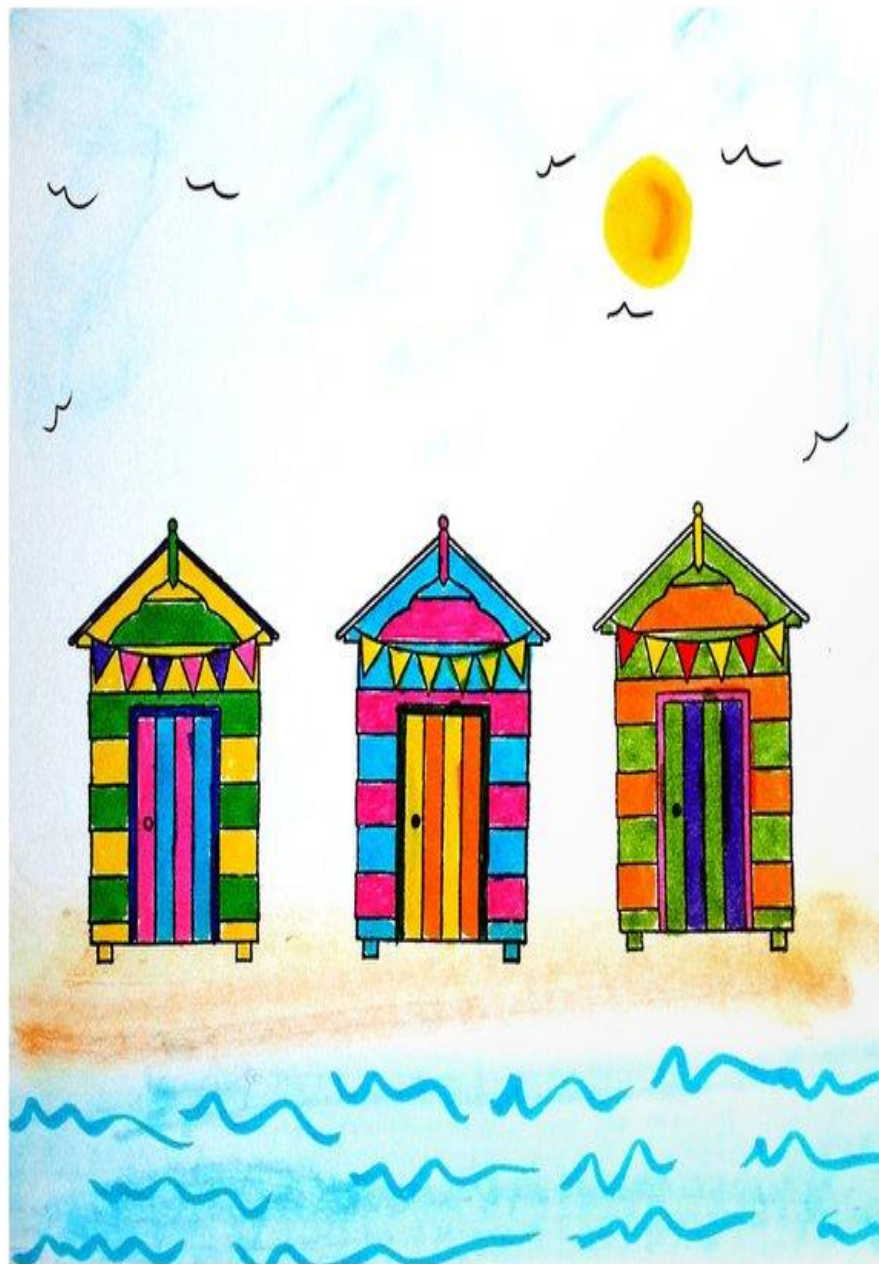


# Visor newsletter

## Summer 2019



**CURRENT ELECTED OFFICERS  
AND TRUSTEES  
2018 - 2020**

**Pat McNamee – Chair**

**David Wood – Treasurer**

**Steve Rollings**

**Doug Smith**

**Josie Wood**

**Edward Price**

## **CHAIR'S WELCOME**

**Dear Members**

**I hope you enjoy our Summer Newsletter which includes write ups about trips, news and some useful information.**

**One very important piece of news is that V.I.S.O.R. are having a fund-raising afternoon on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2019, from 2 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. at the Vestry Hall, Richmond. Please put this date in your diaries because it is important that as many of you as possible attend this event and we would really appreciate your support. We will be having tea, a quiz and a raffle during the afternoon.**

