



## THE PROBUS CLUB OF CHRISTCHURCH

### NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2025

#### President's Jottings



Hello, my friends  
I hope you will agree with me that our meetings this year have gone well – good food, good speakers and meetings well organised (thank you Cliff and Robin). I hope too that those who have come also agree with me that our social events have enhanced the life of

the Club (thank you Richard), as has the creation of our Theatre Interest Group (thank you Maurice). What you may not have noticed but I do, chairing the meetings as I do, is the largely unseen and unsung work conscientiously done on behalf of the Club by the whole of the committee (thank you all).

I have been giving a bit of thought to the time ahead, when I have passed on the baton of the presidency to David, and how I might serve the Club while no longer on the Committee. I wonder, following in Maurice's footsteps, if there is any mileage in setting up a second interest group around photography – one for camera and mobile phone "snappers" – you could say that PIG might follow TIG! The sort of thing I have in mind would be a group that would meet every couple of months. Over the previous 2 months they would have taken photos on an agreed theme and then they could share opinions and learn from each other's experience. I belong to a group that has a Facebook Group and the members upload their photos there so the group can share with each other their pics on the

given theme. I am sure, with my son-in-law's help, I could set up such a facebook group. I would see the group as open both to those with all singing, all dancing cameras and to those who use their mobile phones. I would also see it as open to our member's wives/partners and our associate members. Please let me know if such a group would interest you and, if there is sufficient interest, I will take the idea to the Committee. I would hope that such a group could be an additional inducement when we are trying to recruit new members.

Talking of recruiting new members, the future strength of the Club continues to exercise the Committee. We know that we have a good news story to tell of a club that members enjoy being part of, that is worth giving time to each month and that is good value for money. The challenge remains to discover how best to get that message out in the right places, at the right time. May I thank the sub-committee that is looking at the best ways of telling our story. However, at the risk of being boring, one of the best ways has been and always will be word of mouth – each of us looking for opportunities among friends, family, colleagues, and neighbours to share our story and invite them to come and see.

Mindful that this edition of the newsletter comes out in the run up to Christmas may I wish you all a very happy Christmas. My hope too is that 2026 will be a very good year for our Probud Club and Probud in general.

Graham

## Social Secretary Report June 2025 to December 2025.

The second half of the year has been one of varied activity and hopefully all of you have found something that has tickled your fancy. Hopefully all of them have appealed. In July we visited Setley Ridge Vineyard, in the Forest, and was treated to a guided tour followed by a tasting. The commitment and enthusiasm from the owner was infectious. In August we started with a coffee morning, at Baskets and Blooms, followed by a visit to the aviation museum opposite the airport. The visit was met by surprise by many since a lot of our members did not appreciate how large the museum was. Our September event was a guided tour of the Red House Museum and tour of the gardens. We followed the tour with an excellent lunch at the Kings Arms in Christchurch. Come October we all visited Torquay for our annual Presidents Weekend Away. We included a visit to the Golden Hind in Brixham to see how seafaring operated in Elizabethan times. At the time of writing we are still to hold our Quiz Night, but, we have 7 teams all plying for the distinction of being the brain of Probus! Our Christmas Lunch this year will be held at Colin Nash's restaurant at the Retreat. Details should be with you by the time you read this report. For next year we have planned a varied programme of activities and the proposed diary is printed below.

### 2026 Programme

January 29th Skittles at the Con Club in New Milton

February Presidents Lunch at Barton Golf Club

March 17th Cliffe House Hotel, Barton on Sea, Coffee Morning

April - TBA

May 19th – Crazy Golf at the The Boat House

June 2nd, Ladies Lunch at the Bridge House Longham

Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Richard

## Stop Press.....Quiz Night

### DUNSMORES AND WHEILDONS TRIUMPH AT OUR PROBUS QUIZ & CHIPS NIGHT

Some definitely thought-provoking questions for our 28 contestants at the Christchurch Masonic Centre in Mundeford on November 20.

The seven tables of four were put through the mill with a range of easier and hard questions from quizmasters Cliff Putterford and Robin Haggett. The toughest question for many of us was trying to calculate how many dots are there on a standard domino set.

Our winning team *LCFC-Forest*, comprising David & Jane Dunsmore + James & Mila Wheildon, who had never won a Probus quiz night event before, did so with 40 points out of 50, a three-point lead over runners-up *The Glad Rags* (Richard & Linda Porter, David & Helen Sutcliffe). There was a tie for third place with 36 points: *Newrob* (Graham & Angela Newton + James & Barbara Robertson) and *Southbourne 4* (Graeme & Gaye Gibson + Chris & Beryl Mosley).

The food from Browns Fish & Chips in Somerford was delicious, the weather outside was freezing but it was warm inside the lodge, and the bar manager, Mike Harrold, who was also our host, kept us well refreshed. President Graham Newton thanked our intrepid quizmasters and Mike, along with social secretary Richard Porter, who organised the event, which was making a return after a hiatus last year.



