

# DALGETY BAY PROBUS CLUB



**Issue 3**

**5<sup>th</sup> May 2020**



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Good morning Gentlemen and welcome to our third newsletter.

Paul Wibberley, a Forth River Pilot, would have been our speaker today. I wonder what he thinks of the various vessels, including 4 Fred Olsen cruise ships, currently 'parked' in the estuary.

I spent 19 years of my working life in the Middle East - 5 years in Doha, Qatar and 14 years in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The Arabic language has some interesting words and phrases with their primary meaning being loosely adjusted through time. 'Inshallah' comes to mind, as does 'Bukra'. Combining the two into 'Bukra Inshallah' and using this phrase as an answer to 'When will this be done?', we have 'Maybe tomorrow, but who knows!' Very appropriate just now for a response to the media?

**'Answering  
the very  
frustrating  
Media'**

I continue to watch the daily briefings by 'politicians' not being 'politicians' and science experts but switch off at journalists' question time.

**'Isolation is  
not new but  
very  
different'**

During these 19 years, there were several struggles in the region including the two Gulf Wars. Expats working in Doha during 1989/90 were advised to transform one of the rooms within their homes into an 'isolation chamber' to protect themselves from the possible fallout from Iraqi Scud missile attacks. This room was insulated and contained all accommodation needs including food and water. A gas mask, issued by the Embassy, was carried for use whilst outside. Major differences on that occasion were that life was otherwise 'normal' and there was sufficient warning to seek refuge.

Important advice from NHS Inform is to create a healthy home routine, stay active and stay connected. Focussing on DIY projects keeps my mind preoccupied. You may have noticed from a photograph (neighbourhood watch) on our website that I am now painting outside woodwork.

**'Keeping  
occupied'**

**'Community  
Support'**

Several Community Groups are supporting Louie Brown's lunchtime meal delivery to the vulnerable in our community. Our Club's £250 donation went to Raith Fruit & Flowers Limited, Kirkcaldy who are supplying the initiative free of charge.

Stay safe and very best wishes,

Michael Hamilton

PS. Having arrived yesterday for a week, Lesley and I should have been walking along the Lido in Funchal, Madeira this morning on our way to the Tea House for a refreshing passionfruit iced tea. Maybe next year.....*Inshallah!*



## EDITOR THOUGHTS

It is Tuesday and a Probus Tuesday, so welcome to our third newsletter at the end of six weeks of lockdown.

We start this Newsletter with a note from our President.

Next a lovely picture of naval officer training at the Royal Naval College which comes from John Hicks. Flora and I lived in Docklands just before I retired from full time working so we have great memories of the area. One of the joys of this course must have been the location. However John tells me he was too busy working to fully appreciate all the local area offered. The Royal Naval College is the most magnificent Wren building, the picture with the article was taken from the Thames Walkway in the Isle of Dogs on the North side of the river, a short walk from the new financial centre at Canary Wharf. John mentions Chichester's boat the 'Gipsy Moth'. Until quite recently it was on the quayside beside the tea clipper, the recently restored 'Cutty Sark'. On the riverside close by is a wonderful tiled Victorian pedestrian foot tunnel under the Thames, you enter by a spiral staircase or by lift on either side of the river. Built in the very late Victorian era it allowed access for dock workers from Woolwich to the East End docks. Well worth a walk through this tunnel.

The highlight of a visit to the Old Naval College is the Painted Hall which is open to the public and is shown in another picture. A trip to enjoy is a Thames river trip from the Houses of Parliament pier at Westminster, going down the Thames to Greenwich. In Greenwich, beside the tea clipper is the Old Market, now refurbished, several excellent eating places and the opportunity to visit the Maritime Museum or the Royal Observatory in Greenwich Park which lies just behind the Old Naval College.

Rob Lester and Lawson Rennie have contributed articles. Rob gives us some thoughts on the current Covid 19 pandemic and Lawson tells us about the St John's Ambulance volunteers and the Patient Transport Services which continues to transport patients to hospital.

