

ARUNDEL PROBUS TIMES

1st JUNE 2025

Issue No 63

It's the first day of Summer, now that the weather has deteriorated. Maybe we have been enjoying summer since March, and it has ended. I don't think so.

Not long now to the gentle **cruise around Chichester Harbour**, with fellow members from Bognor and Chichester clubs. There are 17 from our club, including two potential members, and partners, and the boat is now full. Ignore the lifebelt on the right. It will be perfectly calm and safe as we float around on our silent, solar-powered craft, working up an appetite for lunch at the yacht club. Bring your water wings, if you must.



Did you know.....

.....two days ago, on 29th May, our club was exactly 45 years' old, having been formed on 29th May 1980 with twelve members. Robert Cook was President and his daughter Sue still lives in the same house in Arundel. Please celebrate in your own way this time and plan to be around in five years' time when we can celebrate our 50th together. Happy Birthday APC !



The Inglenook lunch with the Bognor club in Pagham on 8th May was an enjoyable event. The three-course meal was very tasty. I had the largest piece of Bass ever, and the Arundel party of ten was well received. Although there was no table plan, members and partners mixed well. On a very warm and sunny day, I found the dining room rather gloomy but others may have appreciated the shade. I much prefer our private dining room at The White Swan.



Presidents Ian and Bill - it was the 80th Anniversary of VE Day !



Rain, gentle rain. “Yah Tah Hey Yah”.

Had you forgotten rain? Long, rainy days seem a thing of the past. We had a lot of rain last autumn and winter but there hasn't been much since. Watering the patio, patch or plot has become a regular task for many of us. Luckily, the reservoirs have not yet run dry and water is still flowing out of the Downs. We haven't reached high summer yet. So far, there are no hosepipe bans in place but that could happen if we don't have some appreciable rain soon.



It's perhaps surprising that the countryside has never looked so green; the blossom has been spectacular this year and the gardens are bloomin' lovely. Enjoy them if you can. Meanwhile, say “Yah Tah Hey Yah” whilst doing a Sioux Rain Dance. (Written during the long dry spell ! It worked; it's rained since.)

Club Meeting Thursday 22nd May

Over twenty members and some partners were present to hear Jack Wheale's talk on “People's Errors”.

I was away so cannot report first hand, but I am reliably informed this was one of the best talks for some time. Thanks Jack. Sorry you didn't win the raffle, as you deserved.

Lunch was enjoyed by twenty-two members, making it another good meeting. I'm sorry I missed it.

Pub Lunch June 12th The Elmer, 89, Elmer Road, Elmer, Middleton-on-Sea, P0226HD

We are returning to The Elmer this month, that lovely little pub at Elmer Sands, thanks to David Tippet.

12.00 for 12.30 £22 pp, tip included, for a three-course lunch. (Yes, that's right. £22 only)

We have passed David's “last orders” deadline but here are the choices to help remind you what you have ordered, or what you are missing.

- Chef's Freshly Made Butternut Squash & Sweet Potato soup, Crusty Bread.
- Farmhouse Pate, Toast, Red Onion Chutney
- Classic Prawn Cocktail in their Own Seafood Sauce

- Chef's Roast of the Day, either Roast Loin of Pork or Roast Chicken with Roast Potatoes and Seasonal Vegetables
- Fresh Cod and Parsley Fishcake, Salad, Chips or New Potatoes, Home-made Tartare
- Rich Chicken, Mushroom, Ham & Leek Casserole, Yorkshire Pudding, Herb Mash
- Baked Jacket Potato, Salad Garnish & Choice of Fillings --- 4 x Cheese & Baked Beans, OR Chilli Con Carne OR Tuna Mayonnaise OR BBQ Pulled Pork :

- Seasonal Fruit Crumble, Vanilla Custard
- Banoffee Roulade
- Mango Panna Cotta
- Tiramisu
- Ginger Cheesecake
- 2 Vanilla Scoops of New Forest Ice Cream

Question: What five letter word becomes shorter if you ADD two letters ?



Driver: "What am I supposed to do with this speeding ticket ?"

Officer, "Please keep it and when you have four, you get a bicycle."

