



The Probus Club of Locks Heath

Volume 16: April 2022: [Happy Birthday Probus Locks Club of Heath](#)

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Welcome

Our club (official title "Probus Club of Locks Heath") was formed in 1981 and has developed over the years. We now have a membership of fifty which is the maximum we can accommodate at our venue. As such, we do have a short waiting list, but encourage those on it to attend meetings periodically when space permits!

We normally meet at 12.00pm. on the first Thursday of every month at [Sarisbury Green Community Centre](#) when we have a short business meeting and a Ploughman's Lunch followed by a Speaker and finish around 2.00pm. A pay bar is available.

We arrange group holidays, recent examples include a cruise to the Norwegian Fjords from Southampton with Fred Olsen Cruises, a visit to Lake Como in Italy and two river cruises in Europe, one travelling part way by Eurostar, as well as a cruise around Britain.

We organise outings, for example a visit to Greenwich and visits to the Chichester Festival Theatre as well as local events such as an annual Summer Event for members, wives and guests. A *Ladies Day* formal dinner is held in November. Photos from recent events and holidays can be seen in our [Photo Gallery](#).

This month's Newsletter features articles from our website section [Our Members](#) as well as articles on reporting on our recent activities and meetings. One of our archived sections, [I Remember](#), contains links to items, hopefully of interest, which may bring back memories of the past as well as provide local interest.

Note that for easier navigation you can also [link directly to all sections of our web site including our Archive from here](#) including previous Newsletters

An Introduction to our New President



Born 1939 in Karachi (India) to Scottish parents. Arrived in the UK in 1942/43 when my father was posted home. We lived at various RAF stations in the UK and when dad had another tour, in Egypt.

My family eventually took root in and around Blackpool where I attended a Secondary Modern School and eventually a Technical College where I gained a number of GCE's.

These GCE's were sufficient to allow me entry into the RAF as a RADAR mechanic and later as a fitter (engineer). My RAF career took me all around the UK and middle east working on aircraft and in the engineering workshops. I completed a tour in Germany after meeting and marrying my wife Eve who was at that time a member of the WRAF.

We had our first son in Germany and our second when we returned home. My final move in the forces was to RAF Boscombe Down where I first headed up a team to bring into service the MARTEL air to ground missile and when that was completed I moved to carry out RADHAZ testing on various aircraft and equipments.

After 22yrs service and the end of my career in the service, I obtained a job with the then 'Plessey Assessment Services' carrying out EMC testing and moved to our present address in Sarisbury Green.

My passion has always been the sea and we have owned a number of sailing yachts which we have cruised locally and to the near continent. Unfortunately, old age has meant progressing to a power boat, which at least keeps us on the water.

I have been a member of Probus for a number of years, many of these as Treasurer and lately as Vice President and now in 2022 as President.

Richard

A Message from our Past President



This is Tim with his wife Liz. They were married 57 years ago. It's been a difficult year because of COVID. We were not able to hold half our normal meetings though we did use Zoom for some of them. A couple of other meetings were held very informally with members bringing their own food. But we did manage to hold several "normal" meetings with first class speakers.

Sadly our caterer, Anne, had an accident and we needed to find a new one at short notice. We were very lucky to find Morven Brown who has served us brilliantly.

Overall, despite the difficulties, morale has held up very well and our recent meetings had been most successful. We had plenty of socialising, good food and interesting speakers. As well as our normal meetings we also had a most successful Summer Event hosted by Graham Adams and a theatre trip to Chichester to see "South Pacific" which was well supported and much enjoyed.

Then in November we had the Ladies Dinner at Warsash Sailing Club which again went very well.

We were very sorry to lose some of our members, David Douglas, Colin Orpe, David Olley, David Price. Also our member John Burwell passed away. They will be greatly missed. On the positive side we have been joined by several new members, bringing new new ideas and enthusiasm.

We have already been planning events for the forthcoming year, including lunch at 141, a five day trip to Eastbourne and the Summer Event in June We are hoping that in all respects it will be

possible for normal service resume as soon as possible.

I have been very fortunate to be supported by an excellent team. Derek Treagus works indefatigably to maintain our Website / Newsletter, Chris Collier keeps finding us speakers and planning future meetings, Tony Hall takes care of our finances and Howard Parret helps out with the treasury and secretarial functions. Our Past President, Lionel Jacobs, is always helpful – especially keeping in touch with any member who is unwell.

