

LIRC News

30th July 2026

WELCOME to this quarterly publication from the **London IBM Retirees Club**.

The next LIRC News will be published on Thursday 29th October 2026.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Were you watching the Wimbledon Tennis Championships on the BBC a few weeks ago?

You may wish to read the article on page 3 about the renewed AELTC Partnership with IBM.

The return to England of the Bayeux Tapestry from France has been featuring on the news recently.

If you are interested in seeing the Tapestry and would like tickets, check the article on page 4.

FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN

Dear Member,

Phew! What an amazing summer we are experiencing; so lovely for some but too much for others. Sadly, it has caused several members to drop out from some events but those that have managed to attend them have given us great feedback and said how much they've enjoyed them.

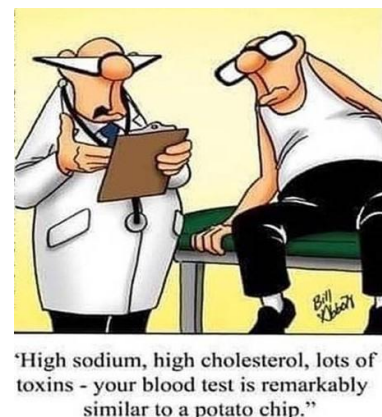
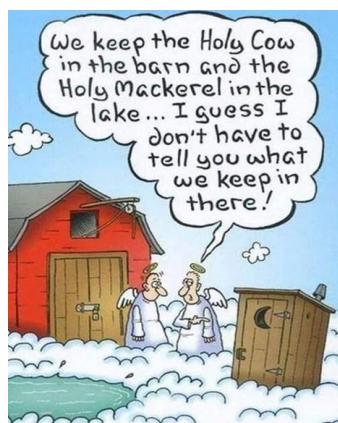
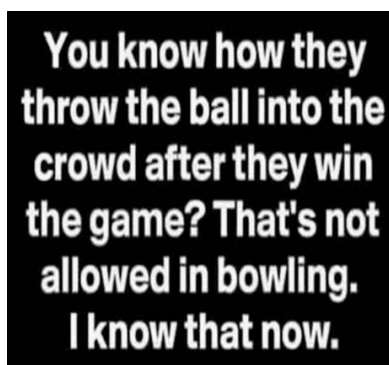
The summer lunch on the Thames; the interesting visits to Tower Bridge and HMS Belfast; the London Walk; the theatres; the short break.... to name just a few ... such a variety of events that your committee continues to research and organise, despite the heat and their own family time-pressure. A big thank-you to them all.

We have lost a few members recently and send our condolences to their families and friends but we also welcome some new members, many of whom are younger and full of energy; and we hope from them will emerge new committee members to replace those of us who are ageing and have less time and energy to give. Your Club will only continue to thrive if that 'new blood' comes on board. So please give it some thought and even if your time is limited, what little you can give now will be appreciated. Just give a committee member a call now – we would love to hear from you.

More new events are being worked on as I write, some of which will be in our August Events Bulletin. We are even working on events for the winter months, including a Christmas Lunch in London; and others well into 2027. We hope you will support them.

Enjoy the sunshine whilst it lasts and we look forward to seeing you somewhere sometime soon.

David Sparrow



EVENTS FEEDBACK

Amersham Bowls and Pipes – Sunday 17th May 2026

This event included a very enjoyable visit to the Amersham Bowls Club in the morning and a private guided tour of the Amersham Fair Organ Museum in the afternoon. The museum's collection was founded by Albert Edward 'Ted' Reed (1926 – 2022) who had a keen interest in steam engines and fairground equipment – notably mechanical organs. During our visit, videos were taken of 10 different organs and if you would like to see and listen to them, they are available on the club's web site – just follow the link - <https://www.retireelondonclub.org/event-photos/amersham-fair-organ-videos/>
It was 'all the fun of the fair' when we visited the Amersham Fairground Organ Museum. As well as seeing these mighty fairground organs of yesteryear we were also able to listen to each one. Our wonderful afternoon was rounded off with tea and cake. Anne Daines

Tower Bridge and HMS Belfast – Wednesday 20th May 2026

This event included guided tours of Tower Bridge, an iconic London landmark and HMS Belfast, a Town-class light cruiser that was built for the Royal Navy, commissioned in August 1939, and took part in the British naval blockade against Germany in WW2.

