

# THE RECORD

NEWS AND VIEWS ON AGEING IN GREATER MANCHESTER



## RETIREMENT: FRIEND OR FOE?

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# EDITOR'S CORNER



WELCOME TO THE LATEST EDITION OF THE RECORD.

WE HAVE BEEN DELIGHTED BY THE RESPONSE TO THE CAMPAIGN SO FAR AND IT HAS BEEN AMAZING TO MEET SO MANY PEOPLE AGED 50 AND OVER WHO ARE ROCKING LATER LIFE AND SHOWING HOW THEY CAN OVERCOME CHALLENGES THAT AGEING CAN BRING.

IN THIS EDITION WE HEAR FROM PEOPLE ABOUT THEIR RETIREMENT EXPERIENCES - THE HIGHS AND THE LOWS.

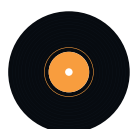
WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THE READ AND PLEASE GIVE OUR PODCAST - CHANGING THE RECORD - A LISTEN ON SPOTIFY, APPLE AND DEEZER OR DIRECTLY AT [HTTPS://AUDIOBOOM.COM/POSTS/7374658-CHANGING-THE-RECORD-RETIREMENT](https://audioboom.com/posts/7374658-changing-the-record-retirement).

WE ALSO HAVE A LIVING LIBRARY EVENT COMING UP AT MANCHESTER CENTRAL LIBRARY ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26 - WHERE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO MEET SOME FASCINATING PEOPLE AND LISTEN TO THEIR STORIES. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS GO TO:

[WWW.YELLOWJIGSAW.CO.UK/LIVINGLIBRARY](http://WWW.YELLOWJIGSAW.CO.UK/LIVINGLIBRARY)

WITH LOVE FROM THE TALKING ABOUT MY GENERATION TEAM X

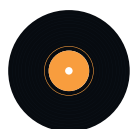
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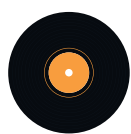
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# THREE WIGAN GRANDMAS ARE RE-WRITING THE RULES ON RETIREMENT

Three grandmas from Wigan discovered a new chapter in their lives by taking up writing in their retirement – and have since gone on to write 24 books!

Joan Brickley, Mary Gonzales and Joannie Preston became a writing team to help them to continue to use their imaginations and keep their minds active in retirement. They say writing the books has helped them to meet people from various walks of life, take part in TV and radio interviews and give them a new lease of life.

Joan said the inspiration came from her hobby of decorating and furnishing her Victorian style doll's house and the first story was produced by herself and Mary on that theme, called 'The Victorian Doll's House That Was'. Joannie played a supporting role, typing up the stories and proofreading.

Joan, who was a teacher for 30 years, said: "Writing has made us feel that



L - R: Mary, Joannie and Joan.

retirement is another chapter in our lives and has given us a feeling of excitement and rejuvenation.

"The stories seemed to have become popular with locals, especially grandparents, who not only bought them for their grandchildren, but also wanted to read them themselves.

"This reaction inspired us to write more books, some based in Wigan, some in various parts of Liverpool and some taking our main characters, twins, Jessica and Matthew, back to Ancient Egypt, the Viking era, Ancient Rome and many other places with the help of a mischievous magic doll. The trio have since produced 24 books in the 'That Was

Series' and Joan also paints her own watercolour illustrations for the books and her own individual published works.

Joan added: "Writing these books has helped us in many ways. We have developed our ability to use our imagination. At times, when we have been feeling down, writing our books has also kept us going and kept us out of trouble!"

Joan has also written individual children's books, the 'Flip- Flop Series', and Mary too with 'Izzy Beaver Books'.

