



THE PROBUS CLUB OF CHRISTCHURCH

NEWSLETTER JUNE 2024

President's Jottings



This is my first newsletter as President, of what I hope will be an enjoyable Presidential year for everyone.

We have already started with some new social events, with more to come during the 'season.' It is always a

challenge to satisfy everybody but thanks to Colin and James W we have further new venues and hopefully a balanced diary of events to attract as many members as possible to the many varied events.

As ever, Robin has found a variety of excellent speakers covering a vast array of subjects. Again, it's impossible to find any given subject that meets all wishes, but I am sure you, like me are amazed at the wealth of subjects and speakers Robin has managed to find for us over his numerous years in the role.

As doubtless mentioned elsewhere we have already met our commitment to the Hotel for our Presidents weekend away. For anybody still unaware it's from Fri 4th to Mon 7th October and based at St. Annes Manor in Wokingham. There is a boat trip on the Thames on the Sunday and plenty to do in the area for the rest of the weekend. If you are still unsure about the weekend, Helen and I know the area well and can offer suggestions for the Saturday. Colin has the full details. I am sure we can add you to the booking if you would like to come.

I look forward to the rest of the year as President and will do all I can to make it a good one. However, if you think there is something I or the Committee could do to make it better for you please let me know.

Best Wishes Cliff Putterford President 2024/5

Social Secretary Report Dec 2023 to May 2024.

Dec 13: Our Christmas lunch this year was again at the Miramar Hotel in Bournemouth, it was well attended with 62 Members, Wives, Partners and Associate Members. A full Christmas lunch of Turkey and all the trimmings was served with alternatives of sea bass, or pea and pumpkin risotto.

Entertainment was provided by The Diamond Divas who ran through their seasonal repertoire. A collection at the end of their performance raised £219.23 for the Macmillan charity.

Jan 13: A coffee morning at The Cliffhanger was well attended.

Feb 22: The Presidents Lunch was held at The Lord Bute. With an attendance of 65 we were able to have the restaurant to ourselves, this together with menus chosen in advance ensured that the event went off very smoothly.

March 21: Skittles at New Milton Conservative Club with 26 attending. This is a regular event on the social calendar and this year Brian Hollowell was the winning male competitor, making a change from him cleaning up in the golf tournaments. Helen Putterford was the leading lady. For some strange reason by Probud tradition prizes are also awarded to the least successful male and female players and step forward Richard Reader and Mila Wheildon. Two years ago, Mila beat both the men and women. How the mighty have fallen. Last year's champion Graham Newton was unfortunately unable to attend. The club is always good value for food and drink and this year was no different.

April 16 Two events this month. Our 21 on the Christchurch Priory tour were split into three groups each led by a guide. We learnt where the phrase "the weakest go the wall" hails from and saw a beautiful, relatively small and amazingly modern looking Norman-

stained glass window at the west end of the church. The crypt we visited was reopened after two centuries of closure and found to contain 1,500 suspected plague skeletons. Nesting peregrine falcons prevented a bell tower tour, but we climbed 72 narrow spiral staircase steps to the church museum, formerly a boys' grammar school, with excellent views of both town and sea. A lunch at MK Turkish restaurant in the high street followed for 32 members and partners. There was plenty of food, especially meat, chips, rice and salad. But we could have done with humous and sauces to offset it all. Still at £14 a head, a bargain in this post-Covid inflationary world.



May 16 The Lady
Returns for our visit to the National Trust's Kingston Lacy estate near Wimborne. We are hoping for fine weather for a picnic in the grounds, an optional 60minute circular woodland walk (bring sturdy footwear) or a more sedate walk in the

gardens, followed by a cream tea at the Trust's Stables café, which also serves lunch for those not wanting to picnic. Our tour of the house will include seeing this renowned 1606 painting. The lady is Maria Serra Pallavicini, and the painter is Reubens. The painting has now returned to Kingston Lacy after being loaned to Dulwich Picture Gallery for its recent exhibition *Rubens and Women*. The rehang of this and the pictures surrounding it at Kingston Lacy more directly at eye level is intended to reveal connections between the paintings and tell the story of the Bankes family's collecting across the centuries. Probus members had a talk on Kingston Lacy in 2019.