## **Speakers January to June - 2026.**

### **January 2026**

#### **Julian Gee – The Life and Times of a 20<sup>th</sup> Century Maverick**

This talk introduces a unique character, Noel Pemberton-Billing. In his packed 67 years, he was (amongst other things) a prolific inventor, pioneer aviator, aircraft designer, politician, playwright, author, actor, gun-runner and spy – it's a true-life story you simply couldn't make up.

Julian is a cruise ship speaker who is now making presentations to local groups in return for a donation to the Romsey Cancer Support Centre where he is a trustee.

### **February 2026**

#### **Stephen Robson – The Old Dragon Who Spread His Wings – Nevil Shute – Aviation and Author Genius**

Following on from January, this talk introduces us to yet another unique character.

Stretcher bearer, engineer, pilot, author, co-founder of Airspeed, sailor, model engineer, and racing driver are all in Shute's life experience. In his engineering life he was Nevil Norway, but as Nevil Shute he is known around the world.

We met Stephen during the visit to Bournemouth Aviation Museum in August, where he is a volunteer, and he is also the speaker secretary at Boscombe and Southbourne Probus Club.

### **March 2026 (AGM)**

#### **Peter Warren – My Life with the Police**

Following the Annual General Meeting, as usual the talk will be given by one of our members, and Peter has kindly agreed to share memories of his career with the Boys (and Girls?) in Blue.

### **April 2026**

#### **Steve Roberts – The New Forest National Park**

Steve is a local historian who has been a good friend of the club over many years – he tells me that this will be his ninth visit!

He plans to cover all the history of the National Park, starting long before its establishment as a royal hunting forest under William the Conqueror, throwing in such luminaries as 'Alice' of the Alice books and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. As with most of his talks, Steve says that 'there are many surprises along the way'!

### **May 2026**

#### **Alistair Brien – What they don't tell you about being a Head!**

Alistair was headteacher of Bournemouth School for Girls for 18 years, the last three of which was spent getting through Covid and coming out the other side! He shares with us his own experiences as a headteacher and his thoughts on education today.

He says that his aim is to inform, amuse and set us thinking in equal measure. Alistair is also a magician in his spare time, and I gather that there might even be a trick or two in his talk!

### **June 2026**

#### **Keith and Maggie Puttick – Musicals of the 70's and 80's**

We will have our wives and partners with us on this occasion, which seems an ideal opportunity for Keith – ably assisted by Maggie – to deliver this presentation on two decades of musicals – if it's as good as his talks on earlier decades, then we are in for a treat!

As before, we will hear extracts from many of the most popular musicals of the time, with some interesting stories along the way.

**Robin Haggett**  
**Programme Secretary**



### Website Access

Unfortunately we recommend members do not use a mobile phone to access the Probos website.

Although we cannot avoid some pages showing up on the phone, we believe the risk to open all pages could lead to scam issues for both the phone and the site itself.

Also as time goes on we have built up quite a large database and viewing would be extremely slow.

So the preferred method is to use a stand alone PC, tablet, laptop , or an i pad.

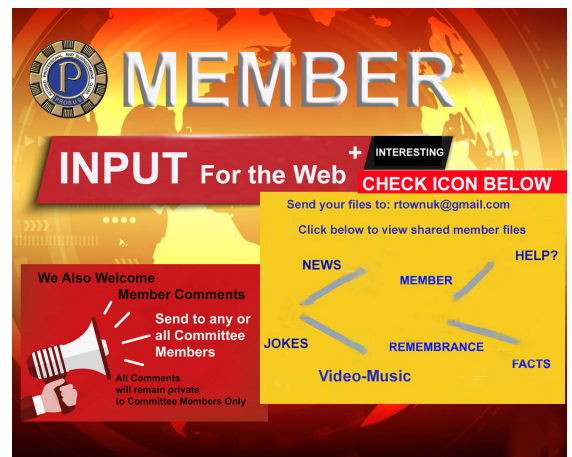
With more attention being paid to security it may mean that if you open pages within our website the program will ask you “**is it safe**” you can be assured that all contents on our site are safe and protected and would be no problem to open.

The password for the members gallery and photo gallery remains unchanged for 2026

## Pr0bus

Any comments or suggestions for our new Members Contributions page are welcome.

Roy T.





## 2026 Luncheon Club Menu's

### January

Pork fillet with caramelised apples, mash potato, creamy cider sauce

Vegetable and butterbean casserole (V)

Side dish for the table – Buttered carrots and cabbage

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Jam roly poly and custard

### February

Baked salmon gratin, salmon fillet on a bed of spinach, topped with a cheese sauce and breadcrumbs,

baked in the oven

Baked vegetable gratin (V)

Side dish – peas, beans and new potatoes

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Rhubarb and apple crumble

### March

Chicken coq au vin

Root vegetable casserole (V)

Side dish – carrots and green beans

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Lemon tart

### April

Sri Lankan style chicken curry

Sri Lankan style cauliflower and chickpea curry (V)

Side dish – rice

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Golden syrup steamed sponge and custard

### May

Sea Bass fillet with ratatouille, pesto and balsamic

Stuffed baked aubergine, pesto and balsamic (V)

Side dishes – rosemary roasted potatoes

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Mixed berry fool

### June

Fillet of hake topped with a herb crust, mash potato, crushed peas, butter sauce

Vegetable lasagne (V)

Side dish – courgettes roasted with fresh herbs and lemon

~~Apricot and ginger coupe

### July

Chicken breast in white wine cream and mushroom sauce, served with rice

Wild mushroom stroganoff and rice (V)

Side dish – buttered green beans

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Strawberries and cream

### August

Baked salmon fillet, buttered new potatoes and greens

Risotto verde, rocket and parmesan (V)

Side dish – summer vegetable medley

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Summer Pudding & clotted cream

### September

Roast loin of pork, creamed cabbage and bacon, creamy mash.

