

THE GRASSHOPPER PENSIONERS' CLUB



**MARTINS
BANK**

Website: www.martinsbank.co.uk

© gut informiert!

SECRETARY: David Baldwin, Lower Windle, Windle Royd Lane, Warley, HX2 7LY.

'Phone: 01422 832734. email: grasshoppers@btinternet.com

CHAIRMAN: Bernard Lovewell

TREASURER: Alan Thomond

WELFARE OFFICER: David Baldwin

DATABASE MANAGER: David Baxter

FUNCTION ORGANISERS:

Sue Williamson (Liverpool) George Hamilton (Manchester) David Baldwin (Yorkshire)

Summer Edition 2025

**DESPITE THE FACT THAT WE
ARE DOWN TO**



**OUR PRESENCE CONTINUES TO
REMAIN ON THE HIGH STREETS OF
CERTAIN TOWNS AND CITIES**

**HOW CAN ANYONE EVER
FORGET OUR MAGNIFICENT
FORMER HEAD OFFICE
BUILDING?**



Although it is not open for business, our Head Office building continues to be restored to its

original state and caringly future-proofed by its new owners: **KARREV**.

Recently, I made contact with their *Director of Development & Asset Management, Olivier Scherb* whose comments follow:

We are progressing well on the Martins Bank project, and are currently engaged in the tendering for the refurbishment works with a number of contractors. Our goal is to start the works before the end of the year and we are anticipating a period of 18 to 22 months to completion from start on site.

*We have no objection to the members of **The Grasshopper Pensioners' Club** holding a function at the building in the future, following our restoration project. I will loop you in with my colleague who will be managing the property closer to the date.*

Please stay in touch, and we can provide you with project updates going forward, or arrange to meet on site in the near future. This could be a good opportunity to also show you how the historic items that your members gave to be displayed / archived are securely stored on site

Great news!

I will keep you updated in future issues but, in the meantime, please continue your efforts to recruit more members so that they can, once again, enjoy the splendours of the building that will forever be **MARTINS HEAD OFFICE** to us.



For those of our members who have the misfortune of not visiting Liverpool, the above and following images simply illustrate the intricate detail of the carved stonework and the

craftsmanship of the stone masons who produced it.



Since the last Newsletter, I have received comments about the lack of content about our southern members. However, I can only include items that I receive for publication and, the fact is that, I receive more items from our northern-based members than I do from those of our southern-based members.

However, Christine Lovett (nee Taylor) has helped to balance these concerns and I hope that you will find Christine's memories of interest to those of you who remember and worked with her. Christine's memories follow:



I joined the new Unit Trust Department at 80 Gracechurch Street in 1958, just round the corner from 68 Lombard Street complete with grasshopper hanging outside the building, as it still does today. I joined this new department in Gracechurch Street with the first female Pro Manager in the 'Square Mile' (Margaret Perks). What a very happy department we were, and were personally asked by the Manager to attend the annual dinner/dance where we were overawed by the sequined dresses!!!!!! I remember that Diane Turner's partner didn't own a suit! After cowering on our seats I piped up this is ridiculous WE ARE jiving to the next quickstep, and me in my Mary Quant Mini-Dress in purple and Orange stripes. My goodness all of a sudden the band woke up and got with it. We had a fabulous time and were personally thanked by the Manager the following Monday who said he knew we would liven things up. Such happy days. Margaret looked after us through all our ups and downs. Photos on our 21st Birthdays, Engagements and Marriages are testament to such a happy place. I've lost my best friend, Susan Kayes Knight to dementia and Diana who went to South Africa to live. I'm still in touch and see Beryl Sachs and Carole Raven as well as Val Randal. Also in the Department were Molly Scholtock, Pat and Wendy the typist. I left after my marriage in 1964 joining Save and Prosper who had kept their 'London Weighting' but moved to Gants Hill one stop from my new Maisonette (£3,250) so it made sense to leave.

It was the biggest mistake of my life an awful working environment with a terrible boss I couldn't please. After having my family I took up Market Research and have been an Area Manager for many companies from 1978 until today. And YES, I'm still working at 84! That was a little walk down 'Memory Lane' alright although I did waffle slightly, sorry.

Kind Regards Christine Lovett (nee Taylor)

Editor: No need to worry about waffling Christine as there are many names that others will surely remember as well as the great times that your memories will have rekindled. Thank you.

DEATH NOTICES

Davies, John E	July 2023
Hutchings Reginald	On 10 th June 2025 aged 102
Hutchinson, Roy	On 24 th May 2025, aged 88
Johnson Ian	2024
McGuinness, Bernard F	On 17 th May 2025 aged 85
Pickett, June R	On 1 st December 2024 aged 88
Stringer Pauline	On 31 st July 2025 aged 88

Bernard McGuinness

Juan Mc Guinness advised me of his father's death, writing: My father Bernard Francis McGuinness received your newsletter as an ex-employee of Martins Bank, sadly he passed away on 17th May 2025. He was 85 and I was by his side when he passed away peacefully.