Thursday 26th June meeting at the White Swan - Speaker, Peter Fenton, Slindon's last Village Blacksmith.

The Old Forge in Slindon is now a popular café and village shop. You may have been there. Peter worked there for x years and probably shod x horses. Come to the meeting to find out how many, and so much more. Bring your horse with you. Flyer and menu to follow.



What's on next month, July ?

Pub Lunch - There is no pub lunch organised in July at the time of writing. That's sad. Would someone like to organise one, please?

Club Meeting, White Swan - July 24th Speaker, Bill Avenell "Why didn't I listen more at school?"

Remember Bill? This is his third visit and Bill is always entertaining. He's a retired Geography Teacher and Principal at Christ's Hospital School, Horsham. He lives in Pulborough.

John Munro, one of our Honorary Members, is enjoying life in his comfortable home in Chichester, at the age of 95. He looked fit and sprightly when I visited him last month. We discussed many things as John's memory is excellent, and he is bang up-to-date with current affairs.

John has macular degeneration and is equipped with some impressive hardware and software which, for example, reads him his incoming emails. It also assists him to write so we agreed John will write a couple of articles for us. The first is further on in this Newsletter. John sends his best wishes to the club.

Magna Carta

Did you read that recent report concerning a "copy" of the Magna Carta, owned by the Harvard Business School? On detailed examination, American experts have concluded that it is a genuine, original copy, even though signed with a "fat, felt tip pen". (Now, who signed that, I wonder ?!)

A Tragedy reminds me of happier times.

It was sad to read two weeks ago that the Mexican Navy Sail Training Ship "Cuauhtemoc" had lost power and crashed into the Brooklyn Bridge in New York with the loss of two young sailors' lives. This beautiful ship sails the world, calling at ports which it enters with the crew standing aloft on the yard arms.

This is a spectacular sight, and I recall the ship sailing majestically upstream under the Pont de Normandie, near the estuary of the River Seine in France several summers ago. The near-by Port of Rouen holds a ten-year Tall Ships Regatta and beautiful sailing ships from around the world dock there along the river bank for the public to visit during their two-week stay. Sian and I were lucky enough to be there twice and

we climbed aboard "Cuauhtemoc" on both occasions. I recall being surprised that so many Mexican Naval officers spoke perfect English. It is a truly beautiful ship, especially close up.

Cuauhtemoc was the last Aztec Emperor before the Spanish invasion, and the ship is, of course, named after him. One of Cuauhtemoc's grandparents was Chichimecalihuatzin. Try saying that after a hot bath !



"Cuauhtemoc" with the young crew standing proudly aloft. A truly impressive sight.

If you don't think you are getting old, visit the National Motor Museum at Beaulieu as I did last week.



There you will find models of cars you once owned, or borrowed, all those years ago. My cars, in a museum ? That really dates me. (The Roller is not one of mine !)

There was the A40 (borrowed) I failed my first test in; my Austin 7 (What would that be worth now ?) There's the A35 I drove my wife and new-born son home in: the Rover 75, Ford Classic and more.

My lovely Norton Dominator bike is there and my old Panther.

I never owned a Spitfire, Hornet, Traveller, MG TF, Minx, or Mayflower, and certainly not an E-Type, but there they all were in their as-new splendour.

I can't imagine a Tesla being admitted in years to come. But why not? The Museum already has several electric vehicles, some from the mid-19th century ! There are trams, too and the monorail is electric. But don't park a Tesla near my old cars, please.

Squeak, squeak – a word of warning

If you plan to spend any time in an hotel, guest house or air b-and-b this summer, a word of advice: be sure to take a small spray can of WD40 with you. Squeaky doors, especially to the bathroom, can wake the dead in the middle of the night. Staff seem deaf to the sound, never taking the trouble to oil those dry hinges. I have met the problem in hotels everywhere and sometime forgot to carry my trusty WD40 with me. Hair sprays, deodorants or even fly sprays don't solve it. I know, I've tried them all. WD40's the one for me, if I remember. You have been warned.

RIP John Hollister

Our friend John passed away in hospital a few days ago, following a fall at his home in Burpham. John was a good member, even organising a Pub Lunch at The Elmer some years back. He was also controversial, sometimes with tricky questions for speakers. John was the only member I can recall arriving for a club meeting in khaki shorts. "It ain't half hot Mum", called out Richard.



