



# " *proBITS* "

an occasional publication  
from the

**PROBUS CLUB**  
HORLEY & DISTRICT

issue 9  
8<sup>th</sup> December 2020



## INTRODUCTION

This epistle is seeing the light of day in response to the Covid-19, or Corona Virus, being the cause to postpone our lunch meetings until further notice. The ProBus Club Horley & District's Committee wants to stay in touch with the Members and the Members to stay in touch with each other. It is very important, in the situation we find ourselves in, to be "connected". Complete isolation from our friends/family is a dangerous thing. The majority of our Members have access to email - only 4 don't - and those without will receive "proBITS" in printed form. Hopefully, they'll relay their words of wisdom in a more traditional manner, like delivery by hand, snailmail or even pigeonpost !

The "proBITS" newsletter can only exist successfully with the cooperation of all Members concerned, that must be obvious to everybody. I plead therefore with all Members to make a contribution, however small.

The email address for "proBITS" contributions is :  
jpd.l.probus@icloud.com  
**this is a change of address**

As a guideline : maximum about 850 words.  
If pics included, deduct 30 words per pic.  
Text in plain A4 Word document/email.  
Pics sent separately, in JPG or JPEG format, NOT embedded.  
Please note : your copy may be edited !  
If you submit early enough you'll receive a proof print.

Please email or mail your contribution for the 10th issue, to be received before Tuesday the 5th of January. As always : a week before the issue of "proBITS". Each edition will land in your mailbox on the second Tuesday of the month, the same day we would have had lunch.

Many organisations have a newsletter of some sort. Virtually all of them struggle to get pages filled. I really hope that the ProBus Club of Horley & District, with all its Members having (had) interesting professional lives and interests, will prove to be an exception to the rule.

And no, you can't use the excuse that you don't have the time .....

*editor*

## President's Christmas Message

This time last year I doubt if there's anyone who could have predicted how 2020 was going to turn out and it has certainly proved to be a year which none of us will forget in a hurry. We remember those who have departed and the sense of loss for those left behind made worse by the restrictions on funeral attendance. Whilst there has been a lot of pain and sadness for many, there have also been many opportunities for the best in humanity to shine through. We just have to think of the volunteers who have provided support for the vulnerable members in our community, companies which have switched from their usual business to producing much needed equipment to assist in the fight against COVID. Also, we should not forget the herculean efforts of the NHS in taking care of patients and the scientists who have worked valiantly to better understand the disease and to produce the vaccines necessary to allow a return to a more normal way of life for everyone.

As for ProBus, we might have missed our monthly meetings and lunches and we have not been able to enjoy the usual talks from our guest speakers. However, we have now had the chance to learn more about our own Members from their various contributions to "proBITS". It has been a pleasure for me to edit this and whilst I am sure that we all look forward to a time when we can meet again in person, I do hope that, until that time comes, the contributions will keep on coming so that we can continue to enjoy the chance to "stay in touch".

I know that this Festive Season will be hard for many and especially so for those who are spending their first Christmas without a much cherished family member, made no doubt even harder by the restrictions which will still be in place for social gatherings.

Judi and I would like to wish each and every one of you a Christmas that is as happy as circumstances will allow and we hope that 2021 will prove to be a better year for us all. As Dave Allen used to say: "May your God be with you".

Stay safe & well.

