

VISOR - 2025  
SUMMER NEWSLETTER



## **CHAIRS WELCOME**

**Dear Members**

**Herewith our Summer/Autumn Newsletter which is longer than usual because it includes an article on Doug's trip to New Zealand which makes very interesting reading.**

**A very warm welcome to our new members, Anne and Julia. We hope you both enjoy your time with Visor and we look forward to seeing you at some of our events.**

**We still have a few places left on the Eastbourne trip so please let us know if you would like to come.**

**Pat**

## ROSE OF YORK LUNCH

on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2025

We had our second visit to the Rose of York pub for a three-course lunch, with 25 members old and new attending.

We had a choice of three starters: squid, soup and spicy sausage, followed by a choice of four main courses: fish & chips, chicken schnitzel, bangers & mash, and sweet potato & chicken curry. We then had the choice of three deserts: sticky toffee pudding, ice cream, and chocolate brownie + sauce, followed by tea or coffee if required.

A good time was had by all, and we look forward to going back to the Rose of York again.

Keith

## APRIL 2025 VISOR VISIT TO GOODWOOD HOUSE

After a pleasant journey through some beautiful small towns and villages and open countryside, we reached our destination.

Goodwood House appeared quite suddenly, not a grand imposing house, but built to sit in open countryside, and still make an impression.

Everything went like clockwork. We were greeted at the entrance, met our guide (originally from Syon House) and began our tour.

The guide was excellent giving us a really good description of the people who had built and lived in Goodwood House, and how it had changed over the years.

Each room was spectacular – Lizzie loved the Yellow Room, and the fantastic Egyptian-themed Dining Room. Thank goodness it was reinstated after the King, not approving of the décor, and his Host changing it to ‘His Royal Highness’s liking’.

We did think that a little more time to study the paintings and items of interest would have been a bonus.

We enjoyed the high tea, with silver tea pots, three-tiered cake stands and lovely food. We felt very grand and it was just the right ending to a special day.

Sheila & Lizzie

## **COMMUNITY HEROES AWARD**

**Councillor Dane, one of our local Councillors, kindly nominated VISOR for a Richmond Community Heroes Award 2024 - 2025.**

**The award is given for individuals and small charities who have given their time to helping people in the community. We did not win our category but were shortlisted - all who were nominated received a framed award for their efforts. This award is now in the VISOR office for all to see.**

**Alwyn and Pat were invited to the event at York House which took place on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April in the evening. There were approximately 300 people present from many local charities. It was very humbling to meet so many lovely people who have done so much work in the Borough.**

**We sat at a table with Councillor Dane, and next to Councillor Cambridge, whilst The Mayor and Councillor Gareth Roberts, Leader of the Council, and other dignitaries presented the prizes.**

**We would like to thank Councillor Dane for nominating VISOR.**

RICHMOND THEATRE - May 2025

ROCKY HORROR  
PICTURE SHOW

I started out at Popeye's for Chicken Tenders & Coke (limitless) before making my way to the theatre. It was very colourful with lots of the audience in colourful outfits. The show started at 8:00 p.m. with the live band playing tunes from the show, ending with the 'Time Warp'.

It started with the Usherette coming on stage; she doubled up as Majenta in the show. As the curtain came up, we saw Brad and Janet in a cardboard cutout of a car which broke down. They came out and made their way to the castle. They were met by Rif Raff and the Phantoms. They were stripped into white coats as the Phantoms danced around the pair, then Frank f-Furter made his entrance in a black cape. He threw this off and came on stage wearing a basque,

suspenders and stockings. As the show progressed, Frank f-Furter had made Rocky a muscle-bound human being. The music was loud and entertaining; the narrator was a lady and she was having a lot of banter with the audience. This went on for most of the show; it was entertaining but got very rude at times. As the first half finished Frank f-Furter had a bed on stage ... and the rest is censored. The second half continued the same way as before. It was very entertaining with more banter between the audience and the narrator. Towards the end, we had a floor show with various members of the cast in red suspenders and stockings and feather boas. This was carried on by Rif Raff and Majenta before they transported the castle back to Transylvania. That was the one before the band did a reprise of the songs and a repeat of the 'Time Warp' by the cast and audience.

