



PROBUS RECORDER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PROBUS CLUB OF GILLINGHAM, DORSET
(www.probus-gillingham-dorset.org.uk)



Chairman's Notes

The leaves are falling quickly now. The nights are drawing in and the heating is on - winter is well and truly on the way.

Earlier last month, Margaret and I attended our annual Gallipoli and Dardanelles lunch at the 15th Century Town Hall in Kings Lynn, where we enjoyed an excellent talk on the involvement of the Gurkhas at the Gallipoli landings. (*Your Chairman is standing, one in from the left.*)

Here at home, our two speakers this month were most enjoyable and thought-provoking; the first dealt with body language and had us all examining our own habits and ways, while the second covered the subject of 'Atlantis', albeit the speaker admitted to being a bit of a conspiracy theorist!! (*Reports on both talks are covered more fully later in this issue - Ed.*)



On a more pressing matter, and one which is glaring in its absence, we are still in urgent need of a member to fill the post of Welfare Officer – I urge you – **please!** – to consider putting your name forward for this very important role.

Despite still being many weeks hence, Christmas begins to strike once again. Many shops are already full of Christmas decorations and gifts, and advertisements come fast and thick. And it's no different for our own Club; we look forward to our Christmas lunch at the Old Brewery on Tuesday 26th November (which is almost fully subscribed – and with a closing date of 5th November). Also, of course, there is our Chairman's Christmas Dinner on Thursday 12th December at the Royal Chase in Shaftesbury. (For this latter event, I ask that you pay by the 1st December including the £5 coach fare per person - if applicable.) The pickup points for the coach are on our website.

Andrew

SOCIAL

Social – November & December Club Events *(Editor)*

12 th November 2024 <i>(Men only)</i>	Antarctica My Way <i>John Highnam</i>
26 th November 2024 <i>(Wives & Partners)</i>	The Monarch and the Dustmen <i>Paul Hooley</i>
	Probus Christmas Lunch <i>The Old Brewery, Gillingham</i> <i>12.30pm for 1pm</i>
12 th December 2024	The Chairman's Christmas Dinner <i>The Royal Chase Hotel, Shaftesbury</i> <i>7pm for 7.30pm</i>



OUR OCTOBER TALKS

“It’s Not What You Say”

Alan Jones
1st October 2024



Alan Jones has spoken to us before. Last February he told us ‘Tales of a Roving Reporter’, recounting his time as BBC radio reporter. This time, it was to tell us about ‘Body Language’, and its impact.

Ever wondered why you feel attracted to some people and avoid others? Most of us form an opinion about somebody in just 7 seconds and rarely change our minds. Its’ not based on how they speak or what they say - but on their body language, which speaks louder than words when we communicate with others. It used to take 90 seconds, but we are now so used to instant communications that our senses have speeded up.



We employ body language every time we speak to other people, including to our pets. Women are better at it than men as they have sixteen areas of the brain to work with – while men have just six!

Folding our arms sends signals to other people. Standing erect exposes our vulnerable midriff, so we fold our arms as protection whereas open arms are welcoming. But putting our arms behind our backs is a show of authority. (The King walks this way.) However, fiddling with our cuffs or jewellery covers up our discomforts in a situation.



Teenagers often leave their thumbs showing with folded arms. Their lounging postures with crossed ankles demonstrate their rebellious attitude.

When flirting, men touch their ties or hitch up their trousers and puff out the chest. A colourful lining to their jackets is a flashy effect (demonstrated by Alan opening his jacket to reveal flashing lights!).

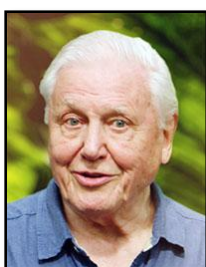
Our hands and face give off numerous “signals” to others. Politicians are expert at using hand movement as signals to reinforce their statements, or even their excuses. However, hand signals in other societies and countries can mean quite the opposite to our perceptions, e.g. thumbs up and the OK hand shape- so beware when abroad talking to the locals.

Handshakes also convey meaning. A hand over or above the other person’s hand shows that you are in charge, whilst standing to their right make this handshake possible. Watch how Presidents and Leaders make sure they can greet their guest in just this way. They are always on the right in those front-page photographs. But some visitors are wise to this and use their free hand to cover the shake and therefore regain the “upper hand”.



