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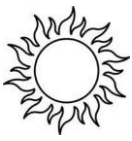
Contact the Editor

E-mail: news@theretirees.co.uk

Subject: Amex Retirees

Newsletter – Q1 – 2026

Editor's Welcome



My name is Jonathan Pontin and I'm the new editor of the Quarterly Newsletter. Firstly, I'd like to thank Richard Watkins for his time as editor – I shall try to keep up his good work.

By way of introduction, I joined American Express in September 1978 as one of fifteen graduate trainees to join the EMEA Technologies group. Exciting times as our task was to help the Business manage the transition from largely paper-based processing (A3 listings, microfiche, forms etc) to online screens. I retired happily in 2016.

Chris Belton and John Lias organised a reunion for Retirees in November which was well-attended. It was good to see so many old friends and faces. Read a report below...

As you might expect, the Reunion consisted of lots of small ever-changing 'huddles'. Typically, these started with 'X! I haven't seen you in years! How long has it been? Where does the time go?' and then settles down into 'Where are you living now? What are you doing with yourself? Etc'.

Now events like these aren't everyone's cup of tea and there are many reasons (geography/health etc) why people couldn't make it. But of course, there are other ways to keep in touch.

As well as the Retirees website, the Retirees offer three vehicles – the Facebook page, the e-newsletter and the quarterly newsletter. Each has particular merits and limitations. For example, the quarterly newsletter is slightly more formal and is printed and mailed out to Retirees who have opted to receive it. As such, there are practical limitations on how much we can include. The e-newsletter is online and arrives by e-mail so has fewer restrictions. And with Facebook, it is easy to get in touch with other members.

So please, if you missed the Reunion or prefer to use the Internet, do send us a message to include in future newsletters. We would love to hear from you!

This quarter, Ann McNorvell has sent us the first of some articles about Vikings. Many thanks, Ann!

Chairman's Report – Peter Smith

A New Year and a new start.

As mentioned in the last Quarterly Newsletter in October by Richard Watkins, I am pleased to welcome Jonathan Pontin as the new Editor of this publication, I hope you all join me in welcoming him to the post and in looking forward to future publications.

It's a tough job gathering together new and interesting articles for publication so hopefully many of you reading this will help by sending in articles to make his task easier.

Please tell us about your career pre, during and post Amex or about interesting hobbies or trips made. We don't accept direct advertising in the Newsletter but we are happy to include articles about businesses you run or help to run on your own or with other members of your family or maybe even past colleagues. I'm sure there are many of you out there who haven't really retired, please tell us about what you have been up to. Perhaps you are interested in writing short stories, or even long ones we can serialise. We look forward to hearing from you.

I can't let this opportunity go without saying a very big thank you to our departing Editor, Richard Watkins. Over the past few years, he has kept us entertained with his tales of his travels, occasionally health issues and more recently with his new found friend AI. Over the past few years, we have had a terrific working relationship and have enjoyed meeting up on a few occasions for coffee and a chat. Once again, a big thanks from myself to Richard.

Speaking recently to Jonathan about our joint times with Amex, it struck me how various sections of the business were separated from each other, only meeting up on rare occasions. One of the aims of the Retirees Club is to bring everyone together, irrespective of their work areas, something I believe that the recent Reunion achieved. For personal reasons I wasn't able to attend but I understand that it was a great success and that there have been requests for a repeat, which I am sure will happen but it may not be in the immediate future.

On a personal note, I'm currently in the process of down-sizing my home. Although I've not lost the interest I can no longer put in the work needed on my garden and the house is too big for just two of us, not to mention the stairs and the costs of maintaining and heating it. We've found a nice two bed flat in a block overlooking the communal gardens, maintained by the managing agents and a few other facilities for the residents.

Unfortunately, I can't say it's been the most enjoyable and smooth experience, everyone involved in the process from agents, to valuers, to solicitors, seem to take so long in processing things and mine has been relatively simple with no ongoing chains either side. As it's been 25 years since my last move, I guess I must have forgotten the bad side and on top of that its not cheap with numerous small charges all adding up.

But I suspect it will be my last.

Events for 2026

After a bit of a break, we are planning to reintroduce a number of Retiree events for the coming year.

