

# THE GRASSHOPPER PENSIONERS' CLUB



## MARTINS BANK

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

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CHAIRMAN: Bernard Lovewell

TREASURER: Alan Thomond

WELFARE OFFICER: Ken Quirk

Database Manager: David Baxter

Function Organiser: Ken Quirk



## CLOSURES OF OUR FORMER BRANCHES CONTINUE TO REDUCE OUR ONCE COMPREHENSIVE NETWORK BUT



**IN THIS ISSUE:**  
**ARCHIVES REVIEWED (?)**  
**CERTAINLY NOT THEIRS?**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**WILLIS TOWERS WATSON CONTINUE**  
**TO IGNORE OUR WIDOWS**  
**NEW MEMBERS**  
**DEATH NOTICES**

Does this **BARCLAYS (?)** caravan remind you  
of another? Although I could be mistaken...



In the latest edition of **Barclays' 'Archives Reviewed'**, the following article appeared, headed: **'The changing face of retail banking'**  
*As Barclays continues to adapt to changing customer needs, we are striving to keep abreast of the latest developments. There is no doubt that banking is currently in the process of monumental change, and it is essential that we capture that. We keep careful records of branch closures, as we know that colleagues in Customer Relations will need this*

**New Year Edition 2024**  
*information in the future; we advise branches due to close on the preservation of their historic records; and we aim to capture as much information as we can about new initiatives. We were fascinated to see that one new service now being offered involves the use of a mobile facility, something which has a long history in Barclays.* (Continued on Page 2)

### 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November

The Gascoigne Room at The Union Jack Club

### MINUTES

#### 1. Welcome (Bernard Lovewell)

Our Chairman opened the Meeting by thanking our members and their guests for attending.

#### 2. Apologies for Absence Alan Thomond, Ted Foster,

David Baxter (I'm afraid that I have misplaced my notes but please contact me if you did offer your apologies and I will add them to the final version of the Minutes)

#### 3. Minutes of the 2022 AGM

The printed copies of the Minutes were read and accepted by those present.

#### 4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

#### 5. Chairman's Report

Bernard confirmed that we would continue to arrange functions at venues around the country for our members and their guests in order to cater for our ageing membership to enable that as many members as possible would be able to attend and meet their former colleagues. He thanked our Committee Members for their continued support and their efforts, which ensured that the Club could and would continue to function. In conclusion, Bernard paid respects to Susan Sutcliffe for her role as our Welfare Officer, when she stepped-in to ensure that the Club would continue to function for the benefit of its members and, finally, mentioning the role that Arthur Rowe had played in ensuring that, as a Member of the Union Jack Club, the cost of hiring the function rooms was reasonable for a central London location.

#### 6. Treasurer's Report

**(Read by the Secretary in Alan's unavoidable absence)**  
*May I start by apologising for being unable to be with you in person today and thank David for delivering this report on my behalf.*

In 2022, we were back to normal following the three years of disruption caused by COVID.

Robert Bunn retired at last year's AGM and I accepted the role.

Although we continue to have a substantial surplus, 2024 will be the 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our takeover by Barclays and I believe that we should offer all of our members a benefit, which should be discussed at this AGM.

New members continue to join our Club, but with the youngest being at least 70 years of age, 'Lifetime Membership' for £5 must be considered as becoming dated and I would suggest that we agree to cancel this cost to new members joining our Club from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024, with which I trust you will agree.

Although the completion of the renovations to our former Head Office building has been delayed, and will not be completed until 2025, I believe that we should offer our members who attend our functions a benefit at our 2024 'Remembrance Lunches' in December 2024.

With our 'Guests' obtaining the same benefit as our members but, for whom we cannot claim any funding, I also believe that the structure should be revised and would like to propose that cost for attending should be:

Member	£10.00
Guest	£30.00

This would mean that our members who ask a guest to accompany them will be paying precisely the same as they do at present whilst our members, who attend in their own right, will benefit from a reduced cost. The removal of the Membership Fee, when coupled with a two tier pricing structure, may also result in the addition of a few 'new' members who, though former Martins staff, have attended as a guest.

This year, our membership numbers have increased yet again from areas outside London and, as Robert did last year, I believe that this geographical spread must continue to be recognised, with the areas outside London having been the source of the surplus generated this year.

