

DALGETY BAY PROBUS CLUB



Issue 2

21st April 2020



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Good morning Gentlemen and welcome to our second newsletter. I hope you found Newsletter No. 1 informative and an excellent way of 'keeping in touch'. Your participation and input is welcomed, even constructive comments.

Newsletter to keep members informed

Today should have been our 37th AGM and I should have been handing over the privilege and honour of the Presidency to Ian. This will have to wait, as will my thoughts on the past year, for our return on the first Club meeting. Meantime, Ian and I with the committee will continue to work together to keep members informed of Club matters.

37th AGM to be held on 1st club meeting

That's 4 weeks of isolation behind us. Time seems to have passed by quickly and days/dates seem to have been lost and need to be checked more than usual.

Apart from our daily walk (only 1 mile, Tommy!) taken early morning, Lesley and I have not left the boundary of our title deeds. Thank goodness for the garden, especially with the weather we have been enjoying. It is truly wonderful to observe the magic of Nature develop its landscape without a hint of the unprecedented situation we humans are facing.

That's the decking been rubbed down and two coats of Ronseal Rescue Decking Paint applied. Next was Karcher cleaning of the slab pathways round the back and then the mono-block drive (will need to move the car). Please tell us what YOU have been up to and let's share DIY tips.

'Activities helping release anxiety'

The car hasn't moved from the drive and the Owner's Handbook recommends the battery should be charged after one month of non-use. I have rigged up the trickle charger (from our classic car days) and hopefully all will keep ready for hitting the road again..... whenever. It is rather frustrating that we cannot take advantage of the current lower fuel prices.

'Online food Shopping'

Our family, son in Edinburgh and daughter in Stirling, have been keeping us well stocked with food provisions. Sainsbury's have just accepted us for priority delivery and

we can now place an order once a week. We have shopped on line but never for food etc. If you have a Nectar card and wish to apply for this facility, I can give you the contact telephone number.

Stay safe and very best wishes,

Michael Hamilton



EDITOR THOUGHTS

We start this Newsletter with a note from our President Michael. Our newsletter is beginning to develop a shape as contributions are received from members. Many thanks for this and keep them coming. The next piece comes from our Past President David Brown in lockdown in Spain for the past 4 weeks. Well known for his wonderful sense of humour, and even more renowned for his unique jokes, he does not let us down. This is a story of our time, and is a theme I would like to continue in future editions. Next there are some short notes on welfare where we are planning to take a more proactive role in keeping in touch with some of our members.

Our Secretary Iain Grant is a man with an interesting background with a story he has wanted to tell. You will now look at bananas with considerably more knowledge.

We have a wonderfully varied cross section of members in Probus from some very interesting backgrounds. We would all be delighted to share some of your interesting stories. Next is local news from Tommy Bryson.

We finish with an update from the various sub groups, bowls, digipix and golf and a short thank you from past President John Scott.

Keep safe and well.
Iain Dickson



DAVID BROWN – LOCKDOWN IN SPAIN

HEALTH AND SAFETY WARNING.

IT IS RECOMMENDED YOU READ THIS MESSAGE FROM A DISTANCE OF AT LEAST 2 METRES TO AVOID UNNECESSARY SUFFERING.

Hi all,

I was delighted when Iain sent me the email regarding a message to be sent out on the day our meetings would normally have been held, as I told Iain I had already compiled a Bowling Update which also included a detailed report of all that Margaret and I were doing to keep occupied, as some of you are probably by

now aware we are in Spain having a relaxing holiday, but have noticed that the locals are becoming a lot less friendly when I approach them to tell one of my jokes with some getting extremely angry.

The only reason I can think why this could possibly be is we went shopping with friends four weeks ago then went into a local restaurant for some lunch and I could not believe that sitting at the next table down from us were Keith and Anne Miller.

For those new members who are not aware, Keith has been a member of PROBUS for a number of years.

Well you can imagine the expression of joy that came across his face when he recognised me. You can also picture my excitement of seeing someone who could understand English and would give me the opportunity of telling some of my jokes.

