

THE PROBUS CLUB OF CHRISTCHURCH (FOUNDED 1977)



NEWSLETTER December 2018

Presidents Ramblings!!

Two thirds of my term gone, where does the time go when you are having fun. We have packed a lot into those few months. We started with the Presidents lunch for Robin's year, which had to be postponed from its March Date due to bad weather. Robin and May would like to thank all those who attended for ending their year on such a memorable note.

In true Probuss fashion, we educated ourselves in May with a trip to the Bombay Sapphire Distillery. Hard, I know, but someone had to do it. June saw us blowing the cobwebs away, with a trip from Poole to Wareham, up the River Ware.

Many of you were able to join Jacqui and myself at our weekend away at Cricket St Thomas, which was a great success. All this enjoyment, over these months, does not happen on its own. Our grateful thanks to David and Jane and Brian and Jan for all their efforts in arranging our social events. Time and hard work have also been exercised by Maurice and Colin. It's only when you get to be President that you realise just how much our Secretary does to make all our lives easier. Speaking of easy lives, Colin has not had it easy either. He bore the brunt of the work in finding us a new "home" after the East Close Hotel announced after our September meeting that they were closing at the end of the month!

In our April 2017 Newsletter Robin comments on the Club's long held aspiration to achieve 50 members, but noted that we should aim for quality not quantity. I am very pleased to say, we achieved this in October this year - 50 top quality members - AND we also had 3 prospective members at that meeting.

My thanks to Keith for again producing this newsletter.

Mike Harrold, President

Probuss Weekend Away

It is said that Friday 13th is unlucky for some and so it proved for David Marshall who, struck down with flu was unable to attend the Probuss Weekend Away with Pamela. Fortunately, however, despite both wind & rain, a motley collection of Probuss members and their partners did arrive safely for the weekend at Cricket St. Thomas.

Totalling 29 in all, we formed the largest group there, meeting up for dinner every evening. It proved a wonderful opportunity to become better associated with Probuss colleagues and their better halves. Good food, good drink and good entertainment - including a Dolly Parton tribute act - made for an enjoyable weekend. By the way, did you know that Robin Haggett has a "thing" about Dolly Parton and that Keith Puttick appears to know all the words to all her songs? It is, perhaps, better that I refrain from any comment about the quality of the Probuss member's disco-dancing!

Set in beautiful grounds, Cricket St. Thomas proved an excellent location from which to explore. The wet weather drove many to seek indoor venues with Forde Abbey, Montacute House, Muchelney Abbey and the Fleet Air Arm Museum being popular venues; almost as popular as the bar at Cricket St. Thomas!

Thanks to David Dunsmore for this report – Ed.



Cooperisms: I went into a country pub yesterday and ate a ploughman's lunch. He was really angry!

I could tell she had false teeth....it came out in conversation!

The Problems of a Dining Secretary

After two years of discussion with the East Close Hotel's management, under both President Robin Haggett and later President Mike Harrold, we finally thought we had found a solution. Meyrick Estates head hunted a Hotel manager with a good track record. Ashley Procter had turned a 2 star hotel in Eastbourne into a 4 star hotel, and managed to entice the Head Chef from the Kings Arms Hotel in Christchurch to join her at East Close.

After a couple of months the food still left a little to be desired, but we finally thought we were getting somewhere at the July & August meetings when the food was thought to be excellent by 99.9% of the membership. Even the chairs looked as if they might arrive soon.

Then the bombshell fell. After the August meeting, Ashley had asked for a meeting. The present and future Presidents and myself sat down with her after our lunch and she told us that she had been instructed to tell us, and Bransgore Probus, that the East Close Hotel was closing at the end of October 2018. We had just one more meeting at the East Close before having to find an alternative meeting place. It was no good waiting for the next meeting to discuss the matter - we had to act now.

After discussions with the two Presidents, I checked hotels in the area to see who had capacity - firstly up to the end of the year and secondly for 2019:

Captains Club Hotel who we had considered last year had no capacity up to the New Year and had also put up their prices.

