Retired Employees’ News

Latest Company news
Highlights from the annual report and much more.

New appointment
Meet new Secretary of the John Laing Charitable Trust.

Platinum Wedding
Find out which couple is celebrating 70 years of marriage.
What has become of the sun this year?

There was a brief sighting of the sun the other day, but as I write this, there are reports of snow in Devon, Gloucestershire and Wales – in May.

It’s not that I mind a bit of weather, I am more concerned about the ongoing battle in my house fought out over the thermostat. When I used to live alone in a flat it was so cold visitors claimed it was like a fridge and surprised that the light didn’t go on when the front door opened.

Weather may be a key influence on John Laing’s latest investments in wind farms, including one in Sweden now [see page 3]. The Company has always been at the forefront of improvements in health and safety. Sir Maurice and Sir Kirby were involved in the early days of regulation for the construction industry in general and the Company is still achieving the highest standards today [see page 7].

Those of you who feel health and safety is often used as an excuse for unnecessary rules and regulations in some parts of today’s society, may be interested in a submission on page 16. It shows how Richmond Golf Club saw no reason why Hitler should ruin a game of golf.

The summer outing season is upon us, but many readers organise their own reunions for former friends and colleagues, such as the ever-growing band of retired architects and engineers (see pages 14-15).

There was a reunion involving current and former employees who attended the English Heritage event to show what is happening with the Laing photographic collection (pages 12-13). Your help would be appreciated in identifying some of the images.

As for this issue’s humorous (arguably anyway) sign-off, I will not be passing on any of my dodgy jokes, rather a couple of funny stories. The first came from Maggie Putman who forwarded a couple of observations regarding children, and why we love them. A mother and her child, while driving along, witnessed a woman travelling in a convertible car. So the story goes, the female suddenly stood up – stark naked – and began flourishing her attributes to passers by. The young child was shocked and turned to his mother saying: “Mummy, that woman is not wearing a seatbelt.”

It seems this type of innocence can exist much later in life as a story passed onto me by my own mother will affirm. An ex policeman told mum of his favourite moment in court. During a case he was involved with, the judge apparently asked the court: “Who is making these allegations?”

A man in the witness box confidently put up his hand and announced: “It is me m’lud – I am the alligator.”

I hope you all have a wonderful summer, please keep sending your letters, stories and other contributions.

Alex Finkenrath
New Trust Secretary after retirement

The John Laing Charitable Trust has a new Secretary following the retirement of Michael Hamilton after more than 30 years with John Laing.

His successor is Jenny Impey who first joined the Company back in 1997. Michael retired at the end of April after more than 30 years’ service with John Laing. His most recent roles have been Director of Community Affairs (since 1995) and Trust Secretary of the John Laing Charitable Trust (since 1999). He has been a trustee/director of more than a dozen charities and companies over his career and was awarded an MBE in 2010.

Speaking at a retirement gathering at the John Laing offices in Kingsway, Michael said that he had enjoyed his career with the group. He added that he was pleased to have been able to help ensure that the John Laing Charitable Trust (JLCT) operated in the way it was set up - to help retirees, charities and also to work alongside the current business.

Jenny started out as John Laing group Financial Analyst then became Financial Controller of Laing Investments Limited in 2001. After a short stint away from the Company, Jenny rejoined on a consultancy basis and became Group Finance Projects Manager before John Laing Charitable Trust Secretary this year.

Company has first overseas wind project

John Laing has achieved financial close on the Svartvallsberget Wind Farm in Sweden, its first overseas project in the onshore wind sector.

John Laing is 100% investor in the project, securing the company’s position in the sector following its acquisition of two UK wind farms in 2012.

The project comprises the design, build, finance and operation of 10 2MW turbines and generation is expected to begin in Spring 2014. The project will produce enough electricity to meet the needs of around 12,500 homes, making a contribution to securing the region’s energy supply, whilst offsetting 21,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions per annum.

Ross McArthur, Head of Renewable Energy for John Laing, said: “We are delighted to have made our first overseas acquisition in the onshore wind market as it represents a significant milestone in the development of the John Laing business in the renewable energy sector.”

Andreas Parzych, Head of Business Development for Continental Europe at John Laing, said: “This is an exciting project for John Laing as the skills and experience we have obtained so far in the renewable energy sector has allowed us to expand into Northern Europe, making Svartvallsberget Wind Farm John Laing’s first project in Sweden.”
Company results report doubling pre-tax profits

John Laing published its results for 2012 in April and trumpeted more than a doubling in profits, much of it from the sale of certain assets.

The report highlights the following points:
- Strong growth in assets under management
- Value added of £63.8 million (2011 – £45.7 million)
- Investment commitments of £146.1 million on seven projects (2011 – £60.6 million on five projects)
- International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) profit before tax increased to £65.6 million (2011 – £29.8 million)
- £92.9 million proceeds from sales of investments in five PPP projects, resulting in an IFRS profit of £5.7 million and a profit against original cost of £47.3 million

The Company’s international reach has extended to include its first ever project in New Zealand. It also has projects in North America, Continental Europe and the Asia Pacific region.

Group Chairman Phil Nolan said: “We have made significant progress this year and this reflects the dedication and commitment of our staff without whom such progress would not be possible. Once again I would like to thank them for the significant contribution they make to the success of the Company.”