John De Lang



### *A proper Christmas Dinner - but not until Easter*

It was one Christmas in the mid-seventies. We usually went to my wife Brenda's folks near Bognor Regis, with turkey trimmings, the puddings and the wines. Christmas Eve came and the car was loaded with food and drink and Christmas presents ready for a morning get away. Brenda had been warned earlier in the year that an operation to cure a complaint would be needed early in the New Year. Some hopes ! Out of the blue it flared up and before we knew it she was in hospital being prepped for an emergency operation in the local Nuffield. Time for plan B. Whilst she was still under, I was driving like Jehu down to Bognor with the family Christmas dinner in the boot. The fastest round trip from Sunbury ever recorded. Returning late there was little point in visiting as the op was successful and Brenda was still out cold. Visiting on Christmas day was memorable for all the wrong reasons. Firstly, I awoke to see my car looking like an igloo thanks to overnight heavy snow. Secondly there was little festive food about (it was all in Bognor). Thirdly driving to Woking in the snow was no joke. Most of the patients, save two, had been sent home. This gave a patient to nurse ratio of about one to five. Matron invited me to lunch and I accepted. Not in the restaurant but in Brenda's room. The Matron, three nurses and me all surrounding my unconscious wife who was oblivious to the merry making and festooned with more tubes than the London underground system. I recall we played tennis on that early TV game. How games have changed since then. All this with the guest of honour out for the count. Then back home to an empty cold house with only Morecombe and Wise for company. Merry Christmas ? Bah Humbug !! Mercifully, Brenda made a full recovery. This was the best Christmas present ever. Not to be outdone, we decided to postpone our celebrations until Easter.

*contributed by John Startup*

### *What are the chances ?*

My stepson was made redundant from his job in Southampton as a result of the pandemic. However, because of a good reputation and a wide customer base, he was immediately head-hunted by one of his clients whose business still functioned normally. My home town was Worthing on the South Coast and I spent my school holidays there during the 50s at a house in Alinora Crescent, Goring-by-Sea. My stepson's new head office is: Alinora Crescent.

*contributed by Martin Gee*

*Photo of the month*  
will YOURS be here, in the next issue ?



### *What is Under Our Feet ?*

A few years ago a new café was being built in Durham for visitors to the Library on Palace Green, an area between the Castle and the Cathedral. (54-46-28.3 N, 1-34-36.0 W) Digging for the foundations revealed about 20 skeletons. Carbon dating set the time that they were walking around between 1625 and 1660. History showed that probably they were from the Battle of Dunbar in September 1650, a battle between the English, led by Cromwell, and a Scottish force which supported Charles II. The result was overwhelmingly in favour of the English. It was the battle that put the Scots under English rule. The forces were about 11000 on each side. The English lost about 40 men and the Scots about 400 killed, 1000 injured and 6000 captured. Many of the injured were allowed to go home but most of the prisoners were taken to Durham, a march of 100 miles.. About 1700 did not survive due to their wounds and illness. Those that did, about 3000, were imprisoned in the cathedral and castle – Cromwell had little respect for church property and the castle was the home of the bishop. Many of the prisoners died and were buried around the castle and cathedral. The other buildings now there were built after 1660, so it is probable that there are many bones under the buildings and the land around them. It was the second battle of Dunbar, the first was in 1296 between Edward I's men and the Scots, with a similar outcome.

*contributed by Arthur Browne*

### *That's The Way To Do It*

Tablet manufacture involves three basic manufacturing procedures. Firstly all the tablet ingredients, namely the drug substance and excipients (all the other ingredients) are blended together to form a uniform mix. The mix is then fed into a tablet press, many models of which can produce tablets at a rate of thousands a minute. Lastly the tablets are collected and sent for coating. The tablet press is a highly engineered machine and the most important parts are the dies and punches. The die resembles a cotton reel and upper and lower punches fit into the top and bottom of the centrally drilled hole in the reel. The punches define tablet shape, weight and thickness and any embossing. Powder is introduced into the die cavity and the upper and lower punches come together under a pressure of several tons per square inch and compress the entrapped powder to form the tablet which is then ejected and collected in a hopper. As precision tools the punches and dies need servicing and maintenance after each compression run. Such actions must be recorded. Modern practise utilises computerised data bases for easy access to records of usage and maintenance. We are now auditing the Beijing site of a European multinational pharmaceutical company. Myself, another WHO inspector, four senior QA managers and a drop dead gorgeous Chinese interpreter. We entered the tool room of the tableting suite and I asked to see the maintenance logs for the punch and die sets. Upon inspection the tooling was seen to be in excellent condition together with a satisfactory set of records amply demonstrating the care and attention demanded. The word punch must have been uppermost in my mind and seeing such a good set of records for some reason I blurted out in a high squeaky voice "That's the way to do it!" Stunned silence. The eyes of the assembled company flickered furtively to and fro. Has he been taken ill? Is he having a fit? I had broken a golden rule, namely do not make off the cuff remarks during an inspection. White faced (Chinese ?!!) they moved in to help me. Red faced and embarrassed I hastily had to explain that I had not gone crazy, who Punch and Judy were and why my squeaky voice was not a medical condition. They could not believe that the Brits cherished such a grumpy, ugly, rosy cheeked hunchback with an nutcracker jaw who beat his wife, threw a baby from the pram, killed policemen and fed sausages to a crocodile and forever chanting "That's the way to do it!". The look of incredulity was something to behold. I really felt sorry for my interpreter who had some difficulty in translating the dialogue of the Punch and Judy story. Not really her every day line of technical vocabulary.