The ‘power grab’ of a person’s arm also does this. Women may pat the back of another’s hand in a less macho show of who is in charge.

A pat on the back when greeting may mean ‘go away’, whereas a gentle rub means ‘I like you’. Fiddling with one’s clothing indicates ‘I’m not listening or not interested’. Gentle nodding of the head says, ‘I’m listening’ - but sometimes not in agreement.



A smile and the unconscious raising of the eye-brows when meeting someone has evolved from our ape ancestors - watch David Attenborough on any wildlife programme.

There are supposed to be more than 10,000 facial movements - who knew that! A micro-facial expression is a split-second ‘humph’; a macro-expression would last longer - and always louder.

Smiles are important in body language, but reflex actions may tell a truer story. When people are lying, they usually touch their nose. This is because the brain sends signals to increase the blood flow, and these reach the nose tip first.



Looking at someone for too long can be misconstrued as an aggressive act - hence fights in pubs.

Personal space is important to all of us if it is invaded. Someone hogging the armrests on a train/plane or in the theatre can be uncomfortable for us. The police tactic of ‘kettling’

to control crowds failed, because it would often lead to aggressive behaviour or worse - rioting.

We try to maintain our personal space - sitting apart in a waiting room for instance, or when entering a lift turning our back to the other occupants. Someone 3 metres away is OK; 2 metres is acceptable; but 12 inches away put us on edge. We don't like standing face to face unless it's necessary for a private conversation. But if we stand at an angle to the next person, we are inviting a third party to join us. (Watch this at coffee time at a Probus meeting!)

Alan also told us about 'noddies'. This a phrase used is to explain why interviewers constantly nod whilst the interviewee is speaking, especially if they are talking for too long to fit the broadcasted report slot - which they always do! The programme editor can clip out the unwanted words and insert a shot of the reporter's nod to cover the gap.

(And now that you know this, news programmes will never seem the same again!)

The Chairman thanked Alan for a thought-provoking and entertaining talk. After inviting and chairing questions, he closed the meeting.

Alan Poulter

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'Atlantis'

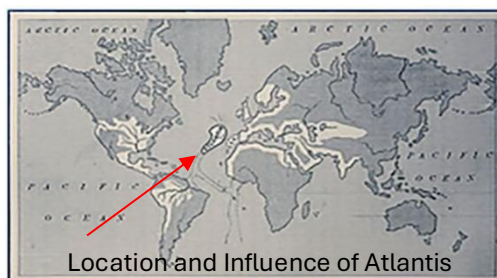
Richard Hutley
15th October 2024



Richard Hutley is a retired Police Inspector (Dorset Police) who spoke to the Club last July on Motorcycle Speedway. This talk covered the Myth, Legend and Facts about the antediluvian lost civilisation of Atlantis, first reported by Plato 3000 years ago.

The legend of Atlantis is well known, kept alive by numerous books, Hollywood films, magazine articles and stories.

Plato was an ancient Greek philosopher born 480 BC, a student of Socrates and teacher to Aristotle. His writings influenced early Christian and Islamic religious philosophy. His books *Timaeus* and *Critias* written around 360 BC both mention the mythical lost civilisation of Atlantis, the island civilisation beyond the Pillars of Hercules (the Straits of Gibraltar) that was once a very powerful and advanced civilisation with a large navy, and that fought against Egypt and ruled all of world. The Gods gave whose son Atlas



both ancient Greece and the then known western the island to Poseidon became king, hence the

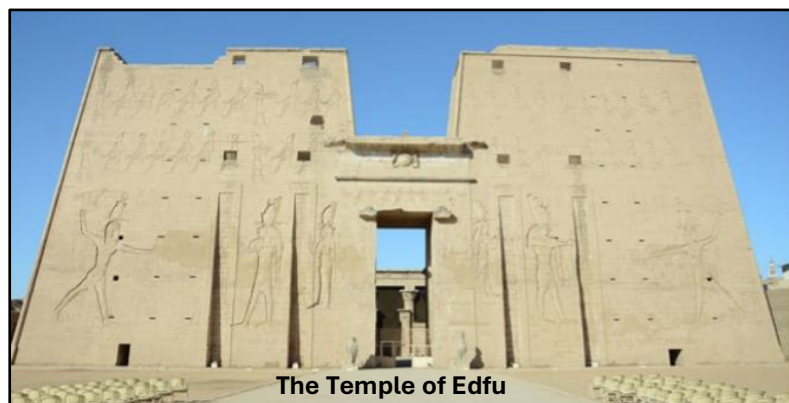
name Atlantis. The island was some 77,000 square miles in size (by comparison Dorset is 1,000 square mile in area). Its main city was built in a circular plan form with concentric circular canals and an outlet to the sea. The buildings were of black and white stone construction. (Note: buildings on the Azores are also of black and white appearance - see below.) The island of Atlantis was destroyed in a cataclysmic event involving a great flood.



