



PROBUS RECORDER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PROBUS CLUB OF GILLINGHAM DORSET - No. 177 - July 2019
(www.probus-gillingham-dorset.org.uk)

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

By the time that you read this, we will have had a look at a potential base for the future – North Dorset Rugby Club. This process will be taken to its next logical step at the following meeting on 23 July (at the Olive Bowl), which is the last one before we break for the summer recess. At that meeting, it is intended that all members will be able to cast their vote as to whether they wish to hold future meetings at the Rugby Club or to remain at the Olive Bowl. Your Committee will then count votes and adjudicate as appropriate. The result will be made known to Members as soon as practicable following the vote. Whatever the outcome, all members will have been given the opportunity to take part in the decision-making progress.

Despite concerns expressed by some members who had heard the talk before, we were treated at our last meeting on 25 June to a marvellous cornucopia of sounds by Nick Crump.

Following representations by members, the meeting had been made open to wives and partners, and even those of us with little or no understanding of music were able to appreciate the amazing potential of so many objects to produce sound, not least the 'boghorn' with which he concluded his talk. The attendance of wives and partners was not intended to set precedent but reflected a genuine desire on the part of many to hear the talk.

After this, it was off to pastures new for a very enjoyable and well-presented lunch – at Shepton Montague. Attendance was relatively sparse for a lunch, but it was appreciated that it was a bit further than normal and a little more expensive. However, those that did attend had a good experience, and I thank the lunch Secretary for offering a new location with quality fare.

FUTURE EVENTS

9 July

Venue: North Dorset Rugby Club

Speaker: John Smith
'Roman Life around Gillingham'

23 July

Venue: The Olive Bowl
Speaker: Christopher Legrand

'Namibia and Botswana Odyssey'

*Lunch at the King's Arms, East Stour Common. 1.00

25 July

Visit to the Newt Garden, Bruton BA7 7NG. 10.00 for 10.30. Own Transport

21 August

Summer Barbeque at The Crown Inn, Marnhull

The meeting on 23 July will see us return for our post-meeting lunch to the well-known King's Arms at East Stour, and I hope to meet as many of you as possible there for this, our last lunch before the summer break.

As to this missive, I have managed to give our Newsletter Editor a mild panic attack by failing to produce my input until the last possible minute. I can only say in my own defence that life outside our organisation has been somewhat full and hectic for the last 10 days, and I suspect that many other members are suffering similarly over-full diaries, and I merely crave the Editor's indulgence and hope that he can enjoy his time away from these duties once he has received this! *Nick Hall*

'Safe and Well' - Rachel Bellamy – 11 June

Rachel is a 'safe and well' adviser with the Dorset Fire and Rescue Service. She was originally based in the Bournemouth and Poole division before recently moving to Shaftesbury Fire station to cover the north Dorset and Wiltshire area. After ten months of training which included the many aspects of fire safety: fire behaviour training; liaison with the public; health and safety issues in the home; mental health issues and self-protection, her role is to provide fire prevention services to the general public. The Fire Brigade always had a fire prevention role, but it was aimed at commercial properties such as offices; shops; hotels and places of entertainment. Her role is to provide home visits to advise householders on fire safety and where necessary supply safety equipment such as smoke alarms.



During the 1980s the number of house fires was increasing whereas the number of commercial building fires was decreasing. The Fire Brigade set up a system for home visits and after thousands of such visits and the introduction of smoke alarms saw a reduction in house fires. The system is now staffed with specialist staff such as Rachel instead of diverting firemen from the main role of fire-fighting. It has also broadened the advice given to include health issues, well-being and general safety issues. The fire safety advisers are better received by some householders where other public service personnel such as the police and council staff are not.

Obviously, the service cannot visit every home, so they target risk groups such as the elderly; people with physical and mental health issues; dementia sufferers; larger families; those on benefits and recent immigrants. A data base derived from GPs, housing officers and social workers as well as publicity gives them addresses to aim for.

Their advice covers electrical safety, cooking safety and the need for an escape plan in an emergency. Their aim is to give advice, but not to criticise the way people may live. They are

aware of the most potentially dangerous things people do, summed up the acronym

CHARLIE:

Care and supported needed

Hoarding and mental health issues

Alcohol and medication problems

Reduced mobility

Living alone

Inappropriate smoking

Elderly

The most dangerous things that need checking are overloaded socket outlets - those with multiple plugs on adapters (*see picture on previous*). Main appliances such as washing machines, fridges, heaters and even toasters need to be plugged into their own sockets. Signs of charring on plugs show that they are overheating. Grease and dirt deposits around cookers can easily ignite. Careless use of candles and, most often, leaving cigarettes smouldering and smoking in bed all contribute to danger.