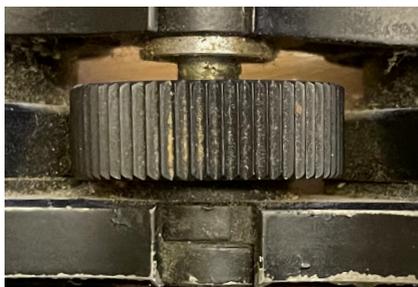
Incidentally, not only are the interpreters I met lovely to look at but their level of knowledge and fluency in English is quite remarkable, especially as very few have ever left China. Next day at the opening meeting the chairman called us to order, stood up and with a quintessential bow in my direction smiling inscrutably began. "Ah so Dr Startup ! We Google Punch and Judy yesterday evening. We now understan' wha' you mean, velly funny". Sanity and reputation restored we proceeded with the day's work.

(By the way, no need to go to the seaside, YouTube does a great job in bringing Mr Punch into your living room. There are also some excellent YouTube videos on how tablets are manufactured & packed.)

*contributed by John Startup*

### *What&Where ?*

Again an every day subject that should be familiar to all of us. No - this one really is ! The number of times that you've had one of these in your hands..... This battered example dates from around the middle of the last century and is a specimen much used and loved by the whole family.



### *An uninvited garden visitor*

"Buy a plastic decoy heron" they said and the real ones will keep away from your garden pond..... Oh yes ? See how this advice worked out.

*contributed by David Ross*



© David Ross

## *St Bartholomew's Church, Horley*

Winter is my favourite time of the year, apart from spring, summer and autumn ! With that in mind, and as Christmas is fast approaching with us currently in lockdown again, I decided that I would put my talents to use and produce a watercolour painting of St. Bart's Church, Horley. I thought I would also give you a little history about the church (with thanks to the Horley Local History Society). Quite when the first church was built here is not known for certain and it may be that a wooden structure was first established close by a fording point on the Emele Stream, as the River Mole was known at that time. This may, in its turn, have been superseded by a stone building and it is probable that a slight mound was constructed to raise the structure above the frequently tested flood level. It is possible that this church was one of two churches in the manor of Sutton which are mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086. It is certain that a church at Horley was established during



1150 -1180, though whether this was a wooden or stone structure is not known. At this time the church was dedicated to The Immaculate Virgin Mary. The earliest known vicar is Walter the Parson and we know this because he witnessed a deed relating to Horley Common in 1218. In 1315 the construction of what we now call the North aisle and the bell tower was started. The condition of the clay foundations was unstable and this caused much movement of the outer walls therefore the addition of buttresses became necessary fairly soon in the life of the church. In particular the bell tower suffered quite a bit of movement and the wooden braces had to be shaped to fit the leaning walls. In 1565 the name of the church was changed to St Bartholomew's. It is not known quite why, though it may have coincided with the restoration of the English service by Elizabeth 1st. The name may relate to the Bartholomew who was the Abbot of Winchester from 1272 -1307. Major work was done on the strengthening of the spire in 1970 (some of you may remember).

