

NEWSLETTER



NEWENT & DISTRICT PROBUS CLUB



November 2023

Notes from our Chairman

Well, we are into November already, the clocks have gone back, and into the long winter evenings. The weather has turned a little cooler now too. I have picked the last few tomatoes in the greenhouse, and we have had our last feed of runner beans. Need now to tidy up the garden, take down the bean sticks and store them away and save the seed for next year, remove the courgette plants and compost them. I have attended a couple of Harvest Suppers, our village one in Northwood Green and the Young Farmers one at Westbury, both very enjoyable and a lot of work by the ones involved in putting it all together.

We have two new members who have recently joined us, Clive Dunning and Stephen Wheeler, we welcome both of them.

There is a change of venue in November, while the new roof is put on at Gorsley, so we are moving to the Newent Community Centre, the old Newent Grammar School.

John Slack is making good progress, he is even phoning members that have not been too well, to see how they are doing.

We have some social events planned for the new year, a quiz, and a skittles evening. The Christmas Lunch at The Hatherley Manor is looking to be well attended, please let Kelvin know your menu choices, if you have not done so already. Mike Warburton will be needing the money soon too.

The pub lunch is in on Tuesday 7th November, at The Farmers Boy, Longhope is our last for this year.

Have a good November. If you are going to a firework display and bonfire, stay safe.

“How many safety inspectors does it take to light the bonfire?”

“One to light the match and three to hold the fire extinguisher, sorry Fraser!”

Best wishes

Mikø



TUESDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2023

PUB LUNCH

THE FARMERS BOY

ROSS ROAD,

BOXBUSH,

LONGHOPE

GL17 0LP

THE LAST ONE FOR 2023

Most people have heard of Karl Marx the philosopher but few know of his sister Onya the Olympic runner. Her name is still mentioned at the start of every race.



**YOUR CALL IS
VERY IMPORTANT TO US**

**PLEASE ENJOY THIS
40 MINUTE FLUTE SOLO**



CHRISTMAS LUNCH
TUESDAY 12 DECEMBER

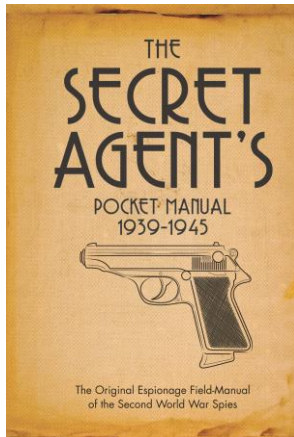


**At The Hatherley Manor Hotel, Down Hatherley Lane, Gloucester,
GL2 9QA**

12.30 for 1pm

SPEAKER

14 NOVEMBER 2023



Rev Dr Chris Hucker

The **Special Operations Executive (SOE)** was a secret British World War II organisation. It was officially formed on 22 July 1940 under Minister of Economic Warfare, Hugh Dalton, by the amalgamation of three existing secret organisations.

Its purpose was to conduct espionage, sabotage and reconnaissance in occupied Europe (and later, also in occupied Southeast Asia) against the Axis powers, and to aid local resistance movements.

SPEAKER

28 NOVEMBER 2023

Eric Moore



Mount Everest Base Camp

There are two base camps on Mount Everest, on opposite sides of the mountains: **South Base Camp** is in Nepal at an altitude of 5,364 metres (17,598 ft) (28°0'26"N 86°51'34"E), while **North Base Camp** is in China at 5,150 metres (16,900 ft) (28°8'29"N 86°51'5"E).^{[1][2][3]}

The base camps are rudimentary campsites at the base of Mount Everest that are used by mountain climbers during their ascent and descent. They are also visited by hikers. South Base Camp is used when climbing via the southeast ridge, while North Base Camp is used when climbing via the northeast ridge.^[4]

Supplies are shipped to the South Base Camp by porters, and with the help of animals, usually yaks. The North Base Camp is accessed by a paved road that branches from China National Highway 318. Climbers typically rest at base camp for several days for acclimatization, to reduce the risk of altitude sickness

