

## NEWENT & DISTRICT PROBUS CLUB

Inaugurated 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1977

### MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

March 2021

## April

13<sup>th</sup> Pam Street:

The wonderful world of  
Ivor Novello

27<sup>th</sup> Probus **AGM** -  
Speaker/Entertainment  
to be confirmed

Also, on April 1<sup>st</sup>:  
**PROBUS SUBS BECOME  
DUE!**

**Still good value at £60.  
Early payment to the  
Treasurer is not  
prohibited, and the use of  
BACS is encouraged.**

Discussion of the Club  
budget will now take place  
during the next meeting,  
since the talk on Shackleton  
became almost as long as  
one of his expeditions!

*Struggling to  
get your wife's  
attention?*

*Just sit down and  
look comfortable.*

## March Diary



### 9<sup>th</sup> The Gloucester Flood of 2007 – Dr Tim Brain

Dr Tim Brain, former chief constable of Gloucestershire, will relive with us the experience of the Gloucestershire Floods of 2007 from the perspective of the emergency services' response, and tell how the county came together to resolve one of the most challenging civil emergencies of modern times.



### 23<sup>rd</sup> Weird and Wonderful Engineering leading up to D Day - John Clark

John's background is as a design engineer in the REME attached to The Fighting Vehicle Research and Development Establishment. In this talk we look in particular at the role played on D Day by the specialist vehicles designed to enable the successful landings to take place at all.

## Chairman's Chat

It is comforting to know that by now we have all had at least one dose of the vaccine. The most recent data suggests a good level of protection after just one dose. The take up had been very high for our age group so let us hope that this continues for rest of the population.

In the last few days the weather has improved which has allowed us to get into the garden and start some much needed maintenance. Our big problem this year is rabbits. I am not a true gardener but do know that the heart of a garden is the compost heap. We have several well matured heaps which seem to have become ideal homes for rabbits to do what comes naturally. My son had recommended drastic action but I do not have the heart to shoot them. If any members know a good rabbit catcher please let me know.

Since the last newsletter we have enjoyed another two well attended zoom sessions with excellent speakers.

I am pleased to say that Fraser has assembled a full programme of speakers for the rest of the year. Most are apparently of the hybrid variety and can operate in person or by zoom. Once we are able to meet again we may still be able to arrange for some speakers to join by zoom if they live far away. Isn't technology wonderful, when it works. I have given half a dozen presentations recently to other Probus clubs and it seems we have been early adopters as far as the technology is concerned.

Wishing you all the best for the month ahead

*Mike*

## Tax, Care and The New Guy

John Ambrose's talk was informal and relaxed; no PowerPoint presentation, just a general chat peppered with questions, humorous remarks and some sobering anecdotes regarding Taxation, Estate Planning, Wills and Funerals. Issues we should all pay particular attention to when planning our estate. Estate planning involves passing on wealth to the people that matter in the most effective way. Individuals will bequeath wealth for different reasons e.g., minimise exposure to taxation, ensuring our wealth is distributed according to our wishes and safeguarding the rights and welfare of a surviving partner.

We were reminded that most of us has an estate. An estate consists of everything owned by an individual: car, home, savings accounts, investments, life insurance, furniture, personal possessions. These days the total value of these assets can exceed £1m, a significant milestone when calculating inheritance tax. No matter how large or how modest, everyone has an estate and all of us have one thing in common, we cannot take it with us when we die.

All advice that John gave was prefaced by the importance of taking advice from qualified, professionals experienced in Estate Planning, the drafting of wills, taxation, probate, and the appointment of an executor(s) (the person(s) you wish to carry out your wishes after your death).

John highlighted the importance of:

A **Power of Attorney**, a legal document where one person (the donor) gives another person (the attorney) the right to make decisions on their behalf.

**Lasting Power of Attorney** is the most common form of Power of Attorney. It is an ongoing arrangement with no expiry date that will allow another person to make decisions on your behalf. Once the document is registered, it can be used immediately, with your permission while you still have capacity, or it can take effect from when you lose mental capacity.