I must also thank our Committee members for continuing not to claim any expenses when attending our functions and collecting items donated by members.

**7. Secretary's Report**

The Secretary had nothing to report

**8. Welfare Officer's Report**

Before her untimely death, Sue Sutcliffe had nothing to report. Our Secretary, David Baldwin, said that he has been dealing with a complex problem for one of our members and asked if our members would support him in writing to the Pension Fund Trustees in support of a member saying that for obvious reasons of confidentiality he could not disclose the problem. The members present gave their unanimous support.

**9. Election of Officers**

As the current Officers were willing to stand for re-election and Ken Quirk had offered to become our Welfare Officer, as there were no other nominations the current Officers were re-elected en-masse.

**10. Election of Auditor**

It was unanimously agreed that our Treasurer should obtain a third party, to audit the Club's Accounts.

**11. Any Other Business: PROPOSALS**

**a. Cancellation of Membership Fee:** For former colleagues becoming members of the Club, it was proposed that the £5 Membership Fee should not be charged with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024.

**Passed unanimously.**

With a sudden surge in new member applications, following the 2023 end-of-year lunches, the membership Fee was waived for all of our new members.

*Can my ultra vires actions be ratified at the 2024 AGM?*

**b. Future 'Function Fees':** As a 'Members' Club', it was felt that Members should benefit from any savings that could be obtained.

With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024, Function Fees will be:

Members £10; Guests £30.

Effectively, this would mean that there would be no change for Members who invite a Guest, as their guest would not be expected to pay, and would continue to pay £40 whilst Members would only pay £10 and thereby obtain their deserved benefit from being a Member.

**Passed by the majority of members with only one dissention.**

**There being no other business, the Meeting was closed at 13.10**

***Wait a minute, isn't that one of OUR caravans?***

In the early part of the twenty-first century, some seventy years after Martins Mobile Bank took to the road for the first time, the revival of the Mobile Bank is a wonderful tribute to the pioneers of this service. Trade stands have never really gone away, and now that you can once more pop into a mobile branch once a week in many towns and villages, it's like the whole idea has come full circle. Sadly though, the "bank on wheels" does not hold the same romantic appeal as its predecessor. *What goes around truly DOES come around:*



Wait a minute: Once again, wind back the clock to 1969, and with the merger

barely a few minutes old: **Wasn't that (Page 1) one of OUR caravans?**

## WILLIS TOWERS WATSON

Despite believing that Willis Towers Watson fully-understood how our **Widows & Orphans Fund** operated, following the death of a former male member of staff, I was saddened to learn from a recently-widowed member, that she had been advised that the **Martins Bank Widows & Orphans Fund** benefits had been discontinued. However, following confirmation that she had been given inaccurate advice by Willis Towers Watson, our widowed member is now receiving her rightful dues.

**IF ANY MEMBER KNOWS OF ANY MARTINS BANK NON-MEMBER WIDOW, OR WIDOWED-MEMBER, WHO IS NOT RECEIVING THE ADDITIONAL PAYMENT DUE BY VIRTUE OF THEIR HUSBAND'S 2% MONTHLY PAYMENT INTO THE FUND THEY SHOULD ADVISE THEM TO CONTACT WILLIS TOWERS WATSON IMMEDIATELY TO RESOLVE THE SITUATION.**

### AND STILL THEY COME!

I must thank everyone who has helped us to recruit new members, all of whom are happy to join our elite Club and **please continue with your efforts**. I apologise in advance should I have omitted the names of any of our new members but would ask any of those, whom I have omitted in error, to feel free to contact me with a gentle reminder so that I can rectify my error in the Spring Newsletter.

### WE WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

**PHIL ARROWSMITH** (A doppelgänger Phil Arrowsmith?)



I joined Martins in Wrexham on my 17th birthday, 11th October 1965 and was told that people bought cakes on their birthday for everyone. They let me off on my first day.

I worked in Wrexham for about a year and

was transferred to the much bigger branch in Chester, later being transferred back to Wrexham.

I would be interested to know if there is anyone still alive who remembers me.