Chief executive Adrian Ewer said: “These are challenging times, but John Laing’s strategy of diversifying geographically, working with local supply chain partners and spreading its activities across a range of infrastructure sectors has held it in good stead throughout the economic crisis. It is because of our strategy and experience that we were able to deliver a record year for new investment commitment and more than double our profit before tax in 2012.”

The full report is available online at: www.laing.com, under ‘Financials’.

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Summary of John Laing business activities

**PRIMARY INVESTMENT**
Our primary investment activities involve sourcing, bidding for and winning greenfield infrastructure projects. Our primary investment portfolio includes traditional PPP projects, strategic partnership structures for healthcare schemes in the UK, as well as renewable energy. We work with partners who are individually selected for each project and we bring our broad skills base to everything we do.

**SECONDARY INVESTMENT**
Our secondary investment activities involve holding operational infrastructure projects, most of which were originally primary investments for John Laing. We aim to deliver projected investment returns and consistent growth in the value of the secondary investment portfolio. Key to this is developing strong working relationships with partners over the full life of project concessions.

**ASSET MANAGEMENT**
We provide asset management services to both the Group’s primary and secondary investment portfolios and, in addition, in respect of John Laing Infrastructure Fund’s (JLIF) investments, through John Laing Capital Management (JLCM). These services cover: managing project delivery during the construction phase; provision of technical input; and the delivery of a number of services through Management Services Agreements (MSAs). A further significant area of activity is the identification and implementation of operational improvements to and realisation of value in both the Group’s and JLIF’s investment portfolios. John Laing Integrated services (JLIS) provides facilities management services to a number of PPP project companies as well as directly to public sector clients. Sectors covered include local government, education, police, fire and rescue, health and rail.
Medical research site is a state of the art project

John Laing has been selected as the Preferred Partner by Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (CUH) to deliver the Forum development on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus (CBC).

The Forum, which will be designed by global architecture practice NBBJ, will bring together under one roof a postgraduate medical education centre, a 75-bed private hospital, a 200-room hotel and a 550-seat conference centre. By combining these three functions in one place, CBC users will have access to a social hub to encourage interaction between academics and CUH staff, grow Cambridge's reputation as a venue for biomedical conferences, training and specialist healthcare and create income for NHS services at CUH.

The funding for the £120 million infrastructure project will be arranged entirely by John Laing and no public capital will be used to fund the project. In the first major project of its kind in the National Health Service (NHS), CUH and John Laing will form a Joint Venture to develop the new building. CUH will receive an annual income and a share of the profits over the life of the project. All of this money will go to supporting and enhancing the delivery of patient care at Addenbrooke’s and the Rosie hospitals.

It is planned that the private hospital will be run by Ramsay Health Care UK and the postgraduate medical education centre will be managed by CUH. A new car park, shops and restaurants will also serve local and international visitors to the Forum. The development will create over 300 construction jobs and more than 500 people will be employed in the completed facility.

Peter Ward, Director of Healthcare Projects at John Laing, said: "We’re very excited to be working with CUH on this important project. John Laing is keen to invest sustainably in good quality public infrastructure, and the Forum is a great example because it will provide a social hub for the biomedical campus, give Cambridge a centre for postgraduate medical education that reflects the standards of its teaching, and generate substantial income for NHS care. It’s a crucial part of the CUH’s vision, and will illustrate the potential benefits innovation can bring to CUH’s patients and the staff who care for them."

The final contractual details have still to be completed and will be subject to final approval by both the CUH board of directors and council of governors. Commercial Close for the Forum is anticipated for summer 2013 with construction work planned to start in spring 2014. It is hoped that the Forum will open in summer 2016.
Company keeps Platinum rating

John Laing has been recognised as a Platinum company in Business in the Community’s annual benchmark of responsible business management, the Corporate Responsibility Index (CR Index).

The CR Index is the UK’s leading voluntary benchmark of corporate responsibility. It has been run by Business in the Community for over a decade to help companies:
- accurately measure and manage all aspects of their social and environmental performance
- shape how they integrate and improve corporate responsibility throughout their business operations and benchmark themselves against competitors.

Despite the ongoing economic challenges facing business, the 2013 CR Index paints a positive picture of levels of commitment to responsible business in the UK.

John Laing’s Platinum company status means that it integrates corporate responsibility into its business model and has clear CR responsibilities and incentive structures at board and operational levels.

Platinum companies have a structured approach to data collection and social and environmental impact assessment and can demonstrate a number of years of CR performance improvement across key impacts, high level of transparency and stakeholder engagement.

David Micciche, CR Director at John Laing, said: “We are delighted to have retained our Platinum status, it reflects our continued commitment to our employees, the environment though our investment in the renewable energy sector and our community engagement programmes.”

Stephen Howard, Chief Executive, Business in the Community said: “I congratulate John Laing for achieving Platinum because it signifies a key step on the journey, a willingness to rise to the challenge and that they are part of a movement of responsible business in which all companies have their unique part to play. We look forward to working with, supporting and challenging John Laing to build on this achievement as we, together drive the transformational change needed to deliver a sustainable economy.”

Financial close achieved on Alder Hey

The Acorn consortium including John Laing has achieved financial close in the programme to build a new Alder Hey children’s hospital in Liverpool.

John Laing and Laing O’Rourke will each hold 40% of the total investment equity in the project with Interserve holding 20%. Laing O’Rourke Construction will design and build the new hospital and Interserve will maintain the hospital infrastructure.