Design of modern motor cars



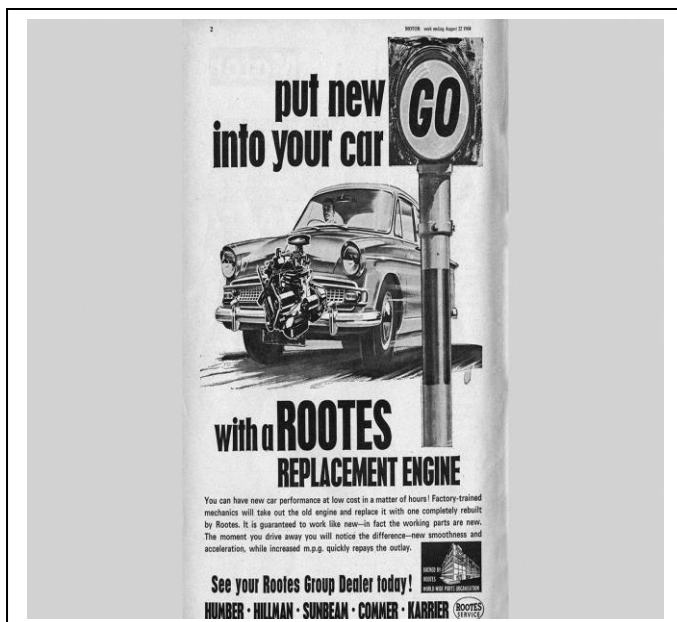
Our speaker Alistair Patrick, started with his apprenticeship in 1978 with Pressed Steel Fisher (Cowley), to his retirement in 2009 from Jaguar Land rover (JLR), via British Leyland, Rover Group and BMW. Alistair spent over 40 years in Jaguar Land Rover in its various guises including British Leyland and being part of the Ford Motor Company. His talk covered such models from the modest Mini Metro to the prestigious saloon in the form of the Jaguar XJ.

In 2022 world production of new cars was approx. 85 million vehicles, and the profit margin was typically between 6 – 8%. This profit must be viewed against the average time to design and launch a new model of 40 months, which could cost up to £1 billion. A massive investment and a major problem for the company if the new model doesn't sell well across all its markets.

To illustrate the point about acceptance in its designated markets, Alistair cited the example of the Jaguar XJ6 which was introduced in 1968 which sold well in the USA and at the time was one of the best-looking cars on the road. The car underwent progressive development culminating in the XJ which ceased development in 2009. However, this late model XJ failed to sell well in the USA because the marketing team had missed the change in tastes with the market looking for a different style of car along the lines of Sport Utility Vehicles (SUV). The model was superseded by the all new and completely restyled XJ which was unveiled in 2009.

Alistair's interesting talk was very well received, leading to a very lively question and answer session at the end.

Ashby Martin



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The Scent of Blood

The first attempt by a professional police force to employ dogs in an investigation was a total failure. Frustrated by their inability to catch the notorious Jack the Ripper, in 1889 London's Metropolitan Police borrowed a pair of blood hounds, Barnaby and Burgho and experimented with their scent following abilities.

When the force couldn't decide whether to use the dogs and failed to pay for their hire, the disgruntled owner took them back. Unfortunately no one told the investigating officers.

When another grisly murder was discovered, the police waited two hours for the non-existent bloodhounds before examining the crime scene.

Ten years later, the police in the Belgian city of Ghent became the first to deploy dogs in an organized and effective way.

**My Wife called me
upstairs and said
she was putting a
black lace number.
Brilliant, I love
Agadoo!**

**I've spent a fortune on
crayons, charcoal pencils
and paper. Now I'm
worried I might be
overdrawn !**

**I now know how
it will all end
for me.....
One of my kid's
will unplug my
life support to
charge their
phone....** 🧑 🗣️

