ALL THE PRESIDENTS MEN

On Thursday February 28th, Twelve past presidents of the club. gathered by invitation of our current President Brian Spencer at the Terrace Restaurant for a celebratory meal to mark fifteen years of Sutton Park Probus Club. Also invited was Rod Crowley our vice President. We were asked to attend wearing dinner jackets and to be prepared to make a five minute speech on any topic of our choice. The meal was excellent and the wine flowed until we all started to worry about what to say.

The job was decided by a draw controlled by the senior past president in attendance Derek Smith.

First out of the hat was yours truly , and out came my carefully prepared golf story. Next came Barry Parsonage who was not allowed to tell his snake story owing to a clash so he ended up with a monologue about our Albert and his ferry trip for only tuppence per trip. Next came Richard Humphrey and his talk entitled the Enigma of soldiers pushing against their weight when called upon by their country. Next came Brian Spencer telling the tale of Peter the snake hissing in the pit. Derek Smith then gave a verse by Noel Coward about Mad dogs and Englishmen going out in the midday sun, Selby Betts read a short piece by Robert Servis entitled The Shooting of Dan Magroo. Mike Lock read an ode to Sutton Park Probus club, which we suspect Yvonne had a strong input. Fred Nightingale told a series of jokes and puns to the chorus of "Bring back John Booth" Neil Crabb told a story of a train journey in which he turned out to be the central character !! Peter Gray was lost for words as his tale had already been told. Rod Crowley then told a tale of a Man at home suffering from the male menopause and experiencing Brewers droop (the mind boggles). John Cheal told a series of jokes then closed the evening with a vote of thanks to Brian for suggesting a splendid evening enjoyed by all present. **John Buckland**

This day in History

1910 - 1st seaplane, takes off from water at Martinques France (Henri Fabre)

1962 - Devastating 8 for 6 spell by Gibbs gives WI cricket victory over India

1964 - 1st pirate radio station near England (Radio Caroline)

Editor's Notes

Articles and or photos received will only be published for the current month if they reach me **no later than the Saturday before** publication at the monthly General Meeting. All other photos\articles will be published on the Club Website. Whilst it is understood that not all members have computers the preferred method of receiving articles\photos is by email. The number of pages in the Newsletter may vary and will be based on information supplied.

Articles should be restricted to **approximately of 250 words**. Articles will be edited, major changes by agreement with the member\author concerned.

Any opinions expressed within the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Committee.

The Publicity Officer **(Harry Medcalf)** may submit extracts of articles and photos to the local press.

xxx

Sutton Park Probus Club Newsletter

(Founded 1998)

President: Brian Spencer

No.173 **March 2013**

Members preparing for the back stage tour of the Garrick Theatre.

There are many more photos on our club website.

A POTTED HISTORY OF THE 20th CENTURY

How on earth do you condense 50 years of history into 45 minutes, or for that matter into 250 words for the Newsletter ? Well Martin Harrison made a brave attempt in doing this in the first of his illustrated talks, presenting a fascinating kaleidoscope of world events from 1900 to 1953. Some of these events combined to change the course history as well as the lives of half the world's population. Events in the 1940's and 50's are of course still fresh in the memories of our members, who took great delight in amending his script as well as bringing a new perspective to the battle of Jutland. I have a feeling he will be mindful of this this when he speaks to us again in March! Bearing in mind my limitations as well as those of this journal, I have chosen to follow specific trends in history as they unfolded down the decades.

That first half century witnessed the slow erosion of the British Empire and the pink that adorned so many school room maps. - Unbelievably there were 130 wars, rebellions or conflicts during that time, the British forces being involved in 17 (officially)including the two World Wars. - Wilber and Orville Wright made the first fixed wing man made flight in 1903, followed by Louis Bleriot flying the channel in 1909 and Charles Lindberg's epic 34 hour crossing of the Atlantic in 1927. Who would have remotely thought then that it would lead to world travel for the masses! - The first Rolls Royce was produced in 1904 followed by Henry Ford's Model "T" in 1908,and the first battle tank in 1915. Motor vehicle production escalated throughout the world following WW1, adding to the prosperity of the industrial nations. The new Ford 8 sold for just £99 in Britain in 1937, and in the same year oil was struck in Saudi Arabia. Petrol was then 1/7d per gallon it's now approaching £8!