A proportion of the scheme is funded by the Trust’s own financial resources alongside charitable donations. The remainder of the scheme is being funded through Private Finance Initiative (PFI).

Acorn was announced as preferred bidder for the project in June 2012 following approval by the Department of Health and HM Treasury.

Alder Hey is the first accredited ‘Investing in Children’ hospital in the UK and is the first paediatric health promoting hospital, accredited by the World Health Organisation. Alder Hey has a strong, active research portfolio and a vision of leading, pioneering translational research to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people locally, nationally and internationally.

The official opening of the new £167million hospital is planned for Autumn 2015.

It is being built on behalf of Alder Hey Children’s NHS Foundation Trust. It will have a floor area of 51,000m2, and contain 270 beds and 16 state of the art operating theatres. Furthermore, 75% of bedrooms will be single occupancy with ensuite bathrooms.
John Laing Infrastructure Fund Limited (JLIF) has completed the acquisition of a 30% stake in Peterborough Hospital, its second acquisition of the year.

The stake was acquired from Brookfield Infrastructure Partners L.P. for a total consideration of £26.7 million. Peterborough Hospital has been fully operational since 2010 and has a long concession period to 2042, which will extend the average life of JLIF’s portfolio from 19.6 years (as at 31 December 2012) to 20.1 years. The consideration paid by JLIF is in line with the current valuation methodology for similar UK health PPP projects in JLIF’s portfolio and, following this acquisition, the portfolio will comprise 38 assets.

The acquisition increases the number of health sector investments worldwide to ten and is reflective of the company’s confidence in the sector.

David Marshall from John Laing Capital Management, Fund Manager to JLIF, said: “We are delighted to announce the acquisition of the stake in Peterborough Hospital, which is a high quality operational project. We look forward to working with our public sector partners to operate this project in an efficient manner. The acquisition reflects the increasing number of investments in the JLIF portfolio sourced from non-John Laing vendors in the secondary market. “JLIF has now acquired 11 such investments with a combined valuation of approximately £95 million and we remain confident of finding further such investment opportunities in the future.”

John Laing Infrastructure Fund Limited is a separate FTSE250 company with a Primary Listing on the London Stock Exchange. JLIF has raised over £520 million in the equity market, taking its market capitalisation to in excess of £575 million. JLIF has paid its target dividend of 6% in its first two years and has created total shareholder return from launch to the end of December 2012 of 17.8%. JLIF has a portfolio of 38 low risk, operational, PPP infrastructure projects located in the UK, Continental Europe and North America.
The Company’s nationwide Suggestion Scheme campaign was sponsored by the Industrial Welfare Society, as part of National Productivity Year. Everyone sending in a suggestion would receive a souvenir key ring. The scheme even had its own secretary within John Laing and Son Ltd.

The miscellany section in the April edition of Team Spirit was packed with interesting snippets. Firstly news that the Sports Club’s football team was due to play its first international games in Belgium and France, accompanied by wives – in the pre-WAG era – for the two games. The long weekend would also include sight-seeing tours. Still with a sporting bias, the column also reported that Labour Officer Bill Luxford was still as fit as ever ‘despite the fact he is now turned 50’. To prove this he had run in the London to Brighton Marathon organized by the Daily Sketch. And following on from newspapers the column added: “One headline which made us smile recently read like this: LAINGS TO GET £2 PROJECT It was in fact a misprint – it referred to a £200,000 contract!

The first UK multi-storey block of flats to be built using the SECTRA construction system commenced this year. It used prefabricated elements and had already been used in France. Many of the team working on the new site at Heywood in Lancashire had been over to see French sites using the system.

Ex-apprentice bricklayer Brian Gardener was winner of the first regional prize awarded by the London Master Builders’ Association under the NFBTE. Brian (who won the craft award in the national final of the Apprentice of the Year scheme a year earlier) received a citation and a cheque for £25. The chap who presented the cheque was President of the LMBA (with many letters after his name) Mr A R Mais OBE, ERD, TD, DL, BSc, MIstructE, FIOB.

National Joint Apprenticeship Board prizes were handed out to Company apprentices. Pictured from left to right are: J Devine, DJ Bevan, GF Smith (General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers) Charles Craft, J Butler, PS Boon, W Dear, and JR Cole.
The Company’s Production Control department was celebrating its first year. The ten main functions were listed as: pre-development planning, tender planning, works programmes, short term programmes, weekly targeting, cost control, feedback of information, progressing, work study and material checking. Pictured are the Production Control team at Fallowfield where a residential scheme for Manchester University was being constructed. JH Woodcock (centre) explains a point to: left to right: LJ Stance, J Thompson, B Jackson and T Haynes.

Work had commenced on an £800,000 scheme for the erection of a 13-storey building comprising a sub-divisional police station, police offices and Aliens’ Registration Office in Holborn, London. It would replace Grays Inn Road Police Station (built in 1897) and the Aliens’ Registration Office then at Piccadilly Place. This second address was originally Vine Street Police Station, and the 100-year-old lamp would be saved to hang outside the new building. The new building would be constructed on an ‘island site’.

