



Chichester & District Probus Club

AUGUST 2025 NEWSLETTER

To all Members

1 PRESIDENT'S GREETINGS

Tony writes:

I will be retiring at the AGM that is being held on Thursday August 14th. So now is the time to look back on the past year which has been largely uneventful.

We were sorry to lose John Hargreaves as our Secretary but his shoes have been amply filled by Chris Fuller. Chris has carried out his important duties with thoroughness and good humour. He has swiftly recruited an experienced deputy in Richard Worsley.

Richard has been one of our five new members but unfortunately, as in the previous year leavers exceeded new members. So we are now only 34, having been 41 in June 2024 and 49 in June 2023.

Increasing our membership will be a key challenge for the new President and Committee. As ever, our Treasurer, Frank Griffiths, keeps our finances in good order. Our Press Officer, Eve Fuller, keeps us in the Chichester Observer each and every month.

Brian French as Events Officer and Peter Heydenrych as Welfare Officer are stepping down and we thank them for their service.

We thank David Thornley for maintaining our website, and Dennis Brady for updating our Pocket Book list of members with their photographs.

Lastly, I would like to thank Dexter Williams for hosting three lunches for me during my year and acting as "meeter and greeter" at our other lunches.

Finally, I give the new President, Committee and Club members every good wish for the coming year.

The August lunch menu will be:

Main

Baked cod mornay with roasted tenderstem broccoli, spring onion mash and vine tomatoes.

Vegetarian

Creamy minted pea and broad bean risotto with pickled tomatoes and a watercress and radish salad

Dessert

Classic vanilla crème brûlée and homemade shortbread.

Our speaker is: Frank Pattison – *"Bewitching - a journey through the Harz Mountains."*

2. SECRETARIAL SCRIBBLES

Firstly, a huge thank you to President Tony for his stewardship of the club over the past 2024/2025.

I/we in the Chichester and District Probus club are very fortunate in that the post of Assistant Secretary will be in the safe hands of Richard Worsley, thank you Richard.

I am pleased to report that we will have a new member, Mike Snelling AFC, will be joining the club (*subject to him liking us!*).

Mike is now living in Chichester and was a member of the Guernsey Probus Club.

I promise I will have a complete CV of Mike in the September Newsletter

2.0 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The club's AGM will be held at 1240pm in Crouchers dining room immediately before the 1pm lunch on Thursday 14 August 2025.

All relevant documentation will be sent to members prior to this meeting.

2.1 RAFFLE:

There will be no raffle held at the August meeting.

2.3 PROGRAMME OF FUTURE SPEAKERS

2025:

September 11: David Bickerton: *"The pursuit and sinking of the BISMARCK in WW2"*.

October 9; Father Peter Bustin – *"Art Appreciation"*

November 13: Brian French – *"Egyptology"*

December 11: Frank Griffiths – *"Frank's Christmas Gala"*

2026:

January 8: Ian Worley: *"Charles Darwin"*

February 12: TBA

March 12: TBA

April 9: TBA

May 14: Judi Darley: *"Chichester Oyster Boats"*

2.4 Members' Pocket Book

Thanks to Dennis, the 2024/25 pocket book is ready for distribution to members

Chris Fuller

Secretary

3 TREASURER'S REPORT

There is nothing specific to report.

The Finances are in order.

Frank Griffiths, Hon Treasurer

4 MEMBERS WELFARE

During the year, David Childs Hopkins was in hospital and is now at a care home. Sadly, Michael Horne's wife Angela passed away.

Some of the following widows continue to attend Christmas lunches and some other social events: Ann Boyd, Jenifer Fidler, Elizabeth Graham, Diana Hodge, Mary McCallion, Catherine Oliver, Patricia Parker and Maureen Powell.

As previously stated: Peter Heydenrych is also standing down as Welfare officer.

A volunteer will be sought at the AGM to take on this important role.

Thanks go to Peter for his work in the role of club almoner.

5 SOCIAL ITEMS

5.1 Coffee Morning Thursday, 7 August at 10:30 am.

Thursday's Coffee Morning will be held at **The Boston Tea Party in Baffins Lane.**

5.2 Probus Walks Report

We still have a vacancy for a Walks Coordinator.

5.3 Social Visits

2024/25 was a lean year for social outings.

Proposed visits to Chiddingstone Castle and the Pallant Gallery were abandoned due to lack of uptake, while a visit to Petworth House was attended by only a few members.

More successful was a Joint Event with Bognor Regis and Arundel Probus clubs, comprising a trip around Chichester Harbour on Solar Heritage, followed by lunch at the Itchenor Sailing Club. It was suggested by some Chichester Probus members that such joint events may produce a better turnout in the future.

Brian French is standing down as Events Officer.

We will be asking the AGM to select a small, three person Sub Committee to plan and implement events going forward

Thanks go to Brian for his work in the role of social visit coordinator

5.4 Speakers' Programme coordinators

There is a vacancy for the coordinator, in the meantime the role will be managed by David Thornley, Dexter Williams and Eve Fuller

6 PRESS REPORT

Great Britain was in a grey war with Russia and Putin could not be allowed to win, Chichester Probus Club was told at its monthly lunch meeting at Crouchers (July17).

The speaker was Prof Peter Varnish, founder and chief executive of Geopolitical Solutions specialising in defence and security. After four decades in government, he now advises governments on the latest threats and resilience.



His subject was “***AI, friend or foe***”.

He told members that Putin wanted to rebuild the USSR and, in response to Britain's support of the Ukraine, we were the target of several cyber-attacks on the UK's national infrastructure.

Prof Varnish said Artificial Intelligence (AI), when computers could carry out the role of humans, had changed the face of warfare. The walkie-talkies which blew up in Gaza were planted ten years ago and Mossad waited until they decided to activate them.

The successful drone attack on parked Russian aircraft was all done via satellite. Now drones the size of humming birds could come down in a swarm. Our Government was advised to have a Chinese car stripped down and three bugs and a kill switch was discovered.

AI technology was not new, he said. It originated with Alan Turing and the German Enigma at Bletchley Park during the Second World War. Dr Turing wrote the definitive paper in May 1950 where he described the Imitation game and how computers could outwit man.

The Exocet missile Argentina used in the Falklands War was programmed to look for a target, drop to a prescribed level and fire.

AI was here to stay while the power and internet were on.

Domestically, we might have a remote key for the car, a lawnmower that guided itself, a doorbell with facial recognition, CCTV around the house, Alexa or Waze sat nav.

Driverless cars were in the pipeline, fake videos were rife, and supermarkets could tell you what you needed to order.

Chatbots, short for speaking robots, used data from the past and could not predict. Listings had the power of persuasion, particularly with youngsters who seemed to have lost the power for thought.

Every single thing was recorded forever. As Kissinger said, ‘AI will profoundly change our lives.’ He was right, said Prof Varnish.

And on September 7 at 3pm, every mobile phone in the country will ring, even if switched off, in a test relay of a warning siren.

[This article appeared in the 24 July edition of the Chichester Observer]

Eve Fuller
Press Officer

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