

1977 - 1986

1977-78

The Club got off to a flying start and membership had risen to thirty-nine by the end of its first year.

Monthly meetings were very well attended with support averaging approximately 90%. Ten speakers had contributed, four of whom were from within the Club.

In December the practice of inviting the Ladies to join members for lunch on a half-yearly basis was instituted and proved to be so successful (fifty-nine attended) that it has remained an integral part of the Club's programme since.

An interesting and well supported Social Programme included visits to Exbury Gardens and the Playhouse Theatre in Salisbury, a Buffet Supper and a Skittles Evening.

The experience gained by the Committee from its early management of the Club and the resignation of two of the original members in July necessitated the co-opting of replacements, Eric Mundy and Leslie Taylor, and subsequently some minor re-structuring. The Programme Secretary was relieved of the responsibility for social functions and Frank Saunders was appointed Social Secretary.

Sadly, a further change in personnel became necessary due to the untimely death of the Vice-President Harry Taylor. In due course Leslie Taylor stepped in to fill the vacancy.

In December the members were delighted to receive the gift of a Gavel and Block from Mr and Mrs Reg. Collins.

In February 1978 the Committee gave advice to the Christchurch Soroptomists on setting up a Club for their retired members, the first of a number occasions in the years to follow when such assistance was extended to potential new organisations.

At the Annual General Meeting in March 1978 the decision was taken to limit membership to a total of fifty and, in the absence of any other nominations, the serving committee members were re-elected for a further year: President: Bill Cotton, Vice-President: Leslie Taylor, Hon. Secretary: Bert Leech, Hon. Treasurer: John Rogers, Hon. Programme & Asst. Secretary: Eric Mundy, Social Secretary: Frank Saunders and Committee Member:
H.J. Robins.

1978-79

The Club continued to flourish in the New Year and, by June, membership had reached fifty, the number previously judged to be the desirable maximum. A waiting list was introduced but this was limited to ten names and restricted to Christchurch residents only.

Attendances at meetings shadowed these levels and the Ladies' Lunches were particularly popular, 107 supporting the December event.

At the November meeting members welcomed their first lady speaker when Miss Yvonne Glover talked about Poole Harbour.

The Committee was obliged to find a new venue when the management of the Copper Kettle Restaurant announced that they were to discontinue lunch time opening. After some research and negotiation arrangements were put in hand to hold future meetings at the Kings Arms Hotel commencing in October.

Following a suggestion by Leslie Taylor it was decided to introduce random seating on a bi-monthly basis to further the Club's objective of promoting fellowship.

Other innovations included the first availability of Probus Ties in July and, thanks to the good offices of Gerry Phipps, in June at Highcliffe Castle Golf Club the first playing of an individual golf competition for club members. The winner, Ray White, was presented with a perpetual tankard donated by John Rogers.

A successful Social programme included visits to Stourhead Gardens, the Hambledon Winery and to the Winter Gardens for a concert by the B.S.O. There were also a Skittles Evening and a New Forest Drive.

During the year Club officers were active in advising in the formation of the Lyndhurst and Bournemouth Probus Clubs.

At the A.G.M. in March the following members were elected: President: Leslie Taylor, Vice-President: Bob Lewin, Hon. Secretary: Bert Leech, Hon. Treasurer: John Rogers, Programme Secretary: Eric Mundy, Social Secretary: Frank Saunders and Committee Member: Jim Halliday (after a ballot), Ex-Officio (Rule 7c): Bill Cotton. Ken Eames was appointed Auditor

1979-80

The Club continued to be very well supported and by the middle of the year it had been possible to admit only one new member from the Waiting List. Accordingly, it was decided to admit the remaining nine applicants as supernumerary to the agreed maximum and to decline any new applications until numbers reduced.

This situation was reflected in the attendances at meetings which averaged in the region of fifty by the year end.

The Ladies' Lunches were, again, particularly well supported with 98 enjoying the Christmas event held at the Kings Arms Hotel. Seasonal music and singing in lieu of a speaker was well received and added considerably to the festive spirit.

An ambitious social programme was enjoyed including outings to the Cotswolds, Bath with the American Museum, and Dorset Villages. There was also a visit to the Salisbury Theatre to see a performance of Pygmalion.