And,... Some dates for your diary,

2024 June

4th Club Meeting

20th Day Out at Bucklers Hard with lunch at the Master Builders Hotel
Optional boat trip and visit to the Museum.

July

2nd Joint Meeting and lunch with our ladies at The

Bridge House at Longham
Including speaker.

17th Coffee and cake at the Boathouse Restaurant followed by a round of Crazy Golf with prizes.

August

6th Club Meeting

22nd Joint Meeting with Twynham Probus Club
Details to follow.

September

3rd Club Meeting

13th Guided tour round Sandpit Marsh followed by lunch at The Rising Sun

October

1st Club Meeting

4th to 7th Presidents Weekend away at St Annes Manor Hotel, Wokingham.
With two-hour boat trip on the Thames.

November

5th Club Meeting

14th Afternoon Tea at the Otter Garden Centre.
Christmas shopping opportunity

December

3rd Club Meeting

12th Christmas Lunch with our Ladies, Provisional booking at the Miramar Hotel. Awaiting menu and cost.

2025 January

7th Club Meeting

31st Lunch at the Brockenhurst Catering College, served and prepared by the students.!!!

February

4th Club Meeting

20th Presidents Lunch with our Ladies.
Provisional booking made at the Lord Bute.
Alterative venue being considered.

SPEAKERS JUNE - DECEMBER 2024

July 2024

Brian and Jacqueline Sutton – ‘Johnny Remember Me’

Brian and Jacqueline have spoken at our club in the past and now have this new talk which covers the birth of British pop music, remembering some of the early performers – the exciting days of John Leyton, Jess Conrad, Screaming Lord Sutch and more. They will however also be taking a look at 50’s and 60’s fashion, and the influence of Joe Meek, ‘Telstar’ and the Tea Chest Tapes.

So, with our wives and partners joining us on this occasion, it is hoped that this will be of interest to all.

August 2024

Bill Howlett – The Hengistbury Head Outdoor Education Centre

In 2009 HHOEC was taken over by Brockenhurst College, and in its last full year of operation 75 schools used the Centre which handled over 10,000 school sessions and 5,000 public sessions for adults and young people. Then Covid happened, and in 2021 BCP took back ownership of the Centre and following a survey, the main building was then deemed to be unsafe for public use and the Centre has not been open since March 2020.

So, the Centre which enabled so many to enjoy all types of water sports will never offer that opportunity again. Or will it?

Bill is a member of a group of water sports enthusiasts who have formed ‘Hengistbury Head Outdoors’ – a charitable community benefit society with the intention of taking a lifetime lease on the centre, albeit with many demanding challenges along the way – it’s a fascinating story.

September 2024

Edward Hallewell – ‘Life’s a Grind!’

Edward is a retired engineer, and is well known in the area, being a Priory chorister, a member of the Bure Probus Club and I’m sure that he won’t mind if I describe him as a ‘local character’.

In this talk he recounts his working days as an engineer, and some of the techniques involved, but knowing Edward, it would have been anything BUT a grind!

October 2024

Michael Heatley – ‘What not to say to a Guitar Hero!’

Michael is the author or editor of over thirty biographies of celebrities in the music world and has interviewed the world’s best from Hank Marvin (twice) through to Joe Brown, Peter Green and Gary Moore. Whilst he describes himself as semi- retired, he still travels the world and has recently returned from a visit to the Jimi Hendrix Museum in Seattle.

This is the story of some of his adventures, and some of the music with which he has been involved.

November 2024

Marc Heighway – ‘Hidden in Plain Sight – Reminders of WW2 in the New Forest’

There is a somewhat spooky background to this booking! Earlier in the year I received an email from Ken Heap telling me about a friend of his who had come across an interesting report on the history of the New Forest during the war, and Ken felt that this might make a good talk for our club. Just two days later I received an email from the programme secretary at Barton Probus Club recommending Marc, who had just given this talk at their club!