For more information on the That Was series go to [www.thesitethatwas.co.uk](http://www.thesitethatwas.co.uk)

For more on Joan's other works visit: [www.joanbrickley.co.uk](http://www.joanbrickley.co.uk) and Mary's: [www.IzzyBeaver.co.uk](http://www.IzzyBeaver.co.uk)

# RETIREMENT CAN BE A ROCKY ROAD



*Our reporter Carole Odgen tells us about her journey into retirement – which had more than a few bumps in the road – from managing finances, caring duties, health and disillusionment to coming out of the dark tunnel to a new life of further education, reconnecting with her community, volunteering, new friends and skills as a published poet – but above all, freedom!*

“ I didn’t exactly choose to retire early, retirement chose me - I seriously damaged my shoulder and the diagnosis took months, so eventually I chose to take voluntary redundancy rather than go through yet another soul-destroying round of reshuffles at work. Ironically, the very week that I received confirmation of my redundancy, my husband was also made redundant from his job, although he was by this time 63 years old, to my 55. Having already had both hips replaced, I came out of the subsequent shoulder operation with only one major joint still intact, and my recovery was complicated by providing 24-hour care for my increasingly frail mother.

To be honest, on reflection, it was a pretty scary time! We went overnight from a reasonable standard of living, with two full-time salaries, to basically no income at all. I was still unable to drive and my mother’s condition was deteriorating rapidly.

My saving grace was that I had, by pure chance, already signed up for a Level 5 Diploma course, which would mean I could potentially change my career and

teach Literacy and ESOL afterwards. I somehow managed to muddle through the course and placements during my convalescence, while my husband took on the main carer’s role during my absence and redundancy, while DLA, Carer’s Allowance and my modest pension kept the wolf from the door financially.

Following my mother’s death, the following year, we entered another phase. We no longer had to get up to deal with endless carers, paperwork and appointments, so we basically drifted for several months with little direction or purpose (apart from lengthy lie-ins), although I did volunteer part-time as a teacher for a local organisation supporting refugees and asylum seekers. When my husband reached 65, his pensions kicked in, surprisingly better than we had hoped, and I calculated that we could probably tick along as we were, as long as nothing major cropped up. A chance visit to a local event led to me getting involved with a local community group and I offered to write a small funding bid for them, which led to me reconnecting further with my local community (I had

worked in another town), attending various creative and craft-based activities and taking on more volunteering roles.

In the last year I have taken up several new skills: I blogged about food and theatre for a community media group, I have learned to crochet, embroider and use a machine to sew clothes for my granddaughter. I have dabbled in painting and ceramics, and I am proud to have a poem on permanent display at Bolton Museum, which introduces visitors to the exhibition. I have also written several successful funding bids and, as a result, we will shortly be starting a community bread-making project. There are still three months left in the year so who knows what else may come up?

I am now Chair of Tonge with the Haulgh Big Local, which is a lottery-funded project providing social activities and development opportunities in my local area. This, in turn, led to me becoming treasurer for our local Sea Cadets, whose building we now use as a hub for the Haulgh community. I also teach ESOL part-time for three organisations, and

deliver occasional writing workshops, for which I get paid. As I don't seem to have enough to do, I am also a Community Reporter for Age UK and Bolton Over-50s Culture Champion.

When I think back to where I was four years ago – very stressed and unhappy at work, struggling with my daily commute, constantly tired and frustrated, with no time to think about what I really wanted to be, or do – I could never have imagined how much my life could change. It's not always a bed of roses and I do still tend to over-commit, but I have made dozens of new friends, seen a really positive change in my local community and I know that ultimately I have the freedom to say no, or walk away, if I choose to. I had heard all the warnings about people who die soon after retiring, because they lose a sense of purpose, or of couples tripping over each other and falling out. As with all things, whether it's planned or thrust upon you, I guess it's all about what you make of it. Keep yourself busy, take some chances, make the most of every opportunity but, above all, enjoy doing a bit of what you want to do!



# SIGHT LOSS WON'T STOP ME SOCIALISING IN RETIREMENT

Our reporters Pauline and Paul visited a group of 20 people in Salford who attend a monthly social group run by the sight loss charity Henshaws, to chat to them about their experiences and take photos. All of the group's members said they had lost touch with friends after developing sight loss – with one member revealing: “once you get diagnosed with an eye problem, you find out who your friends are. They don't know how to talk to you anymore.” But, thanks to Henshaws, these people were getting out of the house, making new friends and trying uplifting experiences.