**Your Will** should state:

**Who** you want to benefit from your will?

**Who** should look after any children under 18?

**Who** is going to sort out your estate and carry out your wishes after your death (your executor)?

**What** happens if the people you want to benefit die before you?

**What** are your funeral requirements and resting place are?

**Where** will your executor find your will?

**How** you share a property with someone who is not your husband, wife, or civil partner.

**How** you want to leave money or property to a dependant who cannot care for themselves.

Beware if you may have several family members who may make a claim on your will, such as a second spouse or children from another marriage.

Take specialist professional advice:

if your permanent home is outside the UK.

if you have property overseas.

if you have a business.

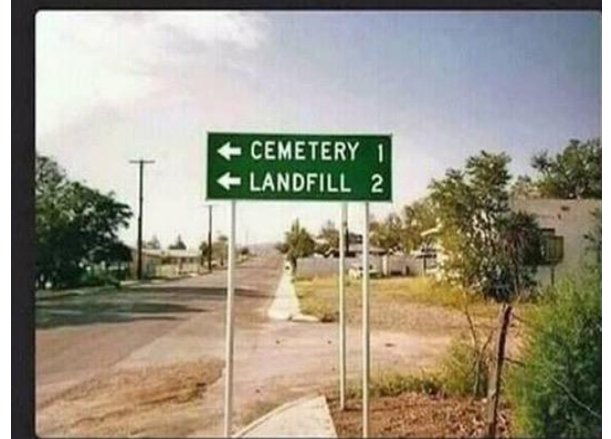
Your Will should be retained in a safe place.

**Probate** is the legal process through which property is transferred after a property owner's death. Simply put, probate calls for the gathering of all assets, paying off debts and distributing any remaining assets in accordance with an estate plan and the law.

At the end of his talk John stressed he was not promoting his firm or himself in a business capacity but should any of the audience wish to take advice they should ask the Secretary for his email address.

*Jim Stewart*

My wife said when I pass she would go the extra mile to give me the burial I deserve...



## Shackleton

From his birth in County Kildare, via his undistinguished academic career, his time as secretary of the Scottish Geographic Society and subsequently as a journalist then a Merchant Navy Officer, the speaker Ken Ingamells led us to his membership of Scott's 1901-1904 Antarctic expedition, from which he had to withdraw due to ill-health after an unsuccessful attempt to reach the South pole. During a further expedition in 1907-1909 he managed , with 3 companions to get within 97 miles of the Pole, for which he received a knighthood.

In 1914, the Pole having already been visited by Amundsen and Scott, he mounted an expedition to cross Antarctica from sea to sea via the Pole. It was then that disaster struck his ship, the Endurance becoming trapped in the ice. They remained with the ship until it disintegrated then, using the lifeboats, managed to reach Elephant Island. Leaving the majority of the crew there, Shackleton set out for South Georgia to get help, eventually landing on the uninhabited side of the island, he then had to attempt a hazardous overland trek , eventually reaching a whaling station . It was then possible to rescue the remainder of his party from Elephant Island . On none of his expeditions did he lose a single member of his crew.

In 1921 he began a further expedition to the Antarctic but died of a heart attack on South Georgia, where he is buried.

In a 2002 poll by the BBC, he was rated 11th out of the 100 greatest Britons.

*John Slack*

## Word Play

The man who fell into an upholstery machine is fully recovered.

You feel stuck with your debt if you can't budge it.

Local Area Network in Australia - the LAN down under.

Every calendar's days are numbered.

A lot of money is tainted - Taint yours and taint mine.

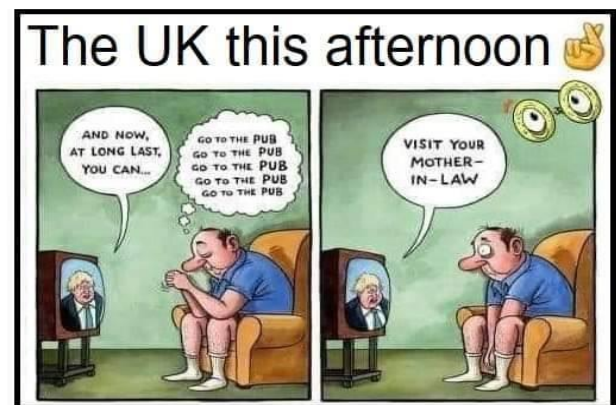
A boiled egg in the morning is hard to beat.

