



Pro-Biz



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News from Teddington and Hampton Probus

March 2019

ON TOP OF HIS BRIEF

Our guest speaker, and candidate for the (Peter) Turner Prize 2019 was legal eagle **Peter Thompson, retired barrister and solicitor.**

Introduced by Chairman Chris Pollard at the Club's February Luncheon Meeting, Peter delivered a standout presentation titled '**You The Jury**' based on a case in which he was defence counsel (with the defendant's name changed). As a barrister during the 1970s Peter defended 'Matthew James' charged with supplying cars transporting large quantities of illegal drugs. The case was transferred to the Old Bailey from the magistrates' courts which deal with 96% of all criminal cases. In passing, Peter touched on the vexed question of raising the magistracy's retirement age, much to the approval of the Club's three retired JPs. A jury would have been empanelled, with Peter allowed up to seven challenges of jurors he felt were likely to be unduly prejudiced against his client. He noted that it was only since 1974 that women were entitled to sit on a jury on exactly equal terms to men. He also cited various arcane practices for forecasting the verdict which he said were far from infallible. In this case the outcome was favourable, Matthew James being found 'not guilty' which Peter was quick to point out, does not necessarily equate with 'innocent'. Peter concluded by remarking that he had not noticed any members falling asleep, and rearranging the Probus acronym to read *Prostate Removed; Other Bits Under Suspicion* – and we thought he was our learned friend !!



The dissertation, enlivened by a continuous thread of wicked humour, gave rise to some searching questions, following which, our man from the Met, Howard Martin proposed a succinct vote of thanks. The response made clear members' acknowledgement that Peter had acquitted (groan) himself far more than capably.

(Jim Woodford)

NEW MEMBERS

Since the publication of the Membership List in May we are pleased to welcome two new members to the Club.

They are: John Morrison, a retired Civil Servant who lives in Hampton with his wife Judith, and Sir James Birrell (call me Jim!) a retired Chief Executive of the Nationwide Building Society who lives in Teddington with his wife Margaret.

Welcome to the Club gentlemen. We hope you both enjoy your membership of Teddington and Hampton Probus.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Flyers are out today for the visit to Hendon RAF Museum on 9th May. This is a self-drive event and we look forward to seeing you there. Please also remember to put in your diaries the Probus BBQ on Tuesday 25 June. In past years we have had generally excellent weather with a large turnout, so please support the Club and those members who work extremely hard to make the event a success.

Reminder that next month is the A.G.M. Please do your utmost to attend this important date in the Club's calendar.

WALK FROM THE CRICKETERS, EPSOM COMMON, 5th MARCH

Our trip to Epsom Common was greeted by a beautiful spring morning, with the daffodils up all around the green in front of the pub. 17 walkers were assembled, including Malcolm and Marilyn O'Connor who made a dramatic arrival in their Bentley limo. There is no car park at the pub, and the local lanes are quite narrow, so it was a treat to see Malcolm parking up his monster car. The walkers were treated to two very interesting factoids associated with Epsom Common, one being that the Common sits on a 200ft deep layer of clay which in turns doesn't help with the drainage, the other being that there was once a sulphurous well on the Common which gave rise to the famous Epsom Salts. Due to the recent rain it was decided to stick to the well-built outer path around the Common, thereby saving our boots and lower legs getting covered in the Epsom goo. We were missing Denzil, Eileen, and Finn for this walk, but we did have John and Judy Morrison with their dog Freddie in tow to make up. Freddie has not got such long legs as Finn so is more susceptible to mud splatter, he also refuses to drink from puddles, so he has bottled water tipped into his own collapsible bowl, a very posh dog indeed. You may remember years ago the question being asked "what would we all be doing when automation had taken over most jobs", and the walk around Epsom Common will give you the answer that is we will be walking each other's dogs, as there were many professional dog walkers out hard at work. A fairly easy flat walk was completed without drama as there were no stiles to cross, and we found ourselves back at The Cricketers dead on midday. We there met with 10 Probus diners. Luckily we had eagle-eyed Bill Rawcliffe with us, who spotted that by filling in a small card which applied only on Tuesdays we could receive a 25% reduction on the meal price. This was enthusiastically taken up, and a very pleasant lunch ensued.

(Keith McArthur)



It's Joke Time!

Finally the fourth ape!
He is the sum of the first
three: He sees nobody, hears
nobody and speaks to nobody.



Scotch with two drops of water

A lady goes to the bar on a cruise ship and orders a Scotch with two drops of water. As the bartender gives her the drink she says, 'I'm on this cruise to celebrate my 80th birthday and it's today...' The bartender says, 'Well, since it's your birthday, I'll buy you a drink. In fact, this one is on me.'

As the woman finishes her drink, the woman to her right says, 'I would like to buy you a drink, too.' The old woman says, 'Thank you. Bartender, I want a Scotch with two drops of water.' 'Coming up,' says the bartender.

As she finishes that drink, the man to her left says, 'I would like to buy you one, too.' The old woman says, 'Thank you. Bartender, I want another Scotch with two drops of water.' 'Coming right up,' the bartender says.

As he gives her the drink, he says, 'Ma'am, I'm dying of curiosity. Why the Scotch with only two drops of water?'

The old woman replies, 'Sonny, when you're my age, you've learned how to hold your liquor. Holding your water, however, is a whole other issue.'

FUTURE EVENTS:

Tuesday 2 April: Pub Lunch and Walk –The Dolphin, Betchworth– Organiser - Keith McArthur

Sun 14 – 18 April: H.L.P.C. Coach Trip to the Lake District

Tuesday 16 April: Club Luncheon –A. G. M. No Speaker