Tommy Bryson updates us on self isolation, shipping movements in the Forth and we learn of another of his interests, weather.

Diston Dryburgh, or is it Rumpole Dryburgh, talks about his lockdown.

Digipix from Willie Allan and Golf are next. The golf article has been prepared by my wife Flora, the last paragraph I added after looking at the Royal and Ancient Golf Club website. For non golfers the R & A run all worldwide golf outside the USA, Their Head of Rules is Grant Moir, a lawyer by training, a fellow member at Lundin Golf Club, is the third generation of the Moir family to have golf in his blood. Father

David is a past President of Scottish Golf, grandfather Bill has pride of place with a seat in his memory at the 14<sup>th</sup> tee at Lundin, the hole called `Perfection`.

George H Taylor gives us a poem written by a poet who was an avid golfer, John Betjeman.

Enjoy, and more please for the next edition.

Ian Dickson



## MEMORIES FROM THE ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE AT GREENWICH

I joined the Royal Navy as a 16 year old in 1954 and served on various ships before becoming a submariner in 1961

In June 1967 I was promoted to Sub Lieutenant SD (Special duties) Marine Engineer. With this promotion I, together with 12 other engineers were invited to attend the six week Officers Training course in the Royal Naval College at Greenwich. Known affectionately as the `knife and fork` course` this was not only an introduction to the technical requirements required of young engineering officers it was seen as a transition from rating to an officer. Hence the name of the course, it was an introduction and a training into a different lifestyle.

Dinner and supper were now lunch and dinner and was waiter served in the Painted Hall of the Royal Naval College, a wonderful room. The hall could seat 200. Amongst our group there were 4 Australians and a New Zealander.



One early recollection is at lunch, having waited patiently for my selection, roast beef, I then had to wait again for my vegetables. Eager to start I reached for and applied a goodly helping of brown gravy. It may have looked like brown gravy but was in fact chocolate sauce. Young officer I was, no way was I going to admit my mistake, although revolting I ate the lot. Having thought I had survived the embarrassment unnoticed, when I arrived at the bar that evening a group of well wishers took delight in asking if I always had chocolate sauce with my roast beef.

As I have already said there were 4 Australians on the course, they were very typical Australians, not short of the occasional comment at the wrong time. One of them, a fellow sub mariner Don Meredith was both vocal and loud. A fairly regular guest at the top table for lunch was Prince Philip. My Australian companion was both delighted and surprised to see him appear and uttered the immortal words `Geez its Phil the Greek`

Luckily it went undetected by the top table, perhaps past encounters had pointed towards our commonwealth friends being kept at a distance.

Another notable event whilst I was at Greenwich was when all leave was stopped for a Friday afternoon. Francis Chichester arrived on his yacht `Gipsy Moth 1V`. He was to receive his knighthood from HM the Queen.

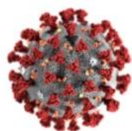


All was going to plan until, shock horror, Chichester's wife appeared and ascended from the yacht in a red trouser suit!

The Gipsy Moth was berthed close to Cutty Sark from 1968 until 2003 by which time it had fallen into a state that required a major cash injection to return it to a serviceable state. It was bought by the United Kingdom Sailing Authority for £1 and a gin and tonic, Chichester's favourite tippie! It was totally restored and repeated the original trip 40 years later. It can still be visited at a new home at Cowes on The Isle of Wight.

And finally a question, what was 'JASON'? The answer is it was a small (10kw) nuclear reactor in the Royal Naval College used for training of nuclear submarine engineers. Right in the middle of London!! In 1998 when the RNC closed the then government planned to sell the site for private development. This was the first that Greenwich Council or the public knew of its existence. In the end the dear old taxpayer paid to have it dismantled and removed. It cost about £7M and took 2 years to complete. The site is now partly open to the public, the Painted Hall and the Chapel. The classrooms and training area form part of the University of Greenwich.