He had a photographic memory that was never developed.

A midget fortune-teller who escapes from prison is a small medium at large.

Once you've seen one shopping centre, you've seen a mall.

Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead-to-know basis.



## Blood Doning

A wealthy Arab Sheikh was admitted to hospital for heart surgery, but prior to the surgery, the doctors needed to store his type of blood in case the need arose. As the gentleman had a rare type of blood, it couldn't be found locally, so, the call went out. Finally a Scotsman was located who had a similar blood type. The Scot willingly donated his blood for the Arab. After the surgery, the Arab sent the Scotsman in appreciation for giving his blood, a new BMW, 5 carats of diamonds, and \$50,000 dollars. A couple of days later, once again, the Arab had to go through a corrective surgery.

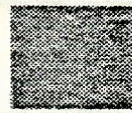
The hospital telephoned the Scotsman who was more than happy to donate more of his blood again. After the second surgery, the Arab sent the Scotsman a thank-you card and a box of Black Magic chocolates.

The Scotsman was shocked that the Arab did not reciprocate his kind gesture as he had before. He phoned the Arab and asked him: "I thought you would be generous again, that you would give me another BMW, diamonds and money ... but you only gave me a thank-you card and a box of chocolates."

To this the Arab replied: "Aye laddie, but I have Scottish blood in ma veins now".



# Vocabulary: how many words do you know?



You need a sheet of paper or a pencil.

Beginning at word Number 1, read through the words of the first test on p. 52 in the order numbered. As you come to a word you do not know, write the number of the word on your sheet of paper. Carry on in this way until you have ten numbers on your sheet. At that point *stop*, whether or not you know the next word. That is to say, you read through the test until you have met ten words that you do not know the meaning of. Now you must show that you really do know the words you claimed to know. It is enough if you show that you can give a correct meaning to the last five words you claimed to know – that is, the last five words whose numbers you did not write down. You can do this in each case by making a small sketch to illustrate the meaning, by writing about the meaning, or by showing in a sentence how the word is used.

Repeat this process for Tests 2 and 3.

## Vocabulary range

### Test 1

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
1. abroad	11. abandon	21. abridge	31. abhorrent	41. abscissa
2. boulder	12. bailot	22. aggregate	32. amorphous	42. badinage
3. dawdle	13. chaos	23. bivouac	33. crustacean	43. cartel
4. expedition	14. contraband	24. chronology	34. declivity	44. daemon
5. horizon	15. excavate	25. credulous	35. emaciated	45. dendrite
6. jangle	16. fatigue	26. hireling	36. fabrication	46. exordium
7. limit	17. laboratory	27. indolent	37. galaxy	47. inchoate
8. pattern	18. manual	28. nomadic	38. heretical	48. moraine
9. rate	19. purchase	29. accidental	39. igneous	49. rubric
10. stroke	20. shuttle	30. somnambulism	40. nomenclature	50. soutane

### Test 2

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
1. abbey	11. accelerate	21. acrid	31. baroque	41. abreast
2. abundance	12. aquatic	22. aftermath	32. cabal	42. atavistic
3. boast	13. celebrity	23. centrifugal	33. Charybdis	43. claque
4. convenient	14. identical	24. circuitous	34. dorsal	44. dharma
5. decimal	15. latitude	25. faction	35. ephemeral	45. flagellum
6. happiness	16. martial	26. interim	36. fiscal	46. gerrymander
7. invisible	17. rotary	27. nautical	37. invective	47. haptic
8. somersault	18. teem	28. retrograde	38. lymphatic	48. imbroglia
9. torpedo	19. terminate	29. splice	39. mandible	49. janissary
10. undergrowth	20. veteran	30. vehement	40. palliative	50. phrenetic

