

STOKESLEY PROBUS CLUB

Minutes of Members Meetings 2024-2025

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[Minutes of Members Meeting held on 18/06/2024](#)

The Chairman was very pleased to introduce Colin Hatton to deliver his talk, "Darlington to Stockton and Beyond". Colin has presented talks to the Club previously and was warmly welcomed on his return.

During his career Colin headed a design team specialising in chemical plant design, and now in retirement is very active in local history research, and amongst other involvements, writes regular articles for the local "Now & Then" magazine. Colin brought several copies for those Members who may not have the latest edition.

In essence, Colin's talk was to explain how railways became instrumental in the development of local industries due to their ability to transport raw materials quickly to areas of production.

Until the 1820's the only available methods of bulk transport were shipping and canals. Roads were poor, and limited quantities could be moved. Wagonways had operated since the 1600's where horses were used to pull wagons along timber tracks, but the wagons were limited in size and number in order to suit the use of horses. A well-known early wagonway, the Tanfield Railway (with its impressive and

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well known Causey Arch), transported coal from the Durham coalfields to the River Tyne for loading onto ships.

With the adaption of steam power to locomotives the opportunity was identified to build a steam hauled railway from the coalfields in Durham to the River Tees. Consequently, a group of investors led by the renowned Pease family, local industrialists and Quakers, formed the Darlington and Stockton Railway, and proceeded to build the railway from the coalfields around Shildon to Stockton. It opened on 27th December 1825 to much fanfare and worldwide interest. On the same day, in an attempt to prove the capability and reliability of rail transport, a race was held between a horse drawn carriage and a steam hauled train - the train won, much to the relief of the members of the S & D Railway Board.

The railway was initially 25 miles long, and intended to transport only coal to the Tees for shipping to markets in London and elsewhere. Initially to Stockton for access to the docks, an extension downstream to Port Clarence to allow coal to be delivered to larger ships was opened in 1828.

To maximise operation, the D & S Rly allowed private operators to run horse drawn passenger wagons along the line until 1833 when the company commenced its own steam hauled passenger trains.

The great success of the railway led to other extensions, the most significant being that to Middlesbrough and beyond along the south bank of the river. Local entrepreneurs, Gers, Bell, Bolckow, Vaughn, and others, saw the potential to utilise local iron ore and coal and developed numerous smelting facilities leading to the development of the Ironmasters' District along this stretch of the Tees, where a large concentration of ironworks was established.

The Middlesbrough extension required crossing the Tees, and a suspension bridge was built. This proved to be unsuitable as it was too flexible, and train weights needed to be restricted. It was subsequently replaced by a sturdy cast iron structure.

Middlesbrough is renowned for being the first town developed entirely due to a railway. It rapidly grew due to the industrial development in the area, and substantial docks were built to compete with, and soon eclipse, Port Clarence.

The railway was later extended to Redcar and Saltburn.

The railway was such a great success that it spurred extensions to other areas, and a plethora of railways throughout the country. This rapid expansion leading to a national network brought a revolution in the transport of goods and materials changing the face of Britain. Similar development spread in many other countries.

Railway development attracted much investment, and its importance was reflected in grand structures. The huge majestic main station buildings (such as those at York and Newcastle in the north) were the largest buildings constructed since the cathedrals of the Middle Ages.

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Railways also had a profound effect on towns and villages allowing efficient connectivity throughout the country. They enabled trade, and the movement of all manner of goods to previously inaccessible markets.

In addition, as railway timetables required coordinated time zones, standardisation of time was introduced. Prior to the railways there was no need for standard time due to little inter area travel, therefore, each district used time to maximise local daylight hours.

Following several questions, and thanks from the Chairman for a much detailed and interesting presentation, Members expressed their thanks and appreciation to Colin in the customary manner with a hearty round of applause.

In recognition of the world-wide significance of the railway, it is remembered on each milestone in its history.

In 1925, when the original D & S Railway was operated by the LNER, the centenary of the line was celebrated in grand fashion. A cavalcade of trains travelled the line including a replica of Locomotion No 1, albeit with a petrol engine.

