

Sutton Park Probus Club (Founded in 1998)



Web Site: <http://suttonparkprobus.wordpress.com>

Issue 137

March 2010

The Way We Were from 1936 - 1954

The Club welcomed Jim Parkes to talk about his early life. He provided excellent display material to support his talk. In the Thirties the structure of society was very much different to way it is now.. There were quite defined lines drawn up between the various social classes. In present times there is more 'blurring' within society.

Jim was born (1936) in a tenement block of houses on the Newton Road in Great Barr where six toilets were shared between 80 people. Initially there was no gas or electricity and water was obtained from a communal well. Washing was carried out in wash houses. The well was eventually replaced as the water had become tainted. (The property no longer exists being replaced by the present day dual carriageway).

Being born on St Swithen's day Jim decided to keep his middle name secret for many years. (A wise choice as Swithen would surly have provoked attention by his peers !!) The men worked in the local Handsworth colliery and his Grandfather was a blacksmith - this business existed from 1740 until 1949.

There was a great deal of respect shown between the social classes.. Personal pride played a great part in their lives too.. Corporal punishment was administered on occasion.

As war-time approached the blackout was introduced, contributing heavily towards accidents. Many children were evacuated away from their own homes, sometimes into an environment where they were badly treated but not in all cases. During the war there were many trips to the communal air-raid shelters. After the war there was noticeable change in social attitudes..

From his humble beginnings John prospered, becoming the prime-mover in raising over six million pounds for various charities, earning a well-deserved MBE for his services.. He still works as a magistrate and has given talks in a great many countries in his attempts to raise funds. He still has the silver spoon in his possession from his christening—a rare event for those days.

Terry Booth gave an appreciative vote of thanks, which was well supported by the members.

Tony Ferneyhough



Long Walk, 1st March

Probus once again bucked the trend of wintry, cold and wet weather. Alfred must have a direct line to higher powers (or a connection through Roy Wilson) because he set a Monday, instead of our usual Thursday, for this month's walk.



Lazing in glorious sunshine !

We gathered at Much Wenlock under a clear blue sky, adding a spring to all our (first) steps.

Much Wenlock, a lovely town in Shropshire, has some really interesting old buildings and we set off through the town and by the ruins of the old Priory, soon reaching typical Shropshire countryside, with a few undulations giving rewarding views. Barry Gill was our leader and he gave a master class in risk assessment; from the thorough recce he and Carol had done, he was even able to forewarn us of the location of badger burrows near to the path, in case we disappeared! Geoff was not quite so lucky when he turned round to warn us

of one muddy section and gave a great demonstration of the tumbles he had been watching from the Winter Olympics. The warm sunshine, which we enjoyed when picnicking, highlighted masses of snowdrops, to brighten the last leg of the walk.

A most enjoyable day, made even better for the ladies when they spotted a rail of bargain clothes outside one of the shops in town. Eventually, we managed to get back to the cars, where we gave many thanks to Barry and Carol for a great day out.

Rod Crowley

SPPC Dining at the Walsall College of Food

On a cool Spring evening approximately sixty members, wives and sweethearts travelled to see the newly built College of Food and enjoy an evening arranged by Dennis Rose.



Quite a few members arrived early for a short tour which was rather disappointing, consisting of a walk across the courtyard to see a modern gym and did not include the main educational facilities. The new building was thoughtfully designed being very impressive and well-justifying the £56 million spent.

The first view of the restaurant showed a colour scheme of grey and green, more in keeping with a smart canteen. The large TVs showed continuous still pictures of nature. We obtained pre-dinner drinks beforehand. Once seated our orders were taken by smiley faced young students\waitresses eager to please.

The feeling amongst some of the members was somewhat downbeat. Although the food presentation was excellent the finished product did need some improvement plus there were strict limitations on the selection sweets.

Although the waitresses did their best, some of the service was slow with our illustrious President's table not receiving their starter until most had finished their main course.. There was plenty of time to catch up with friends between courses.

Overall a reasonable night out.. Remembering that these students are still in training the tutors will be able to assist them in improving their techniques.

Our sincere thanks go to Dennis for arranging the evening.

David Wallis



Blenheim Palace via Bladon 20th May 2010

Leaving Foley Road at 8.45, we should arrive at the small village pub in Bladon known as the White House for coffee at 11.00. A walk across the road will lead to the churchyard where Winston Churchill was buried.

Blenheim is 5 minutes away and we should arrive there about 12.15.

Bring your chairs for a picnic as there is ample room near to the coach park.

There are restaurants providing hot and cold meals if required.

We shall leave for home at 5.00pm. The cost is £24

Brian Mallett

Treasure Hunt

This annual event which is a fun day out and well supported. It will be on **Thursday May 6th** terminating at the Boar's Head, Station Road, Sudbury, Derbyshire DE6 5GX.

The cost of the lunch, two courses, plus your car entrance, is £10.

More information in the next Newsletter.

Jim Bailey\John Cheal

Probus Teaser.

Three Probus members go into a coffee shop and have refreshments. The waitress brings them a bill for £25. Each puts a £10 note on the table and the waitress takes away £30. She brings back five individual £1 coins as change. Each member takes a single £1 coin and the other two are given to her as a tip.

After she'd gone one member says to the other "That's strange, we all put down a £10 note and had £1 change so the cost of the refreshments to each of us was £9. Three times £9 is £27 and we gave her a £2 tip making £29. As we started with £30 where is the missing £1?"