**I am very pleased to tell you that we have another volunteer in the office, starting very soon. Many of you will remember Ali, who has been one of our volunteer drivers, is now able to help on some Mondays during the month. Welcome Ali and we hope you enjoy your time amongst the organised chaos in our very busy office !**

**This seems like a really good opportunity to thank all our volunteers again for all their hard work for V.I.S.O.R. It is very much appreciated.**

**I look forward to seeing you at some of our up and coming events.**

**Enjoy the summer.**

**Pat**

# **V.I.S.O.R**

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2019**

**Held at the Vestry Hall, Paradise Road, Richmond, Surrey.**

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**The Chair welcomed local dignitaries, members, carers and friends to the meeting. Everyone was informed as to who was present.**

**We were delighted to welcome Daisy from the Middlesex Association for the Blind and Jeff, C.E.O. from Visionary. Robin Corti from Skerries4Schools also attended to tell members about accompanied rowing locally on the Thames.**

**Pat informed members of the work carried out by the Charity over the past year and updated everyone on the events enjoyed. She explained the grants applied for and how V.I.S.O.R. had been accepted for inclusion within the Co-op's fund raising scheme for small, local charities in the U.K. Our local Waitrose in Richmond had allowed us to be included in their green token scheme and total raised to be revealed later.**

**She told members that V.I.S.O.R. had joined the campaigns against increased charges for Blue Badge holders at Kingston and another local group campaigning for safer pavements for visually impaired and disabled pedestrians.**

**Pat thanked all the volunteers for all their hard work because without them V.I.S.O.R would not be the successful charity that it has become.**

**Sandra Powell, Senior Rehabilitation Officer, Sensory Services, for Richmond & Wandsworth addressed the meeting and brought us up to date with local news.**

**This year we were delighted to welcome Cerise and Mike from the Community Fire Safety Team, Red Watch, who gave a presentation to members giving useful advice and answered lots of questions. Members were offered the opportunity of a home visit and free smoke alarms.**

**We then served afternoon tea and members were assisted to fill in request forms for future outings and state their preference or suggestions.**

**The meeting closed by 5 p.m.**

## **BOOKINGS FOR VISOR TRIPS/EVENTS**

**Dear Members:**

**I know we have mentioned this before but due to recent events we have to ask you to please ensure**

**the following arrangements are adhered to when booking a place or an outing/event.**

**Please do not ask one of the Trustees if you can be booked on a trip/event when we are at the social or at another event. On these occasions we do not carry around the necessary paperwork for booking arrangements, so we cannot possibly know who has already booked a place and cannot say there and then whether a place is available. The paperwork is kept at the VISOR office.**

**When you receive notification of an event and you wish to book a place, please ring the office at any time (0208 487 5301) and just give your name, number and which trip you would like to go on. There is an answerphone. Alternatively, if you prefer, you can ring the VISOR office on a Monday and speak to Keith, our Events Organiser, or myself.**

**I know most of you already help us by following these arrangements, and thank you, but I'm afraid we can no longer accept bookings at events or at the social.**

**Thank you all for your cooperation.**

**Pat  
Chair, VISOR**

## **MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE**

**The Lions' message in a bottle scheme is an idea designed to help emergency services to assist you if they are called to your home.**

**The bottle with all your medical history, medication details and note of your next of kin, is kept in the fridge where Paramedics can find it - via two labels: one on the fridge door and one on the inside of your front door or main entrance to your home. This will save the medical services valuable time with special medication or allergies.**

