

## **Christchurch Probus Club 2023 Archive**

### **Committee**

President	James Robertson
Vice President and Welfare officer:	Cliff Putterford
Secretary:	Maurice Dowling
Treasurer:	Graham Newton
Programme Secretary	Robin Haggett
Social Secretary:	Keith Rutherford
Social Secretary:	Keith Puttick
Dining Secretary:	Cliff Putterford
Press and Media Secretary:	Graeme Gibson
Webmaster:	Roy Townshend
Immediate Past President:	Richard Porter

### **President's report to AGM 5.3.24**

It has been a good year, thanks to the excellent Committee team which has looked after everything which makes this Club run smoothly, with great care and attention, and thanks to Richard Porter for helping me prepare for my year as President.

One of my aims during the year has been to promote the use of the website. In the 5 years since Roy Townshend took over as our Webmaster, he has shaped it into a comprehensive source of information, and even a source of entertainment (a blessing during the Covid lockdowns). Together with the printed new member 'bios', produced by Roy with Graeme Gibson, the site now has photos and biographies of most members, so it should be easier to get to know each other. This year Roy has even produced a page of handy 'member mugshots'. The Club is lucky to have a member with Roy's IT skills, so thank you Roy.

Attendance at monthly meetings has been good, with a high standard of talks, thanks to Robin Haggett as Programme Secretary. Between meetings, we have enjoyed some memorable social events, thanks to much hard work by Keith Rutherford and Keith Puttick, both of whom are stepping down this time. For keeping us informed and amused with newsletters, we thank Graeme Gibson, who has also beavered away in the background publicising the club to attract new members. Meanwhile, Graham Newton has ably kept our finances on track. He now hands over to another retired vicar with no financial background, so he can prepare for his second presidential year in 2025. My thanks too to Maurice Dowling, who not only produces agendas and minutes with untiring efficiency but has helpfully answered my questions about how this club works. Cliff Putterford has been a very fine and supportive Vice President, taking care of welfare concerns with members and their families, as well as looking after Dining admin more recently. I have no doubt he will be an excellent President.

You will see that our club is in good health, in numbers anyway, maintaining membership at around forty-seven, plus a good number of active Associates. Thanks to all who have introduced new members – there's plenty of room for more. This year saw new links built with Twynham Probus Club – first in a shared boat trip to Wareham, and then with an exchange of presidential invitations to special meals. We continue to keep in touch with this and other Probus clubs in the area,

especially to share recommendations for speakers. I've enjoyed serving you as president and would like to say a big thank you to all members for your goodwill, support and friendship.

## **Speakers at monthly meetings**

January: Christopher Legrand– Around the World in Music and Pictures

February: Kevin Patience– The Man Who Never Was

March: Simon Weinberg– My Life

April: Keith Mitchell– Development of University Hospitals Dorset

May: Gerard O'Boyle– Quotes, Jokes and Anecdotes

June: David Richmond-Coggan– The RNLI and its Women

July: Chris Walker – The Great American Songbook

August: Kevin Patience – The Man Who Never Was

September: Alan Pickford – The People's Mosquito

October: Mark Watts – Winchester Prison – Past and Present

November: Steve Parselle – The Life of an Army Chaplain

December: Ken Fowler – The Yodare Sailing Challenge

For more detail, please see the 2023 newsletters.

## **Social Events**

January: Skittles at the New Milton Conservative Club was arranged for the 26th and 30 members and partners took part in what has become an annual tradition for the club. The competition was fierce and the winner this year was the Reverend Graham Newton with the help of the man upstairs perhaps! A close second was Colin Dobson and David Brand was third. The winner has the trophy and all three took home a bottle each of good French sparkling wine. Basket meals were ordered by the members, and all enjoyed this daytime event.

February: The President's Lunch this year held at The Lord Bute Restaurant on the 23rd of the month. A total of fifty-seven attended to thank Richard Porter for his 18 months of responsibility as President of the club and from Richard for support of members and committee for safe stewardship and for expanding the club back to 50 plus members following the rigours of Covid and lockdowns. The food is always exceptional at the Lord Bute and ordering from a bespoke menu at the table is always a special touch saving the organiser from having to establish a pre order schedule!!!

March: Social at the Cliffhanger in Highcliffe saw members gathered for coffee and cake and twenty plus attended. We were pleased to see a few of our newer members of the club who had the opportunity to meet and mix with established club members at an informal gathering.

April: Lunch at The Carpenters Arms, Bransgore on the 20th of the month which was a great success with 33 members and partners in attendance. A wide choice of good food was on offer to be pre ordered as a main and dessert. The delivery of meals in a timely fashion is one of the strengths of this pub and it is regularly used by many of our members and understandably so. They did us proud!

July: Tour of the Regent Centre in Christchurch, which was arranged by Keith Puttick, whose spell doing voluntary work meant we had the right introductions. The tour was fascinating, and our guide gave us the history of the theatre and an insight into the variety of programmes which had been

going on over the years. It is currently used for cinema, live concerts and relay of live classical shows from London and elsewhere. We also had a view from behind the curtain and what is required to turn it from Cinema to live events. Finally, a trip to the projection area at the top of the building which had the current equipment (digital) and some of the older pieces used over the years to project lighting and cinema film.

August: Picnic at Wilverley Plain which was well attended. Thankfully we missed the company of Tonto's steed this year which was kept clear by some neighbouring children and a good time was had by all.

October: Early in the month we had the President's Weekend Away at Warners in Bembridge on the Isle of Wight and we had twenty-eight attendees. Food was good and table company lively not only between ourselves but with the neighbouring table who enjoyed listening to Robin Haggett and his comedy show. (We have all heard the April. jokes!). The highlight was the Saturday main event which was a Genesis tribute act which also included Phil Collins songs, Peter Gabriel songs and Mike and the Mechanics hits. There was a pitch and put course in the grounds of the hotel where the fairways were in better shape than the greens. There was also archery and indoor bowls facility. Later in the month we had our traditional Probus Quiz held again at the Mundeford Masonic Hall. We had a change to make up of the teams chosen randomly by Quizmaster Robin Haggett and eight teams each with four played players took part. The results were very close from top to bottom. The winners were Cliff and Helen Putterford and Peter and Coleen Warren. They are the trophy holders until next year. As before a raffle was held at the end and prizes were well received.

November: A coffee gathering between 10 and 11.30am on the 23rd at Stewarts Garden Centre was well attended.

December: Christmas Lunch on 13<sup>th</sup> at The Miramar Hotel with entertainment from the Diamond Divas.

More details and photos of the Club's activities can be found elsewhere on this website, including in the minutes of the AGM on 5.3.24