Again, in 1975 the 150-year celebration was held and saw huge crowds attending along the line, especially at Shildon. This time an appropriately steam powered replica of Stephenson's Rocket took pride of place.

2025 will see the bicentenary celebrations for which many events are planned.

Business Minutes – 18/6/24

1. Attendance and apologies: Members in attendance: 26 Apologies: 7
2. New Members and Guests: NIL
3. Minutes of last Meeting held on 21st May 2024: Accepted
4. Matters arising: None
5. Committee Reports

Treasurer: (The Treasurer was recovering from an accident and left the meeting early for medical follow up.) 2024/2025 subscriptions: of 40 Members, 33 had paid to date. The final number of Members renewing their Membership will be confirmed at the next meeting.

Secretary: Nothing new to report.

Website Manager: Website up to date.

Speaker Finder: 2024/2025 programme confirmed.

6. Trips

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3rd July 2024: Land of Iron followed by lunch at Grinkle Park Hotel. This is the first car sharing trip, and the organisation to team up drivers and passengers in the most efficient way has been very time consuming. A list was issued to those attending to confirm the arrangements. There are several empty spaces and anyone wishing to join should contact the Treasurer or the Chairman.

7. Member Lunches

Tuesday 4th June 2024: The Crown at Kirklevington. All feedback from those attending was very complimentary: good venue, good food, and good service.

Wednesday 25th September: The venue is yet to be decided

Thursday 31st October: The Panda, Stokesley.

8. AOB

The Chairman brought a replacement CD (ICI history produced by Stephan Barnes) for a defective copy received by one Member.

Spare Club programme cards were handed to those Members wishing one.

Fun Draw: The Chairman brought four BBC books by Julian Holland, all railway themed.

The lucky winners: Mike Lawrenson, Brian Sturrock, Brian Clarke, and Michael Beavis.

Next Business Meeting: Tuesday 16th July 2024 when the speaker will be Andrew Rees presenting, "The History of Carlton Camp".

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Minutes of Members Meeting held on 16/07/2024

The Chairman was very pleased to introduce Andrew Rees and Roger Smith to present “The History of Carlton Camp”. Both Andrew and Roger taught in Hartlepool Schools, Andrew being a headmaster for many years, and Roger a senior teacher. Both have had a career long association with Carlton Camp and are founding members of “Friends of Carlton Camp”. They gave an illustrated account of its history and its objectives and explained its association with Hartlepool.

Firstly, they expressed their extreme sorrow at the recent accident when one of the students tragically lost her life in a mudslide on the slopes of Carlton Bank. The camp has been closed since the incident while an enquiry is taking place. However, it is due to reopen in September this year.

It was back in the 1920's when a head teacher in Hartlepool, William Wilson Clark, believed in the benefits of children from urban areas experiencing the countryside. He found a field with a barn in Pinchinthorpe that he was able to rent and started taking groups of children there for a camping experience. When the lease was terminated, he started to look for another site, and by chance he learnt of an available field in Carlton. This was purchased by Hartlepool Council with a proviso that it belonged to the people of Hartlepool. William re-commenced trips and took groups of children there on camping trips. The children were very fit then and cycled there and back from Hartlepool. After raising sufficient funds, the first building was established in 1932 providing dormitories, dining facilities, and common rooms.

The camp has operated continuously since its early days, with new buildings being added, the largest of which, a substantial two-story accommodation block, was opened in 2007.

Over the years, both Andrew and Roger have each taken over 40 groups of children for residential stays at the camp. They firmly believe that the experience is overwhelmingly beneficial for the children in that they gain independence, self-confidence, self-esteem, and it essentially develops a more rounded character.

The activities include team games, orienteering, the “leap of faith” (climbing to the top of a high pole and jumping off – restrained and lowered to the ground in a safety harness), both day and night hikes, studying the wildlife, learning about the night sky, and much more.

One particular task undertaken by all is climbing up Carlton Bank to Pinpoint, which is done rain or shine. On clear nights they study the night sky from there. Also, they walk to the Wainstones for “caving” and other rock activities. It was noted that the children used to walk there and back from the camp, but today there is a noticeable decline in levels of fitness, and they are returned by mini-bus.

