

Here we go again. Happy New Year.



It's going to be a good one.

I hope you had an amazing Christmas day and a restful Boxing day. Perhaps you were also out celebrating Hogmanay last night, and still have that headache. Whatever, sit somewhere quiet and peaceful, leave the telly off for a-while and enjoy looking through this first edition of Arundel Probus Times in 2024. Alternatively, wait until you return from that stroll along the seafront or brisk walk on The Downs. There are other options. Perhaps a pantomime? We used to visit Bertram Mills Circus at Olympia, but no more. Now life's a circus.

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What's on this month? January.

There is no Pub Lunch in January, to allow for our full recovery from festivities!

January 25th. First Club meeting of the year and lunch at the White Swan hotel.

Speaker Stuart Flitton "Journalism: My Part in its Survival." (Flyer and menu choices to follow.)

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New Year Resolutions

This new year, as in every year, many people will have made resolutions promising improvements in their lives. Alcohol will have been forsworn, exercise embraced, hobbies sought, but though it may make sense to respond to the indulgences of Christmas with meaningful change, the tradition of new-year resolutions is far older than the establishment of the Christian festival or even the placing of the new year in the middle of winter.

The Babylonians were the first civilisation to leave records of new-year festivities, some 4,000 years ago. Their years were linked to agricultural seasons, with each beginning around the spring equinox. A 12-day festival to celebrate the renewal of life, known as Akitu, marked the beginning of the farming year. During Akitu, people keen to curry favour with the gods would promise to repay their debts and return borrowed objects. In a similar vein the ancient Egyptians would make sacrifices to Hapi, the god of the Nile, at the beginning of their year in July, a time when the Nile's annual flood would usher in a particularly fertile period. In return for sacrifice and worship they might request good fortune, rich harvests and military successes.

The annual tradition has continued through the ages until today, but most people hardly bother. Gone are the religious promises to say one's prayers nightly, or grace before the meal, etc and much more flippant or mundane resolutions are mouthed to each other, barely lasting a few days.

Have you made yours yet? I made a new year's resolution several years ago which I have not broken yet: not to make any more ! I can recommend it. *Thanks to The Economist for extract.*

Christmas Lunch reports.

"There were 43 attendees which included members, their wives and guests. An excellent meal was provided by the White Swan Hotel which was enjoyed by everyone. There were three people who could not attend due to Covid and feeling unwell. We wish them a speedy recovery.

Special thanks are due to Joe, Monica and all the staff involved for their hard work." President David.

"I was pleased I brought my wife and a friend to the lunch today. I admit I had reservations about attending myself as I am just not up to much and my energy level is almost zero. Anyway, my wife said I must, so I did, and happy to have done so. The restaurant should be congratulated on the quality of the meal, and the service was very good.

Lovely there were so many quality prizes to be won. All in all a fine gathering." Hon. Member Joe Hayes

"The Lunch was a great success, thanks to David Feist's organisation. The room was nicely decorated and the food was very good and well presented.

David organised the raffle with a prize at every table. A surprise prize of a bottle of Port - donated by a member - added to the success of the raffle.

President David thanked all for coming, especially Joe Hayes and his wife and their guest. He also thanked the Hotel staff.

Vice President Brian Arthur thanked David for all his work in organising the lunch, the raffle and his attention throughout the lunch to ensure all was going well." Richard Brennan





One table missing, sorry.

White Swan lunches

Over the last few months there have been sporadic complaints about club lunches. They seem to be on the increase, even though the Christmas lunch was a great success, according to reports.

Your committee therefore needs to know what you think and what you recommend before having a meeting with hotel management. So, please send me your answers to the following questions and do add any comments you wish.

Have you been dissatisfied with lunches in the last year?

What specifically did you find unsatisfactory?

Would you stay for lunch if choices were much more inviting, assuming you don't stay now?

How much are you prepared to pay for the lunch you would be happy with?

What changes would you like to see made to our club lunch experience?

If you want my opinion, we have probably been getting what we deserve for paying only £19 for a two-course lunch. We have silver service in a private dining room with waitress service and linen tablecloths. Time has moved on but our meals are still served together and on time to 25 +/- people, from a choice of menu and we now have (unnecessary) tea/coffee to follow which has further reduced money available for food. Take a look at the hotel's extensive menu on-line. Ham, egg and chips, followed by two scoops of ice cream, costs more in the bar than we are paying now! I would pay at least £25 inclusive - and forget tea and coffee - if that would ensure a decent meal.

This is your opportunity to have your say to help the committee improve things.

Please let me have your responses by the end of January. Thank you. bobtanner1809@gmail.com

Did you "plant a tree in '23?"



If so, "plant one more in '24".

Birthdays in January

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CHAPS.

Charlie Meggs - 1st IT'S TODAY! - Is he really that young?!

cfmeggs@outlook.com

David Tippett - 12th - Is he really..... ?!

dave.tippett@btinternet.com

Barry Hopkins - 17th - Is he really that old?! Doesn't look it.

barhopkins@aol.com

Why not send each of them a cheerful Happy Birthday message? They are always nice to receive.

If I have missed you out it's only because our Secretary, Richard doesn't know your birthdate.

We don't need to know the year, only the date and the month. Age is really of no interest to us.

Speakers etc for the next six months

January 25th	Stuart Flitton	- "Journalism: My part in its survival".
February 22nd	Martin Alderton	- Arundel Walking Tours
March 28th	Bill Mc Naught	- "William Cody"
April 25th	AGM	- QUIZ
May 23rd	Andrew Warren	- "The Mysteries of Aroma"
June 27th	Les Maple	- Audio description in a theatre

Long haul flying.

Hadn't done that for a while so it was interesting to find out what had changed.

Seating space seemed to have got even smaller (just as I was getting fatter) so squeezing and settling in took longer. (They call it Premium Economy). There's no chance of retrieving anything small dropped on the floor without getting out of your seat and disturbing your neighbour.

Metal cutlery has returned, after plastic appeared post-9/11, and helpfully, your foldaway table is now magnetised to help avoid dropping knife, fork or spoon into the depths. Food wasn't too bad, except breakfasts. Pre-prepared omelette, bacon and small plastic mushrooms do not travel well.

You can now change your cabin window glass from clear to dark and back again, simply by pressing a button repeatedly. Please explain to me how that works.

So, flying long haul in your 90th decade can be fun if you don't mind sitting for twelve hours and sharing cabin air with a few hundred others.

Air turbulence is still, well, turbulent. Will they ever solve it? I think it's getting worse.

Don't forget to eat plenty of fruit. An apple a day keeps the doctor away, but what does a pair do at night?

If you want to know how to tell the sex of bananas, you have to write to me. I'm not printing that !



Show respect, even to people who don't deserve it; not as a reflection of their character, but of yours.



Dawn over David F. in Clymping. Thanks David.



Red sky at night, pyjamas too tight ?

What's on next month, February?

Pub Lunch Thursday 8th. Arun View, Littlehampton – organised by Ian Goodall

Club Meeting and lunch. Thursday 22nd. The White Swan Hotel

Speaker - Martin Alderton of Arundel Walking Tours



If you don't like cat hair stay off my sofa

We have turned the corner and a new year beckons. Leave 2023 behind with all its problems, crises, disappointments and tragedies and start 2024 with renewed enthusiasm to make things better; to do all we can to have a positive influence on things, in the home, in the place where we live, in relationships, but, most importantly of all, in our Probus club.

Contributions to this humble newsletter are always welcome – on any subject you wish.

And don't forget to send me your thoughts about club lunches, please.

Happy New year - Bob