At Eggborough in Yorkshire the team was reaping the benefits of continuing work throughout the winter to finish the foundations in for a giant coal-fired power station. Aggregates and water had to be heated and the ground was ‘defrosted’ ahead of concreting to overcome the freezing temperatures of 26 degrees Fahrenheit (about -3 degrees celcius). The 115-acre site (within a total site area of 365 acres) was being built by the Northern Project Group for the Central Electricity Generating Board. There were four crawler cranes and six derricks, while the batching plant would produce 400 cubic yards of concrete per day. There were three 100-ton cement silos. Pictured are the boiler house and turbine house areas and concreting of a structural slab.
In an era when colour print was beginning to take hold, Team Spirit was moving with the times and including the occasional colour supplements. One group featured in glorious colour were the ‘essential estimators’ from London Region. From left (seated): Jyotti Gajjar, Barbara Le Conte, Lorraine Gray, Alison Mace, Usha Tanna, Pat Jones and Ross Murray. Standing: Brian Porter, Peter Hughes, Alan Rowe, David Rice, Richard Ackerley, Jon Harris, Roy Backhouse, Richard Powell, Stephen Beck, Robert Gray, Roger Monk, Keith Scott and Robin Whitby.

There was a full page special colour feature about Laing Management Contracting [LMC], which was virtually all housed under one roof at Management House in Luton. This included LMC (Southern), JL Project Management, Laing Interiors, JL Public Relations and Graphics. In fact it was only other regional contracting arms which were housed elsewhere. Assembling the constituent parts in one place was the brainchild of LMC chairman Terry Flemming pictured below.

Quantity Surveyor Alan Saunderson, working at the London Mail Newspapers site, managed to foil a robbery during his lunch break. He heard raised voices from the Abbey National in Southwark and looked in to see some people with shotguns. He managed to avoid being seen and raise the alarm. The robbers were not caught, but they did not get away with any money.

In January heavy fog made way for a beautiful day as Laing Management Contracting’s Stanstead Airport project was topped out. Team Spirit claimed it was one of the largest topping out ceremonies ever organised with over 300 guests viewing a model of the finished development. It was unique also in that the traditional yew tree was affixed to the last of 121 12-tonne roof domes. The 18m square preclad lattice was lifted into place by the transport secretary Paul Channon – helped by a crane driver and banksman.

Al Naboodah Laing was involved in the Dubai golf course in the desert which was opened in March of this year. The Laing contribution was the magnificent club house and it was opened to much acclaim by the President of Pakistan and keen golfer General Mohammed Zia ul Haq. The opening was a lavish three-day event including top international golfers, a gala dinner and plenty of press coverage.

There was some excitement about a disco at Laing Sports Club for May 7. Tickets were £3.50 including ‘a chicken supper’, various fun events and a charity auction for a football signed by the Arsenal football team.

Keys were handed over for the first two of six phases of the Castle Court development in Belfast city centre. It was the largest ever private development in Belfast according to Team Spirit, on an 8.5 acre site. Due for completion in 1990 it was expected to create 2,000 jobs.

John Laing Contracting’s Civil Engineering experts completed the car park in Reading (below) for 1,600 cars. It was described by Team Spirit as ‘one of the most attractive car parks in the UK’.
The government praised John Laing Construction civil engineers for their part in the £90million A406 Barking to South Woodford relief road which was finished six months early. Equally praised by Transport Secretary Paul Channon were fellow contractors Taylor Woodrow, Cementation and Balfour Beatty. Structures in the £10.2m John Laing Construction section included the Woodford and Redbridge viaducts. Pictured are: John Vyse, John Shine, Janis Apsa, Alan Burford, Transport Secretary Paul Channon, John Armitt, Brian Vollans, Martin Foster and Richard Baldwin.


In Spain Laing SA was looking after some slippery customers in the largest olive oil producing region in the world. They were building a new prototype prison for 400 inmates at Jaen province. The idea was to increase security and improve conditions for prisoners at the same time. The 100,000 square metre site was surrounded by 2km of stone walls and was valued at £8million.

A colour pull out focusing on the London Region lauded the £35million Lansdowne House in Berkeley Square with its five storey high atrium as the jewel in the Region’s crown.

The £4.5million JLC Rudmore Flyover at Portsmouth was officially opened. Minister for Roads and Traffic Peter Bottomley was the VIP guest who cut the ribbon ‘assisted by his niece Poppy Mardall and John Armitt’.

Laing Homes was making its mark in Scotland at the Glasgow Garden Festival. They created a terrace of 13 showhouses especially designed for the occasion. Homes had various projects on the go in Glasgow including the 100-acre Princes Dock site for housing and a 16-acre business park.

Yet another colour faces feature were the ‘buyers in the background’ from London Region, being introduced to the wider company. Pictured from left (seated): Renee Hall, Gwen Bagley, Tracey Crowther, Carol Heath, Sylvia Burke, John Niedenthal, Michael Thomlinson. Standing: Eric London, John Brookes, Nigel Sussman, Kevin Fraher, Chris Mansfield, Sean Lye, Andrew Hazlehurst and Andrew Hardy.
Preserved for the future
The John Laing Charitable Trust has devoted a lot of time, effort and resources to preserving the Company’s illustrious history for the nation. The 230,000 images are now part of the Archive at English Heritage. A number of films covering major projects are with the British Film Institute and available as DVDs. There is also a large amount of documentation including leaflets and brochures stored at the Northants County Records Office.