The service can refer people to other agencies for help, even to help stop smoking. They will also provide free fire-retardant bedding and spray carpets with fire retardant in the worse cases. They can supply smoke alarms, heat detectors (located in kitchens as they are better than smoke detectors) and carbon monoxide detectors next to boilers and gas heaters (located 300 millimetres from the ceiling and 1-3 metres from the appliance). For those hard of hearing an alarm can be installed with a strobe light and a vibrating pad to be located under a pillow. Where frail occupants may not be able to respond easily a smoke alarm can be linked to a Care-Line agency who will alert the Fire Service automatically. A free phone service is available for concerned neighbours. *Alan Poulter*

The Musical World of Nick Crump - 25 June

Shaftesbury resident and musician Nick Crump, founder of the long-established Barn Dance and Ceilidh Hambledon Hot Step band, gave a talk about the origins of music, and played some of his more unusual musical instruments, as well as the more conventional. Nick explained that he gives educational talks to schools, where he demonstrates various instruments he has invented, including some made from recycled materials.

Humans have been making music for thousands of years, using sound and rhythm. First, probably, making vocal sounds, and in time to a beat rhythm before the development of more complex music. A prime example is the didgeridoo, used by indigenous Australians – originally a hollow hardwood tube brass instrument, but now also made from other materials. Or dried bean pods - a natural maraca, with the rattle of seeds in the pods, and simple drums made of wood and animal skin.

Nick demonstrated the sounds made by all these early instruments, initially using his recycled materials of hose pipe, copper tubing and amplifiers – how, with vibrating lips, different sounds and musical notes can be achieved. He went on to show how the range is extended by making holes in the side of the tube and covering them with the fingers.

An instrument originally developed in France in the 17th century was the serpent, a distant ancestor of the tuba (yes, Nick possesses one and played this instrument as well). This is a brass wind instrument, with a mouth piece like a brass instrument, but side holes like a woodwind. The serpent would have been familiar to Thomas Hardy, being a staple played in church orchestras.



The trumpet was historically used as a signalling device in battle and hunting, but gradually developed to be used as a musical instrument; and the trumpet group has the highest register in the brass family. The modern trumpet has three stops. Nick played a piece of music he composed and played for the farewell service of the vicar of St James, Shaftesbury, Simon Chambers, Simon's Farewell.

Moving on to the wind family of instruments, Nick played tunes on various versions of the recorder, including a polka, and his own version of Happy Birthday, composed and played for his niece's 13th birthday. The final tune was the

haunting Irish air My Lagon Love, played on the tenor recorder.

The session concluded with playing a selection of 'my other oddities', including a stringed instrument consisting of an upturned water tank, wooden pole and yacht cord; and Land of Hope and Glory, played on a toilet (the Bog Horn)! Nick also showed how the theremin works, which is an instrument with two aerials, played by moving the hands of the player over an electro-magnetic field. He then concluded by playing a fanfare on his Swiss alphorn. Members enjoyed this somewhat unusual talk by this talented musician. John Heap gave the vote of thanks. *Alan Jeffs*

Ian McLennan's holidays with a difference

After a couple of routine holidays Isabel and I decided we would try a couple with a difference which were also only a week each. Here is the first one.

In early June we went to Venice for a river cruise based in the city. This meant that for four days we had accommodation, food and drinks included based on the waterfront close to the Grand Canal. We could easily walk to all the sights and enjoy this interesting city.

Admittedly we had to dodge the thousands of tour parties milling around but we found the back streets peaceful and coffee there was cheap. For us it was as interesting to see the little streets and canals often with washing drying on lines over them as it was to see the grand sites

We went shortly after the boat crash of the liner with a similar boat to ours. Both were still in port and needed considerable repairs. We actually were moored in a different spot because of this accident.

As part of the holiday for an afternoon we cruised to the island of Murano to see the glass making and then on to Burano nearby. We also cruised the lagoon on another afternoon but the highlight of the evenings was a dinner in one of the traditional palaces, now a hotel. This was a gala dinner with a trio playing and entertainment from a masked magician and his assistant. We would recommend this idea of the river boat in Venice as it gives stability of accommodation and daily meals. In fact one of the financial columnists has also backed it in an article. *Next time: By rail to Lake Maggiore and beyond.*

There will be no August edition of the Recorder. Material for the September edition should be sent to Richard Clarke on: richardpclarke69@gmail.com