There is no evidence that Plato's account was based on real events. But the destruction of the Minoan civilisation in the Aegean Sea in the 15th Century BC by the eruption of Santorini, where the tsunami created drowned a Greek city near Corinth, could have some bearing.

Solon, a Greek statesman from the very early Athenian democracy had visited ancient Egypt and told of a priest recounting that the original

Egyptian civilisation was destroyed by a cataclysmic flood some 12,000 years ago.



The Temple of Edfu in Egypt has hieroglyphics describing similar legends.

A great flood is a legend found in many other ancient civilisations (possibly over 500 world-wide) - and of course in the Old Testament with the story of Noah. Hindu texts also mention an Ark and a great battle in the sky (possibly the description of a comet). In Mesopotamia, a history of the earth written on clay tablets describes the creation as Gods coming to earth and creating a race of giant slaves to do their bidding who were subsequently destroyed (fallen angels). The Epic of Gilgamesh tells of a similar flood event to Noah's flood. Geological evidence shows that there have been many similar floods throughout earth's history.

It is known that during the last Ice Age, sea levels were much lower allowing mankind to spread around the globe. The eventual melting of the ice caused many islands and coastal regions to be drowned. The destruction of Atlantis could be from the same event which was about 12,000 years ago.

Spain has several flood legends. Off the west coast there were marshy lands and islands that had circular pattens possibly of ancient dwelling. Indeed many old civilisations depict such circles. In West Africa such circular pattens can be seen from the air (but these could be from an impact crater.

In the Azores, where the Portuguese landed in 1427, many artifacts and symbols of unknown origin were found. And the building remains were of black and white construction.

A Sumerian tablet, 12,000 years old, now in the British Museum, depicts the night stars with an obvious comet. Recently discovered evidence of multiple comet strikes on earth also date from about 12,000 years ago.



Richard's talk then went on to comment on the age of the pyramids in Egypt - and those of the Mayan civilisation in South America both being about 12,000 years. And also on the weathering of the Egyptian Sphinx, which could be water/rain rather than wind and sand.

He also mentioned a theory that the Great Pyramid could be a Hydrogen power-station created by aliens, and this was followed by many left-field/fringe theories about ancient events. [Which rather distracted from the Atlantis legend!]

The Chairman thanked Richard who responded and answered questions from the audience very fully, following which the Chairman closed the meeting.

Alan Poulter

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*The report on the talk - '**A Peculiar Victorian Enterprise**' given on 29th of October, will appear in the December issue of the Recorder.*

Ed



ENDPIECE – Editor

Christmas shopping?



Divided by a Common Language

A member of staff at the Royal Opera House recounts a tale - halfway through a performance a couple of ladies, almost certainly North American tourists, approached her at the assistance desk, and the dialogue went as follows.

Customer: “*Would we be able to get refunds?*”

Me: “*I’m afraid we can’t refund the performance unless it’s been cancelled or interrupted.*”

Customer: *"But it's all wrong! This is not what we expected at all!"*

Me: *"I'm sorry, but the performance is the standard opera for ***"*

Customer: *"It's not an opera! It's just some people shouting in another language!"*

Me: *"Well... I suppose that sounds accurate - to a degree."*

Customer: *"But we saw an opera back home and it was nothing like this!"*

Me: *"Do you mind me asking what opera you saw?"*

Customer: *"The Phantom Of The Opera!"*

Me: *"That... is not really an opera. It's a musical about an opera."*

Customer: *"Exactly! A musical! An opera! Not whatever this is!"*

I had to explain to them the differences between a musical and a classical opera. They didn't seem to agree with me but didn't argue about the refund and decided to leave.

Later I told one of my colleagues about the incident, to which she replied:

"Oh, that's nothing. I once had some tourists walk in asking me if this is where we tape Oprah, like the talk show. They thought she did a British version here."



***"She's the kind of girl who climbed the ladder of success
wrong by wrong."***

Mae West