Christchurch Harbour Hotel could not take us in October but could in Nov & Dec. good price but parking limited.

Kings Arms Hotel could accommodate for all three months up to the New Year, good price but stairs and No parking

Tyrell Ford Hotel only had October available up to the New Year. Price same as East Close and would not commit to New Year.

South Lawn Hotel No capacity up to the New Year, afterwards could not give us a Tuesday

House Martin Pub/Restaurant. Basic food - meeting room difficult.

So what to do? Christmas was coming and lunch times were being booked up.

I took it upon myself to book October, November and December meeting venues and provisionally

booked The Christchurch Harbour Hotel for January to June 2019. The committee were very supportive and confirmed my decision to book the venues to the end of the year.

At the September meeting the President informed the members of the new venues till the end of the year and asked the members to ratify the proposal to relocate to the Christchurch Harbour Hotel until June 2019. The members gave their overwhelming support.

I had survived the ordeal.

Colin Dobson, Dining Secretary

“Michael’s” Quiz Night

We had another successful quiz night in September, held at the prestigious Masonic Hall in Christchurch, with thanks to Mike Harrold for making this venue available to us once again.

The theme of last year's quiz was the figure 40, being the 40th anniversary of the Club. The theme this time was ‘Michael’ (after our illustrious President) – or at least variations of that name, with some of the answers ranging from St. Michael's Mount to Michelangelo to the song Michael Row the Boat Ashore.

The winners this time – by a mere half point – were ‘The Wild Rovers’ comprising Richard and Annie Smith and Richard and Elizabeth Aylward.

But my quizzes are very educational, equipping you with information that you will find indispensable throughout the remainder of your lives. How many of the Seven Dwarfs had beards? Now you NEVER know when you are going to need to know that.....

Thanks to Robin Haggett for this report – Ed.

A Reminder of the Attendance Rules

Members unable to attend any of the following meetings must inform the Dining Secretary (Colin Dobson – Telephone 01425-271953 or e-mail colin@goblins.plus.com) **at the latest by the Friday preceding the meeting.** Additionally, if any member has dietary problems with the meal specified, please speak to Colin (again, by the preceding Friday) about a possible alternative being provided.

Recent Speakers

We have been greatly entertained at our monthly meetings by some very interesting talks.

In **May**, at our joint meeting with wives and partners, **Sandra Simmons** greeted us wearing a hijab veil before starting her talk on “Life Behind the Veil”. In **June**, **John Symonds** took us back to our childhood with clips from “The Golden Age of Radio”, and **Dr Henry Goodall**, from Friends of the New Forest Airfield (FONFA), told us about the history of FONFA at our **July** meeting.

Gwen Appleton gave us a very interesting, and amusing, talk in **August** entitled, “I don’t wish to complain.....BUT”. In **September**, a passionate description of “Life as a Warden at Buckingham Palace” was delivered by **John Wren**, and **Christopher LeGrand** was our guest speaker at the **October** meeting. His talk, ‘Treasures of Dorset’, took members on a whistle-stop tour from West Dorset to Christchurch. In **November**, **Valerie Young** regaled the membership with a living history talk on the social history of Bletchley Park.

Full reports of our meetings and Speakers appear regularly in the New Milton Advertiser.



Cooperisms: I offered a guy £100 to worry for me. He said, “Where’s the hundred quid?” I said, “That’s your first worry!”

For Your Diary:

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

South Lawn Hotel

Thursday 18th December

Full details have been distributed and are on the website

PRESIDENT’S LUNCH

Barton-on-Sea Golf Club

Friday 15th February

Full details to be distributed

SKITTLES NIGHT

Thursday 24th January

Full details have been distributed and are on the website

Future Speakers and Menus

Every month there is a Fish or Chicken dish followed by Fruit Salad or Ice Cream as an alternative to the Menus shown below. All main courses are served with Fresh Seasonal Vegetables.

