

NEWSLETTER



NEWENT & DISTRICT PROBUS CLUB



JANUARY 2024

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Hoping you all had an enjoyable Christmas, how the past year has flown by, and we look forward to a pleasant and healthy 2024. We lost a few members this year and we remember them, but we have gained a few more too. I hear we have some more new members lined up as well. A successful Christmas lunch at the Hatherley Manor Hotel was well attended and enjoyed by all. After the Christmas lunch, I attended with Jane the Newent Town Civic Carol Service, at St Marys Church. It was the second time in a day I got to wear my Probus Chain of Office. Afterwards we enjoyed mince pies and mulled wine. We have now settled into our regular meetings at Gorsley and have some very interesting talks lined up. A new roof has been fitted and I believe a new heating system has been installed. While this was going on we moved to Newent Community Centre for a couple of meetings. As I write this letter storm Gerrit has arrived, strong winds and rain. I must take my two Labradors for their walk; they enjoy the wet and rain. I have Parish Council duties tomorrow, looking at improving the play area surface in our village, hoping the weather will be better by then. I am looking forward to our meetings in the coming weeks. We have a quiz and a skittles evening lined up and of course our pub lunches too. Finally, I thank you all for your support in 2023 and I wish you all a peaceful and healthy New Year and look forward to our next meeting in January.

Best wishes

Mike



At Gorsley

**TUESDAY
9 JANUARY 2024**



Susan Humphrey

**“Nevelle Chamberlain
- my Grandad”**

TUESDAY 23 JANUARY 2024

David Keen & Frank Skilbeck

“The art of making and flying large model aircraft”



Members enjoying our Christmas Lunch at Hatherly Manor Hotel





“AND A JOLLY GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL”

“The best yet” one guest was heard to say, as she departed the Probus Christmas lunch, suitably refreshed. Held once again at the Hatherley Manor hotel some five miles north of Gloucester, 41 members, wives and partners socialised over a drink or three in the palatial surroundings of this former stately home. As nice as the meal was, it is the sense of occasion that is the “clincher” in these events and this year’s was no exception.

Pre-booked from an extensive menu, members enjoyed both traditional and non-traditional Christmas fare and good conversation while the serving staff attended to our every need.

Our Vice Chairman, Fraser asked us to raise our glasses and toast those members sadly no longer with us, a total of six, which is the most in one year in club history, a very sad statistic.

We were entertained by Kelvin who gave us some unusual festive historical events of previous years and of course the event wouldn’t be the same without Fraser’s usual amusing (some very funny) stories.

A raffle rounded off the proceedings, with most items donated by members of the club.

The Hotel generously donated 3 sets of a “Dinner for Two”. With many other prizes being won, the proceedings stretched almost to lighting up time, although no one complained, not wanting to brave the weather and the gloom outside.

Our thanks must go to Kelvin for all the hard work in organising the event and to the Hatherley Manor staff for looking after us so well.

Peter Hayes

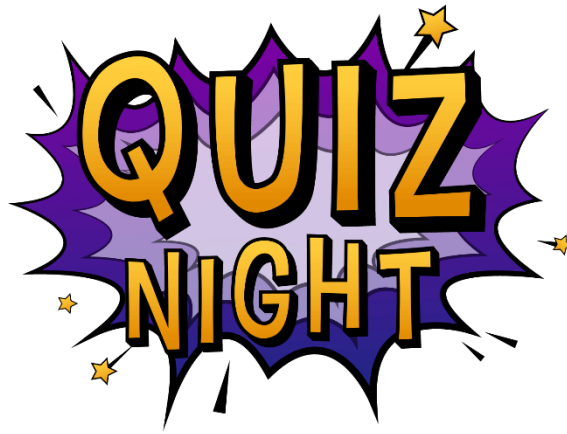


It was with huge pleasure that our chairman Mike Townsend presented Peter Hayes with Honorary Membership of our club. Peter recently became a Nonagenarian, our third oldest club member.

During his membership Peter has been a loyal and supportive member within the club, serving as Secretary for seven years and a regular scribe of articles for the newsletter.

“Peter gave thanks for the very nice gesture, presenting him with, “which he said, was a quite undeserved” award. He said the kind words meant a lot to both him and Margaret.”

Being part of PROBUS fosters a sense of camaraderie among its members. It provides a supportive and inclusive environment where individuals can enjoy each other's company and share experiences. Our activities contribute to a well-rounded social experience for members.



Probus Quiz Night

*Kings Arms
Newent*

MONDAY 22 JANUARY 2024
7pm

Teams of FOUR

Prize for the winners

Food included

£17 per person



After being married for thirty years, a wife asked her husband to describe her.