I would like to say thanks for organising the two tours – Tower Bridge and HMS Belfast. Both experiences opened the eyes of Eileen and myself to the challenges of different eras. For a number of years, I was based at South Bank, but never once did I take the opportunity, as I jogged the Thames towpath, to explore these two icons and their respective places in history - thanks for making it happen for Eileen and myself. Patrick Swinden



Paddington the Musical - Thursday 21st May 2026

The Paddington musical has proved a hugely popular show, with music and lyrics by McFly's **Tom Fletcher** and directed by the award-winning **Luke Sheppard** (Starlight Express, etc.).

It is a very special show brilliantly performed in an iconic venue. My wife & I enjoyed every minute. Thank you for organising. Alex Forbes

We enjoyed the show very much. A very happy show with lots of interesting performers. I thought Bonnie Langford, Mrs Bird, was amazing to do the splits, cartwheels and high kicks at 61 years old! Peter Mitchell

Abba Voyage at the Abba Arena - Saturday 30th May 2026

Thank you so much for persisting with my frequent request for tickets to ABBA Voyage. It certainly did not disappoint. What an absolute spectacle. I just cannot get my head around how they make it so realistic. Nor can I get my head around the fact we were clapping at people who weren't really there! I found the whole thing quite emotional - so evocative of a time many years ago. Dyllis Wretham

Thanks for arranging the ABBA tickets, we both enjoyed it, it was certainly something different and worth seeing. Wendy and Jim Hall



Lunch on the Thames - Tuesday 16th June 2026

From Tower Pier, we enjoyed a two-course lunch while passing many central London landmarks, including Big Ben, the London Eye, St Paul's Cathedral, the Houses of Parliament, the Tower of London, the Shard, Tower Bridge and Canary Wharf.

We really enjoyed the boat trip yesterday. Praise also for the meal and friendly staff. We thought the commentary was just right as it didn't overpower conversation whilst being pleasantly informative. Many thanks for making the arrangements. Simon and Joan Russell



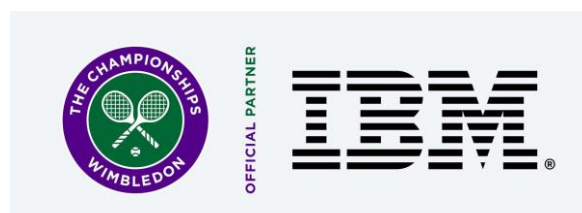
2026 EVENTS PLANNED FOR THE COMING MONTHS

<u>Event Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>
Wednesday 5 th August	The Truth at the Apollo Theatre	Pete Wells
Thursday 6 th August	Jesus Christ Superstar at the London Palladium	Pete Wells
Wednesday 19 th August	Brooklands Museum Family Day Out	Derrick Daines
Wednesday 26 th August	Arcadia at the Duke of York's Theatre	Pete Wells
Thursday 3 rd September	Cats at Regents Park Open Air Theatre	Pete Wells
Thursday 8 th October	Burlesque the Musical at The Arts at Marble Arch	Yvonne Raisin
Tuesday 13 th October	Ramses and the Pharaohs' Gold: The Exhibition at Battersea Power Station	Pete Wells
Wednesday 18 th November	The Lives of Others at the Adelphi Theatre	Yvonne Raisin
Thursday 19 th November to Thursday 26 th November	Autumn Break in Paphos, Cyprus	David Sparrow

We advertise future events in the monthly *Events Bulletin* which is broadcast to club members via a monthly email. All of the events listed above have already been advertised in the monthly Events Bulletins with some events no longer accepting bookings. You can find a description of each event, with information about its availability, together with an online booking form, on the club's website at: [At A Glance – London IBM Retirees Club](#)