*Kind regards, Phil Arrowsmith*

From the **MANCHESTER LUNCH**, we welcome: **JOHN** (aka Alan) **ALAN TUNNA**, **GAIL HAMILTON**, **PAUL HART** and **JOE JAMES** nor were we let down at our **LIVERPOOL LUNCH**, where **JANICE WALLACE** and **ROSEMARY MURPHY** although I believe that I

could have omitted another new member, for which I must apologise most sincerely.

**MALCOLM and KATH OLIPHANT:**

*Malcolm writes:* I joined Martins at age 18 on



1<sup>st</sup> September 1965 at **Kendal**, transferring to Windermere in 1966 and back to Kendal in 1969. Having lived in various places in the north-west as my career

progressed, a couple of years ago my wife and I decided to move here to the Isle of Man to be nearer our son and daughter and their families.

I noticed with interest your item about Staveley, sub branch to Kendal. *(The photograph which prompted*



*Malcolm's memories: ©Brenda Northrop)* During 1969-70 I was the cashier in charge. Mondays and Fridays, 10 am to 2 pm. coupled with this I went to **Burton-in-Kendal** on Tuesdays. Happy days, just myself and the "guard" who in reality was a retired gentleman in his 70s! It was a very peaceful work-flow with a steady trickle of customers plus an hour's closure for lunch, when my guard would go up the road to the local fish and chip shop for our lunches.

The only downside to this job was that on Wednesdays and Thursdays I was back in the main branch at Kendal where a major part of my duties was Stationery Clerk. In 1969: With the upcoming merger, this became something of a nightmare. Replacement Barclays' stationery seemed to arrive by the lorry load, all to be stored somewhere as the 12<sup>th</sup> December approached.

I also remember the **Woodside Hotel** in



Birkenhead. I stayed there in 1967 whilst on a cashiers' course and I remember catching the ferry each morning and evening. In November 1968 I stayed at a hotel whose name I cannot remember (Editor: The infamous Alexandra Court?) but

which I think was near Sefton Park. We were told that we were all there because the hotel was a customer of **Castle Street** branch and was having financial problems. I don't know how true this was. I was on a Martins Securities Course in the middle of which the Barclays merger was announced, making our instruction on Martins' procedures seem a little irrelevant.

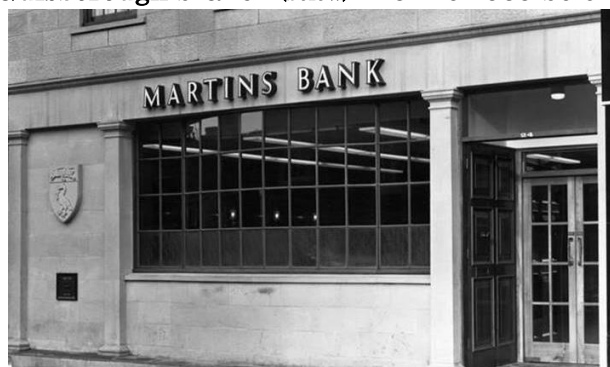


Out of interest, I attach a scan (above) of an old voucher I found in a drawer in **Burton Sub Branch**, which goes back even further than Martins days.

Kath, my wife, also joined Martins at Kendal in 1963 and worked there in various roles until 1970.

### MICHAEL RAMSDALE

Michael Paul Ramsdale joined Martins at our **Guisborough** branch (below) in June 1959 before:



**Redcar, Loftus, Northallerton** (new branch opened), North East District Office in Grey Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Northumberland Street, Newcastle (which moved into) Market Street, Newcastle'

In 1969 moved South to Barclays, Feltham, as Assistant Manager, undertaking various roles in Barclays before retiring in 1994.

### JEAN WHEELER



I was **Jean Woodhouse** when I joined Martins at **Sheffield University** branch in July 1968, straight from school.

I went on 'London Relief' to **84 Piccadilly** before returning to Sheffield for a brief spell. Then it was back

to London, **Bruton Street**, on relief followed by **Goslings branch** in Fleet Street until 1977 when I decided I had had enough of commuting and went to Royal Insurance.

I had a wonderful time with Martins (and Barclays once we had got used to all the X forms!) and met some truly fabulous people. I only applied for the job because my mum told me to get some experience doing job interviews! It was the first one I ever applied for but with hindsight I would not change a thing.