London

Tuesday 17 February 2026 at 1230

The Immersive Pompeii experience
Location : ExCel

The Immersive Pompeii experience transports visitors back to 79 AD. It blends dramatic storytelling with cutting edge technology to bring the doomed Roman city to life. The event delivers a multi-sensory journey through multiple rooms showcasing reconstructed Roman architecture, vivid frescoes, artefacts and replicas.

The exhibition highlights: a 360 degree digital experience, a seated VR adventure in the colosseum witnessing a gladiator fight and more. Visitors will witness one of the most dramatic events in history unfold before their eyes.

The Immersive Pompeii experience, The Last days of Pompeii. It is located at the Royal Victoria Dock in ExCel East. It costs £24 per person for a senior(over 65's) plus a £2 booking fee. If we were to have a group of 14+ it is £20 per person plus the £2 booking fee.

We can meet for lunch close by (venue to be detailed later) at 12.30 (please indicate whether you wish to come to lunch when you reply) and then meet at the entrance foyer at 2.00 for a 2.15 start in the experience. We will make our own way around and it will take about 90 minutes.

As this event is taking place on 17th February, we have limited time to finalise arrangements, so please reply before **16th January 2026** to events@theretirees.co.uk

Tuesday 24 March 2026

The National Gallery visit

The National Gallery is home to one of the greatest collections of paintings in the world. See over 1000 paintings on display from Uccello and Gentileschi to Turner and Van Gogh – experience the wonder of art.

This will be a guided tour led by London Blue Badge Guide Andrew Davis, who was also an Amex Employee. The price is £12 per person and attendees can include friends and family members. If you would like to attend, please email events@theretirees.co.uk There will be ***no other chance*** for us to provide recipients of the paper Newsletter with more details so it is important to let me know if you are interested.

Brighton

Amex Stadium Tours

Free or reduced rate tours will become available in 2026 / 2027. More details will become available as soon as we know!

The easiest way to stay informed of these and any other event is to sign up for the monthly e-Newsletter and / or join the Facebook Group. We know that this may not be an acceptable solution to some but it is more frequently updated than the quarterly printed Newsletter. Details further down under 'Information for Readers'.

From Ann McNorvell (Editor of the e-newsletter)

Happy New Year from the e-newsletter!

Firstly, I'd like to thank the retiring editor of this Quarterly newsletter, Richard Watkins, for all of his hard work over the last few years. Secondly, a warm welcome to the new editor, Jonathan Pontin.

Those of you who also receive the monthly e-newsletter will know Jonathan as a regular contributor for many years, writing on an entertaining mixture of topics, from films to family history, with the occasional foray into mathematics. I know he will make a fine editor for the Quarterly, and (if I promise to write for this publication), I hope he will still find time to contribute to the e-newsletter.

So, I have been pondering on topics I could contribute to the Quarterly. As you may know, before I joined American Express back in 1987, I was a secondary school teacher. My subject was History, with the odd English class (and a weird course called European Studies – a mixture of geography, politics, economics and history).

I can't say that my extensive knowledge of Medieval Europe, with special emphasis on the relationship between the Empire and the Papacy and the Wars of the Roses, was particularly useful itself, but the general analytical skills were heavily used, as was my tolerance for handling vast quantities of information, most irrelevant.

Since my early retirement in 2010, I have had time to delve back into my first love, and the editorship of the e-newsletter gave me the opportunity to bore my former colleagues with various historical items, currently popular uprisings in England (The Peasants are Revolting) and the Anglo-Saxon period (Not the Dark Ages). So I thought (if Jonathan is agreeable), I might bore a new audience with some articles on the Vikings.

You know the Vikings of course from your schooldays – horned helmets (sorry that's a 19th century myth), longships, raids on monasteries, settlement in the Danelaw, forcing the Anglo-Saxons to pay Danegeld, and finally pushed back and out of England by Alfred the Great (he of the burnt cakes) and his successors.

But that is only part of the story of the Viking Age. These intrepid adventurers travelled and settled widely, not just to Britain and North Europe, but reaching as far afield as North America, Russia, the Mediterranean and North Africa.

And if you think the Vikings impact on England ended with Alfred the Great, think again. The Normans were Vikings too!