Born in 1939 in Liverpool he joined Martins Bank from school at 16 and, other than his national service, worked for Martins Bank (and then Barclays) until his retirement in 1999.

He worked in various branches in the Liverpool area before moving to Ramsey branch of Barclays on the Isle of Man in October 1971 where he stayed for the remainder of his career.

I know he had a lot of fond memories of his time with Martins Bank and enjoyed reading the newsletters and even managed to attend a Pensioners dinner or two travelling over from the Isle of Man.

Bernard actually started his Martins career in Manchester District, before transferring to Liverpool, where he worked at our Bootle branch followed by Chief Accountant's Department from which he commenced his National Service at R A O C Blackdown in Hampshire. On completing his National Service, Bernard was allocated to 99, Stanley Road, Bootle branch and finally, before our takeover, Clubmoor.

John E Davies joined Martins' in our Midland District in 1953 where he spent his entire Martins career working in Walsall, Birmingham City Office, Midland District Office, Birmingham Five Ways, Dudley and Birmingham



Digbeth *It is the sort of branch which gives forth a friendly and homely feeling and one in which the staff can take a pride. A sign of the passing of time is to be found in the appointment of a Midland District man to be the first manager. Mr. K. R. Chance, who opened the branch at Shirley, was the first; Mr. J. E. Davies is the second. The District is now old enough to be producing some of its own management*

personnel, a very good and healthy sign. Mr. Davies was educated at Oldbury County High School, and entered the Bank in 1953. He has served at Wednesbury, Walsall, Birmingham City Office, Birmingham Five Ways and at Midland District Office, where he had an all-round training both on Outdoor Inspection and on the loan side. He was a founder member of Oldbury Round Table and is now its Chairman. He is also a member of the British Junior Chamber of Commerce in Birmingham. Second-in-command is Mr. A. Warren who was until recently Accountant at Birmingham City Office, a post which he unfortunately had to relinquish owing to temporary ill-health. We first had the pleasure of meeting him on the occasion of our visit to Kidderminster in 1957 and the new branch is fortunate in having such a sound and experienced man to help it along.

Image © Martins Bank Archive Collections. Advertisement Remastered 7 August 2021

Roy Hutchinson

Although not a member, I'm certain that our Craven District staff will remember Roy, who started his career at Silsden branch in 1953, where this photograph was taken in 1957. In 1960, Roy found



himself working at Ilkley and returned to Keighley in 1965 where David Baxter and I worked with him, as did our other members which include: Brenda Northrop (nee Farey), Pam Pennington (nee Thomas), Jean Overend (nee Plume), Joan Wormald (nee Phillips), Jane Carr (nee Gardner), John Mellin, Jeremy Bauer and Donald Wilding, with David attempting to contact Roy in the hope that he would join our Club.



June Pickett

Jeremy Gautrey-Jones advised me of his mother's (June Pickett) death. June worked in our **London Trustee** branch, where she met her husband, another former member who, sadly, pre-deceased



June, who started her Martins career in the London Agency Department in 1951, followed by Holborn branch in 1957 and finally London Trustee where she met her husband, BJ Gautrey.

We are grateful to Jeremy for providing the following photograph of his mother on her wedding day. I'm certain that you will agree that it is a moment to remember but something

that has always intrigued Jeremy is the 'Photo-Bomber' who couldn't resist the temptation of being in the photograph and wonders if anyone can identify the cheeky chappie? Could he have been one of their colleagues? Please let me know if you know who he is

so that I can advise Jeremy, or will he remain the 'Mystery Man' for ever?

Cliff Cottsworth

Another non-member, Cliff started his career in Liverpool District in 1960, being transferred to Clubmoor in 1963, followed by Walton in 1964, Head Office Secretaries Department in 1965. Cliff's final move was to Smithdown Road in 1967.

If any of Cliff's former colleagues have memories of Cliff then I would be pleased to receive them for future editions. There must be so many former members of staff still out there. If you know any then please encourage them to join us)

Pauline Stringer (nee Rowbottom)

Pauline Purslow advised me of the death of Pauline Stringer. Pauline joined Martins in 1954 in Liverpool Overseas where she stayed until 1961 when she was transferred to Head Office Editorial Department for five years before Head Office Relief and returning to Liverpool Overseas in 1966.

Reginald Hutchings

Reginald joined our Messenger staff at 68 Lombard Street in 1958 and his death at 102 goes to illustrate how former Martins staff seem to live for ever, just like our bank.

