



Chanctonbury Probus Club

Journal 2019/20

We are trying something different this year. In the past, the journal was written and edited in a rush at the end of the Probus year. Much of the information was many months old. This year, we decided that we would build up the journal during the year and update it progressively on the Club website. We agreed to assess it at the end of the year and, depending on views from members, will continue with the new format or revert to doing it as we did in the past.

Two very significant events occurred in the year, but unfortunately could not be celebrated in the grand style we had planned due to the Coronavirus lockdown. The Club celebrated its **25th Anniversary**, but the planned dinner to be held in April had to be postponed but will be held once life returns to normal. The second event was the **100th birthday of our Founding and Honorary Member, Norman Humble** on the 17th March and is reported on later in the journal.

Because of the lockdown, the Management Committee decided to suspend or cancel meetings and social events from the middle of March until conditions change. In the meantime the present committee will continue in their roles until the postponed AGM can be held. The Management and Social Committees found they can function with the use of online video conferencing and John Keayes has added "Coronavirus Isolation News" to the club website to keep members informed of key matters. Roger Millard has issued a couple of quizzes to help pass the lockdown time away.

At the beginning of this Club year the 24th AGM was held at Bramber on Thursday 2nd May 2019. Simon Powlson formally handed over his Chain of Office to new Chairman Graham Moss and in doing so, expressed thanks and appreciation for the support he had received from the Management Committee.

He then went on to summarise the highlights of his year in office. With the increasing number of Associate Members in the Club, Simon asked that increasing engagement with associates be an area to focus on in the future.

Officers elected for the 2019/20 year were Clive Jones (Vice Chairman), John Keayes (Secretary), John Gilbert (Treasurer) and Ted Hooker (Social Committee Chairman).



It was announced that the Club will be contributing up to £1,000 towards the 25th Anniversary Dinner in 2020. The cost to members will be the same but the additional sum will be used towards special extras. The Club joining fee and annual subscriptions will remain unchanged this year.

John Keayes reported that the Club had 40 members, 21 Associates and one Honorary Member, Norman Humble. During the course of 2019 three members, Norman Cooper, Eric Eubank and David Cowley have passed away and their contribution to the affairs of the Club over many years has been very much appreciated. Sadly, in more recent times, two Associates, Audrey Aubrey and Betty Paget have passed away and will be missed by all those who knew them. In February this year, Peter Picthall also died. He was an active and very long serving member of the Club and was a Past Chairman.

Sadly, we also must report the passing of Jim Heath's wife Maureen and Kathy wife of Brian Davis.



Two new members, Bruce Tompson (left) and John Shaw (right) joined the Club this year.

Keith Hamson and Steve Denham led an initiative to ensure the Club includes and encourages Associate members' participation

Chanctonbury Probus golfers celebrated a double win at the annual inter-Probus clubs' golf tournament held at the Ifield golf course on Monday 20th May. Originally held just as an individual friendly competition amongst members of Chanctonbury and South Downs Probus groups, this has expanded in the last few years to include a team competition open to all local Probus groups for men and women, including partners. This year 4 teams and a total of 24 individuals competed. Chanctonbury Probus pipped the other teams to regain the team trophy in fine style. The individual trophy was lifted by John Howard (not for the first time). Simon Powlson and Mike Brett made up the winning team. Alan Jeffs supported the team from the rear. Numbers were down this year due to holidays, so consideration is being given to moving the 2020 event to August when golf courses are quieter and most senior citizens avoid the holiday rush.



In May, 25 Members and Associates joined Clive Jones on the coach bound for Brighton for the 'Brighton Old, Brighton New' visit to the Royal Pavilion and the British Airways i360 Observation Tower. The Royal Pavilion has a colourful history stretching back over 200 years



and was built as the seaside pleasure palace for King George IV. Since then it has served as a civic building, First World War hospital and is



now a true icon of Brighton. The exterior of the unusual Indian styled architecture gave way to the even more amazing decor and architecture of the rooms inside which combines Regency grandeur with the visual style of India and China. We then had free time to explore



Brighton and/or have a bite to eat before arriving at the i360 for our 'flight' in the afternoon. This tower, which opened in 2006, is a 162 m tall needle structure on the sea front with an ascending and descending circular viewing platform and is Britain's tallest moving observation tower. Fortunately, despite a forecast of some rain, the weather was kind to us and remained dry, giving everyone the opportunity to study

Brighton in a very different way, although on this occasion we were unable to see the Isle of Wight as it was just too misty. Judging by the feedback, an interesting and friendly day was enjoyed by all.