Obituaries

Mrs Jacqueline Keegan on 23rd August 2025. She resided in Lincoln and was in receipt of a spouse's pension in respect to her late husband John's membership of the Plan.

Mrs Julia Mary Thomson on 20th September 2025. She resided in Queensland Australia and was single.

Mr Michael Edward Kelly on 16th October 2025. He resided in Hove, East Sussex and was single.

Mr John James (Jim) Marsh on 14th September 2025. He resided in Alicante, Spain and leaves a spouse Patricia Lily Marsh.

Mrs Diane Brunt on 24th September 2025. She resided in Shrewsbury and leaves a spouse, Mr Graham Brunt.

Mrs Barbara Hatton on 24th October 2025. She resided in Hove and leaves a spouse, Mr David Hatton.

Mrs Adela Rose Page on 21st June 2024. She resided in East Sussex and was in receipt of a spouse's pension in respect to her late husband Clive's membership of the Plan.

Mr Amarshi Hirji Chhatralia on 14th October 2025. He resided in Harrow and leaves a spouse, Mrs Josna Chhatralia.

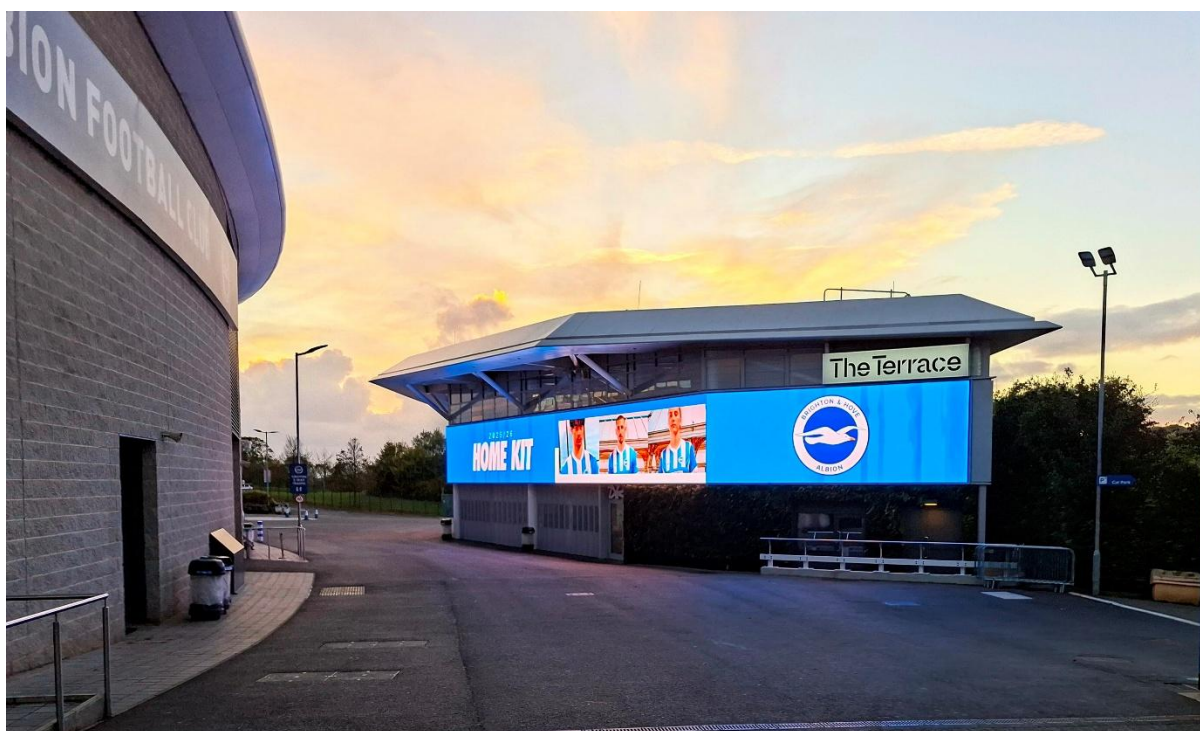
Mrs Ann Irene Aird on 28th September 2025. She resided in Cuckfield, West Sussex.