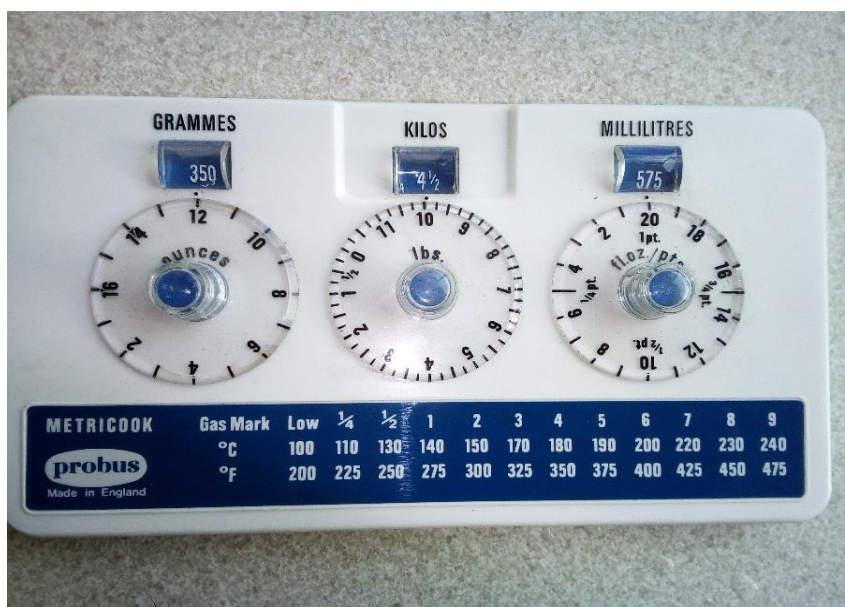
He looked at her for a while, then said “You’re A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K” She asks... “What does that mean?”

He said, “Adorable, beautiful, Cute, Delightful, Elegant, Foxy, Gorgeous, Hot”

She smiled happily and said, ”Oh, that’s so lovely... What about I, J, K”

He said “ I’m just kidding!”

The swelling on his eye is going down and the doctor is fairly optimistic about saving his family jewels!!



Who remembers this?

A BAD DAY AT THE OFFICE



I'm sure I am not alone when, upon hearing of air traffic delays, I get a sense of relief when it is blamed on anyone but NATS. However, when news of ATC delays hit the headlines on Monday 28th August, one of the busiest days of the year, there was no such relief; the blame was quickly attributed to NATS. The incident was resolved safely, but not before significant air traffic delays had built up. Whilst investigations continue, NATS has produced an interim report (*available at*

<https://publicapps.caa.co.uk/modalapplication.aspx?appid=11&mode=detail&id=12321>) and this is a brief summary of what happened on that "bad day at the office". The incident involved NATS' Flight Plan Reception Suite Automated (FPRS-A), which has been operational since 2018, and which has processed over 15 million flight plans in service - this is presumably the source of the media statement that this was a "1 in 15 million occurrence." The sequence of events started with a fully compliant ICAO flight plan being routinely sent from Eurocontrol's flight planning system to NATS' FPRS-A at 08:30 on the 28th, around 4 hours before the aircraft was due to enter UK airspace. A flight plan contains information on the aircraft and its flight, and in particular, the routing information. Although the significance was not understood at the time, this flight plan was lacking certain way-point detail, and the route contained two way-points with the same designator (name). Such duplication is still allowed under ICAO regulations provided the way-points are widely spaced; in this case the two waypoints (both outside UK airspace) are around 4,000 miles apart and would not normally cause any confusion. FPRS-A routinely extracts the way-points for the route through UK airspace from the flight plan, including the entry and exit points into and out of UK airspace. In this case the entry point was extracted correctly but the exit point was absent from the flight plan. This is not unusual in over-flights, and FPRS-A will search the flight plan for the first way-point beyond the airspace boundary and substitute that for the exit point. However, the lack of way-point detail forced FPRS-A to use data from further out along the route than normal, and the way-point it extracted had the identical designator to the one earlier in the route. With two apparently identical, but geographically separate way-points, FPRS-A was unable to extract a valid UK portion of flight plan between these two points. To prevent the possibility of bad data being fed to ATC, FPRS-A is designed to fail safe, and hence the primary system reverted to maintenance mode and the back-up system went live, as it was designed to do. Bad Day at the Office!

However, being fed with the same flight plan, the back-up system came to the same conclusion and also reverted to maintenance mode and FPRS-A ground to a halt - the whole sequence taking just 20 seconds which must have been spectacular to see in System Control.

Due to the complexity of the problem, and the peculiarities of the error reporting, it took until 14:27 to fully restore the service, and it required the involvement of NATS' 1st and 2nd line support engineers, as well as the Technical Design team and the system manufacturer, Frequentis. To cover routine system outages and maintenance, NATS' systems are designed to hold up to 4 hours of processed flight plans, and flight plans can also be entered manually (although at a much reduced rate).