Keith

**VISOR HOLIDAY TO  
WESTON SUPER MARE  
JUNE 2025**

**We left London at about 10.30 am on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> June and made our way to Somerset in the comfortable Cruisers accessible coach, driven by Mat, who remained with us all week. We stopped half way down for a leisurely lunch before arriving in the afternoon.**

**On the Tuesday we had pre-booked a visit to Tyntesfield House, near Bristol. The weather was excellent and we were not prepared for the treat that awaited us. Tyntesfield House is the most expensive house ever purchased by the National Trust and is the most beautiful ancestral home I have visited (Blenheim a close second). It is gothic and in excellent condition. The guides were very knowledgeable and kept us amused with the stories of the family and restoration of the house.**

**We enjoyed a tasty cream tea in the cafe kindly paid for by Shirley and Barry as a donation to the holiday. Thank you again both of you – such a kind gesture.**

**On the Wednesday we split into two groups – one small group visiting the Helicopter Museum and the remainder visited the outdoor market in the Italian Gardens in Weston. The market sold everything from interesting food, jewellery and inexpensive clothes. We walked along the promenade and onto the pier for some**

**tea before enjoying ice creams in the sun before returning home.**

**On the Thursday the weather was bad and Mat, our driver, luckily found us an amazing museum called Oakham Farm Museum where we spent most of the day. It was a huge museum which contained something of interest for 8 – 80+ year olds.**

**There were classic cars, tractors, miniature cars, sewing machines, pharmaceuticals, brooches, flags, old books, maps, sweets, cigarettes and packaging and much much more from years gone by. We also enjoyed home cooked food in their cafe which was airy and spacious.**

**In the evenings we enjoyed being entertained by a singer/guitarist who sang a variety of music from the 60s through to present time. On the other two evenings we enjoyed fun quizzes prepared by Doug and Pat.**

**We had a very smooth journey back to London on the Friday, returning late afternoon.**

**Pat**

## WESTON SUPER MARE 2025 HOLIDAY - HOTEL FOOD

When we arrived at the hotel, we went into the lounge for tea and coffee. We then had to give our choices from the menu for our main meal in the evening, before going to our rooms.

Each morning, we followed a similar procedure after our breakfast and before we left the hotel for our day's outing.

The breakfasts were either a Continental or a full English - with our own choice of breakfast items. We had an equally good choice of dishes for dinner each evening, with 3 starters, 4 main courses, and then a dessert.

Keith

## WIMBLEDON 2025

I visited Wimbledon on the second Tuesday and second Thursday, for 8 hours each day. I went on the 493 bus from Richmond, and went for a coffee before walking around the grounds.

I watched various matches on the outside courts, the big screen on the hill, and also near Court 12 sitting on the deck chairs.

It was very tiring with the hot weather, so you needed plenty of water and cans of Pimms to keep going! I fully enjoyed both days, and I look forward to next year.

Keith

## **My Holiday to New Zealand (Aotearoa – Maori Name)**

**I was visiting my cousin, who for the first 21 years of my life we lived in the same house therefore we were more like brothers; he and his wife emigrated to New Zealand in 1969, 56 years ago. In the late 1990's I went there on four occasions and was seriously thinking about moving there myself; I met my wife and she soon put a stop to my plans.**

**He and his wife had been back to England during that time; my other cousin who I was travelling with, left Heathrow on Monday at 11:10am to Los Angeles. We had a 5 hours layover for our connecting flight to Auckland. Just before we landed in Auckland, I blearily looked out of the window and saw a magnificent sun rise. We actually landed at 5:40am on Thursday. The journey lasted 29 hours (24 hours flying and 5 waiting at Los Angeles). I firmly believe we lost Tuesday; this must be my imagination.**



**The 2 flights over to New Zealand were planned to be a mini round the world trip, outbound westwards and returning from the east.**