**Pauline reported:** “What shone through was not just how they enjoyed each other's company, but how they support each other as a group of older people and how much they enjoy their monthly get togethers, plus some go to exercise classes every week, and they enjoy their trips out together. They all agreed what a lifeline Henshaws is for them to socialise.

**Many people report feeling lonely when they retire – but when coupled with a disability, avoiding loneliness can become a real challenge.**

“It really makes you think about the things we take for granted, not having a visual impairment. One member of the group dreamt of going to the beach, and it seemed so unachievable for him.

“What also became apparent was how other areas of life can be tough – like using public transport, which included a funny but also scary story about being left at Euston station as the train to Manchester pulled out with luggage and companion on board.

“The group also said that using buses is hit and miss as some drivers help and some don't, and they realise “they have 3 to 4 new skin layers that have been hardened” against the lack of help available sometimes. “Comments that stayed with me is that “having limited eyesight is not visible to others” and “it's much harder to have an invisible disability.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON  
HENSHAWS GO TO  
[WWW.HENSHAWS.ORG.UK](http://WWW.HENSHAWS.ORG.UK)



## PRIDE IN AGEING

A team of our reporters spent the day at Pride Manchester talking to people about a new LGBT Foundation programme launched by Sir Ian McKellen in June 2019, Pride in Ageing – which aims to ensure that Greater Manchester becomes one of the best places for LGBT people to grow older. The programme was set up in response to concerns that too many lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people over the age of 50 are living in isolation and facing discrimination as a direct result of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Here, four people took time out from enjoying the festivities at Pride to chat to us about being in the over 50 category in our great City.



### Phillip, aged 66

WHEN MY PARTNER PASSED AWAY I FELT ISOLATED AND LONELY BUT COUNSELLING AT LGBT OPENED OTHER DOORS FOR ME. NOW I HAVE BECOME A BEFRIENDER, I WANT TO BE ABLE TO IMPROVE OTHER PEOPLE'S LIVES, HELP KEEP THEM ACTIVE AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO INCREASE THEIR SOCIAL CIRCLES. I HAVE SEEN FIRST HAND HOW IT CAN BENEFIT YOU.



### Mindy, aged 68

BEING RETIRED GIVES YOU FREEDOM, I CAN DO WHAT I WANT, WHEN I WANT, I ENJOY VOLUNTEERING AS A COUNSELLOR AT LGBT AND IT IS GREAT TO KNOW THAT WHAT MY GENERATION CAMPAIGNED FOR MEANS THAT YOUNGER PEOPLE IN THE LGBT COMMUNITY CAN BE WHO THEY ARE AND DRESS HOW THEY WANT AND PARTY AT PRIDE HOW THEY LIKE.



### Eileen, aged 68

I DON'T KNOW HOW I FOUND TIME TO WORK, I LOVE RETIREMENT. I HAVE AN ALLOTMENT, I LOVE TO TRAVEL AND PLAY CROWN GREEN BOWLS. WHEN I GOT CANCER, I FELT LIKE SOMEONE HAD PULLED A RUG FROM UNDERNEATH ME BUT IT ALSO MADE ME THINK, "STUFF IT" – I MIGHT BE DEAD TOMORROW, SO WHY NOT LIVE MY LIFE AS ME.



### Ian, aged 71

IT IS REALLY IMPORTANT TO STAY CONNECTED IN LATER LIFE AND BE A PART OF THE COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU LOSE A LOVED ONE. I ENJOY BEING PART OF THE GROUPS THAT I AM IN AND I AM IN GOOD HEALTH – SO THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE AND IS IMPORTANT TO HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT RETIREMENT.

For more information on Pride in Ageing visit: [www.lgbt.foundation/prideinageing](http://www.lgbt.foundation/prideinageing)



# NAVIGATING RETIREMENT TOGETHER

Married couple Peter and Margot Lloyd often thought about retirement – but had not considered what this would mean for them as a couple.



