



NEWENT & DISTRICT PROBUS CLUB

Inaugurated 23rd March 1977

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

February 2020

March Onwards

Tuesday 3rd March
Pub Lunch

Tuesday 10th March

An Engineering Icon in
Gloucester – Roger Beard

Tuesday 24th March

The Cuban Crisis – David
Head

Thursday 26th March

“The Habit of Art” at the
Everyman Theatre

Tuesday 14th April

Spring Lunch (date tbc)

Thursday 21st May

Day trip to the National
Arboretum

February Diary

Tuesday 4th February Pub lunch at *The White Hart, Broadoak, 1230*

Tuesday 11th February *Blind Introspective – Paul Holiman*



Paul has been blind since birth. He works at GCHQ and has a degree from Imperial College. He talks quite openly about the challenges of being blind.

Tuesday 25th February *The Chartists of Snig's End – Alex Bailey*



Chartist settlements were built on a number of estates in England during the 1840's. The presenter has lived in a Chartist Cottage at Snig's End (today's Staunton Corse) for 19 years. The history of the Chartist Land Company and how it grew out of the Chartist movement is explored together with the colourful life of Fergus O'Connor, its founder. The movement was short lived but has left us with the legacy of 86 cottages standing in up to 4 acres of land at Snig's End.

Miscellany

The Chairman began the first meeting of 2020 by wishing everyone a Happy New Year, and especially to returning members John Franklin and Graham Jackson who have been seriously unwell in recent weeks.

Members were again urged to sign up (or put a cross by) their names in the Blue Folder expressing interest in social activities. David Clowes is finalising a day trip to the National Arboretum in May: see <http://www.thenma.org.uk/whats-here/> and to the SS Great Britain in October <https://www.ssgreatbritain.org/> He is concentrating on Thursdays to fit in with Andrew Graham's theatre trips which are often on Wednesdays. See the separate display in this issue.

The next Theatre trip is to Alan Bennet's "The Habit of Art" in Cheltenham On March 26th. Andrew is considering a survey of members to ascertain their theatrical interests, which may include musicals as well as drama.

The champion quizzers at Probus Quiz Night at the King's Head on January 27th were Peter and Lee Hines, together with Doreen Brydon. So much fun was had at this very well attended event that the landlord thinks he might have to use the skittle alley next time!

"The secret of change is to focus all your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new"

Socrates

“Do as I say, not as I do”

Mike Warburton entertained us in his witty and inimitable way telling us about the double standards adopted by some politicians who live by the maxim “Do as I say, not as I do”.

As a forensic accountant, specialising in taxation, Mike has often been called upon by journalists and newspapers to unravel the tax affairs of companies and individuals – (particularly those politicians, vocal in their criticism of companies) who had taken legitimate steps to minimise their exposure to tax. On occasion Mike has also appeared on TV and radio to help viewers and listeners understand the vagaries of tax law and the measures taken by some regarding their financial affairs.

He gave us insights into the conduct of some politicians who were quick to criticise wealthy individuals and companies who, it seemed, paid little tax relative to their turnover. However, he was able to show the hypocrisy of these same MPs when their own affairs were scrutinised. Indeed, he has crossed swords with some of the individuals with these double standards.

A really gripping talk, that was well researched and presented and had the audience spellbound throughout.

Jim Stewart

(Special thanks to Jim from the editor for being smart enough not to mention any names in this article, which has not been approved by in-house lawyers)

Story Time

I feel like my body has got totally out of shape, so I got my doctor's permission to join a fitness club and start exercising.

I decided to take an aerobics class for oldies. I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down, and perspired for an hour. But, by the time I got my leotard on, the class was over.

NEVER MAKE A WOMAN MAD.
THEY CAN REMEMBER STUFF
THAT HASN'T EVEN
HAPPENED YET.

SHARED ON PINTEREST BY THE READ.COM

Diet tip: If you think you're hungry, you might just be thirsty. Have a bottle of wine first and then see how you feel.

