

## **President's address for May 2025**

First of all, I would like to inform you that I will be continuing as President for another year as no one else has come forward! I hope that you all have been satisfied with your first Lady President as you will be getting another year of me. Getting people prepared to serve on the committee is a problem for most Probus clubs these days including our friends in Godalming Probus so your club needs you if you can help. We always welcome any member who feels that they would be prepared to join the Committee even without a specific role in order to see what we do and maybe take on a role.

I would also like to thank you all for supporting us during the last year. Inflation has caused rising costs for the lunches and there has been a change of caterers partly to try and keep costs down. We have also lost a few old members as usual but I am glad to say that recruitment has been reasonably successful and we achieved a net gain to 43 members.

Please note, for those who have not already done so, that subs were due on 1<sup>st</sup> April.

We have had 10 normal lunches with generally a good standard of speaker. Plus, we had a Summer Outing to Greyfriars Winery which was most enjoyable, according to those who attended. My thanks to Peter Parker for organising this. Godalming Probus organised our joint Spring outing in June to Nymans and Sissinghurst and in the Autumn we organised a visit to Brighton Pavillion which was not as well attended as we hoped. With interest in special lunches at the Frensham Pond Hotel dropping off and so a need to consider alternatives we decided to hold our Christmas Lunch in the Masonic Hall for the first time. Most members seemed happy with the move and enjoyed themselves. The lunch included some entertainment by a magician. Chris will review the financial costs in his report.

We need to give a big thank you to Jon Warnke who is stepping down as Lunch and Membership Secretary after several years. Peter Parker will be taking on the role of Lunch Secretary and I will be taking on the role of Membership Secretary which includes being the first point of contact for the Club. We have been joined by Colin Simmons who has taken on the role of Social Secretary and Steve Stanley has said that he will carry on as Speaker Secretary for another year although other commitments may make it difficult for him to nursemaid the speaker at every lunch. Neil Bamford continues to be doing a very good job in publicising the Club, both in Round-and-About and Vantage-Point as well as various other publications, and this has resulted in a certain amount of interest and new members.

As part of a recruitment effort some clubs make a big effort to get existing members to bring a guest with a view to them joining. We have not pushed this hard so far.

As well as gaining some new members we have also lost several old members who have died. These include Turlough Bamber, Michael Woolrych, Guy Gammell, Robert Bailey, Andrew Hind and, recently, Tony Barron and Maurice McCracken.