Spinach, chick pea and sweet potato curry (V)

Side dish - peas and carrots.

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Blackberry Bakewell tart and clotted cream

### October

Chicken with wild mushroom risotto.

Wild mushroom risotto (V)

Side dish – mixed roasted squash.

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Sticky toffee pudding and ice cream.

### November

Smoked Haddock Florentine, baked haddock fillet, creamy mash, spinach and mustard sauce.

Roast Celeriac Florentine.

Side dish – courgettes and peas.

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Spotted dick and custard.

### December.

Roast ballotine of turkey with all the trimmings.

Nut roast alternative (V)

Side dish, Braised red cabbage, carrot and swede mash, cranberry sauce.

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Christmas pudding.

**Alternatives always available .....**

Plain chicken breast / white fish fillet, sides as main dish.

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Fruit salad / vanilla ice cream.

## Theatre Interest Group (TIG)



### Theatre Groups: -

The Burley Players

The New Forest Players

### Venues visited: -

Forest Art Centre, New Milton, BH25 6DS

Burley Village Hall, Burley, Pound Lane, BH24 4EB

Ballard School, Fernhill Lane, New Milton, BH25 5SU

### Theatre Shows 2025: -

Talking Heads- Alan Bennett

Attendance: - 6

Pack of Lies – Hugh Whitemore

Attendance: - 29

Bedroom Farce – Alan Ayckbourn

Attendance: - 16 (Fish & Chips included)

Inspector Drake and the Perfekt Crime –

David Tristran Attendance: - 28

Waiting for God – Michael Aitkens

Attendance: - 34

The Theatre Interest Group (TIG) was inaugurated in February 2025 and has been well-attended by members of Christchurch Probus Club.

The most successful outing so far was Inspector Drake and the Perfekt Crime. This was very funny from start to finish. Next year, I may try other theatre groups.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Maurice Dowling

For a full description and reviews of all the above, please go to our website [www.probuschristchurch.com/entertainment](http://www.probuschristchurch.com/entertainment)

And for something a little less serious  
A few cartoons from past issues that I rather enjoyed .....



### And some stocking fillers.....

People say ICY is the easiest word to spell, I see why.

Someone asked me what is the ninth letter of the alphabet, it was a complete guess but I was right.

My wife asked me if I had seen the dog bowl, I said I didn't know he could.

## **And just in case you missed the meeting.....**

CLUB MEETING 1ST JULY 2025,

The speaker at the meeting was Lieutenant Colonel (retd) James Porter who gave an illustrated talk entitled "The German occupation of the Channel Islands"

The Islands are self governing under the authority of The Duke of Normandy, who is the British Sovereign, currently King Charles III. The Islands have never been officially incorporated into England.

After war was declared in September 1939 life on the islands continued as normal for the period of "The Phony War" even tourism continued. But on the 10th May 1940 Germany attacked France through the poorly fortified Ardenne and within six weeks France surrendered.

It was clear the Channel Islands could not be defended and on the 15th June the British Garrison was evacuated and the islands declared demilitarised though by accident or design this was not communicated to the Germans and on 28th June a German bombing raid took place, after which the BBC announced the Islands were an "Open Town".

When it was clear all was lost the islanders were given the opportunity to be evacuated to England. 17,000 left from Guernsey, including 5000 children, 6000 from Jersey including 1000 children and 2000 from Alderney.

Germany had not prioritised the invasion of the islands due to their limited military value and on 30th June a lone Luftwaffe aircraft landed at the airport and having found everything peaceful it was followed by a Junkers Trimotor carrying a platoon of Luftwaffe Infantry. They were met by the local Police Inspector and so began the occupation.

The German Commander was Dr Lanz who behaved in a proper manner and the local administration was allowed to continue, including the courts though specific German edicts had to be incorporated and four new German Courts were set up.

Some limited resistance did take place Guernsey Underground News Service, "GUNS" was established, only to be betrayed by an Irish resident. Agriculture continued and fishing was allowed up to 1 mile from the coast and 2 miles escorted. However by September 1944 food supplies were running low and Britain had to supply food or evacuate the population, In the event the Red Cross provided emergency supplies.

The surrender by Germany of the islands was delayed until 9th May 1945 so the islands are the only UK territory to celebrate VE Day on 9th May.

**That's it for this year, it only remains for me to wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a prosperous, and peaceful New Year.**

**Graeme.**