WIMBLEDON TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS

There has been plenty of sport to watch on the TV this summer including the Wimbledon Tennis Championships. I am sure that some of our LIRC members would have been fortunate enough to have tickets that enabled them to watch the matches on the show courts, but for most of us, it was the BBC coverage of Wimbledon that enabled us to enjoy this annual tennis tournament. During that coverage you would have seen the IBM logo appear at various times, reminding us of the long-running partnership between the All England Lawn Tennis Club and IBM which began over 30 years ago. You may not though be aware that earlier this year, IBM secured a multi-year renewal of their long-standing technology partnership with the AELTC. This new partnership will see enhanced digital experiences served up for fans of the Wimbledon Championships, enabled by IBM-led transformation and powered by AI. For further information about this, you might wish to visit the IBM Newsroom website at - [IBM Announces Long-Term Renewal as the Official AI, Cloud and Digital Transformation Partner for The All England Lawn Tennis Club](#)



JUST FOR RETIREES

If you are odd enough and old enough, people will stop thinking of you as peculiar and regard you as an interesting eccentric.

Friends like to do the same things as they did when they were young. Only more slowly.

Old age is when most of the names in your little black book are doctors.

Laughing is good exercise – it's like jogging on the inside.

Growing old is mandatory – growing up is optional.

It is frustrating when you know all the answers but nobody bothers to ask you the question.

Having plans sounds like a good idea until you have to put on clothes and leave the house.

INTERESTING VENUES AND EVENTS

We have recently been including in the LIRC News information about Interesting venues and events that are not currently being advertised as club events. We have just one for you this month, the **Bayeux Tapestry**.

The recent international news has been featuring the return to England of the Bayeux Tapestry from France for the first time since it was made nearly 1,000 years ago. Following a historic agreement with France, the 70-metre-long tapestry, depicting events leading up to the Battle of Hastings and the Norman Conquest of England in 1066, will be loaned to the British Museum until July 2027. It will go on show to the public on 10th September 2026 but sadly, all tickets up to the end of this year have already been sold.

Your club committee have investigated the option of a group visit next year, but there are no discounts for groups, so there is little benefit in the club organising a group visit. If you've missed out on buying tickets, there will be further ticket releases enabling you to see the Bayeux Tapestry from January to July 2027. These ticket releases will open later this year. It is recommended that you sign up to the British Museum's newsletter (via their website [Sign up to our newsletter](#)) to be the first to hear about future ticket releases.

One of the wonders of the medieval world, the Tapestry offers a vision of life in 11th-century England both before and after the Conquest, from castles, warfare and ships to clothing, food and furniture. Likely commissioned by a Norman patron and made by English embroiderers, using manuscript drawings from Canterbury, the Tapestry is both a precious historical record and a remarkable work of art.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS LAMENT

Oh spare me some pity, I'm on a committee, which means that from morning to night

We attend and amend and contend and defend without a conclusion in sight.

We concur and confer, we defer and demur, and reiterate all of our thoughts,

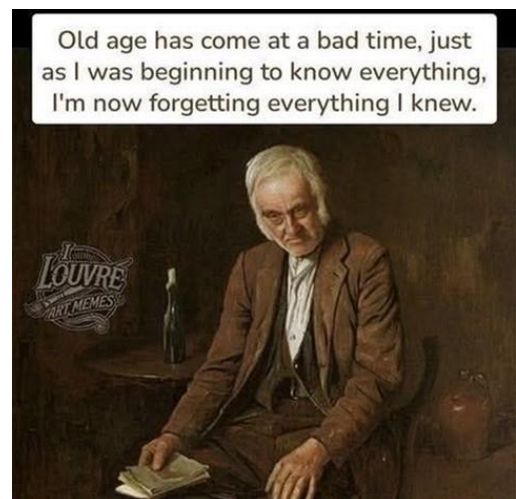
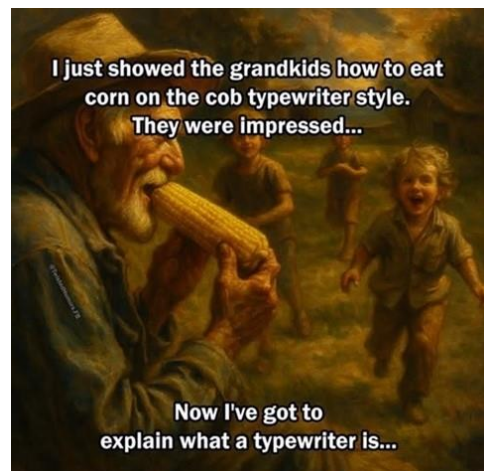
We revise the agenda with lots of addenda and consider a load of reports.