How can we forget **MICHAEL McMINN** and **DAVID WEAVER**

But there are too many instances where we learn that wives and widows also worked for Martins and:

### (SADLY) WE LEARN TOO LATE

A prime example of my comment in the Winter Newsletter follows:

The former **Miss Margeurite Ethel Hall** who became **Mrs. M.E. Langton**.

SOURCE CODE	DATE/Period From/To	YEAR	STAFF NAME	IRC Had	ENTRY TYPE FROM TYPE	BANK/DISTRICT/BRANCH E
EN28V182	Aug to Nov	1952	HALL Margeurite Ethel Miss > LANGTON M E Mrs	No	ENTRANT	LONDON DISTRICT
MA23V158	Aug to Nov	1958			MARRIAGE	London Agency Section
R233P99	Nov to Feb	1959			RESIGNATION	London Agency Section
BT3RAL40	1905/1960	1960			BIRTH	London Agency Section

There are so many instances where we have no record of ladies who also worked for Martins until their death, or that of their husband, so please do not hesitate to contact me if you also worked for Martins so that our records can be completed.

### DEATH NOTICES

It is with regret that we have to report the deaths of our following former colleagues, some of whom were not members, although it is still appropriate to remember them.

<b>HOLLIS, Keith</b>	On 28 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 aged 90
<b>JAMIESON, Ian</b>	On 19 <sup>th</sup> November 2023 aged 84
<b>JONES, Malcolm Francis</b>	On 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2023 aged 73
<b>LEWIS, Elizabeth nee ATKINS</b>	On 15 <sup>th</sup> December 2023 aged 75
<b>RHODES, Gordon</b>	On 14 <sup>th</sup> November 2023 aged 81
<b>RYAN, Shaun</b>	On 6 <sup>th</sup> December 2023 aged 88
<b>WILLIS, Betty</b>	On 15 <sup>th</sup> December 2023 aged 93

I hope that some of our members will have happier memories of their former colleagues which they would like to share in future Newsletters and I look forward to receiving them before the Spring edition goes to print.

### OBITUARIES

**John "Eric" Davies** was born on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1928, and having been raised in Oldbury, Eric became an air traffic controller at RAF Biggin Hill during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, with his family learning that he regularly let off a flare gun to



warn landing planes that their landing gears were not down! Having an interest in numbers, Eric joined the Treasury department of Birmingham Council, before commencing a banking career in 1952 with

**Martins Bank, Colmore Row, Birmingham** (aged 24). Development opportunities led Eric to **Wednesbury** and **Walsall** branches and, having completed 3 years of Institute of Bankers exams, Eric returned to **Colmore Row** and District Office (aged 28). Part of this role was in personnel and recruitment of junior staff. Eric was then transferred to **Five Ways** branch for 8-months as their number two in charge, and on to working at a new branch of **Wolverhampton St, Dudley** (aged 32).

Eric then transferred to **Digbeth** branch where, with Barclays Bank, Eric transferred to Redditch branch for 18-months, and then on to Dudley High Street in 1974. Eric, always keen to help the Black Country prosper, turned down two London based opportunities, and declined transfers to Nottingham and Singapore.

In 1984, Eric was appointed Colmore Row, Birmingham - Branch Director (one of only six in the country), before retiring in 1988 (aged 60).

A supporter of Aston Villa football club, Eric enjoyed match hospitality at Villa Park, even when on-pitch results may not have been quite as tasty.

*The Davies family.*

### SHAUN RYAN

Passed away suddenly on 6 December at the age of 88. Shaun came to Luton District from Martins Bank and, and served in a variety of roles in Aylesbury, Bedford, Broxbourne, and Luton before retiring to Somerset in September 1969 from the role of Assistant Branch Director at Luton George Street. He will doubtless be remembered for his infectious smile, a ready wit, and the unerring support which he gave to his colleagues.

**Betty Willis'** daughter emailed to advise me of her mother's death and I wonder if anyone has any memories of either Norman or Betty?

*Betty was the wife of our former Rochester branch Manager, **Norman Willis**, died on December 15, 2023, aged 93. She enjoyed receiving your newsletters.*

### MALCOLM FRANCIS JONES

And a light-hearted initial comment about one of his former colleagues from Alan Thomond:

Malcolm Francis Jones - known on Barclays' Large Branch Team as "**Chicken 'n Chips**" Jones, due to his limited dietary food groups! Further memories of Malcolm would also be appreciated.