Times past saved forever
JOHN LAING retirees and current staff came together for a special presentation and tour courtesy of English Heritage at their Swindon offices in April.

The charity talked visitors through what they are doing with the John Laing image collection which spans more than a century.

English Heritage head of archive Mike Evans told the guests that the photographic collection was historically significant, not only as a pictorial record of construction within the UK, but also social history.

He said some of the historic images had already been used by other sections within English Heritage. He showed the image of a classroom which is now being used by the education department.

Dr Hannah Little has been working on making the collection accessible and is currently selecting for scanning 1,000 of the images covering some of Britain’s most historically significant projects.

Some of the pictures are thought to date back to 1910 or earlier and one of the reasons that the John Laing Charitable Trust asked English Heritage to take on the collection was to preserve and conserve them.

Guests were treated to a tour of the English Heritage Archive and shown how images are stored in such a way as to prevent deterioration and also how some images which had started to deteriorate can saved by specialist conservation techniques.

A special map detailing some of Laing’s major projects over the years was set up and English Heritage plans to create a geographical record of key projects featuring images from the collection.

Former Group Public Relations Team Manager George Taylor and wife Patty looking at past projects

Former Group Public Relations Team Manager George Taylor and wife Patty looking at past projects.
Can you help unlock some of the archive secrets?

WHILST there are various finding aids, indexes and reference points, even in the hands of an experienced archivist there are more than a few ‘mystery pictures’.

Dr Hannah Little has appealed for help from Laing retirees who may recall some of the projects for which there are no labels which are featured on this page. Dr Little said: “These three images are just some of those which we cannot identify for sure. The two multi-storey buildings in particular look like we should recognise them, but no one can say definitively what they are.

“It is possible that some of these projects are not related to the John Laing archive at all, however, they are in the collection.”

If you have any idea what these images are, please contact Alex Finkenrath on alex@retirement-news.co.uk/ tel: 01234 313055.

We would love to hear your stories connected with any of the projects featured.

There will be other images from the collection from time to time which the archive may seek readers’ help in identifying.

Conservation experts bring Laing images back to life

The substantial John Laing photographic archive is in the right place as proved by the example pictured of how the experts at English Heritage can save and preserve negatives. The image shows a damaged negative and how the deterioration has been overcome enabling a print to be made.

Guests were given a tour of the giant temperature-controlled storage facility where negatives are kept in conditions which minimise any deterioration.

The transparent envelopes which negatives are often kept in are wholly unsuitable and part of English Heritage’s work has involved transferring them to neutral paper-based packaging materials.
Architects and engineers’ reunion at Sports Club

The story telling and the nostalgia were in abundance at the Annual Reunion held at the Rowley Lane Sports Club, formerly Laing Sports Club.

Entry money proffered this year included a Clydesdale Bank £10 note to the “Scot” cashier, goading him to refuse the “legal tender” at his peril. Then the same cashier was confronted with a 50p deficit as the balance of the day! The latter being resolved over a cup of tea.

The attendees were in good heart enjoying the spread of food prepared by the Recreational Club. They were also given an encouraging update by David Scott on the current John Laing business.

The photographs indicate the diversity of the attendees from the many parts of the past Company. Colleagues who

Pictured left: John Bailey, Dave Weeks, Thomas Lai, John Wehrle, David Scott, Ian Jarvis.

Pictured above: John Stevens, Don Hussey, Les Frost, Peter Small, Eddy Blackburn, David Gladding.

Pictured below: Jeremy Wright, John Tarbox, Ron Pearce, Malcolm Tucker, Peter Westwood, Steve Cunliffe, John Vignoles, Andy Smith.

Pictured: Maurice Gatfield, Duncan Gandy, Chris Chiverrell, Ron Brooks, Wally Paterson, Martin Chapman, Mel Stanley.
worked/support each other across the divisions. Apologies from over 20 absentees holidaying across the globe – the Americas, Australasia, the African Continent, Europe and the Arctic – were received, as well as those challenged with ill health and family circumstances. You all got a mention by name to your former colleagues on the day.

So our readers are not puzzling over who’s who, we have endeavoured to name correctly those pictured. As one recent email said “given my ridiculous inability to remember names... I would really love copies of the photos to refresh my memory prior to next year’s event.”

Thinking about that, I am having my own difficulty remembering who sent the email!!

Enjoy the photographs. Looking forward to meeting again next year with the returning holiday makers who missed the occasion.

The former Sports Club is now Macabbi London Brady Recreational Trust.

They have kindly hosted our event under the auspices of Marta Ghermandi, (Site and Events Manager), for the last ten years on the third Thursday of March.

Next year’s event being held on the 20th March 2014.

If you have changed your email address or would like an early invitation for next year , please email John Clark on: jgpa.clark@btinternet.com

Our thanks to John Clark for putting this piece together for us.

Not forgetting...

Those present but not in the pictures: David Harrison, Charlie Novis, Chris Wilshere, John Clark.

Those who were not present but wished to be remembered on the day: David Lloyd, Peter Allcroft, Peter Coles, Linda York, Geoff Mead, Judy & Derek Pollard, Ian Swainsbury, John Keeton, Peter Donaldson, John Sharp, Marianne Tunnell, Bob Dunkley, Steve Farris, David Heard, John Taylor, Gordon Jeavons, Henry Macejewski, Mike Hooper, Mike Silvey, Phil Rendle, Dennis Conner.