We compose and propose, we suppose and oppose and the points of procedure are fun

But though various notions are brought up as motions, terribly little gets done.

We resolve and absolve but we NEVER dissolve, since it's out of the question for us,

What an awful pity to end our committee – where else could we make such a fuss?



SOME WISE QUOTES

- "The only mystery in life is why the kamikaze pilots wore helmets." – Al McGuire
- "The difference between stupidity and genius is that genius has its limits." – Albert Einstein
- "At every party there are two kinds of people – those who want to go home and those who don't. The trouble is, they are usually married to each other." – Ann Landers
- "My opinions may have changed, but not the fact that I'm right." – Ashleigh Brilliant
- "Have you noticed that all the people in favour of birth control are already born?" – Benny Hill
- "The surest sign that intelligent life exists elsewhere in the universe is that it has never tried to contact us." – Bill Watterson
- "As a child my family's menu consisted of two choices: take it or leave it." – Buddy Hackett
- "My favourite machine at the gym is the vending machine." – Caroline Rhea
- "Never under any circumstances take a sleeping pill and a laxative on the same night." – Dave Barry
- "The duty of a patriot is to protect his country from its government." – Edward Abbey
- "How many people here have telekinetic powers? Raise my hand." – Emo Philips
- "If you live to be one hundred, you've got it made. Very few people die past that age" – George Burns

PARDON?

I know that my hearing is perfect,
I've no doubt about that at all;

I can hear a pin drop on a carpet
and a leaf from a tree should it fall;

I can hear when my wife looks straight at me
and whispers her words of advice,

Every word that she says has a value,
and she never says anything twice!

It's just that some folk always mutter,
and when you say 'What' they get cross

But, probably, though, my not hearing
what they say is not much of a loss.

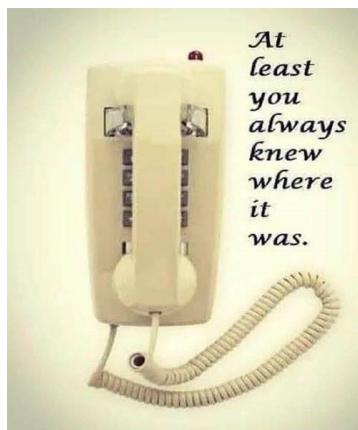
Then, those who parade on the telly
don't speak as we think actors do,

Those muttered asides can't be meant to be heard
and their accents are very broad too!

So I'm certain that it's not my hearing
that's failing because I am old,

It's everybody else who talks to me,
but they don't seem to like being told!

Hylton Pratt



One day, I'm going to judge
a spelling bee.

I'll ask one of the kids to
spell the word "there."

When he asks for it in a
sentence, I'll say...

"Their car is parked over
there and they're late."



AFTER 50,000 GALLONS OF WHISKY
LEAKED INTO THE SEA, NO TERN
WAS LEFT UNSTONED

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU REARRANGE THE LETTERS

Someone out there must be "deadly" at *Scrabble*!

PRESBYTERIAN: When you rearrange the letters: **BEST IN PRAYER**

ASTRONOMER: When you rearrange the letters: **MOON STARER**

DESPERATION: When you rearrange the letters: **A ROPE ENDS IT**

THE EYES: When you rearrange the letters: **THEY SEE**

GEORGE BUSH: When you rearrange the letters: **HE BUGS GORE**

THE MORSE CODE: When you rearrange the letters: **HERE COME DOTS**

DORMITORY: When you rearrange the letters: **DIRTY ROOM**

SLOT MACHINES: When you rearrange the letters: **CASH LOST IN ME**

ANIMOSITY: When you rearrange the letters: **IS NO AMITY**

A DECIMAL POINT: When you rearrange the letters: **I'M A DOT IN PLACE**

THE EARTHQUAKES: When you rearrange the letters: **THAT QUEER SHAKE**

ELEVEN PLUS TWO: When you rearrange the letters: **TWELVE PLUS ONE**

ELECTION RESULTS: When you rearrange the letters: **LIES - LET'S RECOUNT**

SNOOZE ALARMS: When you rearrange the letters: **ALAS! NO MORE Z 'S**

GOLF

In my hand I hold a ball, white and dimpled, rather small
Oh, how bland it does appear, this harmless looking little sphere.