The cost of a five day stay at the camp is £250, although underprivileged children receive financial assistance to enable them to attend.

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The “Friends of Carlton Camp” comprises twenty volunteers offering different skills who manage and oversee the operation of the camp.

Roger and Andrew brought copies of a book explaining all about the camp, which were on sale at £6 – all proceeds going to the camp's funds. In addition, a collection tin was available and Members gave generously towards this commendable enterprise.

Following several questions, and thanks from the Chairman for a much detailed and interesting presentation, Members expressed their thanks and appreciation to Andrew and Roger in the customary manner with a hearty round of applause.

Business Meeting Minutes 16th July 2024

1. Attendance and apologies: Members in attendance: 27 Apologies: 6
2. Guests: Robin Stimpson
3. Minutes of last Meeting held on 18th May 2024: Accepted
4. Matters arising: None
5. Committee Reports

Treasurer: 2024/2025 subscriptions: all 39 Members have paid (there were 47 last year).

Secretary: Nothing new to report.

Website Manager: Website up to date. Entry on Queen Elizabeth taken down. Suggestions on how to enhance website invited.

Speaker Finder: 2024/2025 programme confirmed. 2025/2026 underway.

6. Trips

On Wednesday 3rd July 2024: Land of Iron followed by lunch at the Grinkle Park Hotel. Enjoyed by all – 15 Members and 5 guests. This was the first car sharing trip. In the event, the driver/passenger ratio was such that there were more drivers than ideally required. Therefore, the arrangement whereby passengers chipped in to pay for the drivers' lunches resulted in a less than equitable cost burden borne by the passengers. To note for future car sharing trips.

No future trips planned, or in the pipeline - suggestions welcomed.

Stefan Barnes had suggested Marske-by-Sea sewage works, but no one can find any information about it. This led to a suggested visit to Brands Sands sewage works in the Teesside Dock area.

Any other suggestions welcome.

7. Member Lunches

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Wednesday 25th September. The venue is yet to be decided. The Chairman visited The Black Swan at Kirkby, but all-in-all did not consider it ideal.

Tocketts Mill was suggested with possible Mill visit.

Any further suggestions welcome.

Thursday 31st October. The Panda, Stokesley.

8. AOB: None.

Fun Draw: The Chairman brought two Middlesbrough Football Club sports bags.

The lucky winners were Graham Barwick and Colin Howard.

Next Business Meeting: Tuesday 20th August 2024 when the speaker will be Ted Parker presenting, "Exploits in Greenland".

[Minutes of Members Meeting held on 20/08/2024](#)

The Chairman was very pleased to introduce Ted Parker, supported by his wife Sue, to present his talk, "Journey to the End of the World", about their trip to Greenland on a Hurtigruten cruise aboard the vessel, "Fran". Ted has previously given presentations to the Club regarding his filming of a journey from the source to the mouth of the River Tees.

Their interest in Greenland was sparked in 1986 when they flew over the area on a flight to Vancouver and were much impressed by its remoteness and beauty inspiring Ted to take numerous photographs of the mountainous terrain, glaciers and fjords. Consequently, when they heard of this cruise, the first such voyage since 2019, they jumped at the opportunity.

Although essentially a cruise it is part expedition as the ship serves also as a research and survey vessel having a team of scientists and specialists on board making observations and carrying out experiments. Of the 340 on board, 140 were crew and specialists, and 200 were passengers.

Ted and Sue flew to Reykjavik to join the ship, and from there it headed northwest to the east coast of Greenland. Ted explained that once the ship left Iceland they became increasingly remote from external assistance such as medical evacuation and rescue services, which gave a realisation of the isolation of that part of the world.

Sailing through the Denmark Strait they reached their first destination, a small Inuit settlement (formerly known as Eskimos!) who survived by hunting and fishing and relied on a supply vessel from Denmark to bring supplies and essentials twice a year.

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Scientists (biologists, meteorologists, ornithologists, etc) took the opportunity of shore visits for observations and experimentation. Passengers could assist with this work if they so wished.