The improvement was achieved by building a steel structure inside it and re-hanging the bells so that this structure, rather than the wooden one, took the weight of the bells. When the work was completed it was found that certain adjustments were needed and it was not until 1972 that the bells could again be rung with confidence. It is clear that St Bart's has been central to life in Horley since the 11th century and, provided that the structure of the building can be maintained, can be expected to be so for many years to come. At the moment the wooden shingle tiles of the tower and spire are in a poor condition, particularly on the south and west sides which take the full force of the sun. Currently fund raising is taking place to repair the roof and spire at a cost of £500,000.



Obviously, it's no longer possible for the parishioners to shoulder the whole of the costs and the Church Wardens are dependent on the generosity of Grantees to provide assistance. The church will be applying to the Heritage Lottery for a grant and hopefully, with a lot of support, it may get it repaired in the near future. If not, St.Bart's could look like this photo.

*contributed by Roy Page*

### *Txt shrts*

For a long time our younger generation has employed shortcuts in the way they send texts to each other. Not to be outdone by their prowess, there's now a selection of shortcuts available for the senior texters :

ATD - I'm at the dentist

ATQ - I'm at the doctors

ATOC - I'm at the out-patients clinic

FWIM - I've forgotton where I am

BTW - please bring the wheelchair

HBL - my hearing aid's battery is running low

STAN - sorry, I've got to go - it's time for my afternoon nap

LFD - I'm looking for my dentures

LFT - I'm looking for the toilets

*origin unknown*

Page Ten Teaser

1		2		3				4		5		6
						7						
8						9						
10									11			
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17				18		19						20
21		22				23						
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25								26				
27								28				

Across :

- 1 - I cycle around a plant (6)
- 4 - The remains of a special branch affaire (5)
- 8 - Initially try hurrying in right direction to reach the podium (5)
- 9 - Belgian city has nothing on a severe weather event (7)
- 10 - A universal policeman takes note, the French can be heard (7)
- 11 - Formerly interfered with cone (4)
- 12 - Legendary flier found in Morocco (3)
- 14 - Cause agitation in prison ? (4)

- 15 - To embrace the East can be massive ! (4)
- 18 - Welshman passed away on major road (3)
- 21 - Copies animals in shape-shifting activity (4)
- 23 - Part of the intestine to the Spanish is rank ! (7)
- 25 - Flier discovered on mat of a servant (7)
- 26 - Get back to normal in mature habitat (5)
- 27 - First lady joins charitable organisation for sporting activity (5)
- 28 - Takes pot-shots at waterfowl (6)

*Down :*

- 1 - Pile on top of a pet for forty winks (6)
- 2 - Special operations soldier hiding in ditch (7)
- 3 - Grotesque idly drab beetle (8)
- 4 - Unable to talk sanctimoniously (4)
- 5 - 12 is going back after a new type of nut (5)
- 6 - Plant marshland with native English lavender initially (6)
- 7 - Colour of bream at sea ? (5)
- 13 - Medic in S American country with northern youngsters (8)
- 16 - Pushing furiously for aerial at-tack craft (7)
- 17 - Cause a deflection to totally confuse (6)
- 19 - Ancient Britons seen in choice nightwear ! (5)
- 20 - Basil and I construct legal de-fences (6)
- 22 - A poem, after some hesitation, can gradually deteriorate (5)
- 24 - The old testament contains a thousand and one to exclude (4)

SOLUTION of November crossword.

*Across :* 1-Bah, 3-Laser, 6-Cub, 8-Sew-up, 9-Ramsons, 10-Common Blue, 12-Saw, 15-Efts, 17-Taut, 18-Ham, 22-Passerines, 25-Cowslip, 26-Macao, 27-Olm, 28-Wader, 29-Toe.