The same applies to memories of **Bernard Mayo** who started his Martins career at Moorgate branch, followed by Oxford Circus, then London District Office and finally Brighton?



### RETURNED NEWSLETTER(S)

Does anyone know the whereabouts of:

**Mr A Towensend of Gloucester**

As his latest Newsletter has been returned with the comment: '**Addressee Gone Away**'

### Memories from David Winckles:

*David for what it is worth!!!!*

*In 1952 I was called up to do my National Service. Having done my 'square-bashing', I was posted to RAF Weeton (near Blackpool). At that time preparations were in place for the Coronation. To cut a long story short I unexpectedly was selected to be in the party from my Station to be in the Coronation procession. A photo of the team is enclosed. (David Winckles: front, right)*



*Much preparation took place and all the*



Station representatives assembled at RAF Uxbridge. On the great day we took our place at the point where the RAF were designated and eventually after Her Majesty was Crowned we proudly began to march.

The photo of the RAF contingent is from the archives but I am in there somewhere.

70 years ago and it seems like yesterday!! Especially in view of what happened a few months ago.

Use it as you will or simply consign it to the archives.

With best wishes to all my Martins Friends  
*David Winckles*

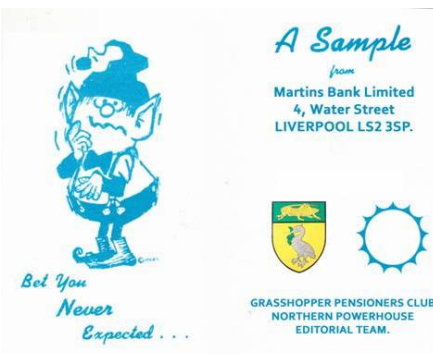
### THE 68 LOMBARD STREET CLOCK

You may remember John Peters' article about how he came by 'his' clock, which used to hang on the wall of our 'London Office' (68 Lombard Street).

Following John's death, Susanne, his widow wanted to ensure that John's clock would not be lost and donated it to the Club. With Kinrise having purchased our former Head Office building, and is currently restoring it to its former glory, where better a place for it to be displayed than in the building with other items of Martins' memorabilia, where it can and will be admired?

I took the clock across to Liverpool where I met Cal Taylor who handed it to Tommy Smith, the Operations Manager on the ground at Water Street, who will ensure its safe-keeping in a secure storage area in the building. Both Cal and Tommy were both surprised and pleased to see the clock's condition and were grateful to Susanne Peters for her thoughts and donation, which is yet another link with Martins.

### WHO'S A 'TIGHT YORKSHIREMAN'?



Never let it be said that 'Yorkshiremen are tight'! Believe it or not, this masterpiece, which was presented as a unique

Christmas Card, to all of our members who attended our Bingley Lunch (*aka the 'Northern Powerhouse Lunch'*) inside a sealed envelope, *not just any sealed envelope*, but A MARTINS



BANK SEALED envelope complete with Martins Bank sealing wax!

I have no doubt that this image will bring back many happy (?) memories when we sealed old notes in paper packets before making-up a HVP ready to post to our Head Office cash centre. Once sealed, there was usually the unenviable task of removing some of the sealing wax from one's fingers. Still great times though!

Finally (for the record): **NO!** This gift, complete with its **1967 HALFPENNY** and **given freely at no cost to the Club's coffers**, was created by **David O Baxter** who hails from **'Over the border, down Lancashire way'**. Had they been created by a Yorkshireman then he wouldn't have used a



halfpenny but one of these! A **'HALF QUID'** But, I must admit, the halfpenny was appreciated by everyone, as was the function and (again) 'NO', although mine is missing from the scan, I haven't spent it. It is safely stored inside the sealed envelope for posterity.