Unfortunately for Keith and Anne they only had time to hear the joke shown below as they said sorry to seem a bit rude but they were in a rush to get back to their holiday villa.

Bit strange as they had only just finished their starter. Anyway Keith you are in luck because I did tell you of my plans to keep in touch with PROBUS members with some jokes.



David's holiday villa

An American and an Irishman start trekking through the jungle and the American has a gun strapped to his back whilst the Irish man has a rock strapped to his back.

The Irish man after a short distance says to the American, why have you got a gun strapped to your back. The American reply's I thought that would have been obvious, it is so that if a lion or a tiger tries to attack me I can kill it.

The American then says to the Irishman, now that you have asked me, I have been puzzled to why you have a rock strapped to YOUR back, to which the Irish man responds, well I was very concerned like you that an attack was a very strong possibility, so if one were to attack me I could dispose of the rock which would allow me to run much faster.

YES I CAN HEAR THE LAUGHTER FROM ALL OF YOU FROM HERE IN SPAIN.

OK, WELL AT LEAST MOST MEMBERS CANNOT HECKLE ME ALL AT ONCE AS YOU USED TO DO AT THE PROBUS MEETINGS.

PS... for those members who know me and already had the privilege of hearing my jokes will note that I have somewhat expanded the original four line contents of the above joke which is something that possibly some of you think I tended to do when in conversation as well as in messaging.

"Although I am no doubt just imagining this due to my sensitivity".

For all our newer members, you will now realise just how UNLUCKY you were not to have had the opportunity to hear them, although some of our bowling club members I am led to believe only then decided to join Probus in the hope I could allow them to hear more jokes.

Incidentally for those PROBUS members not already aware I have been named by some of the Dalgety Bay bowling club THE Reverend I M Jolly.

Colin Lusted and Billy Worthing two of the club's members when addressing me would say morning Reverend this would only happen in the mornings as in the afternoon they would address me by saying afternoon Reverend and in the evenings yes you have got the drift.

After two years of this I asked why they kept calling me Reverend and they explained that was only part of my name and then informed me I reminded them of The Reverend I Am Jolly.

Well on the basis of what others probably call me, I found this to be a huge relief and comfort.

One of the MASSIVE positives of the sad current situation we all find ourselves in just now is I have just had another brilliant idea that when things get back to somewhat normality again I would be prepared to consider telling you all at least one joke at each meeting.

Having had a career in sales am aware to always use added benefits when selling, so you may all wish to consider that in addition to the laughter which is very important for our health, this idea would also help the clubs finances due to a significant reduction of the costs incurred by our club in purchasing tea, coffee, sugar, juice and biscuits plus the tables used for this purpose would be lighter and easier to carry in and out thus reducing the risk of back injury to members performing those duties.

Which in turn would reduce the numbers needing hospital attention.

As I am not totally convinced that the above mentioned would be significant enough a reason would also wish you to consider that it would also make it much easier for those attending meetings to keep the 2 metre distance currently recommended without any risk of having difficulty in doing so, due to the reduction in members attending.

Finally, at the meetings during the period I told you my jokes I was informed that a number of you were contributing in raising funds to allow me the opportunity in extending any holidays I wished to take, but I never for one minute expected you to go such lengths to stop me getting back home from this holiday..

I wish you to now show some remorse, as I am pleading with you to send me the funding raised so far, as I think this would allow me and Margaret the opportunity to get "business class" flights back home.

David Brown



WELFARE REPORT

Well, now we know. At Least another three weeks of enforced pottering.

Maybe the government doesn't always make sense, but a lot of it is worthwhile. Staying in, staying safe, certainly. But also keep active, keep the mind busy also makes sense. Our Club welfare extends to OUR welfare too. So have a plan, create a routine, start by putting your own bin out!

And keep in touch. I had nearly 5 hours of different 'Zoom' interactions yesterday. Too Much, must get these spread through the week! But keeping in touch is VERY important. I guess we are getting better at that too.