Golfing members built on the good start evidenced in the previous season. A friendly match against Lymington Probus Club, our Club's first ever Inter-Probus game, was a pre-cursor to the subsequent formation of a competition to be played on a league basis between several of local Probus Clubs. John Rogers offered to donate a silver cup to be presented annually to the league winners. Ray White retained the John Rogers' Tankard as the Club's individual champion.

The success of the golfers inspired bowls playing

members to follow their example and Leslie Taylor donated a trophy for a singles competition.

The first winner was Bill Cotton after a close fought final against Dick Couch. The Bowls organiser, Hector Swanson, was able to make arrangements for inaugural matches against New Milton and Bournemouth Probus Clubs.

The Probus movement was rapidly gathering pace at this time and Club Officers were once again active in advising in the formation of fledgling Clubs. Meetings were addressed in Poole, Parkstone and Swanage to this end.

The Club had certainly ended the year on a high and the members of Christchurch Rotary Club must have been well satisfied at their involvement in its formation.

1980-81

Members attending the Annual General Meeting in March elected the following to form their Committee:

President: Bert Leech (after a ballot)*, Vice-President: Eric Mundy, Hon. Secretary: Norman Williams, Hon. Treasurer: John Rogers, Prog. Secretary: Ted Bingham, Social Secretary: Frank Saunders and Committee Member: Harry Lawson. Ex-Officio (Rule 7 c): Leslie Taylor. Auditor: Ken Eames

*Bob Lewin the Vice-President 1979-80 was unable to take office as President due to ill health.

Although total membership of the Club had risen to approximately 60 the average support for meetings, at

around 45, did not keep up.

Visits to H.M.S. Victory and to Bath (where the services of an official guide were utilised), were very successful but there was evidence of a cooling of interest in social events when proposed visits to R.H.S. Wisley and a B.S.O. Concert had to be cancelled for lack of support.

The Golf and Bowls Sections both had active seasons and Inter-Probus Club fixtures were initiated our Club's teams being very successful in these matches. Domestically, Leslie Taylor won the Golf Competition and only went down in the final of the Bowls to Hector Swanson.

In October the Grapevine system was introduced in order to speed up the dissemination of urgent information to members.

In an attempt to make the management of the Club's affairs more representative and to increase the turnover of members holding office Rule 7 was amended to restrict the length of time that any individual could serve on the Committee. Furthermore, the President called upon members to make nominations for office and not, as previously, to leave it to the existing committee members to do so, the latter practice tending to render the Committee self-perpetuating. A new Rule was also introduced authorising the Committee to recommend appointments of deserving members as Honorary or Life Members in recognition of exceptional service to the Club. Bill Cotton became the first member to benefit when he was accorded the honour of Life Membership for his outstanding contribution in the formation of the

Club.

1981-82

The Election of Officers held at the A.G.M. in March had a somewhat unsatisfactory result in that the serving Vice-President for the previous year, Eric Mundy, was defeated in a Ballot for the office of President.

[This led subsequently to Club Rules being amended so that future holders of the office of Vice-President automatically assumed the office of President the following year.]

The following took office for 1981-82: President: Jack Rogers, Vice-President: Harry Lawson, Hon. Sec: Norman Williams, Hon. Treasurer: Ted Neale, Programme Secretary: Ted Bingham and Ordinary Member: Ray White

No nomination was received for the office of Social Secretary and it remained vacant. Frank Saunders, the retiring Social Secretary, was thanked for his sterling work in this role since the Club's formation.

During his report to the A.G.M. the outgoing President made mention of various items gifted by members to the Club. As well as those already noted earlier in this history he mentioned the Lectern donated by Jack Rogers.

The office of Social Secretary was not filled until Ivo Ife was co-opted on to the Committee early in 1982 and the social life of the Club had, meanwhile, suffered as a result. It had even been suggested that social activities

might have to cease if no one came forward to take on the task. There was little activity apart from a Cheese and Wine Party and a Skittles Evening organised ad hoc by some willing committee members and a New Forest Drive that was very poorly supported.

The average number of members attending meetings was also very disappointing considering that a Special General Meeting in June amended the Club's Rules to increase the permitted maximum number of members from 50 to 60. Interest seemed to be flagging a little after the very positive early years.

The golfers were active once again although it was necessary to combine with Highcliffe Probus Club to be able to find sufficient players to make up a team. The Club's individual competition was won by Jack Price.