**Heathrow to Los Angeles - British Airways  
A350**

**Los Angeles to Auckland - New Zealand  
Airways A350.**

**On arrival, my cousin (Tony) and his wife (Linda) were waiting for us. We took a free park and ride bus to a motel called The KIWI Motel where his car was parked. At the motel we all had a drink; we had another 2 1/2 hour journey in his car to their home in WHANGAREI. All place names in New Zealand starting with WH is pronounced "F" therefore Whangarei is pronounced FONGARAY; we arrived home at 10:15am and I changed into a pair of shorts and polo shirt. We then sat down and caught up on life since his last visit to England. It did not stop there as we went to a marina for midday lunch. We returned home for a chat and rest; it seemed as though we had never been apart.**



**Every morning Tony had to look and respond to work emails, and 2 or 3 phone calls during the day; this however did not spoil the holiday. Their home overlooked the river Hatea.**

**The following day after a good night's sleep, we drove into the local town to look at the shops and another marina. Nearly every day we went to a supermarket; there was plenty to choose from - the fruit and vegetables were in excellent condition.**

**On two of the Sundays we went to church; the church was called ELIM. The service was very different to what I am used to; lots of jolly singing and music.**

**The following day, friends of Tony and Linda suggested we go out for a picnic. The picnic was from 6:00pm to 7:30pm overlooking McLarens Bay, which was only 15 minutes from home.**

**The picnic consisted of fish (red snapper), chips and salad.**

**After 5 days we headed north to a town called Paihia (which was about 80 miles from home) where we stayed in a timeshare apartment and were there for six days. The apartment was more than a luxury standard and it overlooked Paihia bay. During the days we were there, 5 cruise liners came in (one per day) at about 8pm, and the passengers came ashore the next day to do their own thing. When the liners were in the bay, Paihia held a market selling clocks, shells, scarfs and ornaments. About 22 hours later, the cruise liners up-anchored and left the bay.**

**The Sunday we were there, we visited OMATA - VINEYARD which served wine, sangria, soft drinks, and a variety of very tasty pizzas. After a pizza and wine lunch, we travelled into a town called RUSSELL. There is a wooden structured church (the oldest in New Zealand) which, in about 1760, there was a battle between the Europeans and the Maori's; the Europeans raced to the church and war commenced.**

**To this very day, there are 13 bullet holes in the church, and there are many gravestones around the church with the people who fell; the oldest gravestone there was dated 1730.**



**Another escapade: I wanted to visit the CAPE REINGA which is the most northern point on north island; the way I wanted to go was on a bus on ordinary roads and then on to the beach called 90-mile beach. You can get on and off the bus anywhere along the beach; the route came to an end 2 years ago. We got to**

**Cape Reinga in my cousins' car; on our way to the Cape we stopped at the Māori museum for refreshments and bought souvenirs. However, things change in 25 years; there was an enormous car park now - there were only 2 shops 25 years ago - a post office and souvenir shop. Allegedly, in about 2007 the Maoris burnt them down; nobody was arrested. The post office sold stamps with only a Cape Reinga mark and not New Zealand; this was quite unique for stamp collectors. If you sent them through the post, they were liable to be stolen.**



**The Pacific Ocean and the Tasman sea meet there and crash against each other and form a white foam line which can be seen for miles out to sea. On our way home we stopped for an ice cream. We parked near 90-mile beach; we walked on the beach and paddled in the TASMAN sea.**

**You can drive any vehicle on the 90-mile beach but you are warned against it as many a vehicle has sunk in the sand and been destroyed by the sea.**

**From the apartment to the cape was about 300 miles (there and back). This was my suggestion, and I was very disappointed as the historic shops had gone and the weather being so good had an effect on the waves where the Tasman sea and the Pacific ocean join, this is a well known tourist spot to see the massive waves crashing together out at sea.**

**Two days later, we decided to go on a boat cruise which was called " The Hole In The Rock" but when you book your tickets you are told the boat may or may not go through the hole because of weather and tidal conditions. The cruiser held about 100 people, and the cruise took approximately 4 1/2 hours.**

**We boarded the cruiser at PAIHIA and then set off to RUSSELL to collect more passengers, now the actual cruise began seeing many islands some inhabited and some not. Some of the islands were bought for about 10 New Zealand dollars, which is about £5.00 (no gas or electricity); one notable inhabitant was the author, Zane Grey. Throughout the cruise the captain informed us all about the different islands, places and the history. We eventually arrived at the hole in the rock; there was a lot of information about the hole in the rock which the captain told us. We went through the hole and I guess the hole was only about 1 meter bigger than the boat; two of the crew members were on either side with poles to make sure the boat did not collide with the rocks. On our return journey I plucked up the courage to ask**