John Hicks



## THOUGHTS ON COVID-19

'May you live in interesting times' is a modern translation of the ancient curse 'Better be a dog during peacetime, than a human at times of war' and it certainly feels as if the human race is at war with the unseen enemy known as coronavirus. I think that we can safely say that 2020 will be a very memorable year!

It is amazing how people have risen to the challenge of coping with the coronavirus threat and there have been unprecedented levels of cooperation in complying with advice about staying at home, washing hands and keeping your distance.

When I practised as a GP the common flu was a well-known problem; which usually appeared in the winter, caused misery for two or three weeks and sometimes needed antibiotics for secondary chest infections. Covid-19 is very different. This mutation of the well-studied coronavirus family, was named after the year it was first identified. The virus has caused major medical and economic problems all over the world. People have suffered and sadly many have died.

In Scotland, according to reports, it's beginning to look as if the first wave of infection may have peaked. However, based on experience of previous flu pandemics in 1968-69 (Hong Kong Flu) and 1957-58 (Asian Flu), the main risk could be a second wave of infection. So, it looks as if we will need to get used to keeping our distance for some time to come.

We will need to come out of lockdown gradually and the first step might be to allow small shops to reopen with customers wearing masks and maybe only one or two in the shop at a time.

Looking to the future, golfers may well be in the vanguard when restrictions start to ease: the threat of transmission of infection is much less outdoors and players may find it easier to keep the required distance apart.

But for now, many of us are keeping busy indoors or in the garden. I'm taking the opportunity to read more books, watch some good films, do a bit of cooking and master the art of Sudoku!

Rob Lester

### **The Everett Enigma - Provided by Maurice Everett**

Three young ladies pay £10 each for a seat at their local cinema. The manager realising it is his birthday decides to give the girls £5 between them. He gives the usherette a £5 note with instructions. The usherette not being mathematically endowed gave the girls £1 each and put the remaining £2 in a charity box. The girls have now paid £9 each. Three nines is £27 plus £2 is £29. Where is the other pound?

Answer requires knowledge of the Taniyama Shimura conjecture.

**Answers to Maurice Everett**



### **ST JOHN AMBULANCE – PATIENT TRANSPORT SERVICE**

For the past 3 years St John Scotland has been operating a Patient Transport Service in Fife taking Dialysis Patients to Queen Margaret Hospital Dunfermline and Victoria Hospital Kirkcaldy for treatment 3 times a day. In other parts of Scotland this service also includes patients going for cancer treatments.

This service is operated entirely by volunteers and is free to the patients. Monday to Friday the drivers pick up the St John 7 seater Ford Galaxy cars at about 6am at both hospitals, collect the early morning patients and bring them to the Dialysis units. At lunch time another couple of drivers (occasionally the same ones) bring in the afternoon patients and take the morning ones home. At tea time another 2 drivers bring in the evening patients and take the afternoon ones home.

This has been made a bit more difficult recently as Queen Margaret Hospital has been designated a “clean hospital” so any patients with a cough etc. will be treated at Victoria Hospital Kirkcaldy only where there are more isolation facilities. This has resulted in patients who would normally be treated at Queen Margaret Hospital now taken to Victoria Hospital Kirkcaldy and vice versa so occasionally drivers will have longer runs than usual especially as they are restricted to carrying a maximum of 2 patients instead of up to 4.

Some of our drivers are retired and unfortunately for health reasons some have withdrawn hopefully on a temporary basis but we are still managing to provide a service thus helping the already overstretched Scottish Ambulance Service.

