

THE PROBUS CLUB OF CHRISTCHURCH (FOUNDED 1977)



NEWSLETTER December 2013

President's remarks

I hope I am right in thinking that we are now settling into our new venue at the East Close Hotel, following the closure in March of the Waterford Lodge Hotel and the disruption caused while searching for a new suitable location over the ensuing four months. It is appreciated that not all members found the ballot result acceptable, but I feel the right choice was made. To my mind this hotel meets the criteria set out by the committee and although not actually sited in Christchurch, it does carry a BH23 postcode.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to all committee members for the excellent support they have given me and for their efforts on behalf of the Club. We have heard some most interesting speakers and enjoyed a variety of social events which on the whole have been well supported and my thanks go to all the members too.

Now that we have a permanent venue and with the approach of the New Year let us renew our efforts to recruit new members to swell the membership of what I consider is a great Club. Finally, Kate joins me in wishing you all a very happy Christmas, and more importantly a healthy New Year.

Chris Taylor

Monthly Meetings – 2013

Yet again we have been fortunate to have had some extremely interesting speakers at our monthly meetings.

Since the last Newsletter we have been greatly entertained by Stuart Gillespie with 'Remembering the Great Entertainers', by Roger Williams with 'The History of Playing Cards', by Philip Pearson and Kevin Pattinson with 'Living with the Financial Crisis', by Derek Armitage with 'Glider Operations during WW2', by Charles Clark with 'The Rebirth of the Welsh Highland Railway', by Shirley Critchley with 'A Saga of Sunken Secrets' (the story of John Montagu), and by Kevin Patience with 'The Real Bridge over the River Kwai Story'.

It would indeed be difficult to imagine a more varied programme than that!

Future Speakers and Menus – Early 2014

7th January – Arthur Fairchild – 'Flat Bottomed Boats' (Tank Landing Craft Journey).

Slow Braised Lamb Shoulder, Dauphinoise Potato, Neaps and Minted Jus.

White Chocolate and Raspberry Cheesecake.

4th February – Hugh Barnard CBE – 'Modern Smuggling Techniques and Counter Techniques'.

Conqueror Fish Pie with Herb and Cheddar Crust.

Spiced Apple Pie with Clotted Cream Ice Cream.

4th March – Annual General Meeting

Past President Geoff Wilson – 'Around the World in 80 Months'.

Roast Breast of Chicken with a Forest Mushroom and Tarragon Risotto.

Dark Chocolate Tart with Vanilla Mascarpone.

April 1st – Mike Webber – 'Norway's Fabulous Fjords'.

Grilled Gammon Steak, Parsley Sauce, Saute Potato, and Braised Onions.

Chocolate Orange Bread and Butter Pudding with Cream Anglaise.

NB Volunteers for Votes of Thanks are required for the above speakers – please let Ken Goodman, the Programme Secretary, know if you can help with this.

Members are asked to give priority on the front row to those who are hard of hearing.

Reminder of the Attendance Rules

Members unable to attend any of these meetings must inform the Dining Secretary (Mike Harrold – 01425-271860 or mike_harrold@btinternet.com) **at the latest by the Friday preceding the meeting.**

Additionally, if any member is unhappy with the meal specified, please speak to Mike (again, by the preceding Friday), about a possible alternative being provided.

Membership

Since the last Newsletter was issued, two of our members have sadly passed away

In September we lost **Frank Abercrombie**, after a long illness. Frank was a most popular member, aged 85, and had been in membership for some 10 years.

Then in October **Fel Watson** passed away, aged 92, having been a member for over 21 years. It was only at the AGM in March this year that Fel had been elected a Life Member, and whilst ill health had prevented him from attending meetings for some time, he was always interested in what was going on in the Club.

We have also received one resignation, as **John Maton** has moved to Woodbridge in Suffolk to be closer to family. John had been a member for some 10 years, and had acted as our Accounts Inspector, and we wish him and his wife Judith every happiness in their new surroundings.

We have however been delighted to welcome several new members:

Dr. John Page, who was a Consultant Surgeon, being an Ear Nose and Throat Specialist. John lives in Barton-on-Sea, and describes his hobbies as walking (ex!) and gardening (ex!).

John Jacques is not exactly a 'new' member, but has rejoined after some 6/7 years absence, having moved back here. John was a Sales Manager and Guest House Proprietor, and lives in the St. Catherine's Hill area of Christchurch.

It is pleasing to report that as I write this newsletter, we are also due to welcome two new members at our December meeting:

Richard Porter has been introduced by Ian Arnold-Jenkins (thanks Ian!), and was the Proprietor of a local business. Richard also lives in the St. Catherine's Hill area, and lists his hobbies as politics, history and geography.

And finally, a really special 'welcome back' to **Dr. Bill Hale**, who was President of the Club as long ago as 1988. Bill will need no introduction to some of our 'older' members, but for the more recent recruits, he was a University teacher, plays the piano and the organ, is a life member of Highcliffe Theatre Group, and is a Freemason.

Social Events

We have continued to enjoy a busy social programme, with a number of events having been held. These included coffee mornings at the Sway Manor Hotel and The Old Vicarage, a guided tour and lunch at the Museum of Army Flying, afternoon tea at the Moorhill House Hotel, Burley, a brewery

visit to Hall and Woodhouse in Blandford, and a lunchtime BBQ at the South Lawn Hotel at Milford-on-Sea.

President's Lunch – Friday 21st February

This will take place this year at Dudsbury Golf Club – in the Brabant Suite for coffee and the speaker, and then in Bentley's Restaurant for lunch, renowned for the quality of the food, together with the splendid outlook, overlooking the golf course. The speaker will be Eric Watson, with his talk entitled 'Views from the Saddle'.

Web Site

Just a reminder that our Web Site can be found at www.probuschristchurch.com

Court Case

A Probus member found himself in court. He was asked 'Can you tell us where you were between 9 and 11?'

He said 'At junior school'.

The Wedding Anniversary

Did you hear the story of the Probus member who was approaching his Golden Wedding Anniversary. His friends asked him how he was planning to celebrate.

'Well, on my Silver Wedding Anniversary, I took my wife to Italy'.

'Yes, very nice, but what are you going to do for your Golden Wedding Anniversary?'

'I'm going over to collect her'.

And finally.....

The wife of a Probus member went into a garage and said to the mechanic 'My husband wants seven hundred and ten please'.

'Seven hundred and ten what?'

'Well, I don't know – he's just written seven hundred and ten on this piece of paper – here it is – look – **710**

'No' said the mechanic – 'You're holding the paper upside down – turn it around, and you'll see what your husband wants.....'

We wish you all a very happy Christmas, and the best of health for the New Year