Richard Aitken, our Vice President was particularly helpful organising the Ladies Dinner, and Colin Smith, who as Secretary of our club, endeavours to keep all our membership and meeting records up to date and reminds us all of meetings etc.

Tim Mitchell, President, Probus Club of Locksheath, 2021 – 2022

AGM

This years **AGM** was held in place of our normal monthly meeting for April with details distributed to members at the meeting. Details will be added to the Restricted Section of our website when available.

40 years on

April 1st 1982 (from the Club website)



The origins of Locks Heath Probus are somewhat unclear but the President's chain of office records it's first owner in 1982 when the holder is identified as G R Struali.

Moving on just over a decade, there were forty members in 1995 when Roy David (to whom we are grateful for his time and patience in providing this background) joined the Club at around the same time as Golly Carless. George King was president at that time. His proposer was Tony Thrower. Tony Lee produced the monthly Newsletter documenting meetings, trips, etc – a tradition which continues up to today.

It was the members themselves who gave the talks based on their own experiences. Every new member was expected to give a talk, not just a two minute intro as we do today – Roy remembers giving his on Model Aircraft. War stories and personal hobbies were the number one topics.

Like today, the venue was the Sarisbury Green Community Centre, with the members themselves having to set up tables and chairs prior to the meeting. Food was limited, often just soup.

Soon after joining Roy became Assistant Secretary organising trips almost every month, much like today this covered a variety of destinations from the Poole Lifeboat to Woolwich Arsenal and Brooklands. There were no coaches, members took their own cars and their wives went along too.

In 1999-2000, the year of the Millennium, Roy became President. The annual Ladies Lunch (a tradition which continues today although at different venues) was held at the Warsash Sailing Club although a number of the wives met up regularly on "Probus Thursday" organising a lunch of their own.

Today, we have a club of around fifty members but much of the old "tradition" remains and whilst new members are not expected to give presentations on their favourite topics, if they do have a special

interest a talk on that would be most welcome! There are regular trips (including Chichester Festival events), annual holidays as a group and an annual "Garden Party".

To achieve the aims of Probus, members attend meetings regularly in so far as their circumstances allow and play an active part in the club according to their abilities by, for example, giving talks, undertaking secretarial and committee duties, and by helping with the organisation of club functions.

Ron Harrop further advises:

Back then I was head of the Locks Heath Rotary Club's Vocational Committee. The incoming president Keith Phelps charged me to form a Probus club. I used all the information that GB&I head office provided.

Eventually I found six men willing to take on the running of the Club. The first meeting was in my lounge at home . I then handed it over to the those original members.

The rest is history until I joined the Club in 2013.

And what was happening locally in 1982 and why is the photo above relevant, [take a look at this article](#) from the Daily Echo

April 2nd 1982 (from Wikipedia)



The **Falklands War** (Spanish: *Guerra de las Malvinas*) was a ten-week **undeclared war** between **Argentina** and the **United Kingdom** in 1982 over two **British dependent territories** in the South Atlantic: the **Falkland Islands** and **its territorial dependency, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands**.

The conflict began on 2 April, when **Argentina invaded** and **occupied the Falkland Islands**, followed by the **invasion of South Georgia** the next day. On 5 April, the British government dispatched a **naval task force** to engage the **Argentine Navy** and **Air Force** before making an amphibious assault on the islands.

The conflict lasted 74 days and ended with an Argentine surrender on 14 June, returning the islands to British control. In total, 649 Argentine military personnel, 255 British military personnel, and three **Falkland Islanders** died during the hostilities.

The conflict was a major episode in the **protracted dispute** over the territories' **sovereignty**. Argentina asserted (and maintains) that the islands are Argentine territory,[4] and the Argentine government thus characterised its military action as the reclamation of its own territory. The British government regarded the action as an invasion of a territory that had been a **Crown colony** since 1841.

Falkland Islanders, who have inhabited the islands since the early 19th century, are predominantly descendants of British settlers, and strongly **favour British sovereignty**. Neither state officially **declared war**, although both governments declared the Islands a war zone.

If interested you can view the **full history of the Falklands War Day by Day** on the forces.net website

Recent Events

Lunch at Avenue 141



Thirty six members and widows enjoyed a very good on April 1st at Avenue 141 which celebrated forty years of Locks Heath Probus.

The food and good service were very much appreciated and there was a lot of social interaction which made a great change after recent times.

Mike Cresswell thanked members for supporting the event and Gavin Hamilton Fletcher thanked the staff and students for the excellent meal.