Communication became a big influence. The telegraph was invented in 1910 leading to the trial of Dr Hawley Crippen and to the loss of the Lusitania in 1915. As a result of the tragic loss of the Titanic, the CQD Maritime Distress signal was mandatorily replaced by SOS. Following WW1 cat's whisker-crystal radio receivers with their yards of aerial started to appear in family living rooms, quickly followed by the first Marconi valve radio. Baird's first TV transmission was made in 1925, ultimately resulting in the 1953 Coronation being watched on perhaps a 9" Bush or a 12" Pye. Transatlantic phone calls were still via the operator and 32% of us were on party lines.

In 1913 the Suffragette Emily Davidson threw herself in front of the Kings horse, in 1919 Nancy Astor became our first Lady MP, and Queen Elizabeth ll was born in Bruton St, Mayfair on 21/4/1926. Eva Peron died aged just 33 in 1952, who can forget her shoes or Barbara Dickson singing" Don't cry for me Argentina"

There are so many more events to sieve through, but regretfully there's no space left for despots, dictators or the great depression, only wonder! Agatha Christie's " The Mouse Trap" opened in London's West End in 1952 and has had over 25'000 performances to date! **Neil Crabb.**

Where on earth is Huddlesford ?

There is always uncertainty with the weather on these days, but not with Mr. R. Wilson's walks (he did it again!!!). about 20 or more of us met at the old Plough Inn at the hamlet of Huddlesford for an amble of 3 miles through pleasant lanes and by the canal-side.

The friendly conversations were wide ranging as usual. Peter talked about a strange island off the Horn of Africa. Because of its position the island had been isolated for thousands of years producing its own unique flora and fauna. (very similar to the way the Galapagos Islands have evolved). You can see many photos and more description on the Club website. We heard that John Fellows was about to embark on a technological adventure! Some shared their recent holiday experiences.

We were expecting lots of muddy conditions but the going under foot was ok. (he did again didn't he!!). There was quite a lot of activity on the canal. Repair work, some plying through the still dark waters and others just taking life easy ! The walk time evaporated very quickly.

Arriving back at The Plough, which is an oldie worldie style Inn, with a landlord of very pleasant disposition. Single handedly he managed to look after 40 (including the non-walkers) of us very well, delivering all meals in a very short space of time! The landlord even found time to share a joke with some of us. It was really good to see Gwen back in circulation with Brian. The meals we ordered were of very good quality and very good value. 3 courses and coffee (he did again didn't he!!!) After the meal Rod gave a very humourous review of the day's activities. The whole event was most enjoyable, well done once again to our guardians for the day, Roy and Mary. **Jim Bailey**

BACKSTAGE AT THE GARRICK THEATRE

Adrian Jackson, Chief Executive and Artistic Director, was our host to peep behind the scenes at the Garrick Theatre.

After meeting up for coffee we were ushered into the Theatre where Adrian gave us a brief background to the building and its operation and then onto the stage itself to see life from the other side. From month long productions to weekly amateur dramatics, to rolling one off shows – the complexity was explained to our increasing amazement.

If you ever wanted a job that involved doing numerous actions in concert then Deputy Stage Manager is for you. Sat to the side of the stage in front of a bank of monitors and lights his control over sound, lights, front of house, safety and everyone backstage was carefully explained.

The dressing rooms comprised a small "cubby hole" for the stars and two cosy rooms which accommodated up to twenty people in each plus costumes. A far cry from the splendour we saw at Stratford last year.

The sound and lighting facilities to the rear of the stalls provided a myriad of technology that seemed to be linked into an array of domestic plugs!

Seven "volunteers" climbed up to the gantry high above the stage where control of the set layout occurred. A system of counterweighed ropes provided easy action for dropping in the scenery whilst a series of colour codes (on the ropes) allowed flats to be dropped from fifty feet to an exact inch. We walked up to the "Flys" like Himalayan climbers constantly checking to see if the Phantom or Quasimodo had joined us. And, finally, a view of the 'Studio' theatre was presented to us.

This was an interesting visit to a regional theatre that allowed us detailed access to hidden corners. Amazingly the whole operation is handled manually. Next time we visit the theatre, our eyes may see the stage but our imagination will be backstage.

David Rooke

New Member

John Carrington has been a regular visitor with his wife Maggie on recent events.

He is pictured here with our President, Brian Spencer, being formally introduced and accepted as a full member of our Club at the last General Meeting.

At the meeting John had plenty of opportunity to chat to other members.

All members found themselves being randomly seated. Which judging by the extremely loud noise level many members found much to talk about.

Afternoon tea for the ladies of Sutton Park Probus Club hosted by the President

32 ladies accepted the invitation to afternoon tea (with cakes). Many thanks to Brian and his extremely smart helpers (aka Rod Crowley and Jim Bailey) for serving so many cups of tea (with an occasional coffee) together with all the lovely cakes . No one went home hungry ,even the "waiters" who were caught out eating in the kitchen, plenty of time to chat, and as the volume of noise seemed to increase as the afternoon went on, what did those men put in the cups of tea?