**BY BURY REPORTER: LESLEY DOWNING**

Margot had worked for 40 years in the NHS, primarily as a district nurse, and retired at 57, and Peter had been a barrister and private sector solicitor before retiring at 66.

Margot had been ready to leave after 40 years, but then she says “It took me by surprise that I was as lonely as I was the first couple of years.”

Through her working life, bringing up two boys and keeping house, there had not been much time to socialise or take up hobbies, so her newly acquired free time yawned ahead of her.

Having been a regular church goer, Margot joined in with their voluntary groups, the Union of Catholic Mothers, to raise money for various good causes and the St Vincent de Paul Society who support the lonely and housebound, which chimed well with Margot’s District Nurse experience and knowledge. She has also taken up Tai Chi and swims regularly.

Margot said: “I felt really lonely when I retired. I needed a structure to get up for and have a purpose. Eventually you come to realise retirement makes you your own boss – but trying to make time for each other was tricky.”

and for the first few years had to deal with various health issues, some of which still affect his mobility. He regularly attended the local gym, going to specially designed classes, run by Active Tameside, for those affected by health or mobility issues.

But all these activities were ones they did separately, so they decided to look for something that they could do together, which would work well with their interests and abilities. To combat this, the pair joined the NHS Retirement Fellowship five years ago and are now branch committee members and are tasked with finding speakers for their monthly meetings.

The Fellowship promotes social, leisure and educational activities, as well as providing various benefits such as holiday discounts, access to a number of services, financial, insurance, legal and puts out a quarterly newsletter.

down the country, some day trips but also holidays where the time is divided between group trips and time to yourself.

They both admit to being nervous on attending their first meeting but were made to feel very welcome and found themselves in a group of like-minded people who mostly share their views, values and attitudes. "It gets me out of the house, and away from daytime TV" says Peter.

The NHS Retirement Fellowship is open to all current or retired NHS and social care staff and partners, and you can join for as little as £20 per year.

It was founded in 1978 by a retired nurse and now has 9,000 members nationwide, with five branches in and around Manchester.

For more information on the Fellowship go to [www.nhsrf.org.uk](http://www.nhsrf.org.uk)

## WALKING FOOTBALL GROUP USE THEIR RETIREMENT HOBBY TO RAISE CHARITY FUNDS

Salford Community Walking Football (SALCOM) held the Charlie Littler Commemorative Tournament to remember players that have passed away.

SALCOM raised £500 to donate to BASIC charity - brain and spinal injury centre.

Do you ever fancy a kick about? Salford Community (SALCOM) Walking Football play on a Monday and a Friday between 11am-12noon at Salford Sports Village, Littleton Road, M7 3NQ. It is £3 a session and the first session is FREE.



# NURSE SWAPS CAREER FOR CARING FOR THE LOVE OF HIS LIFE IN RETIREMENT



**BY TAMESIDE REPORTER  
BOB ALSTON**

Geoffrey Faulkner has had a long career caring for others (as well as a short spell as a Bus Conductor), before deciding to retire aged 60 to look after the love of his life, wife Sheila.

This transition from work to house husband and carer came very quickly, but he didn't hesitate to spend quality time with Sheila and to make sure that they did all the things that they had talked about doing in retirement, before she became too ill.

This scenario will, no doubt, be a familiar one to some, and the adjustment from working life to retirement can be very

difficult. We all make plans for our retirement and, generally, things happen as you wanted them to, but in Geoffrey's case it didn't!

One major worry when finding yourself finishing work suddenly is how will the finances stack up! For Geoffrey, this really wasn't that big an issue, as he explains: "I felt that I had made good financial plans for my retirement even though it came earlier than expected, and with my wife being ill and unable to travel we didn't have the worry of financing expensive holidays, which can heavily eat into your savings."

Geoffrey explains what his last day at work felt like: "I felt relieved on my

last day, as I knew it would free up a lot more time to spend with my wife. We could be together more, and I could look after her as I wanted to. I left a job I loved quicker than expected and some great work colleagues, who made my last day a breeze. There were some tears shed, but I knew I had made the right decision, and I still do, even though I now find myself living alone after Sheila passed away within two years.