On Monday 3rd June, Laki Marangos had arranged for club members to participate in an Inter-Probus Croquet Day at the Sussex County Croquet Club in Southwick which is home to the Croquet Academy, the sport's leading coaching facility and hosted the 2019 World Golf Croquet championships. Our event catered for those wishing to play in a fun competition or receive a free group coaching session followed by fun games. Refreshments were available all day enabling it to be a good day out for all those attending.



On Monday 24th June, 35 members of the Club, travelled to Portsmouth and boarded the Brittany Ferries vessel, Bretagne, to experience a gourmet evening dinner. After an overnight channel crossing, with onboard entertainment, including a cinema, the vessel berthed by the historic walled city of St Malo, Brittany, France. Initially, a little cloudy, the afternoon was glorious sunshine. At midday everybody was treated to an excellent 3



course lunch in either the restaurant Cafe de L'Ouest or Le Lion d'Or. After a day exploring the city and old town, everybody returned to the Bretagne where we were treated to a pleasant musical evening as we made the return Channel crossing to Portsmouth. A great couple of days was had by all.

Thursday 11th July saw 35 wives, partners and associates gather at Tottington Manor near Henfield for a Ladies Lunch organised by Gwen Moss, wife of our Chairman. The venue with its far-reaching views, excellent weather and menu choices proved very agreeable enabling everybody to have a very pleasant and enjoyable time.



On 23rd July, 24 members and guests travelled by coach in superb weather to Greenwich to visit the major sites, mainly the Royal Observatory and Cutty Sark. On arrival in Greenwich most people had a coffee break and having been given their Explorer ticket went off independently in every direction to spend the day visiting much that Greenwich has to offer. Having been dropped off by the coach near the Royal Observatory, most people started in that area before walking downhill towards the Thames to Cutty Sark and neighbouring museums. Some members commented, that although they had been to Greenwich before, there were many new things to see which did not take anything away from the day's enjoyment.



One of the group, Barbara Yarrow, was photographed at the wheel of Cutty Sark and commented that she last stood here when she was 7 years old. We will not ask her how many years ago that was!

The coach met us near Cutty Sark at the end of a very enjoyable and interesting day saving everybody the long climb back up the hill.

On Tuesday 27th August, some intrepid members spent the day taking a winch launch in a glider to experience the pleasure of unpowered flight. Rob and Anne Golding had organised this event fortunately under a cloudless sky with the temperature peaking in the low 30's C, and about 30 intrepid aviators took to the skies in 2-seater gliders at Southdown Gliding Club. The day started, after a delay caused by changing wind directions, at about 11am and finished about 6.30pm with a break for a ploughman's lunch (with strawberries and cream) enjoyed by the 45 Probus members and guests that gathered for either participating in the flying or just watch and chat. The aviators enjoyed the thrill of a flight in either a modern K21 glider or the traditional T21 with its open cockpit and side by side seating arrangements. Despite further interruptions caused by the heat and changing wind directions some of the flights lasted well beyond the budgeted time (much to the organiser's chagrin as his timetable went into a slow meltdown) but much to the pleasure of the pilots who experienced soaring flight. Thanks to all the members of SGC who made this memorable day possible.



Through the summer, several members took up the invitation from Paul Chislett-Trip to participate in an "Introduction to Short Mat Bowls free taster day".

On the 8th October 2016 members and guests were taken by coach (a very wise decision!), to Harvey's Brewery in Lewes for an evening tour of the facility which was conducted by the Managing Director whose family had owned the brewery for many years. He gave an incredibly detailed and interesting explanation of the brewing process. At the end of the visit, everybody enjoyed sampling the various brews in their in-house pub before returning home.



The annual Chairman's Invitation Lunch was held on 17th October 2019 and proved to be successful in attracting a significant number of 67 Members and guests. To ring the changes, the event this year was held at the Tottington Manor Hotel, nestled in amongst the South Downs, near Henfield. Unlike previous years, the weather proved itself to be less than friendly although it was typically seasonal – some poor folk managed to get drenched on their short walk from their cars to the restaurant! However, the increasingly



crowded bar area and the warmth of the gathered group seemed to act as a suitable drying-out method!