There’s probably little need to go into further detail the title of Marc’s talk is self-explanatory - but will be supported with a slide presentation.

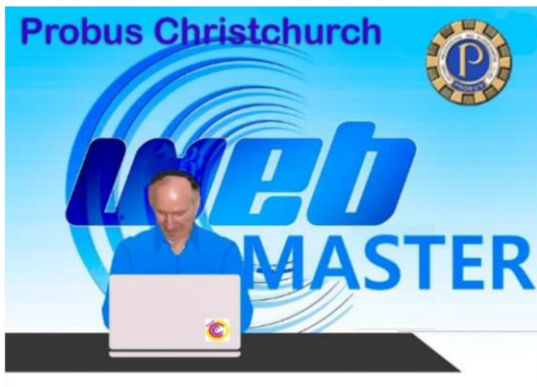
December 2024

Paul Canon Harris – ‘The Road Not Taken’

Paul is a gifted preacher and is now part of the retired clergy team at the Priory. But his earlier life is much varied – a police officer, radio broadcaster and much more – I won’t spoil his thunder by divulging too much!

He spoke at the Men’s Breakfast at the Soho Restaurant in March – a talk so enlightening that he just HAD to be booked for our club.

Robin Haggett
Programme Secretary



Effective **January 1st, 2024**, the new password for the Member and Photo Galleries.

From: Pr0bus32
To

Pr0bus

Eliminating the numbers after Pr0bus

Please advise if any personal information recorded on the Probus Web site is incorrect. All the pictures shown under this icon (on the members page) have been taken at a lunch meeting or a Social Event. There is an opportunity for you to change your picture if you find the one shown requires updating. The same image may also be used in a future Address Book. No need to respond if you are happy with the current version. If a change is preferable, it would be really appreciated if you can submit a new copy to Roy by August 1st, 2024.



Click Logo (Scan not yet available)

Roy Townshend

In Memoriam.....

The Newsletter is sad to record the deaths of two long standing members of the club.

Chris Taylor Joined Probus November 2008.
19th December 1934 - 27th December 2023

Geoff Wilson Joined Probus March 2000.
20th June 1932 - 23rd March 2024.

An unexpected reunion for Kate Taylor

Associate Probus member Kate Taylor got a huge surprise when she joined the club's visit to The National Trust's grand house at Kingston Lacy, near Wimborne, on May 16. Kate found an unexpected guest in the group -- her longtime neighbour Michael Bradbury from across the road in Leicester, whom she last saw around 30 years ago.

Now Michael, at 6ft 7" is not hard to spot, but Kate, who had arrived at the social event with Rosemary Warren and Sheila Jacob, was amazed to see him there. But big a shock as it was for Kate, the meeting wasn't entirely coincidental. The story begins in 2019, not long after social secretary James Wheildon had joined Christchurch Probus Club.

Not knowing many Probus members at the time, James, attending a Christmas lunch gathering the Harbour Hotel was somewhat surprised to hear a woman, a little older than himself, shouting from across the room "Jamie, Jamie over here". The woman was Kate, and Jamie, as it slowly dawned on James was him.

Kate had recognised the name Wheildon from the lunch list and had asked her husband Chris if it might be the same boy she used to see time and again visiting his best friend Michael at 78 Knighton Church Road.

Delighted to find her hunch was right, Kate told James that the Bradbury family, especially Michael's parents, were great friends and that while she knew Michael had emigrated to Australia decades ago, she still kept in touch with the family via Christmas cards with his sisters.

Last month Michael and wife Rita, who moved to Melbourne in 1981, made their first return to England since 1997 when they came over for his parents' golden wedding celebrations in Leicester. They spent a few days in May with James and Mila in Stanpit and stayed an extra day to be able to meet Kate at Kingston Lacy. "It was really good to see Kate again," said Michael. "I wish my parents could have been there too."