By its size I could not guess, the awesome strength it does possess.
But since I fell beneath its spell, I've wandered through the fires of hell.

My life has not been quite the same, since I chose to play this stupid game.
It rules my mind for hours on end, a fortune it has made me spend.

It has made me yell, curse and cry, I hate myself and want to die.
It promises a thing called Par, if I can hit it straight and far.

To master such a tiny ball, should not be very hard at all.
But my desires the ball refuses, and does exactly as it chooses.

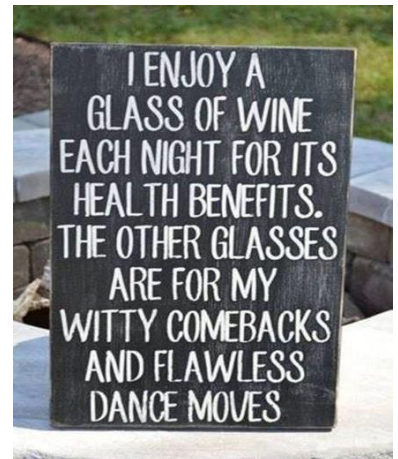
It hooks and slices, dribbles and dies, and even disappears before my eyes.
Often it will have a whim, to hit a tree or take a swim.

With miles of grass on which to land, it finds a tiny patch of sand.
Then has me offering up my soul, if only it would find the hole.

It's made me whimper like a pup, and swear that I will give it up.
And take to drink to ease my sorrow, but the ball knows I'll be back tomorrow.

A THOUGHTFUL POEM

*There are good ships
Wood ships,
And those that sail the seas.
But the best ships
Are relationships,
And may they always be.
(Author unknown).*



YOUR LIRC COMMITTEE MEMBERS

We have included below a selection of the current members of your LIRC committee. If you have questions for your committee, please use the contact information below.

THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS WILL ACCEPT TELEPHONE CALLS FROM YOU, BUT PLEASE TRY AND CALL ONLY DURING SOCIALABLE HOURS.

David Sparrow	Chairman	LIRCnews@gmail.com	020-8440-5871 07711-627788
Harvey Schonfeld	Treasurer	harvey.schonfeld@gmail.com	01276-453205
Alan Jarvis	Club Secretary & Minutes Secretary	alanjarvis029@gmail.com	07586-354341
Peter Morley	Membership Secretary	retibmlon@outlook.com	07779-102015
Tony Shortman	LIRC News Editor	shortmantm@gmail.com	01844-350014

ANNIVERSARIES, WEDDINGS and FINAL RESTINGS

Sadly, we have to report the passing to final rest of our colleagues:

- Emma Jane Smith who died on Monday 13th April 2026
- Bob Moore who died on Thursday 14th May 2026

We have been asked to also report the passing of David J Williams who died almost 3 years ago on 16th August 2023. With IBM no longer informing us of members who have died, we are dependent on friends and family informing us. For those of you who might have known David, he was from Seaford.

Emma Jane Smith, who died on 13th April at the age of 64

Emma followed in the footsteps of her father Geoff D Smith joining IBM after university. Emma worked initially in Havant in the then in-house pensions team, then in South Bank, Heathrow and Zug (Switzerland) in the leasing team. Emma's sister Sue Nowak would be happy to hear from anyone who knew Emma. She can be contacted on her LinkedIn address <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sue-nowak-6855a226/>

SOMETHING A LITTLE LIGHTER

If you try to fail, and succeed, which have you done?

He who laughs last, thinks slowest

Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine

It is said that if you line up all the cars in the world end to end, someone will try to pass them

Torch: A case for holding dead batteries

A fine is a tax for doing wrong – a tax is a fine for doing well.

I saw a dyslexic Yorkshireman the other day. He was wearing a cat flap!

I had to create a new password the other day that needed to be 8 characters long...so I chose snowwhiteandthesevendwarfs.

It's probably my age that tricks people into thinking I'm an adult.

Never sing in the shower! Singing leads to dancing, dancing leads to slipping, and slipping leads to paramedics seeing you naked. So remember...Don't sing!