### NE (TED) FOSTER

Following the mention of **'Ted' Foster** in the previous Newsletter, it appears that several of our members have fond memories of Ted, some of whom have asked to be remembered to him. A selection of their emails follow, which I trust will not embarrass Ted:

*I was so pleased to read the article from Ted Foster and remember him well. I was a 17 year old at Blackburn Branch and played hockey for the Manchester District against Liverpool District. Mr Foster attended the dance after the match and I remember doing a waltz with him. I was so nervous and misheard what he said, in his lovely speaking voice. The conversation went as follows:- " I see you came through WHOLE and unscathed and I nervously replied " No, I think it was MUCH HOOLE". There's a slight difference between my having no injuries, and a local village! What a gentleman he was, not to correct me! Thankfully my career was unaffected and I met Mr Foster many times when I worked as a secretary at the Local Head Office in Preston. I'm sure many Grasshoppers were as delighted as I was to read his letter. The photograph of him was unmistakable. Christine Cain (nee Ormerod)*

*I was very interested to read the article from NE(Ted) Foster ;*

*I was an Inspector in Manchester District Office when Ted came as Assistant District Manager. I was promoted to Deputy Manager at BURY branch and Mr. F. became District Manager upon the retirement of Eric Prestitley.*

*With the take-over by Barclays Mr. Foster was promoted to Head Office. A keen golfer, our Manchester Four (myself, Malcolm Flint, Alan Tunna and Eddie Rees ) used to see Ted at Bank golfing tournaments. He was always pleased to see us. In fact he and Alan Earles entertained Malcolm Flint and myself to a day's golf at Moor Park where Ted was a member and I think Captain.*

*Please pass on my very best wishes to Mr. Foster and I hope he is keeping well.*

*Happy memories! Colin Mitchell*

**Were any of our members present on this day?**

## Swan-downing at Hillside

*I was so pleased to see from the Winter Newsletter Ted Foster's "Apology for Absence". I still hold to this day a handwritten letter which he wrote to me on 31st May 1968,*



Above: Bremner plays from a bunker at the side of the 4th green

*congratulating me on winning the Martins Bank Golf Championship at Hillside, Southport the week before. All in his own hand and extending to two sides of A5 'headed' 43 Spring Gardens notepaper, he generally bemoaned the previous lack of recent Manchester District success in the sporting*



*arena. I thought it marvellous that someone who had recently become District General Manager would write at length to me, a*

*junior who had only been in the bank some 18 months. It was a shining example to me of how to treat staff and I tried to emulate its sentiments throughout my own subsequent career.*



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no return	

(Previous column: Left: Stuart driving; Right: Barry putting; left Stuart being presented with the Directors' Challenge Cup from Mr. G.L. Tillotson.

*Thank you Ted Foster, a true 'Gentleman'; what a class-act. Best wishes, Stuart (Bremner)*

(I'm certain that we can all share Stuart's comments as it was such actions that made Martins a special place to work).

The photographs complementing Stuart's comments are from our 'Autumn 1968' Magazine; but does anyone know the whereabouts of Stuart's opponent in the final, BARRY SWANN? No doubt many of our members will recognise the names of their colleagues in the Table (opposite page) many, sadly, who are no-longer with us including: Dennis Pollard and Eric Barker ( who I knew from my days on CWIP) and 'Bert' Denton; Lindsay Mason; and Eric Shackleton from working with them at Keighley.

## TIME (ALMOST) STANDS STILL IN CROSS HILLS, GOSFORTH, NEWCASTLE and SILSDEN

**CROSS HILLS**  
Then and Now,  
(below)



We must also thank Alan Appleton for sending the following 'NOW' photographs of two of our Newcastle branches: GALLOWGATE



where the ghost of MARTINS continues to haunt the streets around both branches.





And **GOSFORTH** (below), where some interesting alterations to the ground floor appear to have been undertaken over the years Gallowgate Branch (left in the city centre. This branch was closed on merger day as Barclays had a large branch in a new office block on the

opposite street corner.



The premises were subsequently used for various commercial purposes before becoming empty a few months ago.

**Alan's comments follow:**

Hi Dave. Gosforth High Street is in the North of Newcastle. A quaint fact - the branch is situated 50 yards from the original **Greggs** shop - Greggs started in Newcastle.

I hope that the photos are of interest and look forward to seeing them in a future newsletter.