Newent PROBUS Club

Coach Trip

National Memorial Arboretum

Thursday 21 May

Estimated Cost £25.00 to include

- Coach Trip from Newent, leave at 9.00/9.30 return by 17.00
- 50 min Trip on Land Train to see the whole site on arrival
- Exhibitions which change regularly

The entrance to Arboretum is free and covers a large site (over 150 acres) with lots to see including memorials to many service and emergency personnel. Check for yourself on www.thenma.org.uk

Daily Activities include talks and short memorial services in the chapel

***Restaurants available on site
No need to book
(or take your own picnic)***

Transatlantic View **(an American's view of Britain)**

- * All the signs are well designed with beautiful typography and written in full sentences with proper grammar.
- * There's no dress code.
- * Doors close by themselves, but they don't always open.
- * They eat with their forks upside down.
- * The English are as crazy about their gardens as Americans are about cars.
- * They don't seem to use facecloths or napkins or maybe they're just neater than we are.
- * The wall outlets all have switches, some don't do anything.
- * There are hardly any cops or police cars.
- * 5,000 years ago, someone arranged a lot of rocks all over, but no one is sure why.
- * When you do see police they seem to be in male & female pairs and often smiling.
- * Black people are just people: they didn't quite do slavery here.
- * Everything comes with chips, which are French fries. You put vinegar on them.
- * Cookies are "biscuits" and potato chips are "crisps".
- * HP sauce is better than catsup.

More of these observations in a future issue

The Korean War

The talk by Roger Davies began by reminding us that it is often referred to as the Forgotten War. Its origins began with the end of the Second World War, when Korea, which had been part of the Japanese Empire, was liberated by the Allies - the Northern part by the Russians and the Southern part by the United States. In 1948 Korea was divided along the 38th parallel, the North becoming a communist state under Kim-il-Sung and the South a pro-western state under Syngman-Rhee. On the 25th June 1950 North Korea invaded the South. The Americans had withdrawn most of their troops, as President Truman saw the main threat from communism as coming from Europe. Seoul, the Southern capital, fell in 3 days. The United Nations passed Resolution 82 to take action. The Soviet Union was not present to veto this and President Truman described it as a police action, not a war. If he had used the word "war" it would not have passed the United States Congress.

General Douglas McArthur was placed in command and the United States provided most of the troops, but it was a multi-national force, which also included troops from Britain, Belgium, Australia, Norway, Turkey and the Phillipines. The United Nations had air superiority, using carrier planes and B29 bombers. Britain also had a carrier, H.M.S. Unicorn, and carrier planes. Many of the United States aircraft operated from Japan.

On 11th September the United States' forces crossed the 38th parallel and there was a successful amphibious landing at Inchon, 150 miles behind North Korean lines. Seoul was liberated in September and the Allied troops captured the northern capital of Pyong-yang on 19th October. McArthur wanted to push to the Chinese border and this brought China into the war on 25th October. The Chinese flew MiG jet aircraft with Soviet pilots, so were a challenge to Allied air superiority. The Chinese and the North Koreans counter-attacked and by January 1951 they had regained all North Korean territory from the United Nations' forces and had re-captured Seoul. McArthur had suggested the use of nuclear weapons against the North Koreans and the Chinese. He was fired in April and his place taken by General Ridgway. The United Nations succeeded in holding on in the South and in freezing temperatures as low as -40 held on and re-captured Seoul in March. The sacking of Douglas McArthur was not popular, as in the United States he was a war hero, and President Truman did not seek re-election.

Among the British contingent in Korea were the 1st Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment.

They arrived in Korea on 3rd November 1950 and fought a brave action on the Imjin River at Hill 235. They had many casualties and were cut off from the rest of the division. 526 became prisoners of war, including their commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Carne, who spent most of his time in solitary confinement, during which he carved a stone cross using a nail, which can be seen today in Gloucester Cathedral. He was awarded the Victoria Cross. The Glosters returned home in November 1951. The Imjin marked the end of the mobile war, and in 1952 there was a static front line. In 1953 the Chinese were still launching offensives and in May the United States bombed dams in North Korea. Over 25 months there had been 158 meetings between the two sides and on 27th July 1953 a truce was signed. South Korea was not involved. There was never a peace treaty, and technically both sides are still at war.

Britain lost 1,078 men in Korea. The United States lost 86,574. The Chinese lost 1.5 million, and 1 million South Korean civilians died.

China now has the largest army in the world, and North Korea, with a population of 25 million, has the fifth largest.

Our thanks to Roger Davies for a fascinating talk, which gave us much food for thought.

Michael Bennett

Member of the Month: **Treasurer Jim**

(an occasional feature for newer members)



Easily spotted by the dimmest of recruits, Jim is the one with the bulging black suitcase that never leaves his side. It never contains any actual money but undoubtedly he is the Go To Person if you want to give him some. Indeed, all payments for Probus membership and activities go through him regardless of who is doing the organising. Privately a most generous and generous-spirited chap, he has an iron grip on the funds. The Chairman has a distinctive chain of office: maybe Jim should be awarded the kind that locks onto his wrist?