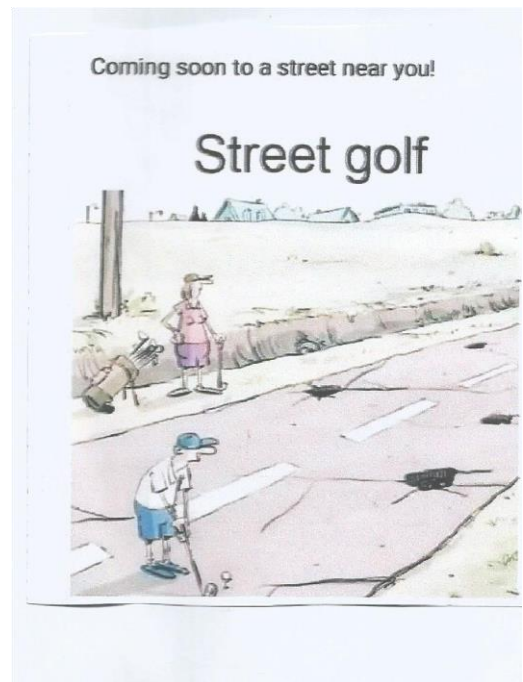
Kate responded, "I was taken back a good 30 years (maybe more) when I last saw Michael, and we amazingly, still recognised each other. Michael's parents were such good friends of ours, and in the early years of my marriage to Chris, we spent a considerable amount of leisure time together."



Footnote Kate's late husband, Chris, our 2013 club president who died last December, was in the 1960s cub leader of the 21st Leicester's, which both James and Michael also joined. Had those two been just a few years younger, Chris would have been their Akela.

Kate and Michael reunited at Kingston Lacy.

And for something a little less serious.....



JUST IN CASE YOU MISSED THE MEETING

and Remembering Des Curtis who was a Navigator in Mosquitos in WW2.

The Report of the talk at the September 2023 meeting.

CLUB MEETING 5TH SEPTEMBER,

The speaker at the meeting was Alan Pickford who gave a talk entitled "The Peoples Mosquito".

Alan is a member of a team engaged in the construction of a fully airworthy Mosquito aircraft using original drawings and tooling. Accompanying Alan was Des Curtis who flew 70 sorties as navigator in a Mosquito. during the second World War, starting at the age of 19. Des completed the presentation with several anecdotes recounting his experiences.

The design of the Mosquito was a response to a 1939 Air Ministry specification for a twin engine Fighter Bomber. Geoffrey DeHavilland who's Company had experience of timber civilian aircraft construction proposed an aircraft built almost entirely of timber. There was some scepticism whether timber would be sufficiently robust, but an initial order was placed for 50 aircraft.

At a time when aircraft production relied heavily on the use of steel and aluminium a timber aircraft using a different skill set and material had some advantages. Joinery and furniture companies such as Parker Knoll were brought in to prefabricate the timber components.

The first flight of the aircraft was in November 1940 and the first demonstration of its performance was on 29th December. The order was increased to 150 aircraft. By June 1941 the Mosquito was in service initially for reconnaissance where its speed and small radar footprint made it eminently suitable. Interestingly with its twin Merlin engines it was faster in level flight than the Spitfire in service at the time.

The aircraft was soon in use as a Fighter Bomber and in all 40 variants were produced during its lifespan. One of the most interesting was the FB18. "Tsetse" where the normal armament was replaced by a single 67mm anti-tank gun mounted beneath the pilot and navigator, its recoil was very noticeable but it proved to be effective against the U Boats in their pens in Northwest France. Between 1941 and 1950, 7781 Mosquitos were built, 122 at the Airspeed factory in Christchurch. The last airworthy aircraft in the UK was destroyed

in a crash in 1996.

“The Peoples Mosquito” is a registered charity and is supported by Airbus and Guy Black Retrotec Ltd. To date they have raised £1.2m but with Merlin engines costing £250,000 each and salvaged components requiring complete strip and costly rebuild there is still some way to go.