We send our condolences to Jo and family.

John's funeral is at 2.00 pm on 18th June at Arun Crematorium.

John Munro – "My Story"

'You've got a lot of anger in you' remarked a fellow student during a coffee break. Me? I was struck dumb.

At the time I was on a social work course at the age of 45. I've had four careers. I started off in advertising, followed by publishing, then after a midlife crisis I became a social worker. Finally, best of all, I was appointed publisher for the social work department of West Sussex County Council.

I had a rocky start in life and I turned to social work, not because it needed me, but because I needed social work to help sort myself out. I was conceived in Paris, born in New York and raised in Surrey.

My mother was an actress: she was performing in a play in Paris and also modelling for a Russian sculptor. One day a lawyer came to his studio to commission a bust of himself. He saw my mother – and so I came into the world. My mother was 27, he was 57 with a wife and four children.

My mother was un-married and ostracised by her family. She made her way to New York in the hope of finding work and probably a husband. Failing on both fronts she returned crestfallen to England with me just a few months old

I was in care from day one. Mother couldn't look after me – therefore no bonding, no attachment. The first five years were a jumble, then my mother placed me with a Mrs P in a private arrangement (before social services were invented) at 25 shillings a week for my care. It was the most unhappy, soulless existence – less said about it the better. I know what it's like for the millions of kids who are unloved and unwanted.

But a great joy was joining the Scouts. I learnt the scout law and can still remember the jingle: Trusty, loyal, helpful, brotherly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, pure in body and mind. Baden Powell, the founder, set my moral compass.

I was 14 and one day I was in the kitchen where Mrs P was reading a letter from my mother and her new partner. They had paid for a place in a boarding school in Devon. Mrs. P said "if you want to go out there with your mother's foreign friends, after all I've done for you and sacrificed, don't think you can come back here any time."

Although I would have loved to have gone, I felt obliged to comply with her manipulative demand. Then she insisted I write and tell my mother that I never want to see her again. Extraordinarily she never came down to argue me out of that stupid decision.

Naturally, the 25 shillings each week (which paid the rent) stopped coming. Mrs P insisted I left school and got a job to pay my way. So off to the labour exchange where they found me a job with the biggest advertising agency in London, in Berkeley Square, as a routing boy at £2 a week.

So, I was at work on VE Day, and walked to Piccadilly Circus to carouse and celebrate!

I gradually rose up the ranks to be an assistant controller, when at last I was called up for national service. I joined the RAF and was dead lucky to get posted abroad to the Canal Zone in Egypt - and really enjoyed my two years in the service.

I learnt two things there – how to skive, and how to wangle. We were supposed to plot aerial photographic cover on maps ready for the next war but I spent most time painting posters for the NAAFI dances and the weekly cinema.

From the RAF Padre I got interested in Moral Rearmament, a movement started by Frank Buchman. MRA's stress on honesty, purity, and selfishness and love gave me direction to my life, as had the scouts law when I was allowed.

A strong urge impelled me a couple of years after demob to try and find my mother and apologise for breaking away. She embraced me with open arms and really tried after that to make up for what she failed to give me earlier on.

But my loveless childhood had left its scars. Intimate relationships were difficult, I had some close female friends but was not able to commit to marriage. This, I know, had a serious impact on the women I was involved with. So I never had children. I had wanted to be the perfect father I never had. Instead, I was asked to be Godfather to 6 different children.

End of Part One

John Munro

Bognor Probus Club - Studley Castle Holiday

The Bognor club has extended an invitation to members of Arundel Probus to join them on a five-day holiday by coach from 22nd – 26th September at £530 per person. At the time of writing there were only eight places left.

There is not sufficient space in this newsletter for all the details I have been sent so please contact me quickly if you want to receive them. You can also contact the organiser, Colin Greaves of the Bognor Club at colingreaves@hotmail.co.uk to reserve your place.

Attractive coach trips from the Warners Studley Castle Hotel, where the group will be based, are planned and these include Stratford-on-Avon, the British Motor Museum and the Cotswold countryside.



Very best wishes. Bob