“That first Monday after retiring was very strange as I found myself still getting up at 5am as usual, and actually I still do. I want to make the most of every waking day! I feel happy I don’t have to work to a time, and I am able to do the things I need to do without clock-watching.”

So, what do you do when you find yourself alone after losing a loved one? Geoffrey explains: “Obviously, when Sheila passed, I felt very sad, empty and alone for quite some time, as I had dedicated my time since retiring to looking after her. Then I decided that she wouldn’t want me to be moping around the house wondering what to do with myself, so I did something about it.

“Firstly, I revisited a hobby that I first started when I was eight years old – collecting stamps – and I now have quite a large collection.

“Secondly, I started going on holiday again in this country and abroad. I really enjoy this, and I have met some really

interesting people and made some great friends on my travels.

“And just recently I’ve become a member of the 131 Club at Age UK Tameside.

We asked Geoffrey for his thoughts on retirement that may help others and he said: “I didn’t realise how hard things were for me when I was working and, at the same time, being a carer for Sheila. Having to juggle the two was hard work, but I just got on with it.

“Now I am very happy and feel secure for my future. If I decide to take a holiday I can without any worries.

“If I have learnt anything about later life that I will share with others it is, grasp every opportunity that comes your way with both hands, get out of those four walls we call home, and do as much as you can that makes you happy – you never know how long it will last!”



CHECK OUT OUR LATEST "CHANGING THE RECORD" PODCAST AND PREVIOUS EPISODES ON SPOTIFY, APPLE AND DEEZER OR DIRECTLY AT

[HTTPS://AUDIOBOOM.COM/POSTS/7374658-CHANGING-THE-RECORD-RETIREMENT](https://audioboom.com/posts/7374658-changing-the-record-retirement)



L - R: Jeff Derbyshire, 68, Dave Friend, 67, Phil Dodd, 66, Syd Bennett, 77, Dave Williams, 75, Dave Worsley, 66, Francis Hegg, 74, Bob Golding, 75

## RETIREMENT DOES NOT HAVE TO MEAN GAME, SET AND MATCH

Tennis enthusiasts are showing how they are smashing retirement and our reporter, Lesley Downing, joined players from the senior's group at Prestwich Cricket, Tennis and Bowling Club for a chat. Lesley joined the group when a match was in full swing, and the group were firing shots and insults at each other across the court with undiminished enthusiasm.

Phil Dodd, aged 66, has played tennis since he was 11, and is enjoying retirement as it gives him more time to play. He said: "It keeps me fit and we have a good laugh."

Sid Bennett, aged 77, is the oldest player there and started playing at 50. He said: "Keeping score is less important now than enjoyment."

Another player, Jeff Derbyshire, aged 68, often plays badminton in the morning and evening and tennis in the afternoon, and Dave Friend, 67, plays up to 5 times per week, having "slowed down" slightly from squash after having heart problems.

TALKING ABOUT

**MY GENERATION**

CHANGING THE RECORD ON GROWING  
OLDER IN GREATER MANCHESTER  
#CHANGETHERECORD

Dave Williams, aged 75, joined in the 1970s and has carried on playing into retirement. Having moved to Llandudno four years ago, he makes the trip most weeks to play, while also playing twice a week at home.

He said: "Tennis provides all round body fitness, as well as exercising your cognitive and strategic