Unfortunately we had some absentees due to positive covid tests including our President ,Tim Mitchell.

Recent Speakers

Old Wives Tales to Supercomputers – The Story of Weather Forecasting by Nick Hammond



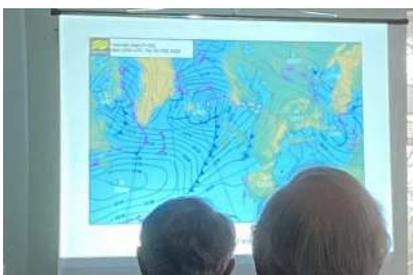
Today's talk on the [history of weather forecasting](#) started with a Quiz of true or false? reality [or old wives tale](#).

- Red Sky at Night.....
- When swallows fly high.....
- etc

We then moved on to the actual history of [weather forecasting](#) reviewing the early pioneers through to the publication of the first daily weather forecast in [The Times in 1861](#).

Not to forget the creation of [Beaufort scale](#) – a scale of values, from 0 to 12, for describing wind strength, as defined by Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort in 1806 and adopted by the [International Meteorological Committee](#) in 1874. And something we are all familiar with today.

Similarly, we covered the classification of cloud types (first proposed by [Luke Howard](#) in 1802), the movement of winds around the planet and the [beneficial effects that clouds have in maintaining global temperatures](#).



Weather forecasting has further changed as we have moved into [computer generated forecasts](#) based on a set of [Numerical Weather computing](#) equations. As computer power improves, surely forecasts will get better and be more accurate.

We all complain about weather forecasts and their accuracy as most notably demonstrated by the infamous [Michael Fish](#) (already featured on our website), but with ever increasing sensors, [increasing computer power](#) and our own increasing understanding of our planet, things can only get better.

Post meeting, Nick has kindly provided links to the videos he was unable to present

- [ESA's Earth Observation Programmes: an introduction – YouTube](#)
- [EUMETSAT's next-generation satellite systems – YouTube](#)
- [Earth – a global map of wind, weather, and ocean conditions](#) (The Earth can be rotated using the mouse. The menus for displaying other NWP parameters is accessed by clicking on the word 'earth')

Operation Pedestal – the third 1942 convoy to Malta by David Russel



A very interesting and detailed account of the challenges faced in keeping the island of Malta in British hands during the second World War, Malta has been an island fought over for many years due to its strategic position, but there has perhaps been no more important battle than this.

Whilst our talk concentrated on the detail of the attempt to land supplies on the island and prevent its capture, the suffering of the islanders themselves was immense, resulting in the island being awarded the George Cross by King George VI to "bear witness to the heroism and devotion of its people" during the great siege the islands suffered during the beginning of WWII.

You can see it today, immortalised into every Maltese flag as it is woven into the design in the top left-hand corner.

The following, extracted from Wikipedia, gives more details of the blockade, you also see the [NAVAL HISTORICAL BRANCH INFORMATION BRIEF](#) on Malta by following the link above.

The [Siege of Malta in World War II](#) was a [military campaign](#) in the [Mediterranean Theatre](#). From June 1940 to November 1942, the fight for the control of the strategically important island of the [British Crown Colony of Malta](#) pitted the air and naval forces of [Fascist Italy](#) and [Nazi Germany](#) against the [Royal Air Force](#)(RAF) and the [Royal Navy](#).

The opening of a [new front in North Africa](#) in June 1940 increased Malta's already considerable value. British air and sea forces based on the island could attack [Axis](#) ships transporting vital supplies and reinforcements from Europe; Churchill called the island an "[unsinkable aircraft carrier](#)". General [Erwin Rommel](#), in de facto field command of Axis forces in North Africa, recognised its importance quickly. In May 1941, he warned that "Without Malta the Axis will end by losing control of North Africa".

The Axis resolved to [bomb](#) or starve Malta into submission, by attacking its ports, towns, cities, and [Allied](#) shipping supplying the island. Malta was one of the most intensively bombed areas during the war. The [Luftwaffe](#) (German Air Force) and the [Regia Aeronautica](#) (Italian Royal Air Force) flew a total of 3,000 bombing raids, dropping 6,700 tons of bombs on the [Grand Harbour](#) area

alone, over a period of two years in an effort to destroy RAF defences and the ports.

