LOCKED - DOWN TIMES

A monthly news update from the

Probus Club of Bransgore

June 2020

The purpose of a newsletter is generally to share news but, sadly, for clubs and organisations such as Probus, the only news is that there is no news. Despite the modest, and welcome, easing of the lock-down it still seems likely that a return to our regular monthly meetings is a long way off. Much as we might want that to happen, can you imagine the noise as we all attempt to carry on conversations at a range of two metres?

Club News

For the second month running the committee met by video-conference and, with very little to talk about, the meeting finished in record time. It seems that most members are remaining happy and cheerful in lock-down, food supplies are being maintained and the unseasonable weather is being appreciated by most.

The Club has now cancelled all speakers up to and including August and we will be keeping this under review on a monthly basis. Let us hope that our venues will survive to be there when we next need them, whenever that might be.

A number of people have asked how Peter Sharott is doing and we are happy to report that his recovery from both the stroke and heart attack continues well. He is now accompanying Jean on walks to the shops, and is responding to ongoing speech therapy. He is hopeful that the easing of lock-down will allow him to see his friends again in the near future.

The President's Perspective.

Hello everyone, I hope you have all been able to enjoy the lovely weather lately. Whilst we wait for lock down restrictions to be eased, there's not much happening with Probus, although the committee still meet online to compare beards.

So what have I been up to?
Like many of you, a spot of gardening and now the garden centres are reopened I need to get some new containers and compost for all the seedlings I have coming up. The fencing we ordered to attempt to keep the dogs off the flower borders arrives next week. I have also declared war on the rat family which invaded the bank at the back of the garden fence.

Indoors my pursuits have been more peaceful. I have started going through audio versions of my favourite books, humour and escapism mainly and I have started delving into our family trees. This is absorbing stuff. On my side I am back to the 1840s and on Sally's the 1730s. Have come across some fascinating characters, like Nehemiah Tuffin who ran a

pub in Marnhull, another ancestor who was charged with stealing from a garden, one who did 14 days for assaulting a peace officer, and a wagon driver in the East End of London. I don't think I am likely to find any lost fortunes as I dig down. All told I think there is enough material on line to keep me going for months.

Meanwhile Mrs M has been busy. Like many others in the village she has fired up the sewing machine and our conservatory looks like a sweatshop as she produces Scrub hats, bags and masks. With the new focus on face coverings if anyone is having trouble sourcing them let me know and I will see if I can get you a couple.
I have some copies of the Probus Summer 2020 magazine available, if anybody wants one let me know and I will pop it through your letterbox.

The President's Poser

I am fond of doing brainteasers, if you are too try this one:

Sherlock Holmes once claimed seeing something peculiar at a sports facility. A 100 yard dash had taken place, the umpire had fired his pistol and when the race was over he declared the names of the winner and all other runners and their positions. Yet Holmes had seen no man run. How could this be?

No prizes, answer in next newsletter.

Our New Normal
Bernard Gilbert

For the best part of six weeks the car was unused and our one hour's freedom each day was a walk around the local area, discovering places we never knew existed. Social-distancing when out walking became the norm, with fellow walkers mostly taking exaggerated care to stay 2 metres away, not always easy on narrow footpaths. The bike became my escape route out of the village and, with few vehicles on the road, cycling has become a joy.

It is fair to say that, up until lock-down, I had been a reluctant gardener, providing manual labour when required and generally begrudging time spent on jobs that keep recurring! All that has changed since lock-down. I happily spend my days grovelling around in the dirt, I can recognise growing vegetables, weeds are no longer safe and taking a successful cutting was surprisingly satisfying. Move over Gary Lineker, Alan Shearer *et al,* Monty Don has become my new TV hero.

In some ways, lock-down was easy in that it was quite clear what we had to do but, as the restrictions are eased, we now have to start making our own risk assessments of any given situation. Do we meet with family and friends? On neutral territory or at home? Do we BBQ or not? In short, we're back to being treated as adults with minds of our own. Anyone fancy tomb-stoning at Durdle Door next weekend?