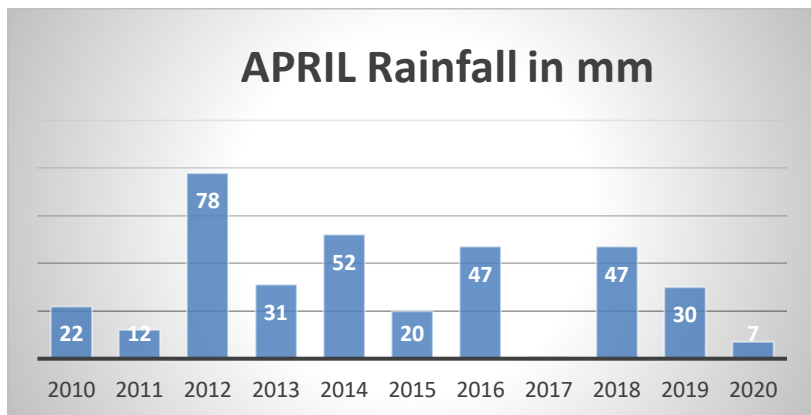
I would like to say a big thank you to all our volunteers, drivers and organisers who make this service and others possible.

Lawson Rennie



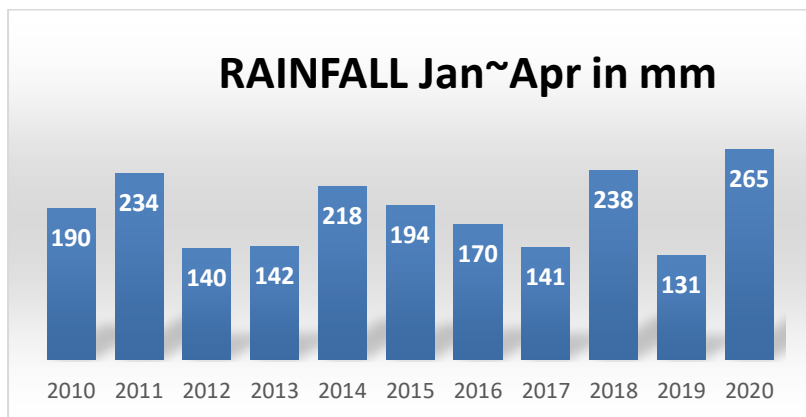
## SHIELDING AND SELF-ISOLATING – The Continuing Bryson Story!!

Now into week 7, walking first thing in the morning is our daily exercise. We continue to see the Muirs usually going in the opposite direction and George B Taylor has joined the walkers. Some interesting facts from these 06:30 walks. If it is bright sunshine we may see 20 people, when it is cloudy less than 10. Another statistic, it has only rained once at that time since we started walking 42 days ago, last Thursday. My weather station records daily weather data. Rainfall in April is the second lowest I have recorded in the last 10 years. 2017 had only 1mm and 2020 has had 7mm, 5mm of which fell on Thursday.



However a "DRY" April does not necessarily mean the first four months of the year have been similar.

The graph below shows total rainfall January to and including April for the same period as above. 2020 shows the highest, primarily due to two days in February when we had 28mm in a 4 hour period and 32mm another day!



Cruise ship report:

The 4 Fred Olsen ships anchored down river take occasional “trips” out into the North Sea as far as Arbroath or Bamburgh. They were joined by the Viking Sky for a few days, it has moved on to Alesund in Norway, where a couple of the Hurtigrutten fleet are laid up. This week the “4” have been joined by a wee tanker from Belgium, now alongside and probably refuelling. On Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May P&O’s Pride of Burgundy, a Cross Channel ferry arrived, is now in Leith docks and has been joined in Forth by the Pride of Canterbury.

Tommy Bryson



## THE LOCKDOWN

Life is very strange at the moment. A lockdown seems like something from a science fiction novel rather than today’s reality. Life is changing, some things will be for the better some not so good but let’s take a lighter look at what is happening, probably in many homes and certainly in mine.

I have an aversion to doing things simply for the sake of doing something, but I don’t know how well I have succeeded. Make up your own mind.

My wife also known as “management” has started to bake, seems like a good idea of course but if I say that she has never baked since we were first married many years ago perhaps you will understand my apprehension. Since she knows what I am thinking, often before I do, (and yes, I do refer to her for my opinion occasionally) it would be futile to praise her when praise is not due, it would make matters worse and be seen as patronising. She baked this morning, no jokes about a bun in the oven please and there was a wonderful smell in the kitchen. She has set it aside to cool but I have yet to taste.