**the captain if I could steer the cruiser and to my surprise, he said yes - only for about 5 minutes. The route was basically straight; I sat in the captain's seat while he stood behind (the co-pilot may have had something to do with the steering).**



**We disembarked the cruiser and walked along the jetty; in the water below there were red snappers and Monterey's, and also there were signs NO FISHING - PROTECTED AREA.**

**We stopped at an island for refreshments, and after that we returned to PAHHIA.**

**February 6th is WAITANGI day, which is New Zealand's national day; it's for New Zealanders, Maoris and politicians. The treaty was signed by the British Crown and Maori chiefs on the governors lawn (near the BAY OF PLENTY) in about 1840 This year the Maoris threw tomatoes at the politicians and removed the microphone so they could not be heard, other years the day has been quite violent. The treaty both sides signed is different, it's the truth.**

**On the third Sunday we travelled to a restaurant called MATAKANA MARKET KITCHEN where we met the whole family: my cousin's sons, wives and grandchildren, I knew the sons and wives but not the grandchildren. 2 sons live in Auckland and the other lives in the South Island. He and his wife are dairy farmers. They have 600 cows to milk twice a day; they have help to milk 600 cows. It takes 90 minutes.**

**During the last few days of our holiday we travelled south to ROTORUA, a Maori stronghold; with 3 miles to go, we could smell Sulphur (bad eggs). We visited WHAKAREWAREWA village where there are mud pools, geysers and hot springs. These are all over 106 degrees Fahrenheit; the heat comes from underground thermals. Some of the names of the mud pools and hot springs are as follows, STEAMING FUMARoles, SODOM AND GOMORREH, MUD VOLCANO, STEAMING CLIFFS, TE TEBU, KERERU, POHUTU and THE BLUEYS. At the end of the day your clothes smelled of sulphur.**

**We visited the Kiwi museum where we actually saw a lively kiwi - very unusual . Every year the museum rescues 2 kiwis: 1 boy and 1 girl; after 12 months they are released back into the wild. This time they obtained 2 boys but a few months together one became the predator and the other the victim; the museum had to separate them because the weaker one would have been killed.**

**Our last major day out was to the GONDOLA (like a cable car); at the entrance all there was was a rather large car park and payment kiosks; everybody goes on the gondola to the top of the mountain (very steep). At the top there are luges, zip wires and 6 different cycle tracks (track 1 easy and track 6 hard) to return to bottom. Also, there was a MEGA SWING for 4 people which had to be winched about 100 meters in the air and then let go. It looked terrifying; lastly there was a restaurant where I bought drinks and a snack for all of us. The views from the top overlooked LAKE ROTORUA.**

**On the last full day in New Zealand we travelled back to Auckland Airport where we said our final goodbyes. My cousin and his wife drove home; we were staying in the KIWI motel because our flight home was early. Auckland to Singapore - New Zealand Airways A350 Then Singapore to Heathrow - British Airways A380**

**It was a magical holiday; I hope to return to New Zealand in 2 years' time and not leave it 25 years like I had previously.**

**I know I have not told you everything we did; I will always talk to you about New Zealand.**

**A little information - we saw:**

**CAPE REINGA - PAIHIA - WHANGAREI and  
KAKAHI water falls - MANGONUI - RUSSELL -  
COROMANDEL - HAMILTON - ROTORUA -  
TAUPO - WHANGANUI - DOUBTLESS BAY -  
KERI KERI.**

**One last thing, there are 2 meeting places  
called THE MARAE which is for everybody and  
the other THE LOWER MARAE is for Maoris  
only, when you enter one of these places you  
have to take off your shoes.**





**THE END**

**Doug - Trustee**

**Dear Members**

**September 2025**

**We just want to remind you that our monthly quiz/tea/chat sessions at the Richmond Library Annexe, are completely free to members for the duration of a local grant we acquired for VISOR.**