### Test 3

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
1. absence	11. abode	21. admit	31. acquiesce	41. accidia
2. agriculture	12. barricade	22. alabaster	32. agrarian	42. burette
3. blizzard	13. bulletin	23. bigotry	33. bullion	43. coruscate
4. crescent	14. climax	24. circumvent	34. clandestine	44. contumely
5. downpour	15. crouch	25. culminate	35. desultory	45. desuetude
6. fragment	16. export	26. fallacious	36. eradicate	46. frustum
7. hemisphere	17. flimsy	27. mediocre	37. fluted	47. haulm
8. reach	18. hospitality	28. nutritious	38. homogeneous	48. imago
9. sheaf	19. longitude	29. parry	39. larynx	49. mandragora
10. triangle	20. rustic	30. rancour	40. overt	50. normative

(from *Standard Literacy Tests* by Hunter Diack)

So – how many words do you know?

The mark in each test is the number of words known in that test up to the tenth unknown word. The total vocabulary is the average score in three tests multiplied by 600, e.g. average score 25 = total vocabulary  $25 \times 600 = 15,000$  words. You may find this hard to believe but extensive tests have shown this to be a very accurate estimate of how many words a person knows. So, multiply your average score (i.e. Total over 3 tests  $\div$  3) by 600, to find out how many words you know. This exercise will probably show you both how much you know already, and also how much more you could learn!



Members might like to amuse themselves with this (apparently fairly accurate) test, which I would use for fun with classes on wet afternoons near the end of term! Keeping individual results confidential was essential because the aim wasn't to humiliate. There is no such thing as a good or bad score, but if I recall rightly I found that Year sevens typically scored under 10,000 and Sixth Formers between 15,000 and 20,000.

And no I'm **not** telling you what my own score is, or at least **was** 20 years ago, although it's north of these figures!

Ed

With apologies for the poor copy of a 1990's copy.



# COVID-FREE SUPPLEMENT

A MAN went to the movies and was surprised to find a woman with a big collie sitting in front of him. Even more amazing was the fact that the dog always laughed in the right places through the comedy.

"Excuse me," the man said to the



woman, "but I think it's astounding that your dog enjoys the movie so much."

"I'm surprised myself," she replied. "He hated the book."

—Graham Foster in *Tomahawk, Wis., Leader*, quoted by Debbie Christian in *Milwaukee Journal*

## Irritation Levels

1. Discovering that there's no more effective alarm clock than a bin lorry's air brakes two doors down.
2. Knowing that if you decided on a whim to put out the wrong colour bin, you'd make an entire street question their sanity. Now that's power!
3. Asking yourself if it's time to put a little romance back into your relationship as you realise "blue bin goes out tonight!" is the first thing you've said to your partner all day.
4. Waiting with bated breath to see whether the small extra bag you've left beside the wheelie bin will be accepted by the gods of the bin lorry.
5. Feeling a powerful urge to call 999 as you spot a passer-by slipping an empty crisp packet into your black bin.
6. Noticing that next door have "accidentally" swapped your, essentially identical, bin with their own, then embarking on a 3am ninja-style raid to get it back.
7. Showing enormous levels of grace and courtesy by dragging your neighbour's empty bin a few centimetres in the general direction of their house.
8. Making the disastrous mistake of allowing the lady across the street to use your unused green bin, then finding she's emptied an entire rockery into it.
9. Wondering why no one's ever written a horror story about the scariest prospect of all: missing the first collection day after the Christmas break.
10. Refusing to accept that your bin has really been emptied - even though (a) it weighs much less than it did and (b) it's in the middle of the road - until you've had a sneaky peek inside.