*Down :* 1-Bisected, 2-Hawkmoth, 3-Laptop, 4-Strobe, 5-Rumpus, 6-Crow, 7-Bass, 11-Eat, 13-Wainscot, 14-Otoscope, 16-Sap, 19-Mallow, 20-Isopod, 21-Primer, 23-Echo, 24-Swim.

*Where there's muck...*

Soon after finishing National Service with the RAF, I got a job as an audit clerk with a City accountants firm. After the initial interview, I seldom saw any of the partners who were far too busy with their FTSE 100 audits; I was left on my own with no training (apart from night school) or supervision (which was OK by me). One of the first audits I did was in North London. I carried out all the usual audit routines - reconciling the cash book with the bank balance, checking the validity and ageing of the debtors' and creditors' ledgers etc. I had some difficulty with the stock valuation until I obtained more information about the business.

After a week or two the Polish entrepreneur, Mr N, came in and asked me how I was getting on. I said everything was satisfactory, but I was puzzled that all the significant transactions were with the National Coal Board (NCB). Mr N. said he would tell me how he had set up his business, and how it was operating.

In 1939 he came to England as a penniless refugee and managed to get a job as an Engineer at a Nottingham pit (he had previously worked in the Silesian pits in SW Poland). Nearly all the NCB's pits used coal cutting machines which were in constant need of repair and refurbishment, along with their essential armoured trailing cables. Mr N's services were in great demand, and he travelled the UK giving advice on the machines and their performance.

After two or three years he left the NCB and set up his own small company, employing Polish engineers. Due to changing geology, coal cutting machines often became unsuitable for a particular pit, if the seam became too weak or too narrow. Mr N. would often buy a machine knowing that after repair and refurbishment, he could sell it to another pit who needed that type of machine.

All the ingredients for a very successful business were there :

- 1 - No risk of a nationalised NCB pit going bust;
- 2 - Continuous supply of repair and refurbishment work;
- 3 - Plenty of opportunity to buy and sell machines from various parts of the NCB as an individual pit's requirements changed;
- 4 - No heavy investment in fixed assets; most of the stock was truly current assets (being available for sale).

I did the audits for three years, and in that time the business and profitability grew rapidly and Mr N became very wealthy. His motto was : "Where there's muck, there's brass !"

*contributed by Arthur Meaton*

### *Chinese NHS - a story told against myself*

I had just finished a presentation to Chinese quality assurance personnel comprised mainly of pharmacists and a few doctors. Stepping from the lectern I tripped over a cable and went down like the proverbial sack of potatoes banging my head against a wooden screen and smashing my elbow on the floor. Pandemonium ensued and several people rushed to my aid. The babble was indescribable as I was helped to my feet. Shaken but otherwise superficially damaged I took my seat and felt fine after a few minutes. The group chairman (a lovely lady I still correspond with and an Arsenal fan to boot) insisted I went to a hospital across the road for a check-up. There we were told it was closed for the day as there were no patients needing attention. Not to be outdone we moved on to a second hospital two minutes drive away. I was seen by a lady doctor who apparently welcomed my presence as it made a change to examine somebody who wasn't all skin and bone. I was then taken to a radiologist for an elbow check. The radiologist would not have looked out of place in a paddy field such was his state of dress. The X-ray was examined by a doctor in a white coat more suited to a Smithfield Market's porter. Bloodstained and rumpled - not a good advert for a medic. One squint satisfied him all was fine but he told me to go easy on my weight training. Asking how he knew I trained he pointed out the tell-tale signs on the X ray. Not such an iffy doctor after all..... Thinking I was in the clear I expected to re-join the course. Not a bit of it. I was driven half way across town to the only CT scan in the district. VIP treatment with a CT scan done within 30 minutes. Again, all was seen to be OK. The doctor made some comment which apparently translated as they now knew why I was so clever. (flattery from my admiring guide/host who never left my side ?) Finally, we returned to the lecture room none the worse for wear. Thinking about it, VIP or not, I had been given a top-grade physical with X-rays, scans and results all inside 2 hrs. All free at point of use. Our beloved NHS would have been pushed to match that.