They next headed up the rugged coast to Scoresby Sound (Scoresbysund), the world's largest fjord. Some of the maps and sea charts along this coast were marked "Unexplored" underlining the remoteness of the area.

The sun had not set since they were a day out of Iceland, and now the sun had a 24 hour presence, albeit low in the sky during the night. Maximum daytime temperatures were a surprising 10C+. The trip was undertaken in August, a time of year when it is normally foggy and raining, but they were blessed with a nine-day window of unbroken sunshine. Sea ice and icebergs, large and small, were a constant hazard making progress slow, and the ship travelled at a leisurely 5 knots. The bow thrusters were operated to push the ship away from ice bergs that they encountered. At times they had to wait for sea ice and icebergs to break up with the tides and currents for channels to open up before they could proceed. Drones were often used to identify these passages.

The ever changing skies, the multitude of colours, the changing moods of the landscape, and the clarity were a constant joy day and night; a photographer's dream. Ted illustrated his talk with many of the wonderful shots he took.

They had short trips in the ship's inflatable craft (Zodiac boats) to get close up to some of the icebergs, and to land on ice flows. Bringing a chunk of ice broken from an iceberg (frozen sea water) back to the ship they allowed it to melt, and, surprisingly, when they tasted the water, it was barely salty.

Despite the apparent desolate landscape they witnessed much wild life activity with regular sightings of whales (hump back, sperm, fin, great blue, minke, and orcas), and seals (ring and harp). Of the bird sightings fulmars were in abundance, also many little auk – an interesting bird that feeds on plankton. It was noted that 25% of the world's oxygen is produced by plankton. On the ice, polar bears often appeared – larger creatures than they had imagined, which are extremely aggressive, and very mobile, able to run at 40 mph.

They made first landfall deep into Scoresby Sound. The ship was not allowed to drop anchor to avoid damage to the sea bed, and kept position using its engines with GPS guidance. All those going ashore had to wear long boots, "mud boots", which were disinfected both leaving and returning to ship to avoid cross contamination in this pristine, and isolated environment - "Nothing taken, nothing left" is the rule. The boots also served to keep feet dry (and warm) as they had to step into the water to walk ashore onto a muddy beach. The first thing they noticed were swarms of mosquitoes. As the ground is covered by snow and ice for eight months a year, the very short growing season results in sparse vegetation, which comprised patches of ground cover with small white flowers, and some fungi. Ted and Sue took the

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opportunity to try kayaking – for the first time - and found it wonderful in the majestic setting of the fjord.

The next stop was an Inuit settlement of around 250 inhabitants. Here, all transport was by husky dogs and sleds, or by snowmobiles. They discovered that polar bears were hunted for their meat and skins and saw skins being dried outdoors stretched on frames.

The voyage continued along the coast with constant views of icebergs, mountains, glaciers, and the ever-changing sky with the most beautiful array of colours. Ted frequently got out of bed during the night to marvel at the scene and take photographs.

Life on board was luxurious with fine dining, and luxurious lounges with wide views of the majestic landscape and magnificent skies. Daily lectures were given by the scientists and specialists on board. Truly, a journey of a lifetime.

Following several questions, and thanks from the Chairman for a visually stunning and fascinating presentation, Members expressed their thanks and appreciation to Ted and Sue in the customary manner with a hearty round of applause.

The Chairman read a Eulogy he had prepared in remembrance of **Garry Turner** recently sadly deceased.

Business Meeting Minutes 20/8/2024

1. Attendance 25 New Member: Robin Stimpson Apologies: 8
2. Minutes of previous Meeting held on 16th July 2024: Accepted
Matters arising: None
3. Committee Reports

Treasurer: 2024/2025 subscriptions all paid. Thanks to Members.

Secretary: Nothing new to report.

Website Manager: Website up to date. At next meeting there will be a brief demonstration on how Members may obtain maximum benefit from the website.

Speaker Finder: 2024/2025 programme confirmed. Bob announced that he will step down as SF as of the 2025 AGM. Due to other commitments, especially his involvement on the S and D Railway 2025 Bicentennial Committee, his time availability is very limited. Members invited to consider taking over the role. The programme for 2024/2025 is confirmed and the new Speaker Finder would need to start by filling the remaining 2025/2026 slots. However, there is reluctance by speakers to commit too far in advance and filling programme slots more than a year ahead is not practical.