3rd January – **John Smith** – *The Roman Army*

Pork Fillet, Rosti Potato, Cabbage and Bacon, Cidre Jus

(Aubergine Steak sat on Flat Cap Mushroom with Lattice Puff Pastry)

Winter Berry Meringue

5th February – **Katherine Wallbanks** – *Leonard Cheshire, His Life and Times*

Salmon en Croute, Green Beans, New Potatoes

(Vegetable Coulis, puff pastry with capers, rice and egg)

Steamed Sponge Pudding with Clotted Cream

5th March – **AGM** – **Keith Puttick** (member) – *New York City Marathon*

Confit Duck Leg, Petit Pois, Creamy Mash

(Salt Baked Celeriac, Petit Pois, Creamy Mash)

Bread and Butter Pudding with Custard

2nd April – **David Ottley** – *The Submariner*

Fillet of Sea Bream, Crushed New Potatoes

(Mushroom filled with Aromatic Rice)

Lemon Cheesecake

Membership

We have been very pleased to welcome five new members since our last Newsletter was issued:

Keith Ades

Partner: Val Capstick

Joined May 2018

Plumbing & Heating Engineer

Hobbies: Golf and Bowls

Cliff Putterford

Wife: Helen

Joined June 2018

I.T. Director

Hobbies: Golf, Table Tennis, Sport, Current Affairs

Keith Rutherford

Wife: Carol

Joined July 2018

Company Director (Property Services)

Hobbies: Gardening, Fishing, Wine Making, Travelling

David Cannon

Wife: Muriel

Joined September 2018

Police Officer

Hobbies: Reading, Cycling, Gardening, DIY

John Reeves

Wife: Linda (known as Lynne)

Joined December 2018

Captain (Merchant Navy)

Hobbies: Golf and Bowls

A very warm welcome to all.

While we promote our Club through Posters, local Newspapers, Magazines and our Website, the most successful method in recruiting new members comes from existing members introducing friends, neighbours and other acquaintances. If anybody you know shows an interest please bring them along to check us out – and enjoy their free lunch!

Website

Our Clubs website address is:

www.probuschristchurch.org.uk

Please do take the opportunity to visit the site and give us your views.

Ladies Group

Our Ladies Lunch Club continues to grow in numbers and it is good to see so many new members joining us for our monthly Lunch date on the second Wednesday. We try to visit different venues and we are always seeking new places to eat, so any ideas are welcomed! This year for our Christmas lunch 18 of us are going to The Carpenters Arms in Bransgore on Wednesday 12th at 12 noon. This is our largest number so far but if any more ladies would like to join us, please contact me. We are having the private room so everyone is welcome, but I will need to know in advance!

Many venues are now not able to accommodate us on one table, such is the popularity, so next year we shall look forward to mixing and changing tables so that we can all catch up on each other's news! We are never short of conversation.....funny that!!

Dates for next year will be January 9th, February 13th, March 13th and April 10th. A week before, I contact all the ladies to give them the time and venue and ask for replies by e mail to ascertain numbers. So.....if you would like to join us just make a quick phone call to me.

A few of us also meet at the Lord Bute on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 10a.m. if anyone would like to join us. Just turn up if you can make it.

And of course, last, but not least, we also meet up with our gentlemen at Probus social events during the year which we all look forward to.

Happy Christmas everyone.

Rosemary (Warren). 01202 420501

Lifts for Senior Members

I made a request earlier in the year for volunteers to assist in giving lifts to our more senior members, and a number of you came forward, for which I am extremely grateful. But a few more additions to the volunteer list would now be very helpful.

The 'system' for each meeting could not be simpler: if I need your assistance, then I will contact you – if you hear nothing, then you may assume that arrangements are already in place without your help being required.

Our objective is that no member should ever miss a monthly meeting simply because they cannot get a lift – an objective which, as far as I know, has so far always been met. So please do contact me if you feel able to assist in this way. With thanks.

Robin Hagggett - Welfare Officer.



Cooperisms: I went Christmas shopping and asked the assistant, "what can I get for my wife"? He said, "I don't know. How much do you want for her"?

**A VERY HAPPY
CHRISTMAS TO ALL
CLUB MEMBERS AND
THEIR FAMILIES**