Optical illusion



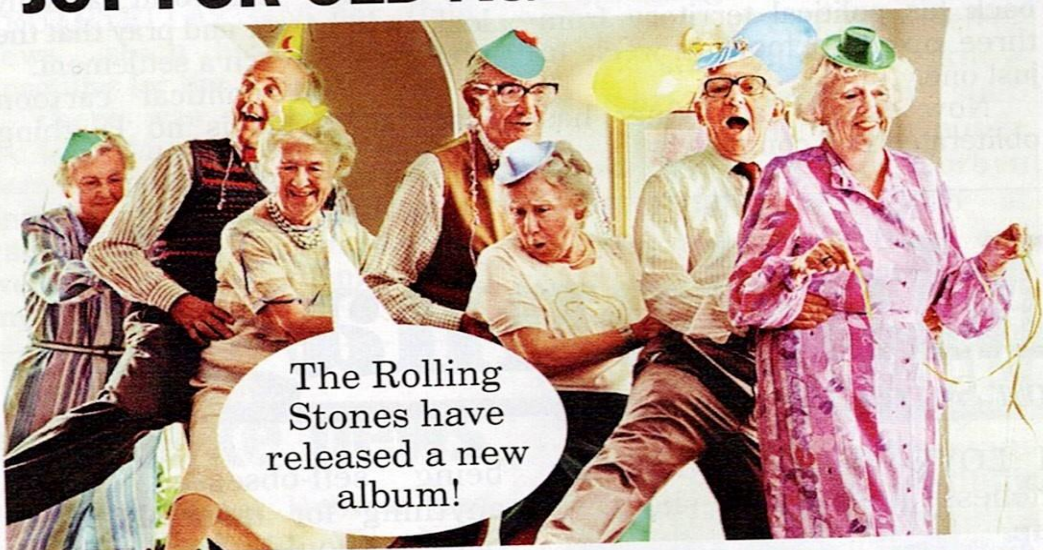


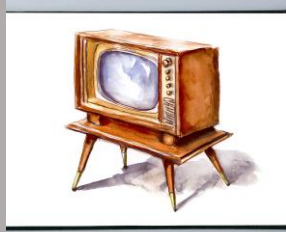
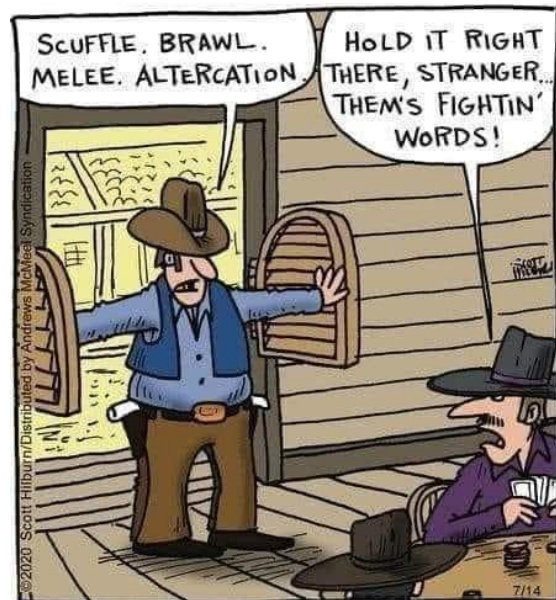
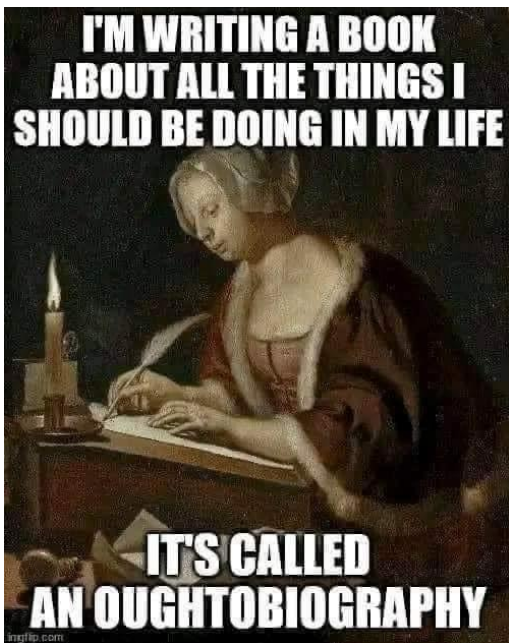
Not so much a name.. more like instructions if something goes wrong

A man decided to do something for the community and took his portable keyboard into to the local hospital. After telling jokes and singing songs at patients' bedsides, he said farewell and said "I hope you all get better."

One elderly gentleman replied, "I hope you get better, too."

JOY FOR OLD AGE PENSIONERS





Just sat down to watch embarrassing bodies. First up was an old fat bloke sat on a chair.....It was at that point I realised I hadn't turned it on.

PUB LUNCHES 2024



Paul Dodd now has some volunteers to share the task of arranging these and is now keeping a **List of the Willing**. If you would like to join this list, please contact him. February and March 2024 are already covered, for which many thanks to Chris Lathan. The job isn't particularly onerous or difficult once you've sorted out what attended really want as opposed to what they ask for!



Sir Peter Markham Scott

On Tuesday 24th October 2023 we were provided with a talk entitled *“The life of an incredible man – A short history of Sir Peter Scott”*, presented by Jackie Harris from the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust (WWT) based at Slimbridge.