**Bottles are free and can usually be obtained from your chemist or doctor's surgery.**

## **HYDROTHERAPY**

**Unfortunately, due to dwindling numbers, we have had to pull the plug on the monthly Saturday pool hire. Unless we can persuade more members in the future, it is no longer viable to continue at present.**

**Many thanks to Anne for all her organising and all those who have supported us over the years.**

**Trustees**

## **BLUEBELL RAILWAY OUTING MAY 2019**

**On a warm, sunny mid-May morning, some 30 VISOR members met in Twickenham for a Bluebell Railway outing. Once everyone had assembled, we travelled by two minibuses to Sheffield Park Station in East Sussex, from where we would commence our trip on the heritage steam railway.**

**Initially, traffic was reasonably light on the motorways to East Sussex, and we were in ample time to arrive for a leisurely lunch before boarding on the pre-booked train. However, with only a few miles to go, we discovered that the road to Sheffield Park was closed. A diversion was sign-posted, and we progressed on the alternative route. We realised that this would delay us somewhat but there was still time to spare.**

**Travelling through the country lanes, enjoying the beautiful scenery, we came upon a low bridge with a maximum height restriction for vehicles. The drivers, taking heed of the height of the mini buses, made the decision that we could not go under the bridge. The only course was to retrace our route to the closed road. Once there, one of the VISOR Trustees used their charm and persuasion to ask the workmen if they would make an exception and allow the mini buses through the closure. It was to much relief that the**



**guys understood the problem and kindly allowed us to continue along the closed road.**

**Finally, we arrived at Sheffield Park Station. There was still time for everyone to either eat their packed lunches or eat in the café, even though it was extremely busy with other tourists. Some of us even managed to have a quick browse in the gift shop before our departure on the vintage steam train.**

**While on the 40-minute journey, one of the Bluebell Railway guards kindly gave us an impromptu talk on the history of the railway. The 11-mile, standard gauge, heritage line runs mainly in West Sussex, serving four stations: Sheffield Park, Horsted Keynes, Kingscote and East Grinstead. It was built by the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway Company and started its commercial operation in 1882. It was closed in 1958 but then re-opened to the public in 1960 by the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society, running a service from Sheffield Park to Bluebell Halt.**

**The extension of the service took place between 1962-2013. Now it is a very popular tourist attraction with the railway hosting many events, including weddings. Everyone thanked the guard for enhancing the enjoyment of our time on the train. As for the bluebells, there were less than expected due to being late in the season.**

**On leaving the train, there was time for members to partake in afternoon tea, as well as visiting the museum, engine sheds and to re-visit the gift shop for last-minute souvenirs. Finally, we took to the road for our homeward journey, after a memorable and enjoyable day.**

**On behalf of everyone, I would like to pass on our thanks to the drivers for safely taking us there and back.**

**Josie**

# Bluebell Railway Outing



## **ROCKETMAN**

**Whilst on the VISOR holiday, some of us expressed an interest in seeing the film 'Rocketman'. This is the recent film about Sir Elton John, directed by David Furnish, which had received 5-star reviews. Most of us had grown up with his music and were curious about the film.**

**We met outside the Odeon cinema in Richmond for the early evening performance. Most of us had not been to the cinema for years and were startled to find the cost of our seats were £15+ each! However, once we found our seats, they were large seats and very comfortable with a good view of the screen.**

**The film was brilliant being exhilarating, sad, shocking and emotional. It took you through Elton's early relationships with his parents, grandmother, his first lyricist, Bernie Taupin, and then John Reid, his Manager. It went on to tell us about his addictions with alcohol and cocaine, and his long road to recovery.**

**The music was sensational and included many favourites during the film such as Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting, Rocketman, Tiny Dancer, Daniel, Your Song and many more.**

**Rocketman is one of those films that will remain in your memory for some time to come, and we were all very glad to have had the opportunity to see it.**