## Aphorisms

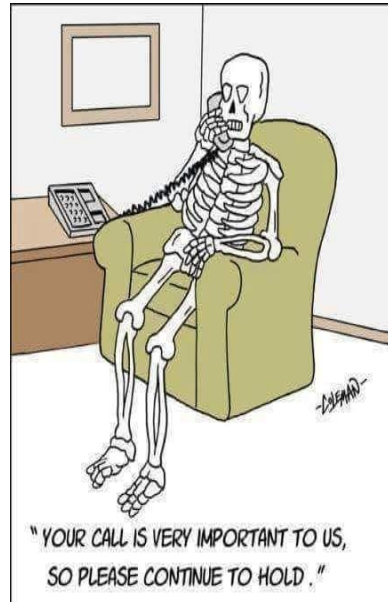
- ◆ I read that 4,153,237 people were married last year. Not to cause any trouble, but shouldn't that be an even number?
- ◆ I find it ironic that the colours red, white and blue stand for freedom until they are flashing behind you.
- ◆ When wearing a bikini, women reveal 90% of their bodies. Men are so polite they only look at the covered parts.
- ◆ Relationships are a lot like algebra. Have you ever looked at your X and wondered Y?
- ◆ You know that tingly little feeling you get when you love someone? That's common sense leaving your body.
- ◆ My therapist says I have a preoccupation with vengeance. We'll see about that.
- ◆ I think my neighbour is stalking me as she's been Googling my name on her computer. I saw it through my telescope last night.
- ◆ Money talks but all mine ever says is good-bye.
- ◆ You're not fat, you're just easier to see.
- ◆ If you think nobody cares whether you're alive, try missing a couple of payments.
- ◆ I always wondered what the job application is like at Victoria's Secret. Do they just give you a bra and say, "Here, fill this out?"
- ◆ The location of your mailbox shows you how far away from your house you can go in a robe before you start looking like a mental patient.
- ◆ Money can't buy happiness, but it keeps the kids in touch.

**DON'T LIE,  
DON'T STEAL,  
DON'T CHEAT,  
DON'T SELL DRUGS...**



**THE GOVERNMENT  
HATES COMPETITION**

**Do you ever wake up, kiss the person sleeping beside you, and feel glad that you are alive? I just did and apparently will not be allowed on this airline again....**



In a recent survey it reported that the average male has sex at least three time a week, except Eskimos who have it on average twice a year. This came as a huge surprise because **I didn't know I was an Eskimo!!**

Forwarded

Since Youngsters of Today have their Texting Codes ( **LOL, OMG, TTYL**, etc.) the Oldies decided not to be outdone by these kids, and now have developed our own codes too :

**ATD** - At the Doctor's  
**BFF** - Best Friend's Funeral  
**BTW** - Bring the Wheelchair  
**BYOT** - Bring your own teeth  
**FWIW** - Forgot Where I Was  
**GGPBL** - Gotta Go, Pacemaker Battery Low  
**GHA** - Got Heartburn Again  
**TFT** - Texting From Toilet.

Now share this with some other oldies and make their day

15:54

### **A Hard (English) Lesson**

On his 70th birthday, a man was given a gift certificate from his wife. The certificate was for consultation with an Indian medicine man living on a nearby reservation who was rumoured to have a simple cure for erectile dysfunction.

The husband went to the reservation and saw the medicine man. The old Indian gave him a potion and, with a grip on his shoulder, warned 'This is a powerful medicine. You take only a teaspoonful, and then say: '1-2-3.' When you do, you will become more manly than you have ever been in your life, and you can perform for as long as you want.'

The man thanked the old Indian, and as he walked away, he turned and asked: "How do I stop the medicine from working?"

"Your partner must say '1-2-3-4,' he responded, "but when she does, the medicine will not work again until the next full moon." He was very eager to see if it worked so he went home, showered, shaved, took a spoonful of the medicine, and then invited his wife to join him in the bedroom. When she came in, he took off his clothes and said: "1-2-3!" Immediately, he was the manliest of men. His wife was excited and began throwing off her clothes, and asked: "What was the 1-2-3 for?"

And that, boys and girls, is why we should never end our sentences with a preposition, because we could end up with a dangling participle.

*.....and did you hear about the little boy who said to his father "What did you bring that book I didn't want to be read to out of up for?"*

#### **NATURAL MEDICINE FOR GUYS**

go up to a tree and take a leak  
 if your pee attracts ants, you got diabetes  
 if it dries fast, your sodium is high  
 if it smells like meat, your cholesterol is high  
 if you forgot to unzip, it's Alzheimer  
 if you missed the tree, Parkinson's  
 if you peed on your shoes, enlarged prostate  
 if you can't smell it, COVID 19

