



# PROBUS RECORDER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PROBUS CLUB OF GILLINGHAM, DORSET  
([www.probus-gillingham-dorset.org.uk](http://www.probus-gillingham-dorset.org.uk))

Issue No 196  
May 2021

## Chairman's Notes - Nick Hall

I must begin by thanking Roger Ellis, Peter Marshall and Richard Clarke for stepping into the breach when I fell off my perch in early February. I also wish say a huge thank you to all of you who have sent me cards and good wishes for recovery - I am getting there. My grey cells aren't quite as 'on-the-ball' as they used to be, but time should cure this (I hope!).

Very sadly, I have to remark on the passing of another stalwart member of our Club – **Brian Walker**, who was a much respected and long-standing Member of the Club.

After an interesting business career, including several years working in West Africa with Unilever, Brian joined Gillingham Probus in 1999 and proved himself a very supportive member. During the 22 subsequent years he made many friends. He was our Social Secretary from 2002 to 2005 and arranged some of our most memorable visits, including one to the Royal Naval College in Dartmouth.

Brian also became our longest serving Chairman (until the Virus lockdown extended the service of your current Chairman!) He was elected as Vice Chairman to Bob Giddings in 2005, but then took over when Bob sadly died after just a few months in office. Brian was formally re-elected as Chairman in 2006 and among other things, he was responsible for TWO stylish Christmas dinners! He also served as Editor of the booklet produced to mark the 25th anniversary of the club in 2008 and became an Honorary Member two years ago in recognition of his service over the years.

Our heartfelt condolences are extended to his wife Sandy, and all members of their family.

Moving on, the time is fast approaching when I will hand over the badge of office to Roger Ellis, who is straining at the leash to dazzle us with further examples of his sartorial elegance. It is unlikely to be a 'normal' handover since it is doubtful that we will be holding a physical changeover in the presence of all our members, and instead it is likely to be an electronic 'shoo-in'. I pray that he doesn't have to face the irritations and pitfalls of another pandemic, although I fear that Covid will be with us in some form for years to come. I wish him good fortune and a fair wind as we try to recover some form of normality in our own and our Club's lives.



## **WELFARE and SOCIAL NEWS - Gordon Banks.**

**Welfare.** Whilst the general situation in the area continues to improve and the shackles of Covid are starting to loosen, we still have a number of members who are experiencing difficulties.

**Brian Walker** has already been mentioned by the Chairman, but his loss will be keenly felt.

**Peter Nation** is on the road to recovery, but remains wheelchair bound.

**Mike Gray** fell and broke his hip, which has been replaced in Yeovil hospital. His situation remains challenging since he faces the tribulations of Alzheimer's.

**Brian Garton** continues to find living hard going. However, Sid spends a lot of time reading to him, in particular books with a historical flavour. But care provision remains a difficult area for them.

**Chas Allberry** continues to tire easily.

**Ron Walker** has reached the stage where he is sufficiently confident of his well-being that he is once again punishing golf balls.

**Nick Hall** continues his recovery under the tutelage of Chris, since physiotherapy is very much the order of the day. He finds that he continues to tire very easily, but his biggest problem by far is that he is unable to drive. He is currently awaiting DVLA adjudication, but it seems likely that it will be for 6 months, probably until early September.

### **Social.**

**Peter Marshall.** Peter and Rita are hoping that at long last they will find themselves moving westward to the fair metropolis of Torquay during the month of May. On the assumption that it all happens this time, we wish them the very best of good fortune, while knowing that if the Revised Constitution is adopted, Peter will remain a member of our Club, but electronically from afar.

*And now for something really different:*

- If you think 'special K' is boring, wait till you try 'normal K'.
- What did the flower arrangers' skydiving team shout when they jumped out of the plane?  
*"Geranium!!!"*
- How did the farmer win an award?  
*He was outstanding in his field.*



## Zoom talk on 'FRAUD' - Alan Jeffs



Roger Lester, our Probus Club Speaker Secretary, organised a (free) talk by Ashley Jones. Ashley is a recently retired police officer, who now works for the South West Organised Crime Unit. In his new role Ashley is giving talks to groups to highlight the dangers of present-day fraud – which is communicated to its intended victims in all sorts of ways, including internet, telephone, and snail-mail. It appears that these types of fraud are increasing at an alarming rate.