Mr Ian Marchant on 14 November 2025. He was in receipt of a spouse's pension in respect to his late spouse Rowan's membership of the Plan and lived in Presteigne

2025 Retirees Reunion

Firstly, we'd like to apologise once again for the short notice given to recipients of the paper version of our Newsletter. The date of the event was only confirmed after the 3rd Quarter edition was produced. Whilst we included the event in the 4th Quarter edition, it gave very little time for recipients to respond.

After several months of planning, the day finally arrived and over 200 paid attendees set off from their homes towards The Terrace venue at the AmEx Stadium in Brighton.



This new venue opened earlier in the year and we were given use of the upper floor courtesy of the Football Club. It was a little cold inside to start with but soon warmed up once everyone had arrived and the drinking started!

A special thank you goes to Nick Satchell who put together a PowerPoint presentation featuring photographs from "back in the day" which were displayed on giant screens around the venue. This proved to be a real talking point amongst guests as they shared their memories of people and places.

These events remind us all of the "family" that is American Express. I was reminded of the family connection when speaking to Diane Kimber who listed several of her family as being employed by the company at one time or another. Indeed, looking at the list of attendees, the family connection is obvious. Including my wife, I can see at least 16 others that I know of who had other family members working at the company.

We were asked, once again, if we were planning another event. The answer is I'm afraid, you'll have to wait and see. For the time being, let's remember the good time we had on Friday 24th October!

And one last word from Richard Watkins :

My pen now pauses, rests at last,
The editor's baton has been passed.

To Jonathan Pontin, I send it on,
To write the next chapter, at set of my sun.

But first, let me gather these memories bright,
And offer this verse as my final goodnight.

For words that arrived from each far-flung shore,
From continents six, sometimes even more.
Your stories and photos, a global embrace,
Brought the wide world to our familiar place.

For Peter, our Chairman, a steadfast guide,
Who, amidst loving family, stood by our side.
With wisdom and care, he helped steer our cause,
Giving weight to our purpose, and framing our laws.

To every retiree, whose life is the ink,
I urge you, please, never stop making us think.
Send Jonathan snippets—your projects, your views,
Your travels, your gardens, your personal news.
For a newsletter lives on the breath you impart,
It's the beat of your community, the shape of your heart.

And let's hold in remembrance those no longer here,
The colleagues and friends that we once held so dear.
Their laughter, their partnership, helped pave our way,
Let's honour their contribution, still felt today.

So, thank you, dear readers, profoundly, sincerely,
For trusting my judgment, and reading me clearly.
For granting me entry, four times every year,
A place in your home, which I've always held dear.

I sign off with wishes, both simple and true:
Good health and much happiness to every one of you.

Information for Readers

Retirees Club Committee - Contact Details

Chairman: Peter Smith
E Newsletter Editor: Ann McNorvell
Newsletter Editor: Jonathan Pontin

e-mail: Chairman@theretirees.co.uk
e-mail: Ann@theretirees.co.uk
e-mail: news@theretirees.co.uk

Tel: +447780 901696

Tel: +447981 046533

Website: www.theretirees.co.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/AmericanExpressRetirees

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Monthly eNewsletter by email, items only; please email the Editor Ann McNorvell at address above.

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You may opt out at any time, we do not record or store your details, they are only used for email purposes and are not passed on.

Quarterly Newsletter items only; please email the Editor Jonathan Pontin at the address above.

NEW RETIREES ONLY - If you are recently retired and seeing this Newsletter for the first time – welcome to The Retirees Club. You are invited to attend any of our events, and this invitation is extended to your guests. Details of our events together with all other Retiree news can be found on our website www.theretirees.co.uk. Where you can also sign up for the monthly eNewsletter. **PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU MUST OPT IN IF WISH TO RECEIVE A COPY** after receiving your first copy.



American Express Retirees Club – Facebook

Enter www.facebook.com/groups/AmericanExpressRetirees in your browser or scan the QR code on the right-hand side with your smartphone or tablet for immediate access to the Clubs 'Facebook' page.

Many Club Members post their comments on the Club and on current events. You too can participate; all you need to do is to register with one of the administrators on the site.

Membership is for anyone who is a current, past employee or who has past connection with American Express.

Please join us on Facebook!