See me next month if you need an answer! **Harry Medcalf**

April Pub Amble

Date: Thursday 8th April
Venue: The Horns Inn, Slitting Mill, Rugeley, WS15 2UW
Start time: 10.30 am
Lunch: 12.15/30
Lunch Cost: £10
Directions: Take the A51 from Lichfield to Rugeley. At island in Rugeley centre go straight on. At next traffic lights turn left signposted Penkridge After 0.7 miles fork left to Slitting Mill. 0.3 miles. The Horns Inn is on left.
Walk: Around Cannock Chase 3mls long. One 50yd hill, otherwise easy walking.
Organiser: Geoff Silvester.

All walkers **must** wear stout shoes or walking boots (preferred)

Please inform **Roger Phillips** if unable to attend a General Meeting by the **Sunday** before that Meeting.

If you are unable to carry out the Vote of Thanks or the Newsletter Report please contact **David Wallis**

Please notify **Rod Crowley** if you are unavailable for the Kitchen Rota well before the General Meeting

Date	Event	Speaker\Coordinator	Vote Of Thanks	Newsletter Report
Thur 25 Mar	Malaysian Adventure	Gabriella	Derek Smith	Graham Jones
Thur 8th Apr	Pub Amble - Slitting Mill	Geoff Silvester	Start at 1030 am	
Mon 12th Apr	Computer Club (please bring laptops)	Tony Ferneyhough	Start at 2.00 pm	
Thur 15th Apr	RAF Hendon by coach (£10)	Keith Keeley	Foley Road East at 8.30 am	
Thur 22 Apr	Annual General Meeting			Keith Keeley
Thur 29th Apr	Long Walk Badby -- Northants	Geoff Silvester	Meet at Roy's 0930 am	
Thur 6th May	Car Treasure Hunt (details TBA)	John Cheal		
Mon 10th May	Computer Club (please bring laptops)	Tony Ferneyhough	Start at 2.00 pm	
Thur 13th May	Pub Amble (details TBA)	Roy Willson		
Thur 20th May	Coach trip to Blenheim Palace (£24)	Brian Mallett	Foley Road East at 0830 am	
Thur 27 May	A Picture of Afghanistan	Dr Javed Hashemi	Paul Beaumont	Mike Lock

Kitchen Rota Thur 22nd Apr

Don Cooper
John Booth
Fred Ditchfield
Roy Galloway
David Roy
Rod Crowley-Venue Secretary

There is now additional
 information on our web site
 for those who may need help
 with the various aspects of
 computing.
 At the next Computer Club
 meeting we will discuss
 emails.

Kitchen Rota Thur 25th Mar

Bill Arnott
Paul Beaumont
Jim Bailey
Terry Booth
John Buckland
Rod Crowley-Venue Secretary

Bowls Day at the Windmill, Gentleshaw

Please make a note in your diary that this event will be held on **Wednesday 16th June**
from 10.00 until 1700.

Mike Lock will be giving details nearer the time.

Anticipated Lake District Visit (?)



Thursday 18th March was a day many looked forward to, as a club trip to the lake district was in prospect. However Chasewater near Cannock was the final destination for our latest Pub amble and 32 brave souls met at the Uxbridge Arms on a day which the weather forecasters had promised rain, needless to say it did not arrive as our venerable walk leader Roy Willson performed his usual magic, producing an excellent day. There was a 'fight' for car parking spaces. Ivor arrived in his new vehicle refusing to park near anyone else !! Double parking was the order of the day on the small car park causing chaos when leaving.

The walk was promoted as four miles around the Chasewater lake started very well with a pleasant stroll through fields of Primroses and Snowdrops and as we eagerly approached the lake many hurried up to the dam to view the wildlife on the lake.. Unfortunately the water had been drained for repairs and so a vista unfolded before us of just pools of mud and hardly any wildlife. Nevertheless our hardy party continued around the perimeter which appeared to get longer and longer. Val announced that she was only going to walk halfway but could not decide where to turn back and so completed the whole journey !! Rita and David, only two days back from Thailand started to feel Jet lagged. We were all pleased to see the Pub at the end of an interesting amble

It was good to see Jim and Sylvia and John Cheal on our return plus one visitor, Jill Irish, declared what a successful day it had been . On leaving the pub the rain arrived.

Our thanks to Roy and Mary for another interesting club event.

John Buckland.



This is a quiz for people who know everything!

I found out in a hurry that I didn't.

These are not trick questions..

They are straight questions with straight answers

1. Name the one sport in which neither the spectators nor the participants know the score or the leader until the contest ends.
2. What famous North American landmark is constantly moving backward?
3. Of all vegetables, only two can live to produce on their own for several growing seasons. All other vegetables must be replanted every year. What are the only two perennial vegetables?
4. What fruit has its seeds on the outside?
5. In many wine shops you can buy pear brandy, with a real pear inside the bottle. The pear is whole and ripe, and the bottle is genuine; it hasn't been cut in any way. How did the pear get inside the bottle?
6. Only three words in standard English begin with the letters 'dw' and they are all common words. Name two of them.
7. There are 14 punctuation marks in English grammar. Can you name at least half of them?
8. Name the only vegetable or fruit that is never sold frozen, canned, processed, cooked, or in any other form except fresh.
9. Name 6 or more things that you can wear on your feet beginning with the letter 'S.'

Answers next month !!