



Probos

Welcome back!

Welcome back! That's the message from Maureen O'Brien, the new catering manager at Goring and Streatley Golf Club.

Probus members, too, are looking forward to business (and lunch) as usual, as the chairman pointed out in thanking the manager of the Shillingford Bridge for his interim hospitality. The hotel suited our needs very well, Preston Bemis said, and "those who stayed for a social drink and lunch were pleased with the meal and the service" his staff provided.

However, "a majority of members



Maureen O'Brien

preferred a venue closer to home". The committee will shortly be working on plans for a ladies' lunch in October and Christmas lunch in December.

[Watch this space!](#)

After the disruption of the pandemic we were treated on 11 August to a relaxing dose of escapism when Jeff Evans talked about "Pop on the box". It was also our first live event since March last year. [See story page 4](#)



Mystery member: who is he?

He's survived two plane crashes, been struck by lightning in flight, flown through the stalk of a mushroom cloud and confronted a man crossing his garden with gun in hand. He's also

been woken at two in the morning by the "ear-splitting roars" of two lions while in a small, open-ended tent in Kenya, "after the fire had gone out and the Masai had gone home".

Attracted seventy years ago by its beauty and good local towns and communications, mystery member ten has earned a quiet retirement in the Gap. "I saw it and I liked it", he explained.

Readers of *The Aftermath* will be familiar with the scene of post-war devastation that horrified him in his youth. On holiday from school in England, he sailed to the Hook of Holland and whence by train to Hamburg, to be greeted by his parents in a military Humber Pullman.

On the way to his father's air base they drove between piles of rubble and the forty cubic-metre block houses in which many German civilians perished during *Operation Gomorrah*.

As an experienced Canberra navigator he was enrolled for an "exciting" RAF tour overseas. What the

[→ page 2](#)

Even already prudent and thrifty members will have taken away something useful on 14 July, from what we hope will prove to be the last Zoom meeting of the pandemic.

Ted Yeates and Simon Whitehead offered advice on financial planning in later life. A previous beneficiary of this acknowledged

Check-list 1

Legal

- Lasting power of attorney (LPA) for health and care
- LPA for financial affairs
- Wills, inform executors, specify guardians
- Solicitor, name and address, location of documents (wills, passport etc)

Health

- NHS number, name of doctor, surgery address and contact details
- Private health or medical insurance details
- Carer's details
- Copies of care assessments

Financial planning in later life



Whitehead (left) and Yeates

that “We all put off thinking about what might happen in old age, our own or our family’s. We know it’s a mistake but we still don’t arrange anything.”

The solution was summed up in three invaluable check-lists, prepared by the National Careline, a not-for-profit company of which Simon had been a director.

Here are a few of the take-away points to emerge from Simon’s presentation and the energetic discussion it prompted. → Page 4

Check-list 2

Financial

- Where is my money? Bank account details, savings/ISAs, life assurance policies
- Open a joint bank account to allow surviving partner access in event of death
- Put utilities in joint names so that instructions can be given by survivor
- List pension schemes and contact information, complete nomination forms
- Mortgage: lender, reference number, contact details
- Personal loans, credit cards, car loans; lenders and contact details
- Insurers, contact details: buildings, contents, car, pet
- Funeral plan, provider and contact details, nominated director and details, copy of plan, expression of wishes
- Benefits: list details of all benefits you receive, copy of relevant documents

Mystery member from page 1

appeal for volunteers did not say was it involved flying through an atomic cloud to get samples for the nuclear weapons programme in Western Australia.

While training for this he experienced his first crash. Landing at night on an unlit, wet runway the aircraft overshot at 80 knots, crossed a sunken lane and hurtled across a field but, happily, was arrested by a wire fence. The crew rescued themselves and two days later were off to Oz.

The flight to Perth was as eventful. On the way from Tripoli to Karachi (“hot, smelly, fly ridden, with a dung economy and no beer!”) the aircraft was struck by lightning, leading to a massive compass error. This resulted in an off-track deviation of 600 nautical miles on the way to Colombo and landing with only a few drops of fuel remaining.