Please help the committee maintain Club policy of staying in touch with members, former members or those who are ill. The normal conversations we had on Tuesday mornings no longer take place. We rely on you contacting us. We comply with GDPR, and will sensitively continue to in contact with all our members.

The Club web page, dalgetybayprobus.club, has more information about Club and many other topics. And you can always reach us via email, secretary@dalgetybayprobus.club .

Be safe, be well, be happy

George Owenson

Proposed Welfare Initiative

Our situation is unprecedented and virtually all of us are classed in the 'vulnerable' group. Some of us live on our own, holding on to our independence, something which may become more difficult to maintain during extended isolation. A 'phone round' is proposed. If you would like to help in this initiative OR if you would rather not be contacted, please let our Secretary know.



GOING BANANAS

Contributed by Iain Grant our Secretary

When I see the displays of bananas in our supermarkets these days I almost despair. The fruit appears to be in various states of ripeness from totally green to bright yellow. A lot of the fruit shows signs of careless handling, for example black marks on the skin and bruising. Worst of all perhaps is a very small amount of fruit which displays a slight grey tinge to the skin colour - these bananas have been badly chilled before ripening and will not ripen properly afterwards. They will have a texture slightly like turnip and the flavour will be compromised. Polythene wrapping is becoming common now, discouraged in the 1970s.

How do I know these things about bananas? In the 1970s I was a Chief Officer on the ships of the Geest Line which was set up in the 1950s to transport bananas from the Windward Islands to the UK. The operation was part subsidised by the British government as the islands at the time were crown colonies. An agreement was reached between Geest Industries and the Windward Islands Banana Growers Association that Geest would buy all fruit of marketable quality delivered to the reception depots at the ports at the specified times. The bananas were grown on some quite large estates, many smallholdings and even in the gardens of enterprising amateur gardeners who were keen to make a few extra dollars.

At the reception depots the stems were cut into hands, and then washed. The hands were packed into cardboard boxes specially designed to allow cooling air to pass through to keep the fruit at optimum temperature. The boxes took about 15 kg of fruit each. The fruit was then ready for shipment.

The system that was set up involved each island having different cutting days. The first island was always Grenada; they cut their fruit on Mondays and Tuesday mornings and the ship sailed from St Georges at about 1800 on Tuesday. Next island was St Vincent where the cut was Tuesday and Wednesday morning with the ship sailing from Kingstown about 1800 for Vieux Fort in St Lucia arriving about midnight, the cut there having been on Wednesday. Only a small amount was loaded in Vieux Fort and the ship sailed around 0400 for Castries in St Lucia arriving about 0700. There the cut was on Wednesday and Thursday morning and the ship sailed around midnight for Roseau in Dominica. At that time there was no wharf in Roseau and all the fruit came to us in wooden barges having been cut on Thursday. Loading from the barges was through the ship side doors. Usually we finished around midday and steamed up the coast to Portsmouth where we finished our loading, again from barges as there was no wharf. We normally set off on our homeward voyage about 1800 on Friday evening. I've been asked why the Portsmouth fruit was not sent by road to Roseau. At the time there was no proper road link between the north and south of the island, only Land Rover tracks.



What of the ships? At the time there were four ships on the run providing a weekly service throughout the year. The ships were built at Scotts of Greenock and were fully refrigerated. They were fast ships as are most fruit carriers. Average speed 21 knots. They were quite striking in appearance, white hulls and superstructure. There was luxury accommodation for twelve passengers, and these voyages were much sought after. Rarely did we not have a full complement of passengers.

Members might remember the late Jim Thomson who lived in The Beeches, he and his wife Mary were regular round trippers. Arthur Lowe, alias Captain Mainwaring, was another. On one voyage I remember being entertained at dinner by the musician and comedian Sam Costa's one liners.

On the homeward voyage the cargo compartments were carefully maintained at 41 degrees F. The temperature of the air from the fridge plants was monitored as it entered the compartments and on exhaust. A sample of pulp temperatures were also noted. On occasions we would be requested to raise the temperature in specified compartments say to 43 degrees in order to start the ripening process.