**If you wish, you are welcome to bring a guest or two.**

**On their first visit they will not be charged. However, if they wish to continue to attend, we must ask that they join VISOR as a member or pay £3 per person/per visit.**

**Trustees**

## **OBITUARY**

### **VITO MAURICI**

**We are very sad to announce that Vito, one of our members, passed away peacefully on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2025, aged 81 years.**

**He and his wife Pauline have been members of Visor for some years and they have joined us for several lunches and events.**

**Vito was a lovely person and he will be sadly missed.**

**Pauline and the family asked that donations were made to Visor in lieu of flowers which we really appreciated. (Access through Holmes & Daughters, East Sheen).**

**Our thoughts and prayers are with Pauline and Vito's family.**

**Pat**

## FUTURE TRIPS/EVENTS – 2025

Thursday - 11 <sup>th</sup> September Lending Library Annexe	Quiz Afternoon 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday - 17 <sup>th</sup> September	Visor Members' Trip to Eastbourne
Thursday - 9 <sup>th</sup> October Lending Library Annexe	Quiz Afternoon 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Friday - 24 <sup>th</sup> October Twickenham Stadium	10:00 – 4:00 p.m. Full of Life Fair
Thursday - 13 <sup>th</sup> November Lending Library Annexe	Quiz Afternoon 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Thursday - 11 <sup>th</sup> December Lending Library Annexe	Christmas Quiz and Raffle for members 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.
To be arranged - December	Christmas lunch To be confirmed
To be arranged - June 2026	Visor Holiday To be confirmed

The Christmas Pantomime at the Richmond Theatre in December this year will be Cinderella. Visor will not be arranging tickets this year, so if you are interested you must book your own tickets.

FREE ITEMS  
AVAILABLE IN OFFICE

2	Gents watches
2	Line writing aids
9	Magnifiers - battery
1	Magnifier - Specs in case
1	Magnifier - Cord around neck
2	Large button telephones
1	Answering machine
1	Clear view power supply unit
1	Large print - recipes
1	Smart talk - Easy to use talking set top box
2	Large print key boards
1	TV picture expander - by 50%
3	Large print playing cards
1	Domino set
1	Pill box
1	Scrabble- large print
10	Magnifying specs (different shapes and sizes)
3	Extendable walking stick

1	Large label medication dispenser
1	Braille (stud marked) measuring tape
1	Measuring jug
1	Pocket Rape Alarm
1	<u>NEW</u> MAB combined player radio/cassette/USB (CD doesn't work) H8" xW15" xD8" - battery or mains

Should you wish to view any of the above items, we would appreciate you advising the office in advance of your intended visit to the office.

Thank you.

## **THANK YOU**

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

- **The London Mayor's Fund (Building Strong Communities)**
- **The Hampton Fund**
- **Richmond Foundation**
- **The National Lottery 2024 Community Fund**
- **Chair & Trustees of the Kew Fair**
- **The Ulverscroft Foundation**
- **Middlesex Association for the Blind**
  
- **Ed Mears, IT Consultant, for his continued invaluable assistance**
- **Cartier Graphics for their assistance with printing our brochures, newsletters, etc.**
- **Cruisers Limited for their quality coaches and helpful driver**
- **Richmond Libraries (Annexe) for providing a venue for our regular meetings**

**VISOR Trustees**

**VISOR  
CURRENT ELECTED OFFICERS  
AND TRUSTEES**

**Pat McNamee – Chair**

**Ashley Wright – Volunteer Treasurer**

**Trustees:**

**Keith Bulmer**

**John Hoschander**

**Doug. Smith**

**Josie Wood**

**Alwyn Wales**

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **VISUALLY IMPAIRED SOCIETY OF RICHMOND (VISOR)**

**Sheen Lane Centre**

**74 Sheen Lane**

**East Sheen**

**London SW14 8IP**

**Telephone: 020 8487 5301**

**Email: [admin@visor.org.uk](mailto:admin@visor.org.uk)**

**Website: [www.visor.org.uk](http://www.visor.org.uk)**

**Visitors' Centre opening hours:**

**Mondays: 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

**UK Registered Charity No. 1090135**

**This newsletter was compiled by the office  
volunteers. Many thanks to our contributors.**