Pictured: Nick Cook, Mervyn Richards, Denis Owen, Brian Collins, Brian Starkey, Ian Brixey, Graham Bell, Neil Kitchener

From the left: Debbie Dix, Martin Foster, Mark Tyler, Keith Dawson, Alan Coakley, Oster Bayne, Brian Stephenson.
Some gems from Ray Hanson’s farewell dinner menu...

The greatest of gifts is the power to estimate things at their true worth...
de la Rochefoucauld

Profit x Probability = Expectation Value
Prof John Whittaker

Fine bunch of employees in our estimation

Thanks to George Dixon who passed on some of these photographic memories of estimators from around the country. Feel free to put some names to these faces if you can. Among the items was this poem from Ray Hanson’s retirement meal which may strike a chord:

An estimator stood at the Golden Gates, His head was bent and low, He cautiously asked the man of Fate, Which way he ought to go.

What have you done? Saint Peter said, To seek admission here, On Earth I played the guessing game For many and many a year

Saint Peter opened wide the gates, and beamed on him as well, Come in and choose your harp, he said, You’ve had your share of Hell.

Only in Britain – temporary golf rules during the War

Thank you to Mr Ken Cole who passed on this wonderfully calm set of temporary rules from 1940 put in place at Richmond Golf Club to cope with the war.

1. Players are asked to collect bomb and shrapnel splinters to save these causing damage to the Mowing Machines.
2. In competitions, during gunfire or while bombs are falling, players may take cover without penalty for ceasing play.
3. The positions of known delayed action bombs are marked by red flags at a reasonably, but not guaranteed, safe distance therefrom.
4. Shrapnel and/or bomb splinters on the Fairways, or in Bunkers within a club’s length of a ball, may be moved without penalty, and no penalty shall be incurred if a ball is thereby caused to move accidentally.
5. A ball moved by enemy action may be replaced, or if lost or destroyed, a ball may be dropped not nearer the hole without penalty.
6. A ball lying in a crater may be lifted and dropped not nearer the hole, preserving the line to the hole, without penalty.
7. A player whose stroke is affected by the simultaneous explosion of a bomb may play another ball from the same place. Penalty one stroke.
Ken receives top scouting honour

Realm member Ken Hughes has received the Scouting Movement’s highest honour - The Silver Wolf.

Ken, who was former Area Marketing Manager for Laing Midlands, has been involved with the scouts since 1968 at least, and given tireless service to the cause.

He was delighted to receive the honour on St George’s Day.

Ken said his time as a Scout did not count towards the many years he has devoted to the movement. It was during the war and he had to ‘man his bike’ and be ready to act as a link between the emergency services, passing on messages if the phones went down.

Ken’s wife Margaret has also been involved with the Scouts for decades and it was she who first convinced him to become a scout leader. The couple have been involved in many gang shows over the years together.

The presentation was made by the Mayor of Solihull and the official citation stated: “Ken continues to set a fine example of the true Scouting spirit to members of the movement; and his frequent involvement with the local authority ensures that the movement is always held in high regard within the community. The great respect that Ken holds cannot be overstated and he ensures that The Scout Association always has a high profile, demonstrating the invaluable training offered to young people and fine example set to the community in general.”

Getting the right team!

Thanks to those of you who pointed out that the image we carried in the last issue purporting to be an EPL team from Severn Bridge, was in fact a group from Wessex Region.

They were working on a £13m contract for 167 apartments adjacent to the new Port Solent Marina Portsmouth.

John Laing Retired Employees’ NEWS 17
President’s Day Summer Outings 2013

May 20 – South West
Leigh Park Hotel, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 2RA.

June 4 – Saltire
Murrayshall House Hotel, Scone, Perthshire, PH2 7PH.

June 5 – Carlisle
Leeming House Hotel, Ullswater CA11 0JJ.

June 6 – North West
Nunsmere Hall Hotel, Northwich, Cheshire, CW8 2ES.

June 7 – Realm
Alveston Manor Hotel, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 7HP.

May 21 – REAL
Grovefield House Hotel, Buckinghamshire, SL1 8LR.

May 22 – Elstree
The Bedford Arms Hotel, Chenies, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, WD3 6EQ.

May 23 – Solare
Ockenden Manor, Cuckfield, West Sussex, RH17 5LD.

June 3 – LNER
The Judges Country House Hotel, Kirk Levington Hall, Yorks, TS15 9LW.

June 4 – Saltire
Murrayshall House Hotel, Scone, Perthshire, PH2 7PH.
**Retirement club news update**

New **REALM** chairman David Hemlin (pictured) is hoping that Laing retirees who are not yet taking advantage of being part of a Laing retirement club will join up. He highlighted benefits including the companionship of fellow members and regular meetings with former friends and colleagues.

**Solare** club members learned the new names for Burma (Myanmar) and Rangoon (Yangon) during a talk on the country by Victoria Helstrip.

In **Carlisle** members enjoyed a fun-filled holiday trip to Grantham. They even had good weather for the break which included trips to Coventry, Stamford, Burghley House and Kings Lynne.

Feel free to contact your local retirement club if you are interested in joining up.