Wish me luck, success will bring all round happiness, at a time when disappointment is keenly felt, failure cannot be contemplated.

There is no way to describe painting a fence as exciting, a must do pastime, let's be honest its boring, its messy and its soul destroying but there was a little worm in my ear telling me it needed done so I started to apply the preservative that I bought last year and has been creating a trip hazard in the garage ever since. You will be pleased to hear the trip hazard has been removed, (of course you are) the fence painted and the remaining preservative, tools and equipment safely stored away. "Ah" you say job satisfaction, "no" I say, relief that the work is done yes, job satisfaction no.

As with so many things there is another side, a benefit, when working outside I was able to speak to the walkers, taking their walk in accordance with government guidelines, dog owners exercising their pets and runners trying to run off the weight increase caused by eating and drinking too much because they are stuck at home. Before anyone accuses me of breaching the 2-metre rule I was able to talk from behind the safety of my boundary fence and the grass verge on Halyard Rise.

Inconsequential conversation but welcome contact with others.

Wonder if I can hire a dog to walk, may give me another reason to be out?

Metal railings are the bane of my life, the paint blisters and rust come through even though the metal is rubbed down carefully, and paint is applied immediately afterwards. We employed a painter last time this happened, thought that a competent professional would get it right but alas, no, after what seemed like no time at all blisters and rust returned as per normal.

Last year I made a bold start to painting my front gate and railings, I rubbed down carefully even bought an angle grinder to remove the rust where it was bad, undercoated, then gloss painted the handrail on the steps to the gate and the gate with some kind of super-duper rust inhibiting paint. Then I ran out of steam, leaving about 4 meters of railings still to paint.

I started again this year as there was enough undercoat in the garage to paint the remaining railings but no gloss to finish it so now we have half of the railings with shiny black paint and half undercoated with red paint the colour of the Forth Rail Bridge. This is progress, but only of sorts and more like a candidate for DIY SOS than for Homes Under the Hammer.

I could order black gloss, and have it delivered but it is not in the spirit of the lockdown. That's my story and I am sticking to it. For the record wine is included in essentials and delivery does not break any guidelines.

I have, like many I suppose not been able to meet my family and have had to communicate with the phone. For a technophobe such as me remembering to use my mobile, call prepaid rather than the land line, call chargeable was a breakthrough. I have now taken a leap through some invisible barrier and use What's App to speak to my son and his family. I must admit I had it on my phone my brother suggested I download it but who pays attention to a younger brother, no matter how successful they have been. The crowning glory came when I added Zoom it only took an evening and I was able to use it. I think! My wife and I can now see what the family are doing a huge leap forward thanks to my daughter in law who took the time and had the patience to talk me through the process.

I caught a glimpse of my granddaughters when I was phoning that night not sure whether the look was of pleasure that they could now see us or incredulity that someone could make such a fuss about such a simple



task. It used to be said if you are having difficulty setting your VHS video recorder ask a child to do it for you, need I say more.

Onwards and upwards, more IT to explore and BBC i-Player to conquer. Life has changed already.

Keep safe.

PS Tasted the cake Ina baked, great cake, now I have to work out how to get her to bake again.

Diston Dryburgh



## DIGIPIX

Thanks to those who participated in the April “Dalgety Bay in Blossom” project. If you have photos that you haven’t yet sent in, please let me have them and as there is still a lot of blossom around, it isn’t yet too late to participate. You can see the photos received here:

<https://www.dalgetybayprobus.club/digipix-members-photos>

I have decided on something completely different for May’s project, which will be unusual pictures of everyday objects. This can be anything – animal, vegetable or mineral but the emphasis is on looking at things we see every day with different eyes and here are just a couple of web pages of photos that most of us could have taken had we just thought about it:

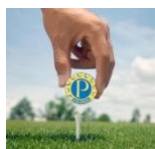
<https://gurushots.com/article/get-creative-28-unbelievable-photographs-of-everyday-objects->

<https://www.ephotozine.com/article/52-things-you-can-photograph-at-home--29764>



Do give this a go and send me your photos. All club members, whether or not part of the Digipix group, are welcome to participate. There is a mass of inspiration on Google and feel free to try copying something you find that you think is interesting or amusing. Attached is my starter for 10.