However the loss of FPRS-A threatened to exceed the 4-hour buffer period, and flow restrictions were applied over all UK airspace from 11:00; the restrictions being finally lifted at 18:03. This resulted in large numbers of delayed or cancelled flights on the 28th and beyond, as the airlines struggled to recover from the disruption, it was later estimated that around 200,000 passengers were affected by the system failure. The NATS report indicates that there was no evidence of a cyber- attack as I'm sure many suspected at the time and operational safety was maintained throughout - something which was thankfully taken for granted by the travelling public and the media. As in all such cases, this incident was prompted by the combination of a particular set of circumstances, each of which in isolation would not cause a problem. In this case it was the duplicate way-point designators, the lack of waypoint detail in the flight plan, and the manner in which FPRS-A was programmed to cope with such flight plan exceptions. This scenario is typical of the Swiss Cheese model of accident causation. If you are interested, there is a nice explanation of the model on Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swiss_cheese_model, Steps have been taken to ensure that this and similar sequences of events, will no longer cause problems and there will likely be longer term changes arising from recommendations from the ongoing investigations. However the business implications continue to resonate. Following the incident, many airlines stated that compensation should be available to help offset the costs they incurred as a result of the air traffic delays. Whilst no such mechanism exists at the moment, recent announcements that the CAA is allowing NATS to raise its air traffic charges have gone down like "a lead balloon" in the airline industry and will no doubt re-open the compensation debate. Interesting times!

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John Martin

Key to Acronyms:

ICAO: International Civil Aviation Organisation: Based in Montreal, responsible for setting the standards for every aspect of international civil aviation.

CAA: Civil Aviation Authority: Based in London and responsible for regulating all aspects of civil aviation in UK, including airworthiness of civil aircraft/aircrew/licensing etc.

NATS: National Air Traffic Services: Organisation responsible for providing the Air Traffic Management facilities throughout UK airspace, including air traffic control centres, radar stations, communications systems and flight plan processing etc.



therussellshaw

2d ...

Busy, cold night at Stonehenge as we move the stones backwards an hour...



**Want to know what
offends a manipulator?
You standing up for yourself.**

@RamblingMinds1

Jack, walked into a sports bar around 9:58 pm. He sat down next to a blonde girl at the bar and stared up at the TV as the 10:00 news came on. The news crew was covering a story of a man on a ledge of a large building preparing to jump.

The blonde looked at Jack and said, "Do you think he'll jump?"

Jack says, "You know what, I bet he will."

The blonde replied, "Well, I bet he won't."

Jack placed £20 on the bar and said, "You're on!"

Just as the blonde placed her money on the bar, the man jumped off the ledge, falling to his death.

The blonde girl was very upset and handed her £20 to Jack, saying, "Fair's fair... Here's your money."

Jack replied, "I can't take your money, I saw this earlier on the 5 o'clock news and knew he would jump."

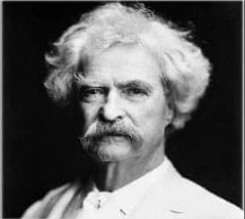
The blonde replied, "I did too; but I didn't think he'd do it again."

Jack took the money!

Got the new Pensioners Satnav. Not only does it tell me how to get there, it also tells me why I wanted to go in the first place.



Remember being able to go to a bank and do this?



“Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.”

— Mark Twain

Eat whatever you like because...

- * The inventor of the treadmill died at the age of 54.
- * The inventor of gymnastics died at age 57.
- * The world bodybuilding champion died at age 41.
- * The best footballer in the world, Maradona, died at 60


And then-

- * The KFC inventor died at 94.
- * The inventor of Nutella died at 88
- * The inventor of Hennessy died at 98

How did doctors come to the conclusion that exercise prolongs life, when

- * The rabbit is always jumping but it lives for around 2 years, and
- * the turtle that doesn't exercise at all, lives over 200 years.

*** **So, rest, chill, eat, drink, and enjoy life**

 Daily Dose of Inspiration
Quotes by Catherine

I now know how it will all end for me.....

One of my kid's will unplug my life support to charge their phone.... 🧑🏻 🗣️



Where am I?

YOU COULDN'T MAKE IT UP

MY COMPUTER AFTER I FAILED
THE CAPTCHA 13 TIMES IN A ROW



No doubt, when trying to access an internet site, we have all struggled with those annoying questions which are intended to prove you are human and not one of those automated “bots” we hear so much about. They generally comprise a number of pictures in a frame and you are asked to select those which contain parts of a specific image, for example a cat. Other examples have distorted text and you are asked to re-type the word. Researchers at the University of California have recently been looking into the performance of these “Captcha” questions - apparently **Captcha stands for Completely Automated Public Turing** test to tell Computers and Humans Apart. (Who knew) They have been comparing the responses from both humans and Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems and it now seems that humans are more prone to making more mistakes, and take longer than AI systems, when answering the Captcha questions . So the more cynical amongst us might conclude that robots are now better at proving they are human, than humans are.

John Martin



**Thanks to all who
assisted with
publication and
submitted articles.
Ed**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR
Keep your stories and jokes coming**

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are not subject to any copyright issues.