4. Trips

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The Chairman researched the following three suggestions made by Members, but all came to nought:

Brands Sands (Mike McCamley & Colin Howard) – not open to the public for visits.

Boulby Potash Mine followed by lunch at the Grinkle Park Hotel (Graham Howard) – no facilities to accept groups of visitors.

Tocketts Mill and Restaurant (Graham Howard) – mill only operates between 2:00 pm and 4:00 pm on Sundays during the summer months.

Other suggestions for 2025 welcome.

5. Member Lunches

Tocketts Mill Restaurant: Following a visit by the Chairman and Peter Robinson they were suitably impressed, and a booking was made for Wednesday 25th September 2024. Details and the menu have been circulated by e-mail, and Members are invited to inform Peter of their choices.

The Panda, Stokesley on Thursday 21st October. Details will be issued in due course.

Suggestions for 2026 were invited.

Jim Gannon proposed that, in the absence of any new suggestions, a return visit to the previous year's venues should be considered. Members were supportive of this.

6. AOB

Photos of Members. After general discussion it was decided that Derek Whiting would arrange to take an individual photo of each Member (subject to Member's consent). No photos would be posted on the website, and they would only be used when required.

A beautifully crafted and decorated wooden walking stick, made by the very talented Jeff Prettyman, was shown to Members.

Fun Draw: The Chairman brought five David Attenborough BBC Complete Series DVD's.

Lucky winners were: Colin Howard, Derek Whiting, David Bryson, Malcolm Britton and Mike McCamley.

Next Business Meeting: Tuesday 10th September 2024 when the speaker will be Chris Robinson presenting, "Forgotten Victory, 1918". It will be held in the Main Hall upstairs, and tea/coffee will be made using flasks of hot water.

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Minutes of Members Meeting held on 10/09/2024

The Chairman was very pleased to introduce Paul Bruce, supported by his wife Linda, to present his talk, "Smith of Maddison Remembered", about the now defunct local transport company. Paul very kindly stepped in at the last moment as the scheduled speaker was unavailable.

Paul's father was a class 1 HGV driver for Smith of Maddison in the 1960's and 1970's. Paul's interest in the company started when, as a boy, he travelled hundreds of miles in the cab with his father (against the rules!).

Some years ago, Paul began to research the company and soon built up much documentation and photographs and has now become an authority and gives lectures on the subject.

Operating from 1931 to 1984 the company was started in Stockton by brothers James and Alec Smith who persuaded their father to loan them money to buy a 1928 Morris flatbed truck to transport coal. Making a success of this, they moved into general haulage buying more trucks and hiring drivers.

As they expanded, and journey distances increased, they were at the forefront of "trunking" whereby trailers were used in relay with other companies to deliver goods over long distances without drivers and wagons leaving their own areas thus not exceeding their allotted shift hours.

The company thrived and expanded, and purchased its first brand new vehicle in 1947, an ERF flatbed lorry, raising the fleet total to thirty.

Acquiring failed transport companies, the business boomed during the 1960's and 1970's when numerous depots were opened in other regions giving nationwide coverage. At peak, the organisation had around 350 vehicles, 1000 trailers, and employed 1000 drivers. The trucks were mostly over 10 tons heavy haulage.

In 1966 the company was taken over by a South African transport consortium but continued to trade under the Smith of Maddison name with the same directors all under the umbrella of United Transport.

The demise of the company began in the late 1970's when numerous big contracts ended. Activity slowed but the company struggled on until 11th October 1984 when it stopped trading after 53 years of operation.

Paul was clearly very knowledgeable about trucks of the past, and he screened a good number of images of his favourites in the Smith of Maddison livery. These included splendid examples such as, 1953 Leyland Vivo, 1953 Leyland Octopus, 1957 Albion Chieftain, 1957 Leyland Steer, 1962 Atkinson Silver Knight, 1966 Guy Big J articulated tractor unit, and several ERF's.