In Tripoli he began a successful period of poker by winning the equivalent of a month’s pay in the casino. Play continued in Australia and the Aussies turned out to be enthusiastic if poor poker players. In a shack mess in the outback an illegal school was interrupted by the appearance of three very senior people, including



David Wilkins was mystery member nine

Bill Penny, who went on to become chairman of UKAEA and Rector of Imperial College. “We were lucky, as our CO — an unpleasant type intent on causing us serious trouble — was thwarted by a new top man who asked to be dealt in the game.” Back in the UK his Australian winnings helped buy a TR2 which, he likes to think, enhanced his marriage prospects.

Mystery member ten had his second crash when posted to Germany in a low level reconnaissance role. At night, on one engine, his aircraft stalled on the approach. They were saved from inverting and an untimely end by one wing hitting the ground and breaking off. He was lucky again!

His talent as a sculptor is plain to see. Works at home include a lifelike barn owl and various abstracts, some inspired by Henry Moore. Much of his sculpting was done with a chain saw, including a wooden, near life-size female nude.

Mystery member ten deplores the introduction of speed limits, the current “loss of human trust” and the ending of National Service, “which could be revived to support charitable causes”.

His own favourite charity is the air ambulance.

What annoys him most is “wokeism”. People are “looking to be offended”, he feels, and see only one side of our history. “One wrong word can lead to a job loss while incompetence thrives, especially in the public sector.”

Mystery member ten “loves France but hates the EU”. Yet his

desert island disc would be Beethoven’s ninth, the source of the EU anthem. The public figure he most admires is Nigel Farage, who “changed the course of history virtually single handed and without reward or formal recognition”.

His desert island luxury would be his wife, if allowed; if not, his garden shed. His book would be *Nanette*, by Edwards Park, described by our mystery member as simply “a good yarn”.

With his son he was hosted at Buckingham Palace by the Duke of Kent. They were invited to share their pictures of the duke’s father, taken during his wartime visit to the RAF base commanded by our mystery member’s father. The pictures had great sentimental value to the duke, being the last taken before his father died in an air accident in August 1942.

The “gunman” on the lawn turned out to be Walter, Baron Marshall of Goring, champion of nuclear power and chairman of the CEGB. The gun was for targeting game and the incident triggered off a lasting friendship. The mushroom cloud came from the “dirtiest atomic bomb ever tested by the UK”. From the unexpected acrid smell in the cabin our mystery member “thought we were dead men”. It was one of the explosions of three fission, ground-burst devices and four, one-thousand times bigger, hydrogen/fusion, air burst weapons he witnessed. Unlike some other servicemen involved, he came back unscathed.

Who is mystery member ten?

Look for the answer in the next Probity

XEDSXWORD No. 9

The Compiler will pay £10 to the charity of choice of the sender of the first all-correct solution drawn out of the hat.