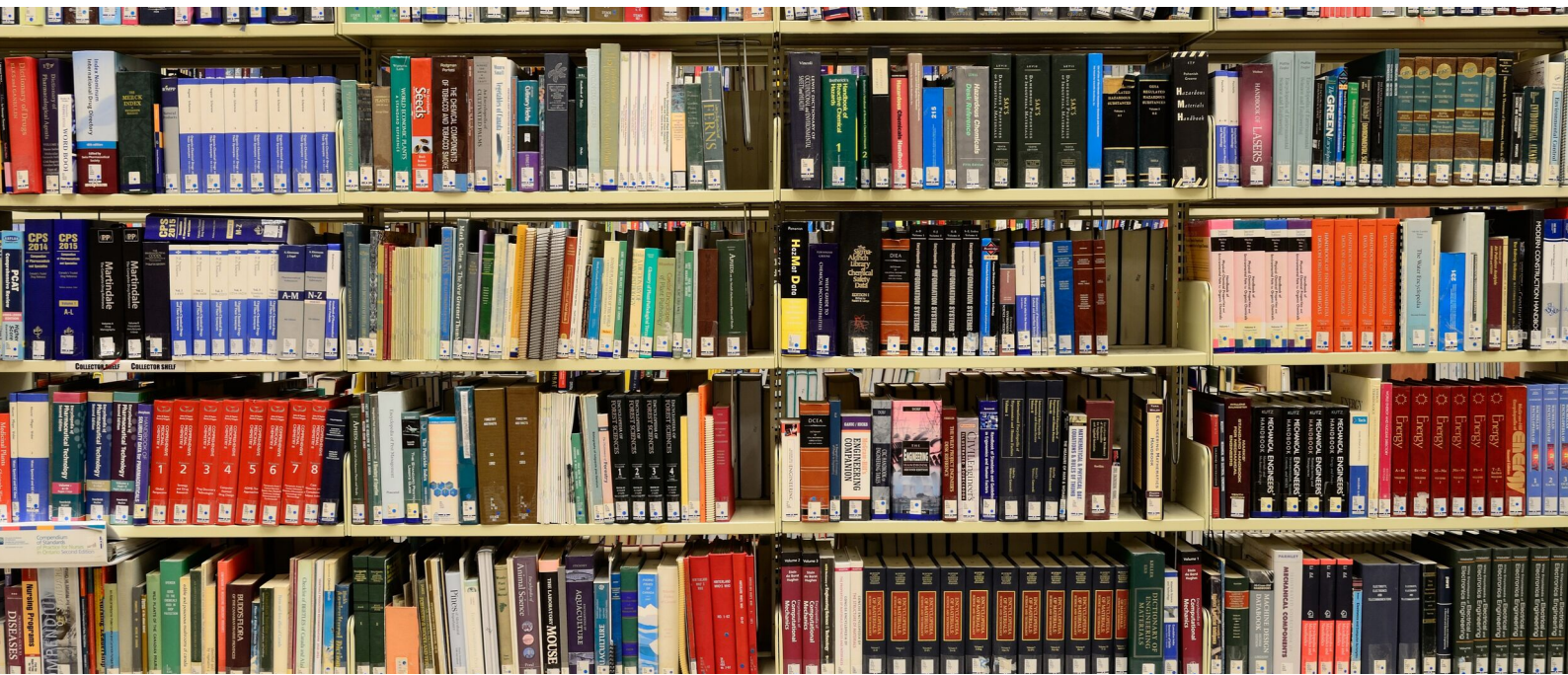
functions, with research showing that tennis played regularly into old age improve outcomes all round.

"But I mainly come for the social element, meeting with 50 to 60 people at my three clubs, having a great time and a good laugh. We all still love to play, we forget most things these days - except grudges."

For more information on Prestwich Cricket, Tennis and Bowling Club go to <https://www.prestwichsport.com>



# CAROL CAN TEACH US A THING OR TWO!



From leaving school, Carol started her working life in a Denton laboratory, but soon embarked on a lifetime ambition to become a teacher.

After training, Carol found herself in the classroom pursuing the career she was destined to do, she explains: “I loved school as a child and admired the teachers that taught me so much, and I always wanted to follow in their footsteps imparting my knowledge to a younger generation.

“I left school and started work in a local laboratory, as I was too young to start teacher training college, but as soon as I was of an age, I enrolled at Manchester University and trained to be a teacher in Mathematics and English. I started teaching at Stamford High School and continued to enjoy a very worthwhile career, which lasted until I took early retirement in my 50s.”