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During the talk Paul held a number of quick alternative-answer questions highlighting some impressive annual statistics, such as what was the maximum mileage covered, what was the annual fuel bill, what was the weight of goods transported? Most appropriately, all the prizes were Yorkie bars!

Paul's father had driven a truck with registration number OWG 279 for a number of years with his friend and work colleague, Walter Pugh. Although having many photographs of the company's vehicles, Paul did not have one of this particular truck.

Walter had sadly died of a heart attack at the age of 49. After many years of research and building his collection, Paul contacted Walter's son, Paul, and arranged to meet. He was overjoyed when Paul gave him a photo of his father in truck OWG 279. Furthermore, to his surprise, his mother was also in the picture shown at the wheel of the family car.

At his home, Paul has a large collection of Smith of Maddison model trucks, and much company paraphernalia & artefacts, a small selection of which he had brought to the meeting. He has produced two booklets on the history of the firm, which were on sale.

At the end of his presentation, Paul stated that he was very impressed with the Club and had decided to apply for Membership.

Following several questions, and thanks from the Chairman for a visually stunning and fascinating presentation, Members expressed their thanks and appreciation to Paul and Linda in the customary manner with a hearty round of applause.

Business Meeting Minutes 10/9/2024

1. Attendance and apologies: Members in attendance: 27 Apologies: 4
Guest (and new Member) 1 – Paul Bruce

2. Minutes of previous Meeting held on 20.8.24: Accepted

Matters arising: None

3. Committee Reports

Treasurer: All in order.

Secretary: Nothing new to report.

Website Manager: Website up to date.

Speaker Finder: 2025/2026 programme progressing well.

4. Trips

The Chairman presented details on Trip suggestions from Members:

- Whitby Brewery (Nr Abbey): £15 including 1 pint

- Whitby Gin (A174 south of Whitby): £25 including tasting.

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Not supported in Member vote.

The Auckland Project & visit to Weardale Railway to be looked into further.

Any other suggestions for 2025 welcome.

5. Member Lunches

Tockett's Mill Restaurant on Wed. 25th Sept. So far, 12 booked.

Those wishing to join please contact Peter Robinson with your choices - the menu has been circulated by e-mail. Alternatively, just turn up on the day at 12:30 pm for 1:00 pm.

The Panda in Stokesley on Thursday 31st Oct. Details will be issued in due course. The Chairman recently visited The Queen Catherine in Osmotherley and found it to be a good venue to be considered. Pending.

Any other suggestions for 2025 are invited.

6. AOB

Photos of Members. This was put to the vote and most Members approved of the plan. It was, therefore, agreed that Derek Whiting would take photographs of those Members giving consent. No photos would be posted on the website, and they would only be used when required.

Fun Draw: The Chairman brought two copies of the Times publication, "The First World War". The lucky winners were Mike McCamley and Malcolm Beavis.

Next Business Meeting: Tuesday 15th Oct. 2024 when the speaker will be Tim Townsend presenting, "Ready for Anything".

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Minutes of Members Meeting held on 15/10/2024

The Chairman was very pleased to introduce Tim Townsend, Emergency Planning Manager, at North Yorkshire Council to present his talk, "Ready for Anything".

In his role, Tim oversees and manages the essential services response to various emergencies around the North Yorkshire area. The Emergency Response Team deal with all manner of incidents: flooding, landslides, fires, foot and mouth disease, major accidents, fuel shortages, explosions, etc.

Although national procedures were already in place, a series of major emergencies during the early 2000's (foot and mouth, flooding, fuel shortage, fire service strike, etc) showed that although individual organisations responded well, the co-ordination was not 100%. This prompted reform of the Civil Emergencies Act to introduce more co-ordinated responses, both locally and nationally.

This required local authorities set up Local Resilience Forums comprising the main response organisations of Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastguard, and the like, who represent the primary responders.

At a secondary level, the need to maintain vital services requires the support of key responders such as Utilities Companies, Environment Agency, Army, Navy, etc.

And at the next level, but no less important, are volunteer support groups such as Mountain Rescue, RNLI, St John's Ambulance, Red Cross, etc.