*contributed by John Startup*



### *White Angel's Trumpets - Brugmansia*

This tropical shrub or small tree is a real showstopper. Grow it in a large container outdoors in summer, or indoors all year.

This rather splendid specimen adorns Jim Williamson's garden. The plant is poisonous and sap irritates skin, so always wear gloves !

## Highlighting a Local Club or Organisation.

### *Horley Local History Society.*

The HLHS was formed in 1952. Over the years Membership has gradually increased and currently exceeds 100. Since the beginning we have assembled a large collection of documents. We have local maps and photographs of the district dating back over several centuries. We even have complete census records. When life gets back to normal again after the pandemic, we shall continue to explore the possibilities of building a dedicated archive storage facility, preferably within the Horley's town centre, and if we are successful in moving this forward we shall soon be embarking on a serious fund raising exercise. The Horley Local History Society is a member of the British Association for Local History. We aim to provide a forum where anyone with an interest in the history

of Horley and its surrounding areas, from its earliest times to the present day, can meet, discuss and review ongoing projects and acquire knowledge on all aspects of local history. We encourage the collection of data, information and photographic records on all aspects of local history and can provide help and



*local history section in the Horley Library*

assistance to those undertaking studies in areas of personal interest including family research. We can also help members to undertake further research with the object of assembling the results in a published format for the benefit of members and for the general public to enjoy. Our publications are on sale locally and via Ebay. Membership is just £10 a year for individuals or £15 for families and all are welcome to join us whether resident in Horley or not. Apply to the Treasurer, Doug Cox via the contact form on our website below. We meet (when such gatherings are permitted again) on the 4th Thursday of each

month (except August) at Horley Methodist Church in Victoria Road, Horley at 7.30pm for an 8.00pm start. Meetings usually take the form of an illustrated talk on a subject relating to local history or a more generalised historical event. During the Covid pandemic we shall be holding meetings for members via Zoom. Occasionally meetings are held elsewhere - to find out just check our website.

*contributed by Doug Cox*

www.horleyhistory.org.uk. email : via website form

Col. Macleod was a founding member of the HLHS and he wrote the introduction to the first book the Society published in 1958. Here is part of it :

"The growth of Horley resembles that of many a parish eventually invaded by main roads and the railway. Beginning as forest, and a wet forest at that, with all the head waters of the Mole to keep it moist, a few clearings made here and there by the Britons. When the Saxons came more land was cleared, and it may be that the Saxon settlements laid the foundations of Horley as we know it today, perhaps along Lodge Lane, about Sidlow, Bonehurst Road, Vicarage Lane, Lee Street, Horley Row and in the Haroldslea-Thunderfield area, where the Saxon place of heathen worship is thought to have been. The name Thunderfield seems to be older than Horley, and it may be worthwhile remembering that, if the first grant of Horley land to the Abbey of Chertsey was made under the name of Thunderfield, the Saxon place of worship may have been on the site of the parish church itself".



*What&Where ?*

Told you - this one really is easy - isn't it ?!

And finally...

Even in these dark days there are still enough reasons to celebrate !

In December we pay tribute to the parents of the following people :

On the 15th David Yates increased the local population by one.

On the 20th Bernard Lockley saw the light of day.

On the 29th LAWRIE made a PERFECT appearance.

Please let us know if your birthday is in December but was not mentioned.

The editor always has the last word.....

I would like to say a very warm "thank you" to those people who have, with their contributions, made this issue of proBITS possible - take a bow !

Contributions for the January issue are very welcome (if not essential) - and you still have enough time on your hands ! More details on page 2.

Please email to :

[jpdl.probus@icloud.com](mailto:jpdl.probus@icloud.com)

Receipt before 5th of January would be much appreciated, it gives me enough time to prepare the next issue which will see the light of day on the second Tuesday, the 12th.

Our website : [www.probusclubhorley.org](http://www.probusclubhorley.org)