Chairman Graham Moss hosted the event, giving a warm welcome to the wives, partners and guests of the Club members before we all sat down for our meal. The guests enjoyed a 3-course lunch, with a choice from 4 options from each course. The restaurant staff did well to keep the service going between courses, working hard amongst the room full of tables. As so often happens at these events, the lunch experience was fully supported by the warmth and constant burble of "happy chattering" and laughter which was evident throughout the whole time. Perhaps this is a good measure of the fellowship and companionship for which our Club thrives on! Once coffees were served, Graham addressed the guests and formally thanked the Tottington Manor staff for the delightful food and for looking after us all. He then went on to acknowledge the time and effort put in by a number of Club members who willingly organise various events throughout the year (the coffee mornings; the monthly walks; and the various trips and events) all of which combine to help keep this Club active, vibrant and most of all, enjoyable and fun. Time was given over to Rob Golding and Laki Marangos to each address the guests and provide them with a reminder of two significant events planned for next year – the 25th Anniversary Dinner in April and the trip to Normandy in September. Gwen Moss then took the floor to address the ladies of the group and to let them know that, as the Chairman's wife, she will be organising a post-Christmas Ladies Lunch, with a date set for 12th February 2020 – further details will be issued in due course. The event was drawn to a close with a toast to Probus. Before we know it, the next Invitation Lunch will be upon us all again!

On 21st November 31 members, associates and guests went to the South Downs Planetarium in Chichester to see their show. We were a bit worried as we knew the seats were comfortable, leaned back and, let's be honest, could induce dozing, sleeping even snoring among some of us. No snore was heard. John Mason was an outstanding speaker and presenter. He started with how the stars and planets look this evening in our local night sky and showed us how that would change over time. He was able to pick out features, that many of us would recognise, and explain their behaviour and history. His ability to provide a seamless dialogue to what is a very complicated and at times bizarre process made it both fascinating and understandable. Several of us were saying that we will return for another show/talk before Christmas. The organiser even went out at 4.30 the following morning to see if the shooting stars were visible. It was cold wet and cloudy with nary a star in sight, but it was a small example of how interesting John's talk had been. Over half of us were able to go onto Wagamama's where we learned even more about exotic and different places like katsu and teriyaki and had a thoroughly good time.

On 11th December 48 members, associates and guests enjoyed a coach trip to the John Rutter concert at the Albert Hall. Our picnic lunches were enhanced by prosecco, mulled wine, sausage rolls and festive mince pies and extra supplies were enjoyed on the way home. This trip was oversubscribed and Alan Jeffs, the organiser, had to maintain a reserve list!



On Monday 20th January 2020 the first club social event of the new year took place. 28 members from Chanctonbury Probus Club and 12 from Storrington & District Probus Club met up for the annual Ten Pin Bowling “friendly challenge” at the “Out of Bounds” complex in Rustington. A great deal of excitement (or noise) and various bowling techniques were displayed, with a final gathering at the Windmill Inn, close by, for lunch and prize giving. Having had much discussion on how “I was robbed, and the equipment was faulty”, it was disclosed that the top scoring men were, Chanctonbury’s Ray Gatward and Stuart Arnold. For the ladies, it was Vanessa Edwards of Storrington and Pat Beard of Chanctonbury. The top scoring teams were Storrington Ladies (lane 6) and Mixed Club Mens (lane 7). This year the competition was remarkably high, with close scores between both clubs which only means it will have to be held again next year – when will this rivalry stop? Many thanks to John Gilbert for organising this successful and enjoyable function and to John Shaw for providing back up while John Gilbert was away.



Following the success of last year’s Introduction to Curling event at Fenton’s Rink near Tunbridge Wells, a further session was organised by Simon Powlson on Tuesday 4th February 2020 and this increasingly popular event was attended by 15 members and partners. After a particularly useful introductory video



and lesson the group split into four teams and set about playing for real. Our efforts were a bit approximate to begin with but as we got familiar with the stones and the speed of the rink we improved both our direction and distance. Two players, Ian and Valerie, were particularly successful in mastering the art of launching 20kg of Aisla Craig granite down the 150-foot rink and stopping it in the target area. Afterwards everybody enjoyed a celebratory meal and drink

at the Abergavenny Arms, confident in both our ability to negotiate our way around the curling rink and the road closures.

