

## **Christchurch Probus Club 2024 Archive**

### **Committee**

President	Cliff Putterford
Vice President and Welfare officer:	Graham Newton
Secretary:	Maurice Dowling
Treasurer:	James Robertson
Programme Secretary	Robin Haggett
Social Secretary:	James Wheildon
Social Secretary:	Colin Dobson
Dining Secretary:	James Robertson
Press and Media Secretary:	Graeme Gibson
Webmaster:	Roy Townshend
Immediate Past President:	James Robertson

### **Out-going President's report to AGM 4.3.25**

I would like to say it has been an absolute honour to be your President for the past year. I would like to thank each and every one of you for the support you have given me and the Club throughout the year. I hope you have enjoyed the year too.

I would particularly like to thank the committee, to whom I am indebted for their unstinting work in providing us all with not only the operation of the day-2-day events but also the many varied and excellent social events and speakers we have had during the year. In addition, I welcome and appreciate both the new members of the committee who joined during the last year and those who are joining, returning, and changing roles for a further stint this year. Without them the club would be significantly diminished

As I welcome Graham to a second term as President, I wish him a successful year and thank him for his invaluable support as Vice President. I am pleased to support him as Dining Secretary for the coming year.

It is appropriate at this time to remember not only Colin Dobson, who did a wonderful job as Social Secretary before he sadly departed, but also other members and partners who sadly passed during this last year.

In conclusion. I hope you have had a good year of Probus Membership and that like me, you are looking forward to many more.

Cliff Putterford  
President 2024/5

### **Speakers at monthly meetings**

January: Malcolm Wells MBE – 'So Far, so Good'

February: David Bickerton– 'The Pursuit and Sinking of Bismarck'

March: Keith Puttick– 'Musicals of the 1950s and 1960s'

April: Kevin Patience– ‘The African Queen’

May: Peter Ellis– ‘The National Coastwatch Institution Station at Hengistbury Head’

June: Ian Schulz - ' A Vietnam and Cambodia Experience'

July: Brian and Jacqueline Sutton – ‘Johnny Remember Me’

August: Bill Howlett – ‘The Hengistbury Head Outdoor Education Centre’

September: Edward Hallewell – ‘Life’s a Grind!’

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

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

December: Paul Canon Harris – ‘The Road Not Taken’

For more detail, please see the 2023/4 newsletters

## **Social Events**

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 Probus 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.

July 2: Ladies Lunch The Bridge House Hotel, Longham. 49 members and partners attended. A main course and dessert were served, with coffee before and after the meal. The speakers Brian and Jacqueline Sutton (their subject "Jonny Remember me – Joe Meek and his influence") were entertaining and well received.

July 16: A superb coffee and cake morning at The Boathouse Restaurant, Christchurch Quay, along with a round of Crazy Golf with prizes. Cliff Putterford won the men's golf, and Susan Dowling and Valerie Shimmings won the ladies' golf. The sun came out too. As well as cake, there were plenty of croissants, sandwiches and biscuits as well as an endless supply of tea and coffee. A well-attended and very successful event.

August 22: Singalong and lunch, The Oaks Highcliffe. This double social event was held jointly with Twynham Probus (whose members also joined us last August for the Poole-Wareham boat trip). Sixty-four people (33 from Christchurch Probus) braved the rain and wind to listen to our singer, Stephen Christopher, perform the hits from yesteryear for an hour and a half. His efforts were much appreciated especially as he sang numerous requests across a wide range of music. The performance, held in the garden marquee, was followed by lunch inside, with the chicken terrine for those who had it proving a big hit, although the trout salad wasn't so well regarded.

September 13: An unlucky date for some but not for Christchurch Probus.

Another double event, starting with a guided tour of Stanpit Marsh led by BCP's countryside area manager Robin Harley (who will be giving the club a talk next year) and Zena, a member of the Friends of Stanpit Marsh. Unlike last month, the shone for the 19 of us attending plus Lemonade, Peter and Coleen Warren's dog. We also saw lots of ponies and other wildlife on this beautiful marsh, mentioned in the 1086 Domesday Book and saved in the 1970s from being built on by former Christchurch mayor Dorothy Baker. After refreshments at the Marsh centre, we dined at Mr Poon's restaurant in The Rising Sun, Purewell, with 35 attending. Delicious food and we had the pub's conservatory area to ourselves.

October 4-7: The President's Weekend Away. We stayed at the Hilton Doubletree hotel in St Anne's Manor, Wokingham, Royal Berkshire. Our number was reduced to 22 from 28 for various reasons but those who came enjoyed a pretty much rain-free three days and an excellent Thames cruise from Windsor with a cream tea on board as the boat, which we had to ourselves. The boat turned round at the halfway stage after passing through a lock. If you didn't know Eton College is one wealthy institution, we cruised past their land for an hour and were told we had barely seen half of it. Our hotel produced very good meals albeit from a limited menu to keep costs down. We had a quiz that was won in a close finish by the Mosleys and the Newtons, who shared their chocolates

winnings. President Cliff Putterford paid tribute at our first dinner at the hotel to our social secretary, Colin Dobson, who died two weeks before the event, which he and Cliff had organised.

November 14: Afternoon tea at the Otter Nursery, Lymington, and a Christmas display. The occasion was much enjoyed and well attended, with 38 of us having sandwiches, scones with jam and clotted cream, and a choice of cakes. We were looked after by two ladies, who served us a pot of tea or a cup of filter coffee – and who provided takeaway boxes as there was plenty of food left over. The club also went to the nursery for afternoon tea in November 2023 and many of those who attended then came back this month.

December 12: Christmas lunch Booked for the 4th year running at The Miramar Hotel on the Bournemouth Sea front, with a performance after the dinner from The Land Girls, singing us the hits from the 1940's.

More details and photos of the Club's activities can be found elsewhere on this website, including in the minutes of the AGM on 4.3.25.