Carol’s premature retirement was brought on by an ever-increasing workload. She explains: “As a teacher I was increasingly asked to do more. More teaching, more reports, more record-keeping, more marking, and more extra-curricular work.

“This is not what I came into teaching to do, I wanted to go back to the days when I spent quality time with my students, not being a slave to piles of paper!”

Carol remembers, vividly, the day she finished work and states: “By the time the term finished when I was leaving teaching for good, I felt joyous and relieved mixed with a tinge of sadness for the students I was leaving behind.

“They had been part of my life for so long and I knew I would miss them the most.

“Retirement really hit me the day I would have normally returned after the summer break. I felt a mixture of emotions and out of sync with my routine, but I also felt relieved because the pressures of work were no longer there.

"I was still getting up at the usual time, but soon found that I could now slow down – retirement allowed me to change my routines and to do things in my own time.

“With retiring from teaching at a relatively young age, I needed something to fill that gap. It took a while to adjust to the change from working full time to having that time on my hands to do whatever I chose to. I felt more relaxed and wanted something that was enjoyable and, at the same time, would keep me fit, so I started ‘Pleasure Walking’ in local

country parks and when I felt like a rest I would sit on the nearest bench and combine walking with my love of reading by getting my book out!”

“I also found myself spending more time with my husband, even though he was still working, because I wasn’t using my leisure time prepping for classroom lessons.

“My husband is retired now, and we can do more things together. He also helps me a little more as my health is not what it was, but I am still enjoying life.

“Looking back, I enjoyed being a teacher and I would do it all over again, but I’m also enjoying retirement and the many things that I currently have in my life – I can recommend it to anyone!”

## REIGNITING A HOBBY IN RETIREMENT

I’ve been into motorbikes since I was a lad, picking up a love for them from my brother and father.

Before the age of twenty I had had three motorbikes but as I got older I replaced the bikes with a car to suit my family life. Fast forward to today, I am still married to a loving wife, and my two children are grown-up with families of their own and I had a longing to get on a motorbike again. So, in 2012 the research started, and I settled on a Kawasaki ER6-f. I now enjoy great bike rides on a Sunday with the wind in my face. It is such a good



feeling with fantastic scenery, especially the ride from Chapel-en-le-Frith. It has it all, twists, turns, climbs, descents, narrow, wide, different speeds, quaint villages, and the world-famous Peak Caverns. If you used to like riding - I would say go for it again! Retirement gives you the freedom to enjoy a hobby again.





GETTING OLDER  
ISN'T ACTUALLY  
TOO BAD

## How to make the transition from working long hours to having all the time in the world

Our Salford reporter - Chris - tells us about his retirement and how joining local groups stopped him from becoming socially isolated.

My work kept me so busy there was little time for much else, driving around the country and often visiting London at least once a week, so early mornings and late evenings were the norm. There was inevitably some stress involved in signing-off deals, keeping competition at bay, difficult meetings to manage and suchlike, but after thirty-odd years in the retail business I'd learnt to roll with it. At 61 I was keen to work through until state pension age 65 and therefore accepted some things I felt inequitable as a sort of quid pro quo to achieving that goal.

Unfortunately, difficult as the day to day challenges were, the biggest impediment to my longevity was an

internal management change with the resultant shift in business targets and philosophy. The incoming CEO made changes to the top team, bringing in people who'd previously served him, and brutally dismissing a couple of head office middle managers to assert his authority.

This led to a climate of fear and referrals by staff to Union representatives for guidance. It seemed sensible to keep one's head down and effectively get on with the job. This I managed for about two years until it became obvious that, increasingly, field work was being hived off into telephone sales. The division I worked in was decimated and I was called to an early morning meeting

to be served with a redundancy notice. Even though the writing had been on the wall, the shock of redundancy was still devastating and at 63 I still felt fit and productive.