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**Club events**

**CUMBRIA**
*Monthly meetings at Wigton Methodist Hall.*

**July 7**
Annual pub lunch at the White Heather, Kirkbride.

**August 7**
‘Make Do and Mend’ talk by Pat Martin.

**ELSTREE**
*Weekly meetings St Michael and All Angels Church Hall, Tuesday 2.30pm.*

**REALM**
*July 10*  
River boat trip from Upton on Severn to Tewkesbury. Only nine tickets left as we went to press.

**SALTIRE (SCOTLAND)**
*Jim Saunders*  
t: 01324 638896  
e: saund@blueyonder.co.uk

**SOLARE (SW LONDON)**
*Bill Blamire*  
t: 01737 553174  
(e: laird1964@yahoo.co.uk)

**SOUTH WEST**

**August 8**
Skittles and Lunch Woodborough Inn, Winscombe.

**August 29**
Summer Lunch, Brent House, Brent.

**October 10**
Skittles and Lunch Woodborough Inn, Winscombe.

**CHEAM ROAD, EWELL, KT17 1QZ**

**September 25**
AGM at Antoinette Hotel in Kingston.

**REAL**
*Monthly meetings at Allum Hall, Borehamwood.*

**June 5**
Talk on Toastmasters by John Parker.

**July 3**
Cream Tea followed by a quiz.

**August 7**
Guide dogs for the Blind.

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**Contacts**

Please address general club queries to:  
**John Laing Welfare Department**  
33 Bunns Lane  
London NW7 2DX  
Tel: 020 8959 9683
Diamond Anniversary

14 February
Martin & Ellen Goaley

28 February
John & Sheila Sharpe

14 March
Rita & Geoff Bluff

21 March
Les & Margaret Andrew

4 April
Ken & Eleanor Fuller

Golden Anniversary

16 February
David & Barbara Green

23 February
Pat & Sheila Lane

9 March
Dave & Barbara Morgan

16 March
Tom & Sylvia Cook

28 March
Roland & Vanessa Everington

Gordon and Joyce celebrate 70 years

Gordon and Joyce Grieves
Platinum Anniversary

May 15, 2013
The couple were married on Joyce’s 20th birthday. They had planned to save up points and coupons for a wedding dress and marry on her 21st, but Joyce was suddenly called up to the WRENS. Gordon said: “We married straight away and then the WRENS didn’t want her.”

Gordon spent 21 years with Thermalite at the factory by the Hamshall Power Station where his official role was ‘spare man’. He was trained up in everything and could step in and replace anyone should the need arise.

The factory used the powdered ash from the nearby power station which they mixed with sand, cement and aluminum to make the thermalite blocks.

He also had an unofficial role as factory cartoonist. He loved drawing and would mark all kinds of incidents and events and stick the pictures on the notice board.

When Sir John Laing visited the factory, Gordon drew a cartoon depicting a load of broken coal bricks in a little trolley to be towed away by Sir John’s car, with a caption saying that he had just popped in to pick up some broken blocks for his rockery.

Sir John’s chauffeur spotted the picture and asked if he could take it for Sir John. Every cartoon featured a little mouse by way of a signature, a habit he had started while drawing cards for his children who loved Mickey Mouse.

Gordon loved his time at the Thermalite factory claiming it was like working at a holiday camp having already spent 23 years working down the mines. “I started in the mines aged 14 and remember the pit ponies,” he said. “When I got to Thermalite it was lovely, being in the fresh air and it was a really happy factory.”

Somewhere within these two careers Gordon also found time to spend 23 years in St John Ambulance. He twice was part of a five-man team to make the All England First Aid finals.

He attributes his happy life to ‘my old Dutch’ as he affectionately refers to Joyce. He added: “We are like one. This picture is the best present we ever got, it is the two of us and just sums up exactly what we felt.”

The couple have three daughters and a son, five great grandchildren and eight grandchildren, two of which sent special gifts from Australia and Moscow.
Must be Fields of Gold
Ron and Cora Field
Golden Anniversary
March 25, 2013
Ron and Cora met at a dance in Richmond.
Ron was already working on the M1 with Laing as a cost surveyor. He joined the company in 1958 and moved from the motorway project to London. There he was involved in cost and bonus planning, becoming a production controller and ending up as a visiting production controller before retiring in 1992 after 34 and a half years.
He enjoyed his time with the Company and saw many changes over the years. He said: “The main difference between when I started and when I finished was that the work moved away from cost control to planning.” He had worked on many interesting projects, but one that stuck in his mind was the Commonwealth Institute. “It was a really interesting project,” he said. “The agent was Jimmy Potts who was quite a character. The project itself featured a complex hyperbolic paraboloid copper roof. “Materials for the project were donated by various countries; copper from Rhodesia and cedar wood from Canada among them.” The couple have a son and a daughter and a grandchild.

Birthday greetings
95th
6 March
Harry Davis

90th
8 February
Florrie Bull
27 February
Des Stokes
14 March
Bert Ellis
16 April
Ramsay Madden
17 April
Ray Redwood
27 April
Eryk Koziel

If you would like your anniversary pictures and details published, please send or email them to Pensioner Publishing or the Laing Welfare Department at the addresses on the inside front cover of this magazine. Ideally include details on how you met and your career with the Company.
Check your benefits
AGE UK has introduced a useful calculator to help pensioners check that they are claiming all the benefits they are due.
Currently £5 billion of means tested benefits go unclaimed by older people every year according to the charity. You can find out more at their website: www.ageuk.org.uk. Failing that go and visit your local office.