All these organisations can be called upon in the event of an incident and carry out planning and training exercises to develop their readiness to respond quickly and efficiently.

Tim, in his role as the county Emergency Planning Manager is responsible for the oversight, planning, and co-ordination of all the above organisations and groups in respect of their response to major incidents.

The main risks classified as major incidents are events of severe weather (flooding, landslides, etc), power/utilities interruptions, pandemics, malicious attacks (terror, cyber), major fires and accidents.

In respect of their response to emergencies, each organisation has the following hierarchy of responsibility :

Bronze : officers on the ground at the scene

Silver : back up in offices for organisation and co-ordination

Gold : chief officers, chief executives, to make the major decisions covering costs, reputational risk, and facing media.

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In practice the first responders to any serious incident complete a standard form to raise attention of other organisations and the County Emergency Planning team. The extent of response required is then assessed and put in place as required.

The North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum website includes much useful advice to the public in relation to fires, floods, etc. This covers prevention and mitigation measures, responses and contacts for support. As a key resource, it is recommended that individuals, households, and businesses be aware of the extensive information and links within this website.

Website: www.northyorks.gov.uk select the North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum pages.

The major incidence response teams referred to in paragraph 4 above are supported by a wide network of volunteers comprising groups, clubs and members of the public under the *Ready for Anything* initiative. Anyone can volunteer – some offer specialist skills but many provide just a willing pair of hands. Each local authority has a pool of such volunteers who can be called upon at any time. Firstly, the Ready for Anything co-ordination team send text messages to volunteers with mention of incident and asking volunteer's availability. There is no obligation to respond if unavailable. Other volunteers will be contacted. Upon receipt of a positive response further details of the incident will be sent and volunteers will make their way to where they are needed. De-briefings are held to identify areas where performance can be improved.

Tim described some of the unheralded but vital volunteer support functions. In 2000 there was large fire in the centre of Richmond when 2,000 people were evacuated from the area. While the key responders dealt with the fire and the effects on the immediate area, a nearby school offered use of its main hall as a rest centre for some of the evacuees. Volunteers set up seating and tables and provided food and drinks, emotional support, communications, to comfort those affected. All very much appreciated by those affected.

Tim is responsible for the overall management and co-ordination of all the response organisations and support groups for all major incidents in North Yorkshire. This very extensive area encompassing both urban and rural zones, coastline and upland & rugged terrain presents a particularly challenging range of potential major incidents.

Inter-agency training and exercises are carried out to hone operational readiness and effectiveness. These include practical outdoor and indoor simulations of anticipated incidents. For authenticity volunteers are recruited to enact crowds and the public, often requested to shout, take photos, make demands and generally make life for the response teams more difficult!

To volunteer for a response role contact emergency@northyorks.gov.uk

Tim is always ready to give advice and answer any questions. He can be contacted at tim.townsend@northyorks.gov.uk

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During a question session the issue of location was discussed. Tim recommended "what3words" app be downloaded to mobile phones. This simply identifies your current location (3m square grid) with three words. It is very accurate and is recognised by the emergency services.

Following thanks from the Chairman for an expertly delivered, fascinating and very informative presentation, Members expressed their thanks and appreciation to Tim in the customary manner with a hearty round of applause.

JE 15.10.24

Business Meeting Minutes 15/10/2024

1. Attendance and apologies: Members in attendance: 28 Apologies: 8
2. Minutes of previous Meeting held on 10th September 2024: Accepted
3. Matters arising: None
4. Committee Reports

Treasurer: All in order. PROBUS lapel pins available for sale for £2.50. **Christmas lunch** organised and menu distributed by e-mail. Those intending to attend please inform Chris Lee and arrange payment of £24.00 for 2-Courses or £30.00 for 3-courses Payment includes gratuities.

Secretary: *Nothing new to report.*

Website Manager: Website up to date. Very positive feedback received.

Speaker Finder: 2025/2026 programme progressing well. Volunteer to replace Bob still sought - successor will have transition start as 2025/2026 programme will be complete.

5. Trips

The Auckland Project & visit to Weardale Railway to be looked into further. Apart from this, no further suggestions since previous meeting.