**Pat**

### **Mind the Gap and watch your step**

**Some members have reported having difficulty alighting from trains services at certain main line and some underground stations due to the width of the gap, or the depth of the step, between the train and the platform.**

**Despite the often clear and repeated warnings announced at stations, accidents can happen (recently experienced by two of our members)**

**You are reminded to remain vigilant and aware of these hazards**

**Trustees**

### **STEVIE'S STABLE**

**It has been another quiet period.**

#### **Rainbow Rebel**

**has now recovered from his injury but has been officially retired from racing, and has been**

re-homed for hopefully a long and happy retirement. His racing record was 41 runs, 9 wins, 9 second places, and 3<sup>rd</sup> six times, earning £164,839 in prize money. To a £1-level stake, he was +£2.23.

### **Bagad Bihoue**

His back surgery has been a success except for a few small setbacks, and he's now in pre-training ready to return to Paul Nicholls.

### **Rick Steady**

has suffered a few setbacks with lameness but returned to the track at Worcester on 10<sup>th</sup> July in a 2-mile hurdle where he was very disappointing, finishing 7<sup>th</sup> of 8 runners. Alan King is going to try him in cheek pieces next time to see if that helps.

After Rainbow Rebel, I have invested my hard-earned winnings into a 2-year-old called "Malvern" being trained by Richard Hamon, which should make a racecourse debut towards the end of the summer.

Congratulations to Pat and John who had their first win with Parody at Newton Abbot in July - hopefully the first of many on her racing adventure.

See you in the bookies, Steve

# **TEIGNMOUTH HOLIDAY - 2019**

## **THE JOURNEY**

**This year, for the first time, we decided to take the whole group by train for the journey to and from Teignmouth with a view to meeting concerns registered in previous years about the comfort and time of the long bus trip in a vehicle not really designed for such journeys. It was necessary to split the journey into two sections - from Richmond to Reading, and from Reading to Teignmouth.**

**Booked seats and assistance by the railway companies were arranged to make the transfers and the journey as stress-free as possible. However, the need to change platforms at Reading quickly did cause some worries.**

**Unfortunately, for the outward journey, the seat reservations on the Reading to Teignmouth section had not been marked. As a result, some confusion ensued. Seats however were available, and everyone was able to travel in comfort. The advantages of the train including the freedom of movement became evident and we arrived in Teignmouth about two hours earlier than had we taken the normal bus.**

**The part of the journey along the beautiful Devon coast via Dawlish was particularly appreciated.**

**The return journey passed without a hitch and we arrived back in Richmond around 5 p.m. having left Teignmouth around midday.**

**The question of transport arrangement in future years may need some reflection.**

**Edward**

**KILLERTON HOUSE & GARDENS**  
**Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

**Killerton House is a National Trust property – a 6,400-acre estate, built in the 1800s for the Acland family, with a glorious landscaped garden surrounded by parkland and a fine 18<sup>th</sup> century house. Sir Richard Acland gave it to the National Trust in 1944. There is plenty of calm space in the glorious garden, beautiful year-round, with rhododendrons, magnolias, champion trees and formal lawns. The estate has an onsite café and restaurant.**

**Keith**



# **THE DONKEY SANCTUARY, SIDMOUTH**

**5<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

**As we had not visited the sanctuary on a VISOR holiday for many years, it was decided to see the new buildings and improvements that had taken place over the past 4 years.**

**The Donkey Sanctuary was opened in 1969 by Dr. Elisabeth Svendsen, MBE, their founder. Sidmouth is only one of the many centres throughout the UK where they help over 40+ million donkeys. They have a riding school where children with special needs can experience the calm and gentle donkeys in the large barn. At the sanctuary there is much to see and you can walk for miles through the Heritage Walk, pause in the Memory Rose Gardens, visit the exhibition centre and enjoy delicious food in their new restaurant overlooking acres of glorious Devon countryside.**

