



THE PROBUS CLUB OF CHRISTCHURCH (FOUNDED 1977)

NEWSLETTER August 2020

President's Jottings



I hope to see you all at the **Picnic in the Forest at Bolderwood Deer Sanctuary** – Tuesday 4th August 2020 12.00 noon onwards. Let's hope the weather treats us kindly.

Just a reminder of future events: - **Probus Weekend away at Warner's Studley Castle**
16th/17th/18th October

Christmas Lunch at The Miramar Hotel
Thursday 17th December 2020 10.00am.

President's Lunch, Bentley's Restaurant
Thursday 18th February 2021 12.00 noon.

We have had two committee meetings using Zoom on 2nd June and 7th July, which is our only option at the moment. We also held our first virtual talk on Tuesday 14th July 2020, using Zoom. The talk, given by Steve Roberts, was entitled: 'Fact or Fiction Mr. Selfridge'. Although we did experience a few technical problems, the talk was generally well received. Unfortunately, however, not as many members as we would have liked joined in. So I did ask all members what they thought. Most of the members that replied are not in favour of Zoom speakers. It was a nice idea but the members who will participate is low. So we are not going to have speakers on Zoom and we are not going to purchase Zoom. The committee can manage with the free 40 minutes. The virtual talk was in two halves due to the free 40 minute limit. I have put recordings of both halves on the website under Meetings, Dates, Talks, Menus. Please take a look.

We are in contact with the Christchurch Harbour Hotel and as soon as the rules/guidelines allow, we will have a meeting there.

Our thoughts are with the family of Audrey Newey who passed away in June this year.

Other general news: -

1st July UK offers citizenship to Hong Kong residents 2.7 million people.

4th July Pubs, restaurants and hotels to open, 2m distance reduced to 1m+

8th July Mini Budget. Cuts VAT to 5% for the hospitality sector, Removes stamp duty up to £500,000, Subsidises meals by £10.00 Monday to Wednesday in August. £1000 to employers to keep employees for 3 months after furlong ends. Fast track scheme for young people 16 to 25 year olds, employers will get £2000 for every young person it employs.

Captain Tom Moore was knighted on the 17th July by the Queen at Windsor Castle.

24th July Face coverings mandatory in shops.

Please stay healthy and safe, see you at Bolderwood.

Best Wishes,

Maurice Dowling - President

Club news and notes...



A note of thanks from our Treasurer

I am very grateful that everyone has now paid their subscription for 2020-21. The committee is trying to sort out ways of keeping the Club together through the pandemic, e.g. the talk by Steve Roberts in July, a picnic in August. If the hotel cannot host us safely and legally for the time being, we will have to find other ways to be Christchurch Probus Club safely.

Whatever we are able to do, it will be an inevitable reality that there will either be no income or it will be much reduced. So the fact that everyone has paid their annual subscription, despite there being a very changed situation for the Club, does mean that we have money in the kitty to finance ourselves through these trying times and for that, as your treasurer, THANK YOU. *Graham Newton*



A note from our Web Master

You might be interested in some stats on the Probus Website www.probuschristchurch.com:

For the last three months we have had 238 visits. Of those about 55% are first-time visitors, returning visits approx. 45%.

Bounce rate is 20%. That is, the visitor went to one page only and left.

As lockdown has eased the numbers have dropped, with 25 visits in the last 4 weeks.

76% used a desktop PC and 24% used a laptop. Only one used a mobile phone and I suspect that was myself checking how useless this is right now!

We will need to rethink what information should be viewable when using a mobile phone.

Robin has done an excellent job providing content for the Entertainment page.

Although the stats do not break out individual pages, I am sure this has been the most viewed page, second being members checking for phone numbers of other members.

The "Latest News" Page is updated every two weeks. All other pages are updated as new content becomes available.

When we see a restart of social activities with pictures taken the number of visits will increase for sure.