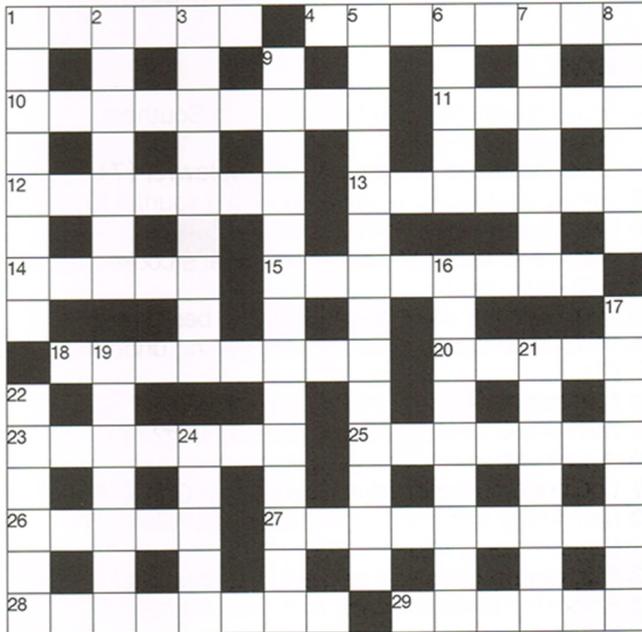
Closing date 30th November 2021

N.B. Send your entries to John Gray

john@thegrays.myzen.co.uk

or

13 Holmlea Road

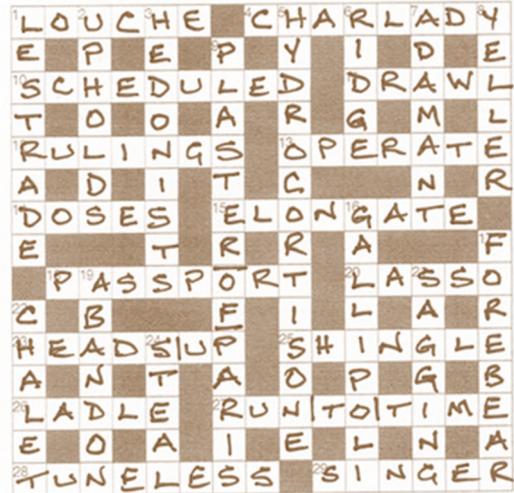


Across

1. Ditch the fish - that's about right. (6)
4. Artist brought back in schools, nothing lost for students (8)
10. Expressing my gratitude for Arthur's catchphrase (1,5,3)
11. In the thick of chaos lies a system of morals. (5)
12. Heard ungentlemanly Judaic prayer. (7)
13. Reconstruction of German ruins thus covered. (7)
14. Gain nothing from Antipodean author. (5)
15. Lads were moved into shelter. (8)
18. A mother's tease gave rise to herself! (5,3)
20. To obscure, play "Misty"? (5)
23. Ah, so brother Marx ruled Egypt? (7)
25. Great, good person - the greatest, in fact. (7)
26. Base Boat Race crew in *ad hoc* Talk show. (5)
27. Coach taken in by other's restriction. (9)
28. Mischievous moves under bridges! (8)
29. Applications of herb in America. (6)

Name(s).....

Charity.....



Solution to XEDSXWORD No 8

Congratulations to the winner

Alan and Irene Matthews

Down

1. Contemplation of slim ruler. (8)
2. Chained-up Monotreme. (7)
3. Ancient manuscript about Church uniform. (9)
5. He makes verbal circuits! (14)
6. Signs that soldiers were taken in by mapmakers. (5)
7. He'd read about being stuck. (7)
8. See seed broadcast and quit. (6)
9. Expletive coming from rather holy Byrd? (2,3,4,5)
16. Emirs brag about whale production. (9)
17. I state silver creates turbulence. (8)
19. Dreadful cockney physician has nervous twitch. (7)
21. Releasing from iron reign. (7)
22. Don't breathe a word! (6)
24. Let inexperienced lose the head! (6)

Later life from page 2

Ageing is a process, not an event. For a long time the effects are gradual and planning is easy to put off.

Planning for the rest of your life is better for everyone but can be harder than you expect.

It can also be frightening when you begin to realise how expensive care at home can be, broadly the same as a care home, typically £1,250 per week.

If the public sector can turn you away without paying money they will. "You'll get better service if you're a bit Bolshie."

Jeff Evans chronicled how television had presented and been influenced by rock and pop music since *Six-five special*, the Saturday evening youth magazine, hit our 405-line, twelve-inch, black and white screens in 1957. The impression was of a gladiatorial contest for ratings between the BBC and fledgling ITV.

Sixty years on, he concluded, if you exclude award ceremonies and festivals such as Glastonbury, there is little pop music on TV.

Popular music used to come over the wireless, in programmes like *Two-way family favourites*. *Six-five special* broke new ground. It was produced by Jo(sephine) Douglas who, at thirty, had been appointed as the "closest in age to the target group" of the programme. The BBC "still had a Reithian mindset: wholesome and uplifting", and the programme content reflected this, with features on film, sport, jazz and classical and choir music as well as "possibly a bit of newfangled rock and roll".

Soon, Jack Good was brought in to assist. He was younger, and excited by the impact of **Bill Haley's *Rock around the clock*** on young people, who he saw dancing in the aisles at the local cinema.

In a "revolutionary" change, Good "got kids in front of the camera by putting them behind the performers". He increased the rock and roll content and introduced **Tommy Steele**, but serious music was retained.

