LOCKED - DOWN TIMES

A monthly news update from the

Probus Club of Bransgore

May 2020

With no obvious end in sight to the Covid 19 lockdown, and very little prospect of a return to normal life for several months, the committee want to keep in regular contact with all our members, regardless of their IT skills and access to on-line media. Hence this newsletter, in which we'll share items of interest, information, funny stories (we hope) and anything else that might be useful in helping to keep us connected.

VIEW FROM THE TOP

Len Morel

Well I never expected my year of presidency to go like this. On the plus side, I have got out of wearing the regalia for a while, but that is far outweighed by the lack of contact I have been able to have with people. I worked out the other day that since the lockdown started I had only seen 3 members out and about, and spoken to only 2 further on the phone. I hit my 70th birthday in April, and the only real celebration was an online zoom meeting with a few of my family to watch me blow out the candles on my cake. I hope you all have found ways to stay in touch with friends and family, but if you do find yourself going a bit stir crazy and fancy just chatting with someone you know my number is shown below.

SOCIAL EVENTS

Visit To Mary Rose Museum

The last event to take place before we were all confined to barracks was the visit to the Mary Rose. A report from Stephen Dennison:



The Mary Rose sat on the bottom of the sea for 437 years and was finally returned to the surface in a maritime salvage operation seen by 60 million people across the world. She had been a favourite flagship of Henry VIIs due to her impressive sailing ability. The crew worked with her for 35 years but in 1545 nearly 500 men died as she came about with gun ports still open, fatally, below the waterline. The ship has unlocked many secrets since being rescued in the late 1970s. I visited, like many, in the 1980s and viewed the rotten hulk being sprayed with water. Not that interesting? It may not have been very enlightening then but now is a different experience. On Wednesday

11th March, after an invitation to visit from the museum, 21 members and partners headed for Portsmouth. I was always told to eat a hearty breakfast before boarding a ship so a collection of likeminded individuals devoured a full English before setting off to the museum. As arranged, we met all together in the Visitor Centre and were introduced to our 2 guides who accompanied us into the museum. The displays around the ship are fascinating and our very knowledgeable guide explained what had been learnt about Tudor life from the very many artefacts retrieved during the salvage. What struck me, in particular, were the descriptions of the men on board. They came from many different walks of life and nationalities. The science available now allows examination of collagen and enamel on teeth to identify where you come from. All intriguing information. 45 minutes with our guide went very quickly as did the 'free time' to wander around. I hope everyone was as captivated by the Mary Rose exhibition. Definitely one to visit again in the future and if you haven't been recently, it's time to get on-board!

Bernard Gilbert: I have a connection to the Mary Rose that goes back to the days in the 1970s just after the wreck was discovered. At the time, I was a member of the British Sub Aqua Club and some of my friends were part of the team of amateur divers who were helping to explore and excavate the wreck. Grovelling in mud, in shallow water, in conditions of NIL visibility, at my own expense never appealed and so,sadly, I never dived the wreck myself. In October 1975, on the day the wreck was raised, I made a point of being at home (skived!) to watch the lift on TV. A truly amazing sight!

In subsequent years, I visited the old museum on several occasions when they were still spraying the wreck and then, eventually, became involved in a business relationship with the Mary Rose Trust. It was really good to go back and see the reality of all those far off dreams.

Vintage Tea

This promised to be a very successful event and was very popular but the Covid lockdown intervened. We will re-arrange it as soon as it becomes possible.

Forthcoming Events

At the moment this is very much "wait and see" but it might be that we can establish a programme of walks, observing social-distancing, in the not too distant future. Regrettably, ending up in a pub will probably not be an option but cans and bottles fit very well into backpacks!

KEEPING IN TOUCH

As well as this newsletter, and Facebook, we will be using the telephone to keep in touch with members wherever it seems appropriate. If anyone needs our help or support in any way our key contacts are listed below. As they say in a certain quiz programme: "'phone a friend"

Bransgore Probus Facebook Page

Thanks to Barry Dench, our own Facebook page was launched almost as we went into lockdown and 21 members are currently signed up to it, sharing jokes, funny videos and occasionally, even useful information.

Many of us have reservations about social media but, when it presents a simple way of keeping in touch with friends, the positives tend to outweigh the negatives. Do please think about trying it and seeing what your friends might be up to. It's perfectly OK to be a passive user, looking and not writing anything (posting!) but it can be another, albeit often odd, window on the world.

Just one word of caution for new users. Look very carefully at the "Settings and Privacy" and adjust them to suit your requirements. Call Barry Dench or Bernard Gilbert if you need any help with this.

Key Contacts

Committee

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And Finally,

(*Editor: Note to self. Do not start sentences with a conjunction!)*

Have you heard the one about the Irishman who goes into a bar. . .
Lucky bugger!

Lady to her friend: "Where's your husband?"
Friend: "in the garden"
Lady: "I didn't see him"
Friend: "You have to dig a little. . "

Them: "What inspires you to get out of bed every morning?"
Me: "My bladder, mostly!"

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