Our home port was Barry in South Wales. On arrival discharge would begin almost right away. The boxes were palletised and loaded into refrigerated artics and sent directly to ripening centres throughout the UK. Scotland's ripening centre was at Airdrie in Lanarkshire. The premium fruit was usually purchased by Marks & Spencer, and Sainsbury.

On completion of discharge in Barry we would then load general cargo for Barbados and the Windward Islands. We did not load any fruit in Barbados, but picked up the loading schedule at St Georges Grenada on Tuesday.

On one voyage I remember loading a car in Barbados for Barry. It was a British Racing Green Volvo sports coupe, the property of Roger Moore the actor. I'm told it appeared in one of the James Bond films. As any homeward non fruit cargo had to be carried on deck, we reckoned the safest place would be on top of the poop deckhouse. Unfortunately the after crane developed a hydraulic oil leak onto the bonnet of the car

which nobody noticed till we came to unlash the car in Barry. By good fortune our Bosun knew people in Cardiff who could sort it out and they did so in the back of the cargo shed over the weekend. It cost me a couple of bottles of whisky! I never heard any more about it so I guess they did a good job.

What happens now? All the fruit is carried in temperature controlled containers. No ripening centres now, very much a streamlined operation. In the 1970s the banana shelves contained bunches of evenly coloured yellow bananas with a hint of green at the tips, almost ready to eat. John Van Geest told us that a banana was ready to eat when the first brown speckles appeared on the skin. Incidentally if your bananas are ripening too fast they can be put in the fridge to give them a few more days life. The skin will soften and turn horribly brown but the fruit will be fine. Which was best?

Iain Grant



SHIELDING AND SELF-ISOLATING – The Brysons Continued!

We are into week 4 of shielding and now isolating from each other in our own house! Why, two Mondays ago I had to call my optician. Unaware that Optician HUBS were being set up by NHS Fife, I found that fortunately Ferrier McKinnon, my optician in Chalmers Street, are the only Hub Opticians covering West Fife dealing with Optical Emergencies. After discussing my problem “lights flashing in my left eye”, with different staff, it was decided I would need to travel to Dunfermline. Eleanor drove me up and waited in the car. When I arrived the door was locked, I was greeted by a staff member in full “Covid Gear” and had my temperature taken before I crossed the threshold. After having an “eyeball to eyeball” consultation, it was decided I had damaged an eye muscle probably by lifting something “the wrong way”. Painting and Decorating is now on hold for 2 weeks. However I was advised, as Eleanor is Shielding and I had “breached” social distancing by virtue of my eye test, I need to isolate from Eleanor for 14 days “just in case”.

I’m glad so far I am feeling fine, I pity those living in flats who just could not attempt the 2 metre rule we are having to follow within their small houses.

We still do our early morning walks keeping the distance rules. We regularly see Jim Muir and Frances who have the same idea as we pass on the other side!

Scottish Government keeps one promise!

For once a story of a promise that has been kept.

Last Thursday in the daily broadcast the First Minister announced that from that afternoon people in the “High Risk” category would be contacted to get Online Grocery delivery slots. True to her word Eleanor had a text by teatime and responded. Asda emailed the next day, Friday, and set up a weekly delivery slot till October. (Do they know something we don’t?). Before this I had to sit up till midnight to try for a slot, so a pleasing result. Well done!

Tommy Bryson



DIGIPIX

One part of the club website that continues to be updated is the DigiPix Members' Photo Gallery page (<https://www.dalgetybayprobus.club/digipix-members-photos>) and many thanks to those members who have been sending in photos. These are very welcome from any club member, whether or not you ordinarily attend DigiPix meetings. There is plenty to photograph even on our daily short walks not far from home and when out, do look for photographic opportunities, even if you only have your phone with you.

The April project is "Dalgety Bay in Blossom" and there is certainly plenty of blossom to photograph at present and the generally sunny weather is a bonus. There is a separate gallery on the website for the blossom photographs, already looking quite good, and it should look spectacular if you keep sending me photos. The more the merrier. Please send any contributions, not necessarily restricted to blossom, to wallan@btinternet.com.