Within months Good resigned and the BBC "hoped rock and roll would fade away". He was snapped up by ABC Television, who broadcast *Oh boy!* live from the Hackney Empire. In a reversal of his BBC innovation, Good kept the youngsters in the stalls and circle, away from the cameras, as there had been "too much waving to mum".

Oh boy! was a "breathless" half-hour, starting at six o'clock to steal the audience from *Six-five special*. Made famous by the show were **Marty Wyld** and **Cliff Richard**. ITV received complaints that Cliff was a "bad influence" but *Oh boy!* did what was wanted and "blew *Six-five special* out of the water".

Wyld migrated in 1959 to *Boy meets girls*, the "girls" being the Vernons Girls, spun-out from the eponymous football pools promoter. The BBC fought back by moving *Juke box jury*, chaired by **David Jacobs**, to Saturday

Review your will every three years and make sure executors can still do the job.

Make sure you have a joint bank account, even if not your main one. When you die your personal account is closed and won't pay the bills, even direct debits and standing orders.

Hold property as tenants in common, not joint tenants.

Create a one-stop file of information. Be sure those who need to know can find it.

Keep passwords in a central file.

Check advisers' credentials on the Financial Services Register (at: www.gov.uk).

Check-list 3

Household

- Details of main house, spare keys, key information
- Details of other properties
- Car details
- Pet: who will look after (agree it with them)

All information in one secure location, with friends and family aware

Review every 3 years

See more on the Probus website

Sixty years of pop on the box



Jeff Evans with the chairman

evenings. The public preferred this and *Boy meets girls* was dropped. Other shows which started and failed at this time included *Dig this* and *Drumbeat*, the latter featuring **Vince Eager** and **Adam Faith**.

A young Midlander, **Janice Nicholls** found fame as a juke box juror with her "Oil give it foive" verdict on the week's best discs. Her fresh face and Black Country accent appealed to viewers and she served on the jury for three years. After a record that flopped and a stint as a journalist she retreated to "train as a chiropodist and settle down as a housewife".

In 1960 Good launched *Wham!!*, starring **Joe Brown**, **Jess Conrad** and **Billy Fury** but by then "the excitement had lapsed" and the world was "waiting for the Beatles to arrive".

The BBC was in a Reithian time-warp when rock 'n' roll took off



The Beatles were "lucky" when they appeared on *Thank your lucky stars* in 1963*. Transmission coincided with heavy snow, which encouraged large numbers to tune in. *Please, please me* went down well and the record "shot up the charts". TV companies again "fell over each other" to put pop on the box and record companies grabbed the opportunity to plug their discs.

Pilot programmes for Rediffusion's *Ready steady go!* showed the public preferred music to chat. On-screen dancers were selected for their skill, but were turned away if not in "whizz fashion gear". **Cathy McGowan** became "the face of the sixties". The show symbolised Swinging London and "people in Scotland and Cornwall could see what was going on in the capital", many for the first time.

Top of the pops lasted 42 years from 1964, reaching its peak audience of twenty million in 1969, helped by performers such as **David Bowie** and **Marc Bolan**. When it closed the audience was a mere million.

By the mid-sixties pop music on TV had changed, partly because "performers became more serious", writing and producing their own material. The trend was reinforced by the growth of album sales. Programmes were devoted exclusively to one, sometimes two artistes or bands.

The old grey whistle test, launched in 1971 epitomised this genre. It was hosted by journalists, including **Bob Harris** and **Annie Nightingale**. It had a cult following and boosted the career of **Elton John**.

Under its condensed title, *Whistle test* closed in 1987. The void was filled by the BBC's *Album show*. Intriguingly, a production misunderstanding on this helped launch the career of **Queen**. "By the end of the eighties", Jeff Evans said, "pop music was off prime-time television".

A formula that's endured is *Later with Jools Holland*. Jeff attributes its thirty-year survival to a mixture of old and new. **Adele's** first appearance on *Later* was in 2007. On the same bill was **Paul McCartney**. The message was, he said, that "it's OK to like any music as long as it's good music".

* Travelling on the upper deck of a number 66 bus, your hapless editor was caught in the traffic jam caused by fans outside the ATV studios in Birmingham when this show was being recorded.