Gardener's World
Stephen Dennison

Alan Titmarsh is inspirational and those 'Love your Garden' TV programmes are a joy to watch. Sadly revitalising your own patch of land takes longer than 60 minutes and, as one of the expert gardeners said, 'you need patience'.



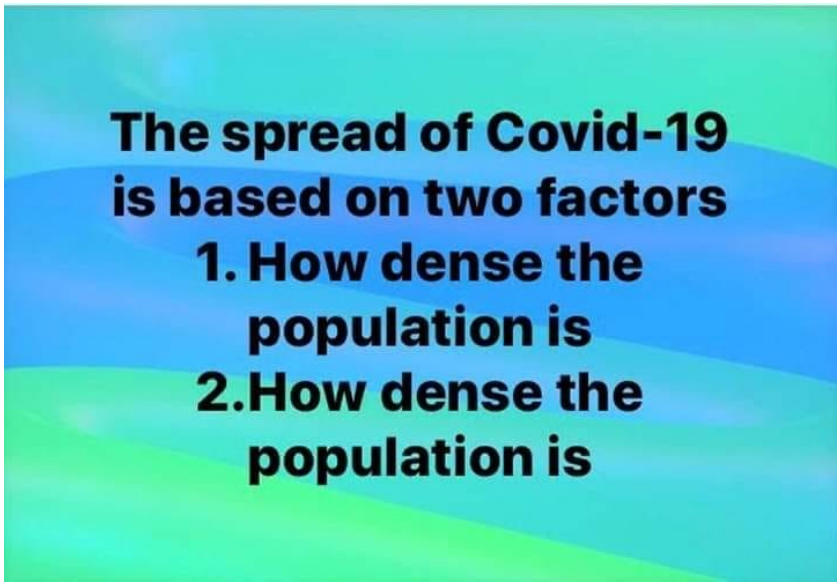
In Spring 2019, Ruth and I spent a few enjoyable days in The Netherlands and headed for Keukenhof Gardens. If you haven't visited these spectacular gardens, which are only open for a couple of months in the Spring and are breath-taking with over 7,000,000 bulbs grown. Camera in hand, we strolled for hours through the displays of tulips in every hue. Round every corner we were greeted with another vista to enjoy. "We can do this at home" we thought ambitiously. So, not being able to agree on a few plants, we ordered 200 to be delivered in the Autumn and didn't think anything more about it.

In October, a large box arrived with the bulbs and some additional bulbs as a gift! Then the problem, where were we going to plant them? One thing, of course, leads to another and three large black pots were purchased, holes dug in flower beds and in the lawn and many hours later, it was done. Once again we didn't think much about this over the wet, dark winter months. At that time we had no idea that we would be spending so much time in our home in March and April 2020.



With the warming of the soil, we watched as green shots appeared in the garden. We were rewarded with a stunning display of brilliant coloured blooms on strong, tall stems. Everyday another flower bloomed and it was a joy to watch. Our impulse buy and patience had been well worth the effort – pity you couldn't come round to see them too.

Light Relief



A suspected Covid 19 patient is lying in a hospital bed wearing an oxygen mask over his mouth and nose. A young female nurse appears and gives him a partial sponge bath.
"Nurse," he mumbles from behind his mask, "are my testicles black?"
Embarrassed, the young nurse replies: "I don't know Sir. I'm only here to wash your upper body and feet."
He struggles to speak again: "Nurse, please check for me. Are my testicles black?"
Concerned that he might elevate his blood pressure and heart rate from worrying about his testicles, she overcomes her embarrassment and pulls back the covers. She raises his gown, holds his manhood in one hand and his testicles gently in the other. She looks very closely and says: "There's nothing wrong with them, Sir. They look fine."
The man slowly pulls off his oxygen mask, smiles at her and says very slowly: "Thank you very much. That was wonderful. Now listen very carefully: Are – my – test – results – back?"

So many coronavirus jokes out there it's a pundemic.

Now is not the right time to surround yourself with positive people.

There will be a minor baby boom in 9 months and then, one day in 2033, we shall witness the rise of **the quaranteens.**

I'll tell you a coronavirus joke now but you'll have to wait two weeks to see if you got it.

More news and humour can be found on our Bransgore Probus Facebook page.

Stay well, keep safe.