Reginald undertook the duties that many of us undertook back in those days and was unfortunate enough to be involved in a robbery which is covered later in this edition.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome **Eric Winstanley** and **Alan John Jones**

Eric started his career at our Speke and Hunt's Cross branch in 1951. He moved into Chief Accountant's Department in 1953 and then Booker Avenue in 1954. Mossley Hill followed in 1957 then Sefton Park in 1958. In 1965 Eric moved to 'Vic Street', where he met his future wife. In 1967 Eric was transferred to Liverpool District Office then Head Office Superintendents Department in 1968, where he received his first 'Appointment'.

Alan joined Martins in 1967 at our Booker Avenue branch followed by Heathfield in 1968 for a relatively short stay before moving on to Allerton Road.

I'm certain that you will agree with me when I say that we look forward to meeting both Eric and Alan at our Liverpool Lunch this year

GONE AWAY

Is anyone able to provide an update about one of our members who appears to have moved house since our last Newsletter? They are:

P Noble, of Buxted, East Sussex

A CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK?

I maintained contact with Ralph Ingham following the death of his father, emailing copies of our Newsletter to him for his mother, and feel that Ralph's



comments will bring back many happy memories of Deryk:

"To thine own self be true" was Dad's mantra which has got me into a few scrapes as well as you and him! (I'm certain that everyone who came into contact with Deryk will remember and respect him for this and, as Ralph says it has for me and I would imagine many others who were fortunate enough to have worked with Deryk).

Many of our Liverpool and Craven members will certainly remember Deryk Ingham (and no-doubt one of Deryk's sons', Ralph) who has provided this update about Ian Johnson. To add to the Aintree picture, I can confirm that **Ian Johnson**, then I believe the first cashier at Aintree was alive and well living in Marple. Ian was Secretary of, and one of those instrumental in purchasing the 4F (43924) from Woodham Brothers Scrapyard in Barry.



Left to Right : Peter Aynsley, Jessica Grimshaw, Jack Dixon, June Tabarn, Ian Johnson,, Deryk Ingham, Pat Hart, George Shaw, Diane Powell, and John Quirk

The contract of sale for scrap precluded selling on and considerable negotiations were required with BR before this was rescinded and 43924 became the first of around 200 locomotives to escape from Barry and become the backbone of the Heritage Railway industry we know today. I first met Ian quite by chance when, as a youngster in 1968, when my father was Manager of Bingley branch, soon after it arrived at Haworth I was helping cleaning the accumulated grime and rust off the loco. I mentioned that I had lived in Maghull before moving to Keighley as my Dad worked for Martins Bank and it didn't take long for 2 and 2 to be put together and I have been involved in the overhaul and maintenance of "his" loco for over 50 years, longer than my career in banking. My elder daughter and her family now live in Marple and Ian and I often meet for a coffee and a natter whilst we are over there helping with the grandchildren. which we hope to resume once the current lurgi outbreak is past.

And some sad news for Ian's former colleagues Although it's a bit late for Ian to join as he joined the ex-Martians celestial branch last year.

REGINALD HUTCHINGS' UNEXPECTED SURPRISE!

Five bank officials were munching apples as they sat in the back of a security van on the 'Country Run', to collect and deliver cash to six Kent branches of Martin's (sic) Bank Ltd.

They were unarmed and the possibility of the van being raided while on the move was considered unlikely.

In the back of the van was £92,139. It had just made its last call at the bank's Longfield branch where it picked-up a suitcase containing £8,261.

Read all about it!

THE HEADLINE NEWS!



Then the unexpected happened. On a lonely stretch of road between Lonfield and Green Street Green, eight bandits in muslin masks, carrying iron bars, pick-axe handles and Indian clubs, swooped on the van.

"The bank men were terrified. One of the bandits was able to get into the van in the extremely audacious way of climbing through a smashed window," said Mr John Gower, prosecuting, at Kent Assizes, at Maidstone.

He was the only bandit to get inside the back of the van but he was able to hand out six suitcases containing £87,300.

Said Mr Gower: *"The bank officials were not there as guards but for collecting and delivering the money. Because they were not there as guards not one of them was provided with any means of defence or offence except his own hands. It is not for me to express views on the rights or wrongs of that."*

Someone shouted to the driver 'Keep going George; it's a raid'. I jumped to my feet and looked out of the back window.

"I saw some men-I think there were about four or five of them- running towards us. They all had masks covering their faces."

He said the men surrounded the van, banging on the sides and shouting threats like 'Open up, or we'll kill you.'

We all crouched down on the floor of the van. A masked man got in through the smashed window and said 'Keep quiet.'

HEAD FIRST

Mr. Hutchings then described how this bandit picked up the suitcases and sorted them out. "He threw the empty cases to the front of the van, and threw the full ones- the cases with the money in them- out of the window.