Roy Townshend



A note from our Dining Secretary

I am in regular contact with The Christchurch Harbour Hotel and have the next formal discussion scheduled for Monday 7th Sep. This is to discuss the possibility of a restart of meetings in October, but who knows what the rules will be at that point.

At the moment, the COVID-19 regulations mean we could only have 2 members at a table (i.e. 2 'households') and each table must be 2 metres from any other, as the hotel is not using screens between. Added to that, the meeting/guest speaker element cannot be held due to these restrictions. Should any government rules change, the hotel and I will reconvene earlier to look at the impact.

I have heard, both from the Hotel and from other contacts in the hospitality industry that some hotels are breaking the regulations by allowing tables to be shared by more than 2 households and with 1 metre distancing. This is manifestly against the regulations

and The Harbour Hotel and myself have agreed it is inappropriate for our membership demographic. I will aim to get us 'back to normal' as soon as possible.

Cliff Putterford

Another notice from Cliff, this time about an event which *can* go ahead!



Christchurch Probus Golf Cup

The much delayed (due to COVID-19) Christchurch Probus Golf Competition is now set for Monday 14th September at Highcliffe Castle Golf Club. Tee times will be from approx. 9:00am.

If you wish to play in this competition for the chance to win the coveted cup presented by Frank Cooper and originally played for in 1978, please advise Cliff Putterford a.s.a.p. and at least by Friday 28th August. (CPutterford@outlook.com or 07720 467695). Entry is free for members of HCGC, but for non-member players there is a reduced visitors fee of £23.00.

A note from Hazel Fay

I thought you might like to know that a total of £920 was given to the RNLI in memory of my husband Michael. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

Members' Stories...

'It's a small world'. Clifford King shares a family story.

As background, my daughter Heather was born with high frequency deafness and in her teens, she lost what little

hearing remained and became profoundly deaf. She was and is a very bright person and at the age of eleven she was accepted to attend the Mary Hare Grammar School for Deaf Children in Newbury, Berkshire.

We lived in the north east when she started at Mary Hare, and so she boarded, as did most of the other children, who came from all over the UK.

She left Mary Hare at 18, but decided to stay in the Newbury area, where she had managed to get a job



with Sony and learnt all about computers. As a deaf person, she was able to compete in the computer world on more or less equal terms with hearing people.

In the 1980's when Heather had finished school, I was living and working in Dubai for a few years. One weekend, my neighbour kindly invited me to join a very well attended barbecue by their poolside. During the evening I got into conversation with a lady, and it transpired that she was visiting Dubai, but lived in Newbury, Berkshire. I told her that my daughter also lived in Newbury and that she had attended the Mary Hare Grammar School.

The lady said she knew it well and that her daughter lived in a large white house across the valley from the school and which was very visible from the school. I said that I had seen the house many times and that my daughter had rented a bedsit from the house owner and that was where she now lived.

The lady then said that my daughter must have been the girl who had left the bath tap running and forgotten it so that it overflowed and flooded the room below where her daughter, the house owner, lived.

Because of Heather's deafness they could not attract her attention for some time and a fair bit of water flowed downstairs. Heather had earlier written a letter telling me about the flood and so I was able to confirm to the lady that, yes, it was my daughter who had flooded her daughter's house. What a coincidence, that never having met before, we found a direct link to an event involving our daughters several thousand miles away.

At times it can seem to be a small world!

2020 holiday plans in tatters? Keith and Maggie Puttick's unforgettable holiday in Greece may help ease the pain...

Midway through a holiday with friends in Stoupa, Greece, we set off in lovely evening sunshine to our favourite Taverna by the beach. The clouds started to appear and just before we arrived, a very heavy shower started. While eating our dinner, the sky darkened, the rain got heavier and a huge storm blew up.

We stayed in the Taverna for an extra hour or so, hoping the rain would cease, but it just got heavier and heavier. We had about a mile to walk back to our accommodation, all uphill.



As we turned to go uphill, I realised the road was flooded with a torrent of water rushing down the hill. Up to our knees in water we managed to negotiate the walk back, however we had never been so cold, and the four of us were soaked to the skin and shivering.