On Wednesday 12th February, 28 guests gathered for the Ladies Post-Christmas Lunch. The Chairman’s wife, Gwen Moss, had great pleasure in organising her second lunch for the ladies of the Club. In previous years, this event would traditionally have been organised as a Christmas lunch, held during the festive period. Gwen took the decision to ring the changes by organising this event AFTER the Christmas period. Judging by the great number of comments made, this would appear to have been a wise and welcome decision!



The lunch was again successfully held at Tottington Manor, where the guests enjoyed some delightful food from an extensive list of options – with not a slice of turkey nor brussels sprout in sight! The event was made even better by the weather on the day, with bright blue skies and glorious sunshine – an added boost to what could typically have been a dull old February day. On reflection, Gwen was very pleased that so many guests were able to make this event and to have enjoyed some great company in a convivial and happy atmosphere which filled the room.

Tuesday 17th March was a remarkable date as our Founding and Honorary Member Norman Humble celebrated his 100th birthday. Despite the Coronavirus restrictions, Norman's daughter Barbara was able to arrange a celebratory afternoon tea party with a small gathering of friends who (given the CV restrictions) were permitted to attend at *The Anchorage Care Home* in Pulborough where Norman now lives. Amongst the

small party of guests were the Chairman Graham Moss (representing the Club) and Barbara Yarrow, Associate Member and very close friend of Norman. He was (for a while at least!) speechless as he was given some personalised cards and presents from the assembled group. There was no doubt he was really very pleased to have some friends and family around him on this, his very special birthday. He was particularly moved by the well-wishes and the special personalised birthday card that our Club was able to give to him. There is no doubt that Probus has been (and continues to be) especially important to "our Norman".



Once again we are pleased to be able to report another successful and enjoyable **Walks Programme** this year organised by David Barnard and his team of walk leaders. We normally have nine walks, one for each month from **March to November**, (second Tuesday of the month). Each walk is led by a different volunteer leader, with the participation of up to 20 keen supporters. In fact, this year, with the unseasonably fine weather continuing, one extra walk was added in December. Each walk (about 4 to 5 miles long) starts from a convenient pub, taking about 1 to 2 hours, ending back at the pub for lunch, together with a few non-walking friends/associates who join us there.



Unfortunately, the 2019 programme got off to a bad start because of the extremely adverse weather in **March**, and the arrival of storm 'Gareth'. So the 12 keen walkers who had gathered at the Partridge Inn, Singleton, had no alternative but to retire to the pub for the planned lunch there.

The walk itself was therefore postponed to **April**, when John Keayes did finally lead us on a 6-mile trek: starting at The Trundle (near Goodwood): a triangular walk through East Lavant, following the River Lavant and the route of the old Chichester to Midhurst railway, then through West Dean along the boundary of the park, finally arriving at The Partridge Inn in Singleton for lunch.

In better weather in **May**, Alan Jeffs led us on a 4.5 mile walk, from The Crown Inn at Cootham, around Parham airfield, towards the point-to-point racecourse, then north to the RSPB sanctuary at Pulborough Brooks, and back across Parham estate on the Literary Trail to Cootham for lunch.

In **June**, 14 of us joined Simon Powlson for a 5-mile walk from Barns Green, through Itchingfield with its historic church, and once again along part of the Literary Trail, back to the Queen's Head at Barns Green for lunch (together with 5 more guests).

In perfect summer weather in **July**, Clive Jones took us from Stopham, across the River Arun, then along the old, dismantled railway to follow the River Rother, to Fittleworth (with a coffee break at The Swan, and finally back to Stopham with fine views over the South Downs, and ending with lunch at The White Hart Inn.

The fine summer weather continued, and in **August**, 19 walkers joined Roger Millard at The Badgers pub, South of Coultershaw Bridge, near Petworth, then via country lanes and footpaths, over the River Rother, up towards Tillington, and the much-admired 1810 All Hallows Church (featured in paintings by Constable and Turner). Finally, back over The Rother to The Badgers pub for lunch (with another 6 members).