I have a few ideas for a May photographic project, again something easily achievable in our current confined circumstances but if you have any suggestions, please pass them to me.

Willie Allan



BOWLS

As you are all probably aware it is the end of the indoor season and you will no doubt have been eagerly awaiting the start of the outdoor season.

Well as some of you may be aware it is unlikely you will be able to start playing at your bowling club for the foreseeable future, so in the meantime can I suggest that you practice your bowls in the garden or for those without a garden, in your living room.

This would give you much needed exercise whilst keeping your mind away from other serious issues like reading my messages.



If playing indoors I would recommend you do not use your usual bowls unless you are planning to buy new furniture and re-decorate soon! I have included a photo of me using makeshift bowls and jack which are far lighter

And easier on your leg and back muscles.

It also allows me to find a use for the quantity of fruit Margaret purchases but normally is never eaten.

As you can see from one photo one of the bowls is going to need replacing soon due to visible damage.

Cannot believe it but since starting this message Margaret has just eaten one of my bowls so will now only be able to play triples when I find an opponent.

In the meantime I am sure you will all be looking out for each other and with the massive positive from all we are currently suffering being that the improvements to the worlds seas, rivers and sky's which have already shown significant signs of recovery, plus the much needed added awareness of so many failings in our society and governments, will result for those in power hopefully having to listen "AT LONG LAST" with the ones who don't, no longer being tolerated and removed from having the opportunity of doing further damage to our planet

Kind regards from the Reverend I M Jolly 🙋😊😄👍

Ps, Most of you will probably be surprised to be informed that the above is a greatly condensed version of what I had originally prepared, but as all great writers and comedians are aware is that you feed your public a little taster to wet their enthusiasm.

The full version includes how I have set up a Guitar and Piano / Keyboard business with the progress to date to be followed shortly by the setting up of a Bowls company.

So those of you who eagerly await the full version , you can receive same by contacting me by Email at davidmargaret@me.com or those of you with poor vision but reasonable hearing can contact me on 07305 763963 or by FaceTime, Messenger or What's app.

David Brown



GOLF

With countries around the world putting in place social distancing regulations to curb the advance of Covid 19, golf courses have been closed and all golfing activity has stopped. The restrictions vary from country to country and the reaction of members has also varied.

Our local courses initially stayed open with a ban on meeting in groups and on handling pins and holes were set up to save members lifting out pins. This soon gave way to full closures with the inevitable difficulties for clubhouse management and course income. In England, where the law on access to golf courses is different, there have been calls from some, in particular Caroline Lucas of the Green Party, to give open access to golf courses in City areas to members of the public to allow all people use the courses as an area for walking. This has caused consternation with some golfers who feel that if the public can walk on the course golfers should be able to play. In some places police have been used to ensure the restrictions are adhered to. There are rumours suggesting courses may reopen sooner rather than later with restrictions and with clubhouses remaining closed.

In Ireland the financial strain has already proved to be too much and some golf clubs have closed completely with the closure due to the virus proving to be the final straw. Our situation locally may prove to be the same, I hope not. Australia closed some courses but some have stayed open, interestingly one option being used is to have no pins on the greens! Would that make a difference to our Probus golf members? Courses are now beginning to re-open.

In America courses were advised to close but many remained open. At one point some members of closed courses were threatening to sue local state governors for infringement of golfers' rights.

The courses in Sweden and Estonia remain open and courses in Denmark are re-opening with restrictions.

What will happen in Scotland we shall have to wait and see? Our course is in good condition and we can only hope that it will not be too long before we can again enjoy the course with perhaps some restrictions continuing for some time.

VOTE OF THANKS

At this strange time of isolation with all that we normally take for granted not now available it is good that we in Dalgety Probus can still keep in contact and up to date with what is going on around us. I am sure we are all grateful for the contribution from some of our members and I thank them on your behalf. Let us hope that it is not too long before we can once again meet in fellowship in the familiar surroundings of Dalgety Church Hall

John Scott