Maggie and I had a very quick hot shower, or rather a lukewarm shower (it was Greece!) before putting a small bag together containing passports, money and food - just in case. The wind howled all night and the rain never stopped until breakfast.

After breakfast we met up with our friends and decided to walk back down to the beach. Water was still flowing down the road about ankle high (see pics). However, when we arrived at the beach it was a scene of some devastation. Several cars had been swept into the sea, and the beach was covered in debris (see pics). Sadly, one person living in a basement room near the beach had been killed along with two other people in the next village.



When the clean-up started in earnest, several of us holidaymakers joined the local people in helping to clear the beach, while the Police supervised the removal of the cars from the sea. After a couple of days the resort had returned to some degree of normality, but we estimated the damage to roads, buildings, trees, etc would take a lot longer.



Maggie and I returned to the same resort two years later and it was lovely to see the village and beach area as it was when we first arrived two years previously. A holiday not to be forgotten!

Tim Vine one liner:

"You know, somebody actually complimented me on my driving today. They left a little note on the windscreen, it said 'Parking Fine.' So that was nice."

How fit we were when we were young.

Way back in the fifties, Pam and I worked in London. She lived in Essex and I lived in Surrey, so all our 'courting' was in London. In that era, the late night shopping was introduced on Thursday nights. On one of these Thursdays in February we spent some time shopping, and departed for our homes at about 10.30pm. I caught the 11.00pm train from Waterloo and my only companion in the carriage was a soldier heading for Pirbright, while my destination was West Byfleet, near Woking.

The carriage was hot and stuffy and we woke up as the train was leaving Pirbright, next stop Aldershot, where we arrived at midnight. I enquired about a taxi, but the cost was £20, a lot of money in the fifties, in fact, about half my monthly salary, so we decided to walk.*

It was a moonlit night and we were able to read the signposts to guide us on our way. At Pirbright we separated and I carried on home to West Byfleet, arriving at about 4.00am. I did this walk in my office suit, city black shoes and carrying parcels. At 7.00am I was out of bed and back on the train to London for another day at the office. Oh how fit I was in those days!!

David Marshall

**My Google Map says this is at least a 16 mile walk!
-ed*

Comedy corner

My four year old nephew has been learning Spanish since lockdown.

He still can't say "please" though,
Which I think is poor for four.

The genie asked, "What's your first wish?" Steve answered, "I wish I was rich!"

The genie continued, "What's your second wish, Rich?"

Thanks for those two, Maurice



A young blonde girl in her late teens, wanting to earn some extra money for the summer, decided to hire herself out as a "handy woman" and started canvassing a nearby well-to-do neighbourhood. She went to the front door of the first house and asked the owner if he had any odd jobs for her to do. "Well, I guess I could use somebody to paint the porch," he said. "How much will you charge me?" Delighted, the girl quickly responded, "How about \$50?"

The man agreed and told her that the paint and brushes and everything she would need were in the garage.

The man's wife, hearing the conversation, said to her husband, "Does she realize that our porch goes ALL the way around the house?"

"That's a bit cynical, isn't it?" he responded.

The wife replied, "You're right. I guess I'm starting to believe all those dumb blonde jokes."

A few hours later the blonde came to the door to collect her money.

"You're finished already??" the startled husband asked.

"Yes," the blonde replied, "and I even had paint left over so I gave it two coats."

Impressed, the man reached into his pocket for the \$50 and handed it to her along with a \$10 tip.

"Thank you," the blonde said, "And, by the way, it's not a Porch, it's a Lexus."

Thanks to David Marshall

"I've just been on a once-in-a-lifetime holiday. I'll tell you what, never again." *Tim Vine*



Joys of lockdown 1: Walking the Dog

Thanks for all the contributions to this edition. There'll be more in the next one, but only if you keep sending them in. Oh, and if you don't like the jokes, please send in some better ones! Meanwhile, check out the website and Entertainment section there for more amusement – ed.