Willie Allan



## GOLF

As golf courses around the world begin to open there is hope that courses in the UK will be allowed to open during the first phase of the easing of lockdown restrictions. Less than a week before the full implementation of lockdown, the government’s chief scientific officer, Sir Patrick Vallance, said golf was an allowable activity provided golfers socially distance.

The UK's culture secretary, Oliver Dowden, has said he is looking at the data on whether golf courses can open during that first phase. The chairman of the UK's Parliament's All Party Group for Golf has given the strongest indication yet that golf courses could reopen shortly. He has been talking to industry bodies such as The R&A, The PGA the UK Golf Federation and the British Golf Industry Association in the last few days and will now speaking to the greenkeeping association BIGGA.

The priority will be to ensure the safety of both staff and players on the course. Different countries are dealing with this in different ways but the fundamentals are the same. Golfers must adhere to the social distancing requirement laid down by the government. This is likely to mean that players may only play individually or in pairs. In order to ensure safe distancing all tee times should be booked online and slots are likely to be 15minutes apart. On the course flags should not be touched. This may mean that flags are removed, the holes are upturned to avoid the ball dropping in or a collar placed round the pin to avoid the ball dropping. In a similar vein, rakes are likely to be removed from the bunkers. Finally there would need to be a temporary relaxation of some of the rules of the sport during the period of social distancing. Golf clubhouses would need to remain closed, including the locker rooms.

Let's hope we are soon enjoying our golf once again.

The Royal and Ancient Golf Club website has very detailed advice to golfers and clubs in anticipation of a return to golf. Also on their website their Head of Rules, Grant Moir, has been posting several lovely `tongue in cheek` blogs he has filmed in his garden to explain some of the rules of golf. These are well worth watching.

Dicksons

This is a poem `Seaside golf` by John Betjeman to raise the spirit of the Probus golfers While I am not allowed to play golf, I must stay at home, I cannot see the Atlantic Waves from Muckhart GC. We do have the "lark song". I always get a good feeling when I read it, my memories of "a quite unprecedented three" many moons ago!! – George H Taylor

#### SEASIDE GOLF

How straight it flew, how long it flew,  
It clear'd the ruddy track  
And soaring, disappeared from view  
Beyond the bunker's back –  
A glorious, sailing, bounding drive  
That made me glad I was alive.

And down the fairway, far along  
It glowed a lonely white;  
I played an iron sure and strong  
And clipp'd it out of sight.  
And spite of grassy banks between  
I knew I'd find it on the green.

And so I did. It lay content  
Two paces from the pin;  
A steady putt and then it went  
Oh, most securely in.  
The very turf rejoiced to see  
That quite unprecedented three.

Ah! Seaweed smells from sandy caves  
And thyme and mist in whiffs,  
In-coming tide, Atlantic waves  
Slapping the sunny cliffs,  
Lark song and sea sounds in the air  
And splendour, splendour everywhere.

JOHN BETJEMAN

## VOTE OF THANKS

Coming to the end of Lockdown week 6. How do you cope?

Back at the beginning, before social distancing, the first advice I received was from a golfing pal. When you do your shopping at Tesco's at the over 70s time of 09:00 to 10:00. If you go in at 09:50, by the time you get your vegetables the wine aisle will be open. Very sensible. However, I am no longer allowed out to do the shopping!

Health and safety reminder – wait until the sun is over the yard arm before you take your first glass of wine.

Enjoy drinking your wine, but don't overdo it!! Take your time and read the Dalgety Bay Probus Newsletter.

A sincere thank you to those involved in putting the Newsletter together. Also thank you to all the contributors. Keep the items coming. I think the Lockdown has some time to run yet.

Stay Safe.

George H Taylor.