**I have been a supporter of the sanctuary for many years and in their most recent newsletter I was appalled to hear about the donkeys found in Blackpool. I asked one of the helpers about a donkey called Bruce who had been singled out for extreme cruelty and was told that he was in another sanctuary, well on his long road to recovery. However, she told me that 27 other donkeys were indeed with them but had been put in one of the top fields about a mile+ away, so that they could gradually be introduced to people**

again. The helper was close to tears when she told me that the RSPCA and the Sanctuary had never seen such a catalogue of terrible abuse and cruelty, which fortunately was filmed by a member of the public who contacted the RSPCA. She told me that the film affected them all very badly. The perpetrators only got a ban from keeping animals for four years, which was disappointing to say the least.

After hearing this story a few of us, myself, Carol, Ray, Eileen and Keith, decided to make the pilgrimage up to the far fields. It was explained that they would not come near to us because they would be nervous but if they did, it would be a huge step forward. It was a very long trek and mostly uphill, but we found them eventually. We approached slowly and gently, and it was good to see them grazing peacefully in the sunshine and, best of all, they did not shy away from us. It was a very humbling experience to see their scars and how badly they had been treated but reassuring to know that they are all now in safe hands.

Later most of us enjoyed some food in the restaurant, enjoyed the gardens and spent ages buying souvenirs in the shop, which is much bigger and better now. We have enclosed a photo taken of some of us in the gardens outside the main entrance.

Pat

## **SOMEWHAT SOMETHING**

**Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

**As we made our way from the Donkey Sanctuary to the Tea Rooms which should have been a 15-minute journey to Sidmouth, we had to make a detour to avoid the ford. We drove into Sidmouth and could not find the way to the venue because of the narrow roads. Eventually, I rang and Jamie came to give us directions to the Tea Rooms.**

**We had a table for 14 and were served pots of tea with freshly-made date scones with plenty of jam and cream – all enjoyed by the members.**

**After tea we had a 30-minute jaunt around Sidmouth before returning to the mini-bus for the journey back to the hotel for dinner and quiz in the evening.**

**Keith**

### **V.I.S.O.R. JUNE 2019 HOLIDAY at The Cliffden Hotel, Teignmouth, Devon**

**This is just an update on the improvements at the hotel seen from our point of view when we visited in early June.**

**We were very pleased to note that the transfer to Starboard Hotels from Action for Blind People/ Guide Dogs seems to have improved from last year and things are settling down.**

**It was obvious that a great deal of renovation had been done since last year and most of the rooms have been updated with pretty furnishings. The gardens were neat and tidy, the lawns mowed and lots of new planting was noticed.**

**The regular and new members of staff were extremely helpful and certainly did their best to help everyone. There were a large number of totally blind visitors with guide dogs, so they were very busy during mealtimes. The service had certainly improved and during most evenings the food came more quickly than last year.**

**They are starting to run their trips to places of interest again, in their own mini-buses, but they have still not organised evening entertainment. This was about to start during July/August, which is good news.**

**Pat**



## Kneller Hall Concert



## Visit to donkey sanctuary



**V.I.S.O.R Trip to Kneller Hall, 2019**  
**Camus 25 Gala Concert**

**We all met at the Well Being Centre, Twickenham, and made our way by minibus to the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall.**

**After being cleared by security we were met by Captain Godwin and Sgt Neal Grimwood who escorted us to our seats. We were given a 10-minute warning by the trumpeters of the Household Cavalry.**

**The music was provided by various bands including the Coldstream Guards, Royal Artillery Band and other various conductors. The music included selections from The Greatest Showman, Carmen Fantasia, West Side Story and the winner of Britain's Got Talent, Colin Thackery, from the Chelsea Pensioners who sang 'Wind Beneath My Wings.'**

**At the finale we had the address from Colonel Victoria Reid, O.B.E. followed by Fantasia on British Sea Songs, Pomp & Circumstance No.1, Corps of Army music March followed by the National Anthem.**