Best wishes, Alan Appleton

**They certainly are Alan and many thanks for allowing us all to see them as they, no doubt, will bring back many happy memories for our members who knew them.**

Now, back closer to (my) home: **SILSDEN** where I spent many happy hours in the four-man branch, actually three men and one lady; Where little has changed in 'Cobbydale'



Pre 1918 (left)  
2010 (below right)  
and 2023 (below left)



As a result of our new members' comments about their first branches, I did some

digging and discovered the following photograph of what University branch, and was saddened to see its current state, as you will no doubt be.



Then there is (the now-closed) **Guisborough** branch



But we will always be there in spirit as our name is **set in stone** unlike that of the bird.

### **MORE MEMORIES**

*On a completely different topic, has anyone who worked at Clifton Street, Blackpool branch previously mentioned how surplus cash notes were moved from the bank prior to the advent of security companies? You can appreciate how notes could accumulate at the height of the summer season when the Blackpool Tower Company and theatres were customers.*

*David Weaver*

**Ron Ibbotson** remembers an amusing event at **Kingston-on-Thames** branch, which was opened





1957 with Mr Eric Parkinson, as the manager, with a staff of four.

It was then that on a certain Saturday morning, after the close of business, the Manager and I were putting away the cash, ledgers and records, Mr Moore, the second man having his

morning off. As I snapped shut the inner grille I noticed a bunch of keys had been left on the table. We had no means of retrieving them as they were tantalisingly out of reach, being ten feet or so from the grille.

Suddenly I had an idea. I suggested that I go home and collect my Salmon Fly Rod, which being some 13 to 14 feet long might enable us to remedy the situation. This was readily agreed. Fortunately, on Saturday morning I had come to work in my rather battered old 1936 car and so was able to complete the return journey to the office fairly quickly.

After assembling the rod, I poked it through the grille of the door and, after several attempts, I managed to get the tip of the rod through the key ring of the bunch carefully retreating until we were able to retrieve the keys and lock up. Thus an awkward situation was resolved satisfactorily to the great relief of us both

**As does John Gaukroger:** I spent a few happy years at **Sowerby Bridge** branch and remember those steps down to the cellar. (Winter



Newsletter) The first cashier, Roger, stood at the top and threw the bags of silver and copper down to me. If I had dropped one, imagine the mess. Split cloth bags with destroyed paper coin bags inside! Fortunately for me, I never dropped one.

**Mr Dennett, Stuart** (?) was the manager. After we had closed at three he would come out of his office pick up a ledger, the items ready for posting, and return to his office where he turned on a radio to listen to some organ music and carry on working.

*John Gaukroger*



And more from *John Ainley*

I thought I'd pass on a few memories from my time in Martins.

I joined the bank in 1966 at Hamilton Square in Birkenhead straight from school. I can still remember all the names of the staff which must say something for the camaraderie at the branch.

I do remember vividly the grilling I got the first day from the girls in the machine room was far more intensive than the interviews I had to join the bank!

The branch was situated not far from the police station and on occasions an officer would come in and ask if he could "borrow" some of the younger male staff to partake in an identity parade. This was always a popular diversion from work for an hour or so, even though we had to work doubly fast to catch up when we returned. Somehow I don't think the police could get away with it today, but 7 or 8 young men from the local banks, all dressed smartly in suits and ties were lined up and then a scruffy unshaven youth in dirty "T" shirt and jeans would be brought in and allowed to place himself in the line-up. The offender stood out like a sore thumb, but it was amazing how often a witness would pick a bank clerk! For our efforts we were all paid two shillings and six pence, always a bonus to our meagre pay!

Another fond memory was being regularly sent on relief to a small sub branch in Meols on the Wirral. As I lived in the village with my parents it saved the train fare and I could go home for lunch! The look on the faces of neighbours when they walked into the branch was priceless! One particular customer I remember was a small elderly lady who always arrived on the same day each week at exactly the same time. What made her so different was that no matter what time of year it was she would be dressed in a big hat, gloves and a very long mink coat that was extremely threadbare. To make the arrival even more special was that she arrived in a chauffeur driven two door Morris minor convertible. Her chauffeur always wearing a peak cap, gauntlets and buttoned up suit would rush round to open the passenger door to help extract her from the rear seat. She would never pass any pleasantries and made it quite clear that she didn't want to talk.

It was the highlight of the day!

Well that's just a couple of many happy memories which I hope you can use.