The final of the individual Bowls competition was fought out between Leslie Young and Leslie Taylor the former coming out on top.

1982-83

The year started with the following Committee Members elected:

President: Harry Lawson, Vice-President: Ray White, Hon. Sec: Norman Williams, Hon. Treasurer: Ted Neale, Prog. Sec: Ted Bingham, Social Secretary: Ivo Ife and Committee Member: Bill Murray. Ex-Officio: Jack Rogers. Ken Eames continued as Auditor

This year could not be described as totally successful with apologies averaging as much as 25% of the membership.

The indisposition of the Social Secretary caused a serious curtailment in the programme and a number of normally well supported events had to be cancelled due to lack of numbers. The outings that did go ahead, a Boat Trip to Wareham and a Carol Concert at the Winter Gardens, failed to attract even half the members. Furthermore, the formerly very high level of support for the Ladies' Lunches was not in evidence this year. The ladies attempted to redress this situation by inviting members to a Coffee Morning at Highcliffe Bowls Club Pavilion.

The Golfers had a disappointing run in the Inter-Probus Club League finishing last but Ray White had cause to celebrate, when carrying off the Cooper Cup as Club champion for the year.

The bowlers had a quiet time with two matches only being reported upon although the signs for 1983 were promising with a more extensive fixture list in prospect. Leslie Taylor was Club champion.

In November Mrs. Peggy Butler offered to donate a trophy to the Club in memory of her late husband who had passed away earlier in the year. This was accepted with gratitude and subsequently the trophy was made available to the bridge playing members and their ladies for a pairs competition to take place annually during the winter months.

In the summer the Twynham Club became the second Probus Club to be formed in the Christchurch area.

The year ended on a more encouraging note with a dozen new members having been inducted during the

final four months.

1983-84

Four personnel changes in the newly elected Committee evidenced the success of the rule change designed to involve more members in the management of the Club's affairs:

President: Ray White, Vice-President: Ivo Ife, Hon. Sec.: Leslie Young, Hon. Treasurer: Bill Murray, Prog. Sec: Bill Newman, Social Secretary: Harry Sharland and Ordinary Member: John Clayton. Ex-Officio: Harry Lawson. Ken Eames continued to serve as Auditor.

The year's social programme was generally quite well supported with the usual popular events being arranged although a proposed visit to the Flower Show at Wilton House could not go ahead through lack of numbers.

There was a record entry of 21 for the annual Leslie Taylor Cup Bowls Singles Competition which was eventually won by Bill Cotton. This result was not unexpected as Bill had, earlier in the season, been awarded his Dorset County Badge. The Bowls Section players also enjoyed the, by now traditional, home and away fixtures against Bournemouth Probus Club.

The golfers had a very successful season winning the John Rogers Cup and this commenced a period of some dominance by them of the competition. The Club's

singles competition was won by Ernest Hanson with an excellent score of 44pts.

At the Ladies' Lunch in December Mrs. Peggy Butler had presented the promised trophy to the Club in memory of her late husband.

An interesting development was the receipt of a newsletter from the Christchurch New Zealand Probus Club. Although it was intended that the Hon. Secretary should try to establish contact regrettably there is no record if he was successful.

1984-85

In accordance with Rule 7(b) Ivo Iffe was installed as the Club's President for the year. The other committee members elected to serve with him were:

Vice-President: John Clayton, Hon. Secretary: Les Young, Hon. Treasurer: Bill Murray, Programme Sec: Bill Newman, Social Sec: Harry Sharland and Committee Member: Ernest Hanson. Ray White, the retiring President, to serve Ex-Officio under Rule 7(c) and Ken Eames was re-elected as Auditor.

Jack Rogers was elected a Life Member.

The Club ran into difficulties at the end of 1984 when it became necessary for the King's Arms Hotel to close for major structural repairs. Fortunately the Committee was able to make temporary alternative arrangements with

the Golfers' Arms, Tuckton, for the estimated 12 months that the repairs would take to complete.

The Social programme for the year had some very successful events with Skittles, a Cheese & Wine Evening and Coffee Mornings continuing to be particularly popular.

A nostalgic trip to the D-Day Museum, Portsmouth was supported by 45 members/ladies 1984 being, of course, the 40th Anniversary of the Normandy landings.