Success would have made possible a combined German-Italian **amphibious landing (Operation Herkules)** supported by German **airborne forces (Fallschirmjäger)**, but this did not happen. In the event, **Allied convoys** were able to supply and reinforce Malta, while the RAF defended its airspace, though at great cost in **materiel** and lives. In November 1942 the Axis lost the **Second Battle of El Alamein**, and the Allies landed forces in **Vichy French Morocco** and **Algeria** under **Operation Torch**. The Axis diverted their forces to the **Battle of Tunisia**, and attacks on Malta were rapidly reduced. The siege effectively ended in November 1942.[1]

In December 1942, air and sea forces operating from Malta went over to the offensive. By May 1943, they had sunk 230 Axis ships in 164 days, the highest Allied sinking rate of the war.[13] The Allied victory in Malta played a major role in the eventual Allied success in North Africa.

If network connected, you can see a **short video of our evening** stored on Dropbox. You can also see an updated version of the **video used at the meeting which covers all aspect of our club activities**.

Our most recent members

Martin Moore



I was born in Hemel Hempstead and then moved to the East Midlands. For the past 35 years I have lived in Warsash.

My interest in the sea began when I was 14 and I went to HMS Conway for 3 years. In 1971, I joined the Ocean Steamship Co. sailing on general cargo ships to the Far East and West Africa. In 1978 I transferred to container ships sailing on the Liverpool Bay class ships from Southampton to the Far East. My first command was Liverpool Bay with P&O Containers.

Following a number of take-overs and mergers, I was employed by Maersk Line retiring in 2018 after 20 years as Captain.

I met my wife at the College of Maritime Studies when I was taking my Masters. Married in 1985, Warsash became my home. Our son and daughter grew up here and have since moved away from the area

Ron Loveless



I was born in 1942 at Sway in the New Forest. I attended Ashley Secondary School and, to my father's dismay, I left with no qualifications.

I became a radio and TV engineer in Lymington where my first job was repairing wind-up gramophones, then the first transistor radios and TV's.

After my apprenticeship finished, I joined Mullards / Philips in Southampton as an electronics engineer. I obtained an HNC in electronics and became a Fellow of the Institute of Electrical Engineers. At Philips I specialised in instrumentation, running a department involved with National Standards. As you can see, I was what they refer to as 'a late developer'!

In the meantime Sandy and I got married and we have two daughters. We have lived around the Southampton area, spending the last twenty years in Barton on Sea/ New Milton. In August we moved to Locks Heath to be nearer to our family.

Anyway back to my career, I took advantage of a management buyout scheme setting up a business with two other directors in Romsey. I became the Company Secretary and Sales and Marketing Director which resulted in quite a learning curve, as you can imagine.

The company expanded quickly with laboratories in Chesterfield, Newcastle and Cardiff with a staff of 100 and turning over in excess of 3 Million p.a.. The company was eventually bought by a major U.K. engineering company who allowed me to carry on in my role.

On my first retirement, many of our major clients persuaded me to start up my own business which I did. I bought a company 'off the shelf' where you inherit the name which in this case was Fantime. Sandy always said it sounded like a business selling party balloons not calibration! I enjoyed this new situation for 3 years before retiring properly and getting down to the important business of playing golf 3 times a week.

From an early age, I spent most of my spare time playing all types of sport with cricket being my main passion. During this time I filled most official positions in club sports from President, Chairman, and various committee positions which I enjoyed.

Since retirement I have been involved as Chairman and Trustee to the New Forest and Hampshire Citizen's Advice Bureau. In all the situations in which I have been involved, I, along with some marvellous people, I have organised fund raising activities generating thousands of pounds for various charities. In the past few years my wife Sandy and I became involved with The Alzheimer's Society and we ran a monthly group providing entertainment and afternoon tea for people with dementia and their carers.

See if you can spot a **reference to Ron in this link**

Ian Stephens



My name is Ian Geoffrey Stephens and I was born in Ealing, London W5 on 30th October 1947. My early education was in Hanwell W7 and at the age of 13 my parents bought a small holding in Milford on Sea. I finished my education at Ashley County secondary school leaving at very short notice at the age of 15 to help on the farm when dad hurt his shoulder falling from a horse.

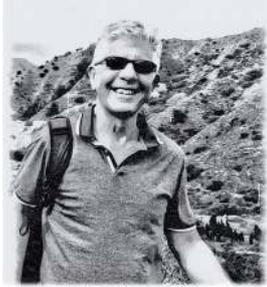
I had various jobs mainly driving until starting work on the Hants & Dorset buses as a conductor based in Lymington in 1969. In September 1970 I passed my driving PSV test and worked on the buses transferring to Southampton depot in 1973 and staying until 1979 when I went to work for Eassons Coaches (Doug Easson).