Kind regards, *John Ainley*

*I must express my sadness at the article re Halifax Silver Street. This was my first Branch when I joined Martins 1st September 1967 aged 16. Sadly we were not to be Martins for long. The old stationery room brings back mixed memories. I was tasked with ordering the new Barclays paying in books and must have got the decimal place wrong as we ended up with the room half full of paying in books.*

Best wishes, **Stuart Crowther**

**ANYONE RECOGNISE THIS GRILLE?**

One (excuse the use of fowl language) Eagle-eyed Member has



No, we're not in the Middle East, nor 'Middle England' we're just in 'The Middle', or Far East of our Manchester District. Although the Afghan rugs weren't there in 1969

I'm certain that other members will when they see this photograph.

*Robin Lucas emailed me to remind me to not forget Arthur Rowe:*

*I was sorry to read about the death of Arthur Rowe in the Winter 2023 issue. I took a photo of Arthur at the 2022 London Lunch, since we were seated next to each other. I knew he was over 90, and thought it best to take a photo whilst he was still with us.*



(Many thanks Robin and I'm pleased that you were able to take this photograph of Arthur as our London members will, no doubt, like to remember him)

**CAN I ASK ALL OF OUR MEMBERS TO KEEP SENDING ME THEIR MEMORIES, BE THEY GOOD OR NOT SO GOOD, OF THEIR TIME WORKING FOR MARTINS AND HOPE THAT WE WILL SEE MORE MEMBERS AT OUR FORTHCOMING LUNCHEES IN 2024.**

And one final memory in this edition, from yet another new member (**John Parker**), his first (handwritten) statement

JOHN PARKER, ESQ. MARTINS BANK LIMITED 24 MARKET PLACE RUGBY

DATE	PARTICULARS	DEBIT	CREDIT	BALANCE
June 17	By M.D.O. Interest		20 9 10	20 9 10
July 5	To Cheque book	4 - -		20 10 -
	Beaver	3 - -		17 6 -
22	Beaver	7 - -		10 6 -
26	By M.D.O.		23 13 5	33 19 5
Aug 4	To Beaver	3 - -		30 19 5
18	do.	7 - -	4 13 5	23 19 5
27	By M.D.O. Interest		23 10 8	
	Beaver	1 10 -		46 - 1
Sept 1	By M.D.O.		5 13 -	40 7 1
15	Beaver	6 - -		
14	Millets	3 7 6		30 19 7
27	By M.D.O. Salary		22 4 1	53 3 8
28	To Banner	1 10 -		51 13 8
Oct 6	Inst. Bankers	12 6 -		51 1 2
12	Sell	7 - -		44 1 2
19	Beaver	3 10 -		40 11 2
25	Salary M.D.O.		21 12 8	62 2 10
31	Raymond Noco.		71 1 7	133 5 5
Nov 5	Sally			132 5 5
8	Banner	4 - -		128 5 5
	Continued Overleaf	57 7 -	182 12 5	

**SAD NEWS INDEED:**

The latest details of our remaining branch network and their closure dates from Jonathan Snowden to whom we must all appreciate his never-ending work for maintain our website.

Sort Code	Branch	Closure Date
11-36-00	Bangor	n/a
11-66-02	Bexley Heath	n/a
11-81-00	Blackburn	10 <sup>th</sup> May '24
11-53-20	Carlisle	n/a
11-60-21	Castletown, IoM	n/a
11-99-20	Cockermouth	17 <sup>th</sup> January '25
11-35-30	Dewsbury	n/a
11-60-40	Hexham	7 <sup>th</sup> March '24
11-03-50	Keighley	n/a
11-05-50	Kendal	n/a
11-26-51	Kirkby Stephen	12 <sup>th</sup> April '24
11-27-50	Lancaster	25 <sup>th</sup> April '24
11-57-50	Llandudno	n/a
11-80-60	Penrith	17 <sup>th</sup> April '24
11-94-60	Preston	n/a
11-08-70	Ramsey, IoM	n/a
11-19-70	Rochdale	18 <sup>th</sup> April '24
11-90-70	Skipton	7 <sup>th</sup> March '24
11-15-51	South Shields	n/a
11-12-80	Spalding	10 <sup>th</sup> May '24
11-48-50	Wallasey, Liscard	24 <sup>th</sup> March '24
11-69-90	Worcester	n/a