Pensioner travel
Getting comprehensive travel insurance is a recurring problem for many pensioners, especially older ones.
However there are various companies which offer insurance with no age limits.
There are often tough terms and conditions and it is essential to inform insurers of pre-existing medical conditions to safeguard your cover.
Prices also vary a great deal, so make sure you shop around and know exactly what you are paying, how long it lasts and precisely what you are covered for. There are often special deals for booking online.
Among the top ten insurance deals with no age limit, highlighted at www.money.co.uk are:
goodtogoinsurance.com
justtravelcover.com
LV= (Liverpool Victoria)
John Lewis Travel Insurance
Others with an age limit of 99 years:
Insureforall.com
Columbus Travel Insurance
There are plenty of other firms with good deals including:
www.miatravelinsurance.co.uk

Legislation will be introduced to ensure sufferers of a certain asbestos-related cancer receive payments where no liable employer or insurer can be traced. [Mesothelioma Bill]

Council tax help
Age UK has also published the following details about help with council tax.
“As part of the welfare reform changes, Council Tax Benefit was abolished in April 2013 and replaced with a local scheme called Council Tax Support [also known as Council Tax reductions]. Contact your local council to see if you qualify. Certain people won’t be affected by the changes, including many people of pension age.
“The support you get may depend on factors such as which benefits you receive, your age, your income, savings, who you live with and how much Council Tax you pay. You may get more Council Tax Support if you receive a disability or carer’s benefit.
“If you get the Guarantee Credit, part of Pension Credit, you may get your Council Tax paid in full. If you don’t get Guarantee Credit but have a low income and less than £16,000 in savings, you may still get some help.”
Other ways to reduce your Council Tax bill:
“If you live alone, you get a 25% discount on your Council Tax bill, regardless of your financial circumstances.
“Ask your local council whether it offers any other reductions, for example, if you share your home with someone who isn’t jointly liable to pay Council Tax, if you’re a carer or if you’re disabled and your home is adapted to support your needs.”

Charities in old alliance
Six major charities have formed the Ready for Ageing Alliance to urge the Government and all political parties to face up to the major changes and challenges from our rapidly ageing society.
Age UK, Anchor, the Centre for Policy on Ageing, Independent Age, the International Longevity Centre-UK and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation have a number of goals.
These include urging political parties to work together to address issues affecting the elderly and to include relevant policies high in their manifestos.

Queen’s speech
Three of the 15 bills outlined in the Queen’s speech 2013 covered proposed legislation largely affecting older people.
The Care Bill will overhaul social care for the elderly, specifically the new funding arrangements outlined in the last issue.
The Pensions Bill aims to introduce a single tier pension payment and is due to be introduced in October.
**IN MEMORIAM**

**Alex Binnie**, formerly a Senior Clerical Officer with Laing Scotland, died on Saturday, 4 May 2013. He was 67 and retired in 2010 after 36 years’ service.

**Cyril Blackburn**, formerly a Joinery Draughtsman with Victoria Joinery, died on Thursday 14 February 2013. He was 81 and retired in 1995 after 35 years’ service.

**Rita Falkinder**, formerly an Assistant Purchasing Officer based in Head Office, Mill Hill, died on Wednesday, 27 March 2013. She was 90 and retired in 1980 after 22 years’ service.

**Tom Grant**, formerly a Joiner with Laing Properties, died on Sunday 17 February 2013. He was 84 and retired in 1990 after 39 years’ service.

**Thomas Hughes**, formerly a Driver with EPL, Stafford, died on Tuesday, 26 March 2013. He was 86 and retired in 1991 after 28 years’ service.

**Dennis Lewis**, formerly a P & T Controller with O C Summers, died on Monday, 11 February 2013. He was 80 and retired in 1995 after 26 years’ service.

**Margaret Macallister**, formerly a Cashier, JLC Southern Region, died on Tuesday, 12 March 2013. She was 90 and retired in 1982 after 17 years’ service.

**Pearl Marshall**, formerly a QS Clerk, with John Laing Construction, died on Saturday 9 March 2013. She was 90 and retired in 1981 after 8 years’ service.

**Miles McDonald**, formerly an Assistant Regional Accountant, JLC Midlands, died on Monday 25 February 2013. He was 86 and retired in 1990 after 32 years’ service.

**Denis O’Connor**, formerly a General Operative with Laing Limited, Southern, died on Tuesday, 26 February 2013. He was 75 and retired in 2001 after 41 years’ service.

**Frank O’Rourke**, formerly a Fitter with Plant and Transport, died on Saturday 23 February 2013. He was 95 and retired in 1982 after 37 years’ service.

**Caroline Parker**, formerly a Senior Secretary with JLC, Eastern Region, died on Saturday 26 January 2013. She was 70 and retired in 1999 after 14 years’ service.

**Robin (Rob) Warren**, formerly a Project Leader with John Laing Construction, died on Wednesday 6 March 2013. He was 69 and retired in 2001 after 17 years’ service.

**Doris Wilson**, formerly an Accounts Clerk with Lytag, died on Friday, 22 February 2013. She was 101 and retired in 1970 after 16 years’ service.

**Peter Witts**, formerly a Contracts Manager with Laing Southern, died on Wednesday, 1 May 2013. He was 81 and retired in 1992 after 40 years’ service.