6. Member Lunches

Tockett's Mill Restaurant : held on Wednesday 25th September. 18 attended and enjoyed by all. Attractive location and good meal.

The Panda : on Thursday 21st October. Small venue and limited spaces. Spaces still available at time of meeting – please advise Peter Robinson if you wish to join.

Lunch dates for 2025: Thurs.6.3.25 Wed.30.4.25 Thurs.5.6.25 Wed.8.10.25

Suggestions for 2025: The *Queen Catherine* at Osmotherley proposed by the Chairman and the *Miller and Carter* at Nunthorpe suggested by Maj Chuhan.

7. AOB

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Derek Whiting will start taking photos of Members starting at the next meeting. This is entirely optional.

No photos will be posted on the website and they will only be used when required.

Fun Draw: The Chairman brought four copies of "The Big British Railway Journey Puzzle Book".

The lucky winners were Chris Lee, Malcolm Brittain, Maj Chuhan, and Geoff Prettyman.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 19th November 2024

Committee Meeting at 9.00 am and Members Meeting at 10.00 am.
The speaker will be Phil Burton presenting, "Seaton Delaval Hall".

JE 15.10.24

STOKESLEY PROBUS CLUB

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Minutes of Members Meeting held on 19/11/2024

The Chairman was very pleased to introduce Phil Burton to present his talk, "Seaton Delaval Hall". This is Phil's second visit to the Club as a speaker having previously given a talk about Ormesby Hall and the Pennyman Family.

Phil had a long career in electrical engineering services with the General Post Office specialising in improving the effectiveness of the telephone service. Following retirement he became a National Trust volunteer at Ormesby Hall.

As a keen supporter of the National Trust Phil presented some little appreciated facts about the Trust demonstrating the range and size of its responsibilities:

300+ houses, 73,000 archaeological sites, 41 castles, 71 dovecots, 400 factories, 2 goldmines, 9 lighthouses, 25 mediaeval barns, 206 mills, 149 museums, 59 villages, 61 pubs, and 4 World Heritage Sites. And, it is the largest landowner in the country after the MoD. It follows the maxim, "once in trust, then never sold".

Delaval Hall, a Grade 1 listed building, which came into the care of the National Trust in 2008, has its origins at the time of William the Conqueror when he granted land at Seaton to his son-in-law, Hubert Lavall. They settled and built a church there in 1102, which still stands today almost in its original state, and can be visited by appointment only as it is privately owned.

Owning much land in the area, the Lavall family (later known as "Delaval") built a castle/hall as their base. Over the centuries they served as Sherriff numerous times, were Members of Parliament, headed Border Commissions, and became very wealthy and influential.

Coal was discovered in their land, and as they exploited its potential, access to the sea for shipment was problematic as the harbour they built was small, tidal, and subject to silting. In 1560, Sir Ralph Lavall had the ingenious idea to build a lock at the harbour entrance as a mechanism to deal with the silting problem. The lock allowed the tide to fill the harbour, and at high tide the lock gates were shut. At low tide the gates were opened and the large rush of water flushed the harbour ridding it of excessive silt.

Sir John Delaval did not manage the estates and interests well. He ran into financial difficulties resulting in him selling the estate, which was bought by his relative, Admiral George Delaval.

Admiral George knew Sir John Vanburgh, the most esteemed architect at the time, and was an admirer of his work. Vanburgh was commissioned to rebuild the house in grand style and created a wonderfully theatrical design highly fashionable at the time. The house comprised a central main building with two wings, although only one was built. Interestingly, the south east wing was eventually built in 1822, but subsequently was gutted by fire and removed. Therefore, what we see today is actually what Vanburgh designed and built according to his layout.

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George's son, Captain Francis Blake Delaval and his wife, Rhoda Apreece, were a flamboyant couple renowned for their entertaining, extravagance, and opulent living. They were referred to as “the Gay Delavals”, a legacy still recognised today.

Having a reputation as incorrigible practical jokers they were known to adapt rooms to surprise guests with pranks such as being tipped out of bed, or being led into dark bedrooms where, in the morning, they woke up to see furniture on the ceