

1997 - 2006

1997-98

Bob Harbord's Committee for his year as Club President attracted a full complement of officers and a new ordinary Committee Member, Don Richardson. Other new arrivals were David Marshall as Hon. Secretary a matter of weeks only after joining the Club from Ferndown Probus, and Ron Scudamore as Hon. Treasurer. Ken Lee and Maurice Reynolds were elected to continue as Social and Programme Secretaries respectively and David Wilkie was elevated to Vice-President. In accordance with Rule 7(c) Alan Deakin would remain on Committee Ex-Officio and Frank Coombes agreed to continue for a further year as Club Auditor.

The business of the A.G.M. included the election of Founder Member, Dick Couch, to Life Membership.

In May the sad news was received that Founder President, Bill Cotton, was seriously ill and had been confined to a Nursing Home.

Ken Lee found it difficult to engage members' enthusiasm for social activities and it was necessary to rely on guests to make up sufficient numbers for a very attractive guided tour of Bournemouth International Airport. Two other proposed outings had to be cancelled for lack of support. Nevertheless, the Committee ruled against a proposal to seek joint social functions with other local clubs. Instead, the Committee decided to advertise in the local newspapers in an effort to increase membership as a whole.

The resignation of 3 members en bloc in October was a severe blow and, with absences still averaging 30%, it

was clear that the Club was in something of a decline. By the year end membership had fallen in number to 51. In September the President raised this question of falling membership but it was decided that the time had not yet arrived when it was necessary to seek amalgamation with another Club.

In view of the above it was no surprise that the Bowls Organiser was finding it increasingly difficult to raise teams for matches and to compete for the Leslie Taylor Trophy won this year by the donor.

An appeal for new players was made by the Bridge Organiser.

The Golf team retained the John Rogers Cup but, regrettably, it is not recorded who was winner of the Club's individual championship.

1998-99

David Wilkie, on taking up the office of President, was able to welcome 3 new members to the Committee; Derek Riding, Des Long and Mike Penn as Programme Secretary, Social Secretary and Committee Member respectively. David Marshall, Hon Secretary, and Ron Scudamore, Hon. Treasurer, were re-elected to their 1997-98 offices. Ken Lee was elected Vice-President and Bob Harbord, the retiring President, to serve ex officio.

Des Long was immediately active on the social programme for the year building on Ken Lee's

preparatory work. These events included lunch at Bournemouth Catering College, a visit to Hockey's Farm, Croquet and a Strawberry Tea hosted by Kathleen and David Wilkie and, the most prestigious, the inaugural President's Dinner to be held at the East Close Country Hotel in February. Generally, there was a marginal improvement in the level of support for social events.

The average number of absentees from meetings remained in the region of 30% and some members were becoming slack in giving advance notice. Due to the hard line taken by the hotel management the Club suffered some consequential financial loss and it was necessary for the Committee to make strong representations to the offenders. Patently, such inconsiderate behaviour could no longer be tolerated.

The question of the Club's potential liability in the event of an accident involving any person(s) attending its functions was addressed and insurance cover effected.

The golfing activities were strongly supported and the Club's team retained the John Rogers Cup. David Marshall came out on top in the Club's individual championship and he was presented with the Frank Cooper Cup.

A full list of fixtures was put in place for the bowlers but this was only possible with the inclusion of guest players and, unluckily, bad weather caused two of the matches to be cancelled. As there were now insufficient bowls players remaining as Club members to justify the continuation of the singles championship for the Leslie Taylor Trophy it was returned for safe custody to the donor who was, most appropriately, the current holder.

1999-2000

At the 1999 A.G.M. members elected a Committee that included only 2 changes in personnel from the previous year. These new additions being Maurice Reynolds as Vice-President and Chris Jones as Committee Member. Ken Lee took office as the Club's President for the year under the provisions of Rule 7 and Mike Penn became Hon. Secretary. A good nucleus of experience was retained with Ron Scudamore, Derek Riding and Des Long continuing in office as Hon. Treasurer, Programme Secretary and Social Secretary respectively. David Wilkie, serving in an ex officio capacity as Immediate Past President, also brought to the Committee considerable experience acquired in covering a number of roles in previous years. Further continuity was assured by the re-election of Frank Coombes as Auditor.

The previous year had seen a considerable running down of the Club's financial reserves that had been perceived as being unnecessarily high. This effect was partially achieved by the purchase of a metal name badge for each member to replace the rather unsatisfactory plastic ones previously in use.

There were 2 further innovations in May when the Hon. Secretary promoted leisurewear bearing a club logo. He had thought that the Club's golfers and bowlers might be responsive to the idea of a team shirt and/or sweater but he was badly mistaken and found very few takers.

More successful was the introduction of a bi-monthly Newsletter. The Secretary saw this publication as a good

way of ensuring that if, for reasons of illness or holidays, members were unable to attend meetings, they would still be kept in touch with the Club's affairs. The Hon. Associate Members, who would normally attend social events only, were not forgotten and they were included in the mailing list.

There were the usual fluctuations in membership numbers which stood at 53 as the year ended. Bill Cotton the Founder President and Bert Leech a Founder Member, who were both very influential in getting the Club off the ground in its early years, passed away in the summer but there was a happier occasion when 3 new members were inducted during the August meeting.

There was a slight improvement in attendances with the average number of absentees falling by 3%.

The, by now, familiar general air of malaise continued to overhang the members' attitudes to the social programme in spite of the efforts of the Social Secretary and a proposed shopping trip to Swindon in April failed to find enough support to make it viable. On the other hand, a lunch outing to Bournemouth Catering College was reasonably well attended.

Although the number of members playing in the various sporting fixtures had fallen, a great deal of enthusiasm was still being displayed by those who did take part.

With the help of guest players the bowlers managed to play 3 matches winning one. Unfortunately, the Leslie Taylor Trophy competition had fallen by the wayside so that the social and fellowship benefits formerly deriving to members from this were now absent.

The Club was fortunate in being able, once again, to field a very strong golf team and won the Inter-Probis League

for the 4th consecutive year.

Bob Harbord won the Frank Cooper Cup and became the Club Champion with a marvellous score of 45 Stableford points.

The Brian Butler Trophy for Bridge was won by Bob & Joan Broach.

2000-01

The elections for the 2000-01 Committee saw the introduction of a new engine room with Tony Jacob, John Prater and Ray Talbot joining as Hon. Treasurer, Programme Secretary and Social Secretary respectively. Another new addition was Les Newey taking over as Committee Member from Chris Jones who was elevated to Vice-President. Mike Penn, who remained as Hon. Secretary, and Maurice Reynolds, the incoming President, offered some continuity, as did Ken Lee the retiring President. Frank Coombes kindly offered his services once again as Auditor.

There were a number of unpleasant warning signs that interest in some of the Club's activities was waning further although the average attendances at monthly meetings remained at 75%.

The number of bridge playing members had fallen to a level where the annual winter competition was no longer viable and the situation was not helped when the

Organiser, Ben Parker, had a serious accident that prevented him from carrying out these duties. Bob Harbord volunteered to take over these responsibilities on the understanding that members would support him but as far as he could judge it had to be considered that this activity was now defunct.

Some interesting events had been arranged by the Social Secretary but a visit to the studios of Radio Solent's South Today failed to fill even the limited number of 16 places made available to us. A lunch at the Bournemouth Catering College was supported by only 25 members/ladies - a reduction of 20 on the previous year and a coffee morning at the Lord Bute Restaurant attracted only 27. A proposed Skittles Evening had to be cancelled due to lack of support.

An even greater disappointment was an attendance of only 39 at Highcliffe Castle Golf Club for the Presidents Dinner notwithstanding that entertainment in the form of the Southern Union Chorus was laid on.

After some complaints from members regarding the standard of food served by the Avonmouth Hotel at the Ladies Lunch in December a decision was made to separate these functions from the normal meetings programme during the year 2001 and to relocate them as social functions at the Lord Bute Restaurant.

The bowls programme was again somewhat restricted due to the falling number of players available to the Club. Even those fixtures that did go ahead could only do so with the assistance of guest players.

A fall in members was obviously not confined to our Club alone and it was a blow to the golfers when the Inter-Probud Club League programme fell apart half way

through the season when some of the Clubs were no longer able to raise a team.

Fortunately our Club was still flourishing and it was possible to hold the annual competition for the Frank Cooper Cup, at Highcliffe Castle Golf Club as usual, with Alan Deakin emerging as the winner.

An interesting event, sponsored mainly by Bure Probus Club, took place at Christchurch Priory on a splendidly sunny day in June when the new Millennium was celebrated by members from all the Probus Clubs in the Christchurch area. This celebration encompassed a service in the Priory Church, entertainment by the Starlight Singers and an excellent tea in the Priory gardens. It was a great fillip for the local clubs to be able to welcome the Mayor of Christchurch, Cllr Eric Spreadbury, as guest of honour but it was something of a disappointment that only 6 members of our Club, accompanied by their ladies, supported this unique event.

The Club's President, Maurice Reynolds, had a very pleasant task to perform in February when he presented special lapel badges to honour the Club's two remaining Founder Members, Dick Couch and Leslie Taylor.

Towards the end of the year the Committee Members thoughts were turning towards the Club's Silver Jubilee which falls on the 18th. April 2002. A Sub-Committee was established under the chairmanship of the Vice-President to commence planning what was hoped to be an interesting and comprehensive collection of activities to celebrate this important anniversary. To gauge the members' wishes in this respect a questionnaire was given to each for their views to be

expressed but only a third of them took the trouble to co-operate in this respect and those who did so were obviously not in favour of any elaborate or extensive celebrations. It was from this base that the Sub-Committee proceeded with its planning.

2001 -02



Chris Jones, duly installed as President, welcomed a very experienced Committee for his year.

Mike Penn was elected Vice-President. His previous role as Hon. Secretary was filled by Mike Medicott. John Prater, Tony Jacob and Ray Talbot were re-elected to continue in their respective roles of Programme Secretary, Treasurer and Social Secretary. Les Newey was also re-elected to serve for a further year as Ordinary Committee Member. The retiring President would serve Ex-Officio. Franks Coombes was again reappointed Club Auditor.

Membership stood at 48 at the date of the AGM but resignations reduced this number to 42 by the end of the

summer. However, from April onwards monthly reports of the Club meetings and social activities were published in the New Milton Advertiser. This initiative proved to be very successful and resulted in the recruitment of eight new members by the time of the next AGM.

After numerous complaints had been expressed by members over the poor service provided by the Avonmouth Hotel, the President had investigated possible alternative venues for the Club to meet. In due course he recommended that a move should be made to the East Close Country Hotel.

This was put to the members in a secret ballot and carried by a substantial majority. Unfortunately the change of venue also necessitated a change in day for meetings.

The first meeting at the new venue took place on 9th August and the change soon came to be regarded as a complete success. The hotel management proved to be extremely welcoming and eager to please. The members appreciated that, unlike at the previous venue, they had a menu choice.

Bob Harbord had tried to re-activate the bridge section but without success. The trophy for the winning pair each year, the Butler Bowl, was to be held in storage in the hope that at some future time interest in the activity might re-emerge.

During the summer the bowlers managed to play a couple of matches although another one was lost to bad weather.

The golf team was again successful and retained the John Roger's Cup as winners of the Inter-Probus Club League.

Club President Alan Deakin, who also had the role of golf organiser, received the cup on behalf of his team during an end of season dinner celebrated at Crane Valley Golf Club. The competition to become Club individual golf champion, held at Highcliffe Castle Golf Club, was won by Tony Jacob with a Stableford score of 40 points and he was presented with the Cooper Cup. Harold Jones and Bob Harbord were second and third respectively.

The problems experienced at the Avonmouth Hotel had persuaded the committee to separate the traditional Ladies' Lunches from coinciding with the usual monthly meeting schedule as was previously the case. The Lord Bute Restaurant was selected as the venue for the two functions this Club year. This proved to be a very popular move, particularly for the Christmas function, when an excellent attendance of 58 members/partners was achieved.

Other successful social functions were coffee mornings at the Lord Bute and lunch at the Bournemouth University Catering College. A party of members/partners enjoyed a very interesting visit to Bournemouth Magistrates Court during which they were able to observe cases from the Public Gallery and to take a guided tour of the holding cell area. A party of only 20 supported a coach outing to the Hampshire Milestones Museum near Basingstoke but they were rewarded with a very interesting and enjoyable journey back in time.

The final social event of the year was the President's Dinner hosted by Chris and Alma Jones at the East Close Hotel. Notwithstanding that entertainment was provided

by the Southern Union Chorus, the attendance was very disappointing.

Members were entertained by some very good speakers during the year. The speaker engaged for the October meeting failed to appear but Des Long filled in admirably at the last minute, recounting his experiences whilst serving with the intelligence unit of the Territorial Army. In an attempt to raise the Club's profile a Probus Plaque was purchased and affixed adjacent to the East Close Hotel's main entrance.

2002-03

The Silver Jubilee Year



Mike Penn was honoured to be invested by his predecessor Chris Jones with the Presidential Collarette for the Club's Silver Jubilee Year.

Mike was delighted that the members had elected such an experienced and talented committee to support him

as President for such an important year in the Club's history. Having previously served for two years as Social Secretary, Des Long returned to the committee as Vice-President. Mike Medicott and John Prater continued in the offices of Hon. Secretary and Programme Secretary respectively. Tony Jacob also remained but now as Social Secretary. Les Newey would continue to serve as the Ordinary Committee Member and Chris Jones, the retiring President, would serve ex officio. Brian Skelt was welcomed to the committee as the Club's new Hon. Treasurer and Malcolm Burton-Smith was co-opted to bring additional computing expertise in anticipation of the much heavier workload likely to be occasioned by the expanded programme of events planned for the Jubilee Year. Frank Coombes was re-elected as Auditor.

The important task immediately facing the committee was to organise and see through to a successful conclusion the celebratory Silver Jubilee Luncheon to be held at The East Close Country Hotel on the Club's 25th birthday - Thursday 18th April 2002.

A separate account of this event appears after this archive.

The President and his committee were anxious that the significance of the year in the history of the Club should be recognised with an enhanced programme of events. Potentially very interesting visits to Swanage Steam Railway, for a Wine & Dine Lunch, the Hampshire Rose Bowl and a Caribbean Barbeque at the East Close Hotel. Disappointingly, these were very poorly supported. In contrast, however, lunch at Bournemouth University Catering College was oversubscribed.

The Jubilee Ladies Dinner in September was particularly memorable for the fifty-one Members and Ladies attending as the Club was honoured by the presence of the Worshipful Mayor of Christchurch, Councillor Mrs Sally Wilkes, who was escorted by Mr Jeremy Wilkes.

There was a full programme of exceptionally interesting talks throughout the year ranging from Firefighting in the Petro-Chemical Industry, through The Life and Times of Robert. E. Lee, Working for the B.B.C., Lifeboats to Clerical Errors.

During the summer months members contributed to a scrapbook produced by the President illustrating typical activities organised by the Club. This was exhibited for three months at the Red House Museum as a further initiative to increase the Club's profile locally.

During the course of the year the net total of members had increased from 45 to 48.

THE SILVER JUBILEE LUNCHEON Thursday, 18th. April
2002

On behalf of the thirty two Club members present the



Club President, Michael Penn, was delighted to welcome as Guest of Honour the Worshipful Mayor of Christchurch, Councillor Mrs Josephine Spencer and her escort Mr Kenneth Spencer.

This was the first recorded occasion in the Club’s history that the Borough’s First Citizen had been entertained. Mr Spencer was a current member of Waterford Lodge Probus Club.

It was particularly to be celebrated that two of the members present were the remaining Founder Members, Dick Couch and Leslie Taylor.

As the date also represented twenty five years of Probud in the Borough of Christchurch, invited guests included Presidents and members of the five other Probud Clubs founded since 1977.

Other important and very welcome guests were Mr Terry Broadfield, the currently serving President of Christchurch Rotary Club, and Mr Lester Watts, the Liaison Officer for Christchurch Rotary Club, which sponsored the formation and development of Probud in the Borough.



Following an excellent lunch, toasts were proposed by both the Rotary Club representatives to the future success of the host Probud Club and the other Probud Clubs established in Christchurch.

Replying, the Christchurch Club President recalled the words of Mr Bill Cotton, the Founder President, spoken in 1978 which had perfectly described the excellent opportunity for fellowship that Probud was able to offer retired professional and business men. However, he

also warned the present members that it would be necessary to work very hard to ensure the future viability of their Club in the light of a general decline nationally in club memberships.



The highlight of the day's proceedings came when the two Founder Members, Dick Crouch and Leslie Taylor, cut the birthday cake made by the Hotel's talented chefs.

Following this, Councillor Mrs Spencer presented a commemorative plaque to each of them on behalf of the Club.

The Mayor went on to deliver a well-researched address which was very favourably received by all present. Before departing for another engagement, together with Mr Spencer, the Mayor took the opportunity to speak personally with many of the members and guests.



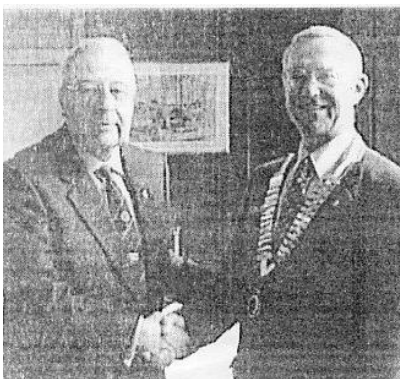
It was universally agreed that the friendly and relaxed manner of the Mayor and her Escort had made the occasion an extremely memorable one for all concerned especially

the recipients of the commemorative plaques.

Although this was probably the first occasion on which one of the Probus Clubs in Christchurch had entertained the Borough's "First Citizen" it was hoped that it would not be the last.

2003/4

*Mike Penn
congratulates David
Marshall as he assumes
the presidency*



THE COMMITTEE

From Left to Right: Tony Jacob (Social Secretary), John



*Prater (Programme
Secretary), David
Marshall
(Vice-President), Des
Long (President), Brian
Skelt (Hon. Treasurer)
and Les Newey*

(Committee Member). Not shown are Malcolm

Burton-Smith (Hon. Secretary) and Mike Penn (Past President ex-officio).

After eight years' service as Hon. Auditor Frank Coombes handed on the role to John Maton.

During his closing speech before relinquishing the office of President Mike Penn gave fulsome thanks to all the committee members who had supported him so generously and well during the Silver Jubilee Year. He made special mention of Des Long, his Vice-President, who had willingly taken on a very heavy workload ably assisted by his wife Pat. Mike also expressed sincere thanks for the wonderful support he had received from his own wife, Ann, during the year.

At the commencement Of the new club year membership stood at 44 including 2 Life Members and 1 Honorary Member.

Attendance at the monthly Ordinary Meetings usually averaged in the region of 60-65% of members.

Social events enjoyed by members included the two usual Ladies' Lunches, lunch at Brockenhurst College, coffee mornings, skittles and a boat trip from Gosport to visit the Solent forts.

There was a good selection of talks throughout the year the pick of which was delivered by our member, Harold Jones, who spoke very eloquently and informatively of his experiences as an R.A.F. Navigator during the Suez crisis.

The President's Dinner held at the East Close Hotel was well attended by a total of 49 Members/Ladies and Associate Members.

During the year the Immediate Past President carried out a review of the current arrangements with regards to

Associate Members. Each of these was provided with a contact within the Club and, to keep them informed of future social events that they might wish to attend, their names were added to the Club Newsletter mailing list.

With a view to recruiting new members an initiative was launched after the annual meeting of Presidents from the six Probus Clubs in Christchurch to produce a leaflet about Probus. It was proposed to distribute these as appropriate throughout the area. Eventually, however, the initiative failed due to the failure to reach agreement on its contents.



Harold Jones receives the "Cooper Cup" from President, Des Long, as the Club's Champion Golfer for 2004

2004-05

Upon assuming the role of President for the year David Marshall was pleased to be able to welcome the following members as forming his Committee: Tony Jacob (Vice-President) Brian Skelt (Treasurer) Malcolm Burton-Smith (Hon. Secretary) John Prater (Prog.

Secretary) Geoff Wilson (Social Secretary) Rodney Simpson (Committee Mem.) Barry Johnson (Co-opted). Des Long, the retiring President, would serve ex-officio. Les Newey stood down as Committee Member at the completion of 3 years excellent service. John Maton was reappointed Honorary Auditor.

As the Club's new year got underway the total membership had been maintained from the start of the previous year at 46.



*David
Marshall
Receives
the
presidential
collarete
From Des
Long*

Concerns were raised at the rising cost of engaging speakers for the meetings as this was putting a deal of strain on the Club's finances. In an attempt to relieve the situation the President requested that any member who would be prepared to give a talk to make that known to the Programme Secretary.

David had a difficult situation to deal with in the summer when the possibility of change of venue from the East Close Hotel to the Waterford Lodge Hotel was proposed after an approach by the owners of the latter. However,

a postal vote of members was overwhelmingly in favour and the move duly went ahead in time for the September meeting. Regrettably the move resulted in the resignations of two members but this was probably fewer than might have been anticipated. Past President, Chris Jones, removed the Club Plaque from its existing location at the East Close Hotel and, having carried out a thorough renovation, he remounted it at the new venue.

Average monthly attendances for the year were once again in the region of 60%-65% of the membership.

Geoff Wilson, the new Social Secretary, excelled in his first year in the role. There was a strong maritime slant to his programme perhaps reflecting his career in the travel industry. One very popular visit was to the Black Prince, a Fred Olsen Lines cruise ship docked in Southampton. The number of members permitted to attend was limited to 10 and they were able to enjoy a complimentary lunch in addition to a guided tour of the ship. Places for this event were in such demand that a raffle was needed to select the lucky winners. There was also very good support for a trip to the Hebridean Spirit a cruise ship docked at Portland. Continuing on a maritime theme, the previous year's cruise from Gosport to the Spit Bank Forts was repeated.

Other trips included visits to Breamore House, Ringwood Brewery and Skittles at Shorefields Holiday Park. There was also a very well attended lunch at Bournemouth University Catering College.

Both of the Ladies' Lunches and the President's Lunch were very well attended. At the latter Dr David Browne

gave a most appropriate talk entitled Health in Retirement.

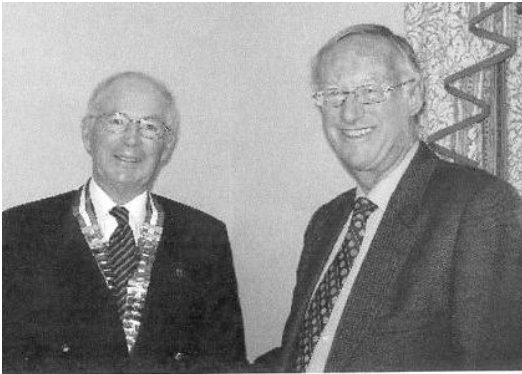
The Programme Secretary, John Prater, had arranged some very interesting talks to keep the members entertained throughout the year. Perhaps the most intriguing was Islam - Friend or Foe? The speaker, Leonard Dixon, related the history of the religion from the birth of Mohammed in 570AD and how many of the complex political problems faced by the world today came about through various power struggles within the movement and influences of the western world.

Very informative and helpful talks were delivered on the subjects of Fire Safety in the Home and Road Safety. Another extremely important and inspiring talk was delivered by Colonel Peter Chitty from The Mary Rose Trust in which he related his personal experiences during the dramatic raising of the wreck from the waters of the Solent. He also gave an account of events leading up to the sinking of Henry VIII's flag ship.



*Barry Johnson
receives the
Cooper Cup from
Club President,
David Marshall,
as the Champion
Golfer for 2004.*

2005-06



*Retiring
President,
David
Marshall
congratulates
Tony Jacob,
on assuming
the
presidency.*

The incoming President, Tony Jacob, was very pleased to welcome the following members as his committee for the year ahead:- Malcolm Burton-Smith (Vice-President), John Prater (Programme Secretary) & Geoff Wilson (Social Secretary). Rodney Simpson took on the role of Hon. Secretary from Malcolm. Due to the retirement of Brian Skelt for health reasons, Ray Talbot became Hon. Treasurer. Barry Johnson continued as a Committee Member to provide support to the Hon. Treasurer as required and Jim Cloggie also joined the Committee as an extra hand. The retiring President, David Marshall, served ex-officio as liaison with members absent through illness and the Associate

Members. John Maton would continue as Club Auditor.

At the start of the year the total Club membership stood at 49. The average attendance for monthly meetings throughout this year remained at about the same level as in recent years at 65% of members.

Geoff Wilson again organised a varied and interesting programme of visits the most ambitious of which was to Bletchley Park. Unfortunately, there was insufficient interest to render it viable and the outing had to be cancelled. However, an alternative outing of a boat trip to Wareham proved to be a great success. There was also a very worthwhile outing to Longford Castle, near Salisbury, where the Earl of Radnor extended a very friendly personal welcome to our visiting party of 20. Interestingly this castle was built by the Captain of Hurst Castle from the proceeds of a cargo of silver salvaged from the wreck of a Spanish galleon.

Another excellent event was a tour of the new R.N.L.I. Training Centre at Poole which was supported by 32 Members/Ladies. Lunch at Brockenhurst College was, as usual, fully sold out and Coffee Mornings at the Boathouse Restaurant on Christchurch Quay were very popular.

The President's Lunch was well supported at the Burley Manor Hotel.