The hall was booked from 2.00 pm with a deadline of 4.00p.m. Washing up done,

crockery put away, tables tidied, curtains opened and still the ladies were chatting. So to move everyone out on time, the President turned the lights out. That worked!!

Special thanks must go to all the ladies who provided the scrumptious cakes, and again to President Brian for hosting the event.

Write-up with grateful thanks to Dorothy Perry

Events and Activities from March to July 2013

Thursday 28th March
A Potted History of the 20th Century
(Part 2) Martin Harrison
Vote of Thanks: David Roy
Newsletter Report: Roy Galloway

Kitchen Rota: Ray Clark
Neil Crabb, Tim Daly
Brian Mallett, John Carrington

Thursday 4th April
Long Walk led by Rod Crowley
Direct or meet at Roy's at 9.30 am

Thursday 11th April
Short walk led by Roy Willson
Thursday 18th April
Highbury Theatre and Buffet
Coordinator - David Rooke

Thursday 25th April
Annual General Meeting
Newsletter Report - Peter Weston

Kitchen Rota: Roy Galloway
Brian Senior, Mike Terry
Ivor Wesley, Bob Badham

Sunday 28th April
Concert at Sutton Town Hall
Coordinator - John Cheal

Thursday 2nd May
Long Walk led by Graham Jones
Meet at Roy's 9.30 am to car share

Thursday 9th May
Alrewas Arboretum
Coordinator - John Cheal

Sunday 12th May
Cricket at Edgbaston
40 overs v Sussex
Coordinator: David Rooke

Thursday 16th May
Short Walk led by Roy Willson

Thursday 23rd May
Club General Meeting
Vote of Thanks: Mike Lock
Newsletter Report: John Booth

Kitchen Rota: Jim Bailey
Keith Keeley, Roger Phillips
John Buckland, John Longmore

Thursday 6th June
Long Walk led by Mike Lock
Meet at Roy's 9.30 to car share

Sunday 9th - Tuesday June 13th
Spring Break - Dublin
Coordinator = Jim Bailey

Thursday 20th June
Short Walk led by Roy Willson

Monday 24th June
Gentleshaw Bowls day
Coordinator: Mike Lock

Thursday 27th June
Club General Meeting
Vote of Thanks: John Buckland
Newsletter Report: Ray Clark

Kitchen Rota : John Booth
Selby Betts, Terry Booth
Roy Willson, Alfred Wallwork

Friday 28th June
President's Supper - The Terrace
Coordinators: Harry Medcalf \John Cheal

Monday 1st July
Long Walk
Walk Leader: Brian Spencer

Monday 8th July
Catton Park & Afternoon Tea
Organiser: David Rooke

Thursday 18th July
Short Walk
Walk Leader: Roy Willson

Club Website: http://suttonparkprobus.wordpress.com

Dublin

A Dublin information meeting for members and there wives/partners will be held the church hall where we have our Probus meetings.

10am--12noon on Wednesday 8th May. Coffee tea and biscuits.

Thank you - Jim Bailey.

Visit to the National Arboretum, Thursday 9th May

Arrive at Car Park approx 10.30 am (A small car park fee).
THIS SHOULD BE A VERY ENJOYABLE AND RELAXING DAY. Try to come.
Money (£6.50) to John Cheal as soon as possible please.

CONCERT AT SUTTON TOWN HALL Sunday 28th April at 7.30 pm
Tickets are £9 each. Payment to John Cheal please.

For full details please February edition of the Newsletter.

Peter Weston will be our Newsletter Editor from May 2013. Please direct all correspondence to him from the 25th April. He would appreciate **all event organizers** to nominate writers for Event Reports. He has an excellent background for this post being a very imaginative and creative writer. On behalf of the club I would like to congratulate him on accepting this important role and wish him every success. I know that all members will fully support him.

Tony Ferneyhough

Short Walk on Thursday 11th April

Venue: Plum Pudding at Armatage.
Directions: Take A5127 from Sutton towards Lichfield. At Lichfield take A51 towards Rugeley. Just before Rugeley take the By-Pass to the right (Still A51). At the first Island turn right to Armatage.
Times: Walk - 1030 start. Lunch: 1230 (approx)
Cost: £8.00 for 2 courses and coffee\tea
Walk: About 3¼ miles. Canal, towpath, country lanes and fields. There is a short stretch along a Main Road. There are no stiles.
Walk Leader: Roy Willson

Please ensure suitable footwear and clothes are worn.