Due to a technical issue, the slide presentation for the talk was unavailable but Jackie revised her talk into a “question and answer” session about Sir Peter Scott and the work of the WWT.

Peter Scott was the only son of Robert Falcon Scott, famously known as “Scott of the Antarctic”. Peter was born on 14th September 1909, the day after his father announced that he intended to make an expedition to the South Pole. The failure of the expedition is well documented but in his final letter before his death in Antarctica, Robert Scott requested that his wife should “make the boy interested in natural history if you can; it is better than games”.

Peter attended Trinity College, Cambridge, where he initially studied Natural History before switching to Art. He became known for painting wildlife, particularly birds. Although he went on to become well known for his involvement in broadcasting and conservation, he stated that his “paid job” was being an artist. Peter designed the Panda logo that is synonymous with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

Peter was also a keen sportsman and represented Great Britain at the 1936 Olympics in sailing. In addition, he was also skilled in ice skating and was, for many years, a wildfowler. It was through wildfowling that he developed a deep understanding of birds. In the mid-1950’s Peter was introduced to Gliding and later became a British champion.

During WW2 Peter became a decorated officer in the Royal Navy, being mentioned in Dispatches several times and being awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) and Bar.

Peter’s involvement with Slimbridge began after the War, in December 1945, when he visited the site hoping to see a lesser white fronted goose amongst and expected flock of 4000 white fronted geese. He actually spotted two lesser white fronted geese, which was quite remarkable as the only previous siting in England had been in the 1890’s. The sitings were verified and formally attributed to Peter.

Peter was particularly attracted to the Victorian Duck Decoy, which at the time was in a state of disrepair. The Duck Decoy had been used to entrap ducks which would subsequently be killed for food. Peter realised that if the ducks could be entrapped and ringed, then it would be possible to subsequently track their movements.

The Severn Wildfowl Trust (now the WWT) was founded in 1946 and restoration work on the Duck Decoy started in that year. The restored Duck Decoy has helped with the plotting of migration patterns around Europe for 12 species of birds.

Surprisingly Peter continued to be a wildfowler until 1953, while at the same time being heavily involved in conservation work through the Trust.

Peter was knighted in 1973 and died in Bristol in August 1989.

Further questions from the group then led onto Flamingoes, and we learned that there are now 5 species of flamingo at Slimbridge, and some of the birds (Andean flamingoes) arrived in the 1960s as adult birds and are still alive. Also, all flamingoes have pink plumage, due to their diet, even though some birds have very pale pink plumage that could be mistaken for white.

We then moved on to Beswick Swans (the logo of the WWT), which breed in Russia and then migrate in large numbers to Slimbridge, amongst other places. It was during a particularly large gathering of the birds at Slimbridge in 1963 that it was discovered the birds had unique facial markings. This has allowed individual birds to be identified and tracked as well as family groupings. The swans are reducing in numbers due to being shot for food, particularly in Russia, and lose numbers of birds on their migratory routes due to increasing urbanisation.

Slimbridge has also been involved in the Great Crane project whereby cranes have been re-introduced to parts of the UK after a 400 year absence. Some birds were hand reared at Slimbridge and have since returned there, which remains a mystery as to how that happened.

Further discussion took place about the role of the WWT. Birds are not generally bred unless they can be relocated in the wild, be that in the UK or globally.

Although Slimbridge is probably the best known site, there are 9 other WWT sites in the UK. The Severn estuary is considered a very important wetland as the mud is rich in nutrients for waterfowl. The WWT is very well known internationally for their conservation efforts. A number of the UK sites have birds that can't fly away, either in aviaries or because their wings are clipped, and therefore are categorised as "zoos". This is particularly important financially as there is a VAT benefit to being classified as a zoo.

Impressively, Jackie delivered her presentation without any reference to notes or visual aids. She is clearly very passionate about the WWT establishment at Slimbridge and very knowledgeable about Peter Scott. Her talk was thoroughly enjoyed by all present.

Chris Yates



What is being British all about?

- ❖ Drive a German Car
- ❖ Goes to an Irish Themed Pub
- ❖ Drinking Belgian Beer
- ❖ Having an Indian Takeaway
- ❖ Sitting on a Swedish Sofa
- ❖ Watching a Japanese TV
- ❖ Watching American Films
- ❖ And all the while being suspicious of anything Foreign

The perfect summary of what it means to be British

WHERE AM I ?



**Thanks to all those who
submitted articles.
Ed**

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