Ashley's talk was split into three main sections:

1. The impact of fraud,
2. The various types of fraud,
3. And 'golden tips' - to stay safe.

Criminals are highly sophisticated these days and millions of pounds are lost through fraud each year. In addition to reported incidents, not all victims who are swindled out of their savings report the crimes they have suffered, possibly through embarrassment. Fraudsters use social engineering, pretending to be what they are not, and often seek personal information for identity fraud, and obtain personal bank information from their victims.

Common types of 'advance fee fraud' (*Type of fraud in which individuals are required to pay a fee before receiving a promised sum of money, which is never paid.*) where bank details are sought, are 'lottery prize fraud', 'interbank fraud', and 'gambling tips fraud'. Another type of fraud is 'software fraud' which is a contact by an apparent software provider to obtain personal information.

There are lots of instances of spoof emails and telephone calls pretending to come from bodies such as HMRC, Royal Mail, banks, and investment companies.

### Golden Rules:

- If it sounds too good to be true – it probably is!
- Beware of time pressure – take your time to check the source.
- Never give details to unsolicited calls.
- Beware when payment is requested in a different currency.

- Always ask for another opinion if you have doubts.
- Never be afraid to report the fraud.
- Report to Action Fraud as soon as you can.
- Instinct is useful in protecting you.

In conclusion, Ashley Jones drew attention to “The Little Book of Big Scams” issued by the South West Organised Crime Unit, and the need to report fraud to Action Fraud. The latter can be done on [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or by phoning 0300 123 2040.

This was an interesting and useful talk, to which we were pleased to welcome some members of the Salisbury Probus Club.



## TALES FROM WALES (Episode Two) – Dave Hooker

The naval architect came to see us in Colwyn Bay. He brought some prints with him of his 16-foot hull drawing, showing what is called ‘the lofted lines’. These are the key to the build. Stations along the hull's length define the change in shape of the hull at a number of exact points



The hull plug at an early stage.

from stern (transom) to stem (bow), increasing in number towards the flared bow; in this case a total of fourteen stations. This construction method is unique for building a fibreglass boat mould and is called ‘the plug’. By reproducing each station as a ‘former’<sup>1</sup> and fitting them in the exact place, it was possible to begin building the upside-down full-scale replica of the hull on the concrete floor of my newly constructed workshop. When finished it had to be a perfectly created shape of the finished hull in order that when covered in layers of fibreglass, and the fibreglass was lifted off the plug, it would be a mould for the hull – a hull in reverse.

One could use anything to create the plug. In this case I employed a good plasterer to give the final finish, laying plaster upon the wooden structure and smoothly following the change in curve from one station to the next. Nothing of the formers, the wooden framework, or any other structural device was to be seen, just one smooth overall form. To finalise this pattern, a lot of work was needed. It had a stepped chine – that is, a step was created at the point where the side meets the vee bottom - traditional on a speedboat or sports boat - this spot is called the chine and the step ran all along the length of the boat. It was about an inch by two inches fully formed and had to appear from nothing at the flared bow, then run along the boat's length to keep spray down at speed. The plaster had to be dried out thoroughly, then sprayed with black cellulose paint. This paint had to be rubbed down time and time again, in the same way a special car body is given the perfect shape and sheen – free from ripples etc. Black was the colour the naval architect insisted on so that any imperfections could be seen clearly.

<sup>1</sup> A transverse member that strengthens and gives shape to the hull.

John, the naval architect, came up to N. Wales to see us in a large Citroen car (do you remember the type that lifted itself up onto its suspension when the engine was started?) to inspect our work - and passed it as first class. He also came up later in a brand-new Datsun 240Z and I thought he must be doing well! He drove me up to the workshop in the Datsun like a maniac and scared me to death, although I tried not to show it. Back to the matter in hand. John insisted that I put a five-inch-high wall along the centre of the plug and to produce the mould in two parts, a) to help release the mould from the plug and, b) to release the moulded hull from the mould later on. I made the mould in two parts as instructed, drilled holes equally spaced through the flange so that it could be joined precisely together, and I got a local boat building company on the banks of the River Conwy to lay up our first hull. However, I had to break up the original plug and remove it from the workshop before we could get the new moulded hull in through the door. The hull replaced the plug in the workshop (the right way up) and was set up so that we could build a new plug for the superstructure, based on that first fibreglass hull. And so the work continued.



The first hull in the farmer's Dutch Barn.

**\*\* Episode Three** in next month's Probus Recorder will give further details of the work - and more photos - as we move towards the finished boat.