In **September**, starting at The Longshore pub, Ted Fisher took 22 of us on a walk along the new Shoreham Tidal Wall. We took the path up to the Millennium Glass Footbridge, crossed, over the River Adur, past the Rope Tackle Development, then back along the tidal wall, passing the 2015 Shoreham Air Crash Memorial, on to the Old Toll Bridge. Finally, back onto the A259, and lunch at The Longshore pub.

In fine weather after recent heavy rains, 18 walkers joined Ted Hooker for the 3.4 mile **October** walk around the ancient village of Kirdford, starting at The Foresters Arms, through an Impressive stud-farm, on through woodlands, past an ancient site of iron-mining, with fine views of the surrounding hills, and then lunch at The Foresters.

The fine (but crisp) weather continued into **November**, when David Barnard led a leisurely walk from The Cricketers pub at Dunton, past the old Dunton Mill and fish-farm, again with fine views of the Downs, on to the ancient church of St Richard and the elegant Burton Park Mansion, then back along part of the Literary Trail to the pub for lunch.

That would normally have been the final walk of the season, but with the continuing fine weather, even into **December**, Simon Powlson kindly arranged an extra walk around the Chidham Peninsular in Chichester Harbour. The group of 18 headed off East from the Old House at Home, on towards the Bosham Channel, (over pebbled beach), and then South on the coastal path, to Cobnor Hard and on to Cobnor Point. We skirted the Sailing Club, returning to the coastal path, headed up the West side, past Nutbourne Marsh Nature reserve, and back to the pub at Cot Lane for lunch.

Monthly Coffee Mornings held at the Roundabout Hotel organised very ably by Clive and Angela Jones. Attendance now regularly exceeds 20 and it has been good to see Associates coming along.

Lunch meetings each month at the Old Tollgate Hotel were smoothly administered by Roger Millard and Peter Comben as usual. These meetings continue to be a key part of the Club programme.

Speakers at the lunch meetings were arranged by Jeff Ward and they have been of interest and many of us have learned a lot from them. The now annual Christmas Quiz at the December meeting was a nice way to end 2019 thanks to Roger Millard.

Speaker subjects during the year included in June, “The Ups and Downs of Crosswords” by Susan Purcell. This was followed in July by Chris Wise on “Wills and Things”. In August we heard from Pat Galen who prior to retirement, held a very senior position in the Metropolitan Police. Her talk was titled “My Life in the Met”. In September, Dr Paul Hellyer spoke about “Mercy Ships”. In November, we heard all about the “Chailey Foundation” from Ian Kirby. In January we had a fascinating talk from Bill McNaught on “Isambard Kingdom Brunel”. In February, our very own John Gilbert spoke about “A Life on the Ocean Wave”. The final talk during the year in March was by Tony Pratt on “The Arundel Postcard Trail”.

As the Club year ends, the Chairman Graham Moss would like to close with this short message: -

- *No one could have reasonably predicated the sudden and enormous impact of the coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic. The global impact of this world-wide disease first started to show its face to our Club during the first quarter of 2020 and, as a consequence, all Club activities and events were formally postponed or cancelled in mid-March. At the time of my writing this short article, there is no clear way forward nor likely timescale for when national restrictions may start to be relaxed nor when the “normalities” of life may start to return.*
- *As I write, we are some 5 weeks into the national lockdown and social isolation phase. Despite the very grave situation and unknown future, it is both heart-warming and encouraging to see that our Club members and associates have individually and collectively developed or extended their various networks (often involving technology) to keep in touch with one another and to help keep spirits buoyed. There has been clear evidence of much self-help and co-help amongst our group, which underscores the friendship and fellowship which is at the foundation of our Club.*
- *Given the current situation and absence of any clarity or certainty on so many fronts, there can be little doubt that we will all likely be faced with some tough and challenging moments as time passes. My hopes and beliefs are that things will improve in time and that a new type of normality will return to all of our lives. With this in mind, I look forward to the moment when our Club can start to plan and prepare for the resumption of our normal activities and events and enable us all to pick up from where we all left off. I suspect I am not alone in missing already the sound of merriment and laughter and general bonhomie that is a hallmark of our Club – with goodwill and a following wind, I am confident we can (No! we WILL) get this back!*
- *Whilst this is perhaps an unusual note for the Chairman to end this year’s journal I would encourage us all to have the strength and courage to get through the current situation and to look forward to better times when we can all gather together in our various groups and social events and re-establish the Club’s “norm”.*