**The evening ended with a wonderful, colourful firework display enjoyed by all.**

**Keith**



## **WIMBLEDON 2019**

**On Day Six of the Championships, I made my way via the 493 bus to SW19. On entering the grounds, I made my way to Court 18 and, on the way, the BBC with Sue Barker were about to interview Tracey Austin and Billy Jean King. Then to Court 18 and walking around the grounds watching various matches and visiting the Robinson's drinks area for a taste of strawberry, mint and cucumber. I also visited various shops and later spoke to Eddie Jones, the England Rugby Union Manager. During the day, I walked approx. 7½ miles. A good day was had, and I look forward to next week's play.**

**On Day Nine I went again and saw senior players on court including Kim Clijsters, Tracey Austin, Conchita Martinez and Andrea Jaeger playing, as well as a number of juniors just starting out on their careers. In the afternoon, I saw Roger Federer and Kei Nishikora practicing for their Quarter Final match. I then had a pint of Stella Artois and a portion of strawberries and cream, before making my way to Henman Hill to watch more tennis before leaving around 8 p.m. – another 7 miles of walking!**

**Keith**

## **MIDDLESEX ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND**

**MAB have some Tricycle Club meetings and Bowls sessions coming up. The programme of these events is on the following two pages.**

**Anybody from our membership is welcome to attend.**

**Please contact them directly if you are interested.**

### **CHARITY CRICKET**

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Brian Rollings memorial match against Richmond Yorkers will take place on Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> September 2019, at Kew Cricket Club on Kew Green.**

**If anybody would like to come along for the afternoon's game and evening of music, then please do so as you will be made welcome.**

**Again, we will be raising money for VISOR. Last year's game raised £390 and with your help and support, hopefully we can beat that.**

**Hope to see many of you there, Steve**



# **THANK YOU**

**VISOR Trustees would like to thank the following for their continued help and support:**

- The Cabbage Patch Pub for the free use of a room for our Social nights**
- Cartier Graphics (Feltham) for their printing and photocopying help**
- Dave Jackson – photography and Steve's gopher**
- Kew Cricket Club for advertising us on their website.**

**Thank you to the following for allowing us to put VSOR collecting boxes in their premises:**

- Kew Cricket Club**
- Richmond Rehab Unit (Evelyn Road, Richmond)**
- The Cabbage Patch Pub, Twickenham**

**If any members know of anywhere locally that we could place our boxes, please let the VISOR office know.**

**VISOR Trustees**

## **OBITUARIES**

**We are very sad to announce the passing of two of our members after long illnesses – Lee Stanley of Barnes and Derek Yardell of East Sheen.**

**The VISOR Trustees and members send their deepest sympathy to the families concerned and our thoughts and prayers are with them at this sad time.**

## **SOCIAL CALENDAR - 2019**

<b>Tuesday 6th August</b>	<b>Social Night</b>
<b>Tuesday 3rd September</b>	<b>Social Night</b>
<b>Friday 13th September</b>	<b>Memorial Cricket Match</b>
<b>Wednesday 18th September</b>	<b>Longleat</b>
<b>Tuesday 1st October</b>	<b>Social Night</b>
<b>Thursday 10th October</b>	<b>Arundel Castle</b>
<b>Tuesday, 5th Nov. - cancelled</b>	<b>Social Night - cancelled</b>
<b>Thursday 21st November</b>	<b>VISOR Fund Raiser (Vestry Hall)</b>
<b>Tuesday 3rd December</b>	<b>Xmas Social</b>
<b>TBA - December</b>	<b>Xmas Lunch</b>

**Any other events organised will be advertised in due course.**

**Trustees**

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

**VISUALLY IMPAIRED SOCIETY OF RICHMOND  
(V.I.S.O.R.)**

**Sheen Lane Centre  
74 Sheen Lane  
London SW14 8IP**

**Telephone: 020 8487 5301**

**VIP Lounge opening hours:  
Mondays 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**Email: [visor.daac@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:visor.daac@yahoo.co.uk)**

**UK Registered Charity No. 1090135**