I stayed with them until 2013 doing a variety of coach work including school runs, works contracts, private hire and holiday tours all over the UK and lots of Europe.

Doug and Ralph Easson retired and sold the business to Coliseum coaches who I worked for until I retired from full time but continued driving part time for Coliseum, Princess and Angela coaches before fully retiring in November 2018.

A very responsible job that I enjoyed for a total of almost 50 years. (but no gold watch.)

Nick Hammond



I was born and raised in East Anglia on my father's smallholding. He was an engineer but also looked after 13 acres, a dozen pigs, several hundred chickens and a few cattle as a hobby. I didn't much care for school and was a lot happier outdoors tending the animals. I failed my 11 plus but then went on to become head boy of my Secondary School, where I was lucky to have an inspirational Physics teacher who encouraged me to aim for university.

He and I hitch hiked to the Italian Grand Prix in 1970 where I fell in love with Italy and Alfa Romeo cars.

I got into University where I graduated with a degree in Electrical/Electronic Engineering. I then went to Teacher Training College and qualifies as a Physics and Outdoor Education teacher. That summer I secured a place with Camp America and spent my summer holiday as a Pioneer Leader at a summer camp in Massachusetts. Happy days.

My first job as a teacher was at well known, liberal minded school in Totnes. It is now closed!

I then became a Housemaster at a boys' boarding school in North Wales teaching Physics and Sports. That school is now also closed! My final teaching job was in Crediton during which time I stumbled upon Royal Navy trainees visiting Exeter Quay on Picket boats for a weekend expedition. They were clearly having a lot more fun than I was so I decided there and then to join up. That was in 1980, and with hindsight I should have joined after, or before, university.

After completing basic RN training I was posted to HMS xxxxxxx. A fellow adventurer and myself planned and executed a 3-week expedition to Nepal for a trek in the Annapurna foothills. More happy days. I then went to sea in HMS xxxxxxx where I discovered the world of military meteorology and oceanography (METOC). I quickly got myself selected for training in this specialist field to support Anti-Submarine Warfare and Anti-Air Warfare.

Whilst undergoing this training at RNAS xxxxxx I met my wife, also RN. More happy days. I honed my METOC skills at RNAS xxxxx and Fleet HQ in London. In 1988 I was posted, married accompanied, to the NATO HQ near Lisbon (Portugal). Two years in the sun with my, now civilian, wife. Yet more happy days. Whilst there I had time to organise SODS operas, Olympiads and an expedition to the Atlas Mountains of Morocco.

I then went to the Naval College for staff training. (Middle management training) On completion I was appointed as Staff METOC to HMS xxxxxx. This was a most exciting time; supporting harriers and helicopters conducting operational ASW and AAW to find and trail submarines in the North Atlantic and monitor and suppress hostile activity during the Balkans war. HMS xxxxxx then embarked on a 6-month deployment to the Far East where my global METOC skills were further developed. Somehow during this period, when I was mostly at sea, we managed to start a family.

In 1994, as a family, I was posted to the NATO HQ near Naples (Italy) for nearly 4, very happy, years. As well as supporting NATO forces and going to sea with the US Navy's 6th Fleet I headed a multi-national team of military and civilian scientists in developing a new concept for providing operational support to NATO forces called Rapid Environmental Assessment. In any spare time, family Hammond travelled extensively in Italy and neighbouring countries.

On return to the UK, I was honoured with an MBE in the New Year's Honours list. This was for my work in leading the team that evolved and delivered the REA Concept of Operations.

Next came a spell in the MOD. Not happy days. To my surprise I persuaded the Appointer to send me on a family accompanied posting to the NATO HQ in Norfolk, Virginia (USA). Happy days were back.

We were there for the 2000 Millennium celebrations and, more dramatically, 9/11. Once again, I was able to go to sea with the US Navy's 2nd Fleet for military training and exercise.

During our 2+ years in the States we travelled to Florida, Canada (East and West), California and several of the national parks. On return to the UK, I transferred to the MOD as a Civil Servant desk officer at the Navy Command HQ. I retired in 2015.

To see previous member introductions, please visit the [Our Members](#) section of our Archive

Please send your input for future Newsletters (which will be now be produced approximately quarterly) via the website or send a message to probuslocksheath@gmail.com