Club members maintained good contacts with similar organisations which included attendance of a Christchurch Rotary Club lunch for them to learn how those meetings were conducted and to promote an exchange of views. The Secretary attended a meeting of representatives of Probus Clubs active in the Bournemouth Area the aim of which was to instigate some joint activities but the individual Clubs represented clearly wished to remain independent and to do their own thing.

In August the formation of Bransgore Probus Club was reported.

The Bowls Team's programme was hit by bad weather but the competition for the Leslie Taylor Trophy could be completed with Bill Cotton prevailing over Eric Mundy in the final.

The Golf Team retained the John Rogers Cup and Fred Martin-Dye won the Club's individual competition.

The Brian Butler Cup kindly donated by his widow, Peggy, was utilised to establish a competition for Bridge playing members to be run annually throughout the winter months.

1985-86

Having succeeded Ivo Ife as President under Rule 7(b) John Clayton was pleased to welcome a healthy influx of new faces to his Committee: Vice-President: Ernest Hanson, Hon. Secretary: Leslie Young, Hon. Treasurer: Steve Thomas, Programme Sec: Eric Evans, Social Secretary: Harry Sharland and Committee Member: Geoff Montague. Ivo Ife remained in accordance with Rule 7 (c) and Ken Eames was once again re-elected as Auditor

The Club's year commenced with membership of 61, just over the maximum 60 permitted, and social events held locally received good support. A Dinner Dance at Hoburne drew an attendance of 62, a Skittles Evening 59 and a Coffee Morning at the Avonmouth Hotel 70. However, an outing to Wych Farm attracted only 37 supporters and a proposed coach trip to Hampton Court failed to attract sufficient numbers to make it viable.

The new monthly venue, the Golfers' Arms, was not initially an unqualified success but when the members were balloted in January 1986 on a proposal to return to the King's Arms, now re-opened after the completion of essential structural repairs, the motion was heavily

defeated.

At a Committee Meeting in March it was noted with regret that the Club's one hundredth meeting had passed uncelebrated. It was decided to delay any celebration until the 10th. Anniversary of the Club's Inauguration due in April 1987.

he first playing of the Bridge Competition for the Brian Butler Cup was completed and the donor, Mrs. Peggy Butler, presented the trophy to the winners, Billie and Ray White at the Ladies' Lunch in June.

The Bowls team had a very successful year winning three matches, and in the individual competition Leslie Taylor lost out in the final to Arthur Crewe.

However, Leslie was more successful in his golf when, in August, he won the Club's individual competition. The Club's golf team was very successful once again winning the Inter-Probus Club league for the third consecutive year.

1986-87

On taking up office the incoming President, Ernest Hanson, was able to welcome two new members to the Committee, Frank Cooper and Bill Hale, as Social Secretary and Committee Member respectively. Harry Sharland received well deserved recognition of three

years hard work as Social Secretary by his election to the office of Vice-President. Others on the committee were: Hon. Secretary: Geoff Montague, Hon. Treasurer: Steve Thomas, Programme Sec: Eric Evans and Social Secretary: Frank Cooper. Ken Eames was re-elected to continue as Auditor

The previous year had seen a net increase of 5 in membership to 64 and the Secretary reported at the A.G.M. that attendances were continuing to improve - clear evidence of the continuing popularity of the Club. During his final year as Social Secretary Harry Sharland had presided over a very successful programme which included well supported outings to Bristol and the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton. In December members attending the Carol Party were entertained by a small group of singers from the Highcliffe Chorus.

In June the Committee discussed the possibility of an independent Ladies' Section of the Club but this suggestion did not appear to elicit much support. An investigation into the possibility of purchasing a plaque to promote the Club's meeting venue did not find the potential cost to be justifiable.

Problems began to arise throughout the year with the standard of service provided by the Golfers' Arms and a ballot of the members supported a return to the King's Arms Hotel.

February 1987 saw a new addition to the number of local Probus Clubs when the Waterford Club was inaugurated

Although the golfers were relieved of the John Rogers Cup by Highcliffe Probus after 3 years of uninterrupted success it was by the slender margin of only one point. Ray White was winner of the Club's individual championship. The trophy was by now in such poor condition that members were delighted to be offered a replacement cup kindly donated by Frank Cooper.

The Bowls team played their traditional fixtures with mixed success and Bill Cotton won the Leslie Taylor Trophy yet again beating Frank Coombes in the final. Mr & Mrs Ben Canham were the winners of the Bridge cup.