My initial worry was economic. I received Statutory Redundancy allowance only and was reliant on an occupational pension from previous employment. No coveted state pension for eighteen months. Also, I'd lost my company car, which would generate major costs to replace. Adamant that I'd not dip into my life savings, I was lucky enough to find a small delivery job that fitted my lifestyle and filled the earnings gap to a degree. It was a difficult period and not the end to working life that I'd envisaged but there was a sense of achievement when the state pension kick-in.

To keep myself fit I started walking briskly for about an hour. It was okay and I said 'good mornings' to various people en route but was walking too swiftly to stop and engage with anyone. This became my routine, and, allied to reading the paper cover to cover and doing the crossword and such like, felt ok to me.

However, luckily my partner, Sylvia, started to suggest tactfully at first and then with increasing urgency that I accompany her to some of the classes she enjoyed. So we went to an Introduction to Creative Writing course, art class, walking group and an established writing group. It was



transformative. All the groups were welcoming and revelatory in that there was no hierarchy no matter what people had achieved in their working lives. All seemed equal and focused on their chosen recreation but essentially with shared experiences of life.

In these groups, I learned about walking football, which I fully embraced and provided the passion and camaraderie that I had previously lacked.

I am not naturally gregarious, and not one to go to the pub, so I was at risk of being socially isolated and I now play walking football four times a week and enjoy the other groups I attend and being a part of this campaign. I now think that I should not have spent so much time worrying about work and should have let the stress wash over me. Now my time is my own and life is pretty good. We should all try and look on the bright side of life!

TALKING ABOUT  
**MY GENERATION**  
CHANGING THE RECORD ON GROWING  
OLDER IN GREATER MANCHESTER  
#CHANGETHERECORD

# Retired assistant chief fire officer 86-year-old Bernard went back to work for the day

Retired Wigan Chief Fire Officer Bernard went back to work for the day at Wigan fire station - almost 40 years after retirement.

Bernard managed over eight fire stations during his career, which starting in 1952 progressing through the ranks until he was promoted to division commander in August 1977 until his retirement in 1980.

Bernard managed stations in Wigan, Bolton, Baccup, Leigh and Chadderton and remembers each station as clear as yesterday.

He was greeted by the watch on duty when he went back to Wigan fire station along with Station Manager John Duffin. Bernard started the morning by telling the crew what they did in his day and how excited he was to see what had changed since he retired.

The fire crew went through each piece of equipment and took Bernard outside where they did a full drill using hoses, equipment and the tower to demonstrate how they would tackle a blaze today.



Bernard said: "It's been a fantastic day, thank you so much to all the men at Wigan Fire Station, my wish was granted and we have formed a relationship, I will be going back to show them pictures of when I worked there all those years ago, the changes in the station today are amazing, the kit and apparatus these days have come a long long way."

Bernard shared pictures and news paper clippings of achievements during his career - including winning a drill competition in 1962 and meeting Prince Charles when he opened the Head Quarters in 1974.

**Pictured - Bernard and his fire truck**



# TALKING ABOUT **MY GENERATION**

CHANGING THE RECORD ON GROWING  
OLDER IN GREATER MANCHESTER

PEOPLE AGED 50 AND OVER FROM ACROSS GREATER MANCHESTER ARE  
CHANGING THE RECORD ON WHAT IT MEANS TO GROW OLDER IN THE REGION.

THEY HAVE TEAMED UP FOR A NEW CAMPAIGN – "TALKING ABOUT MY  
GENERATION" - TO BECOME COMMUNITY REPORTERS AND SHOW WHAT IT'S  
REALLY LIKE TO GROW OLDER IN GREATER MANCHESTER.

DO YOU HAVE A STORY FOR OUR CAMPAIGN OF A PERSON OVER THE AGE OF 50?  
OR KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD LIKE TO JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN ROCKSTARS TO  
BECOME A COMMUNITY REPORTER?

GET IN TOUCH:

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[WWW.YELLOWJIGSAW.CO.UK/TALKINGABOUTMYGENERATION](http://WWW.YELLOWJIGSAW.CO.UK/TALKINGABOUTMYGENERATION)



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#CHANGETHERECORD



**/Talking About My Generation**