The possibility of inviting the town's Mayor to some of the Club's functions was discussed in committee but it was decided that this should only occur in the event of very special occasions.

The Programme Secretary John Prater, had throughout the year, organised a very interesting series of talks.

These included subjects such as The Russian Army, Humour in Court, Hurst Castle, An Actor's Miscellany and The Diplomats Lot.

Perhaps the pick of the talks was delivered by Barry Browning a consultant in fighting fires in the oil industry. At one stage in his career he had been Chief Fire Officer of the Fawley Refinery at Southampton Water. The talk was illustrated with graphic and sometimes frightening images from one of the fires he had attended. This disaster involved nine storage tanks each containing millions of gallons of crude oil, fuel oil or gasoline which were well alight by the time he had arrived and had already been burning for three days. The fire took two days to put out.

On the sporting front John Irons managed to resurrect the bowls section with an event that was also supported by some of the other local Probus Clubs and was designed to attract new players. Although this was fairly well supported it did little to attract further interest from members of our Club.

The Golf Section continued in rude health and David Marshall organised a match against Bournemouth Number 1 Probus Club to be played at Highcliffe Golf Club. Each Club fielded eight players and a very friendly result was achieved with the match being halved. The players enjoyed a meal together post-match prepared by the catering steward and served in the golf club restaurant. A return match was played at Dudsbury Golf Club in October when the match was again halved at 2 matches each. It was planned to continue to play the fixture thereafter on an annual home and away basis.

In September Tony Jacob became the Club Champion Golfer for 2005 upon winning the Cooper Cup competition held at Highcliffe Golf Club. As Club President and, in the absence of the Golf Organiser, Harold Jones, Tony was obliged to present the cup to himself!

2006-07



*Malcolm Burton-Smith
Receives the
Presidential collarette
from Retiring
President Tony Jacob*

On taking office the incoming President, Malcolm Burton-Smith, welcomed the following members as his committee for the coming 12 months (Little changed from the previous year):- Geoff Wilson (Vice-President), Ray Talbot (Hon. Treasurer), Rodney Simpson (Hon. Secretary), John Prater (Programme Secretary), Barry Johnson, David Marris (Ordinary Members). Jim Cloggie took on the role of Social Secretary from Geoff Wilson. The retiring President, Tony Jacob, would

serve ex-officio as liaison with sick and Associate Members.

Membership stood at 47 to start the year but, sadly, both of the remaining Founder Members, Richard Couch and Lesley Taylor, passed away during the summer.

Tony Jacob was appointed to the new role of Welfare Officer and took on responsibility for liaising on behalf of the Club with its Associate Members. These currently numbered 25 in all and Tony wrote to each one to ascertain whether they still wished to be kept informed regarding any social events that they might wish to attend. It was disappointing that he received only 7 replies but it allowed him to be more focused on those who did.

There was the usual number of complaints from some of the members regarding the quality of the catering supplied by the hotel and the far from unusual meeting between Club representatives and hotel management to try to resolve these issues.

The newly elected Social Secretary, Jim Cloggie, laboured to try to put together an attractive programme of events but his efforts were not always well supported by members. Only 11 took advantage of a very attractive boat trip from Gosport to Beaulieu River and 19 for a visit to the Royal Signals Museum at Blandford. However, a coffee morning at The Boathouse, Skittles at Shorefields and Lunch at Brockenhurst College proved to be popular.

There were a number of invitations from other Probus Clubs to join together with them for various activities e.g. bowls, theatre trips, black tie events, but little interest was expressed on our side.

Average attendance at monthly meetings throughout the year remained steady at 65% and members were treated to some interesting talks and presentations including an extremely well-illustrated one entitled, The Restoration of Highcliffe Castle. Other talks about local institutions were The Red House Museum, The History of Bournemouth Fire Brigade and Old Poole Quay and Paddle Steamers. On a more light-hearted note members were entertained by John Symonds with his talk Entertainers at War. Andrew Cook and Andrew James delivered a very helpful and in depth guide on Estate Planning which encouraged many of the members present to consider whether their own arrangements were as up to date as they should, perhaps, have already been.

The last, and most important social occasion of the year, The President's Lunch was well supported by 42 members/guests at South Lawns Hotel.

At the 2007 AGM it was proposed that, to encourage potential new members to try out what the Club had to offer them, on the occasion of their first visit the Club would cover the cost of their lunch. The proposal was carried by a large majority.