"Then he climbed out of the window the same way he had entered"

The report continues but is, unfortunately, too blurred for me to read more

JONATHAN SNOWDEN

Unable to find Reginald on the Staff Record database, I asked Jonathan if he could discover anything about him and he started his search. Jonathan's comments follow:

102! That's a lot of pension! I have explored a couple of avenues, but they turned out to be cul-de-sac. I wondered if he was perhaps on the non-clerical staff, because London Computer Centre opened in 1966, and they did have their own messenger and security staff. No Luck. His entry in the database is still a "stub" - this means that the only time we have any mention of him is in one transfer, the one you have listed from 1966. The other thing was to check the spelling, and also see if there was anyone with that name out of order. So I have drawn a blank. He is not pictured on the famous colour giant glass slide image of computer centre staff, and there is no-one in the database with the surname 'Hutchings', for which there is a photograph. I am sure that one or two of the Computer Centre staff are still around. I think one of them is a 'follower' on our Facebook Page so I can find out and let you know. And he did!

STOP PRESS (LITERALLY)....

AND THEN I FOUND THE ATTACHED! Seems he WAS a Messenger for the Bank, and involved in a pretty big news story escaping with his life!
The attached news clippings include his evidence. Sadly, the shorter one from the Peterborough Evening Telegraph seems to stop, with no pointers as to where the story was (or was not) continued)

Bullion raid trial goes on

FIVE men accused of a £87,300 robbery from a bullion van again appeared at the Kent Assizes, Maidstone, today.

They are: Royston Shaw (27), car dealer of Romford, Essex; William Supple (25), company director, of Bermondsey; John Gill (30), greengrocer, of West Ham; Colin Hall (34), car dealer, of Plaistow, London E., and William Curbishley (22), of Plaistow.

They have pleaded not guilty of being armed with offensive weapons, iron bars, Indian clubs, pick axe handles, sticks and bricks on September 27, and robbing Albert Henry Leslie Thorne of £87,300 and six suitcases.

Supple has pleaded not guilty of receiving £1,050, belonging to Martin's Bank knowing it to have been stolen between September 26 and October 2 last year.

Shaw has pleaded not guilty of receiving £1,046 belonging to the same bank knowing it was stolen between September 26 and October 17.

Mr. John Gower (prosecuting) has alleged that the men raided the van between Longfield and Green Street Green at South Darenth (Kent). The van, carrying £87,300 belonging to Martin's Bank, was ambushed by masked men.

Reginald Arthur Hutchings, of South Benfleet, Essex, a bank messenger in the bullion van, today described the raid by "four or five men."

It's still good to know that:

MARTINS GO TO EXTREMES TO BE HELPFUL

Could Reginald's experience be a prompt for other members to send me memories of theirs in similar circumstances?

In the meantime: DON'T FORGET OUR FORTHCOMING LUNCHES WHERE I HOPE TO SEE AS MANY OF YOU AS POSSIBLE

**AGENDA for the 2025
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
To be held on Friday 12th December 2025 at
The Racquet Club, Liverpool
MINUTES**

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes of the 2024 AGM Follow:
4. Matters Arising:
5. Chairman's Report:
6. Treasurer's Report:
7. Secretary's Report:
8. Welfare Officer's Report:
9. Election of Officers:
10. Election of Auditor:
11. Any Other Business:

**MINUTES of the 2024
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Held on Wednesday 20th November in 'The McIntosh Room' 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:** David Baxter, Ted Foster
3. **Minutes of the 2023 AGM:** The printed copies of the Minutes were read and accepted by those present.

4. Matters Arising:

1. Last year, 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.

Update: David reported that a letter from our member, and another of support from our Club, had been sent 'FOR THE PERSONAL ATTENTION OF EILEEN HAUGHEY', Chair of the Trustees, but that a response from her was yet to be received.

2. With a sudden surge in new membership applications, following the 2023 end-of-year lunches, the membership Fee was waived by the Secretary for all of our new members. The Secretary's 'ultra vires action' was ratified unanimously.

5. Chairman's Report: Bernard Lovewell 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 mentioned that Arthur Rowe had died earlier this year and that we might have to pay the full cost of hiring rooms at The Union Jack Club in future.

6. Treasurer's Report:

7. Secretary's Report: The Secretary had nothing to report

8. Welfare Officer's Report: Ken Quirk had nothing to report and, regrettably, offered his resignation.

9. Election of Officers: As the Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary were willing to stand for re-election, they were re-elected unanimously. However we would be looking for a new Welfare Officer and Lunch Secretaries and volunteers were sought to fill these roles before 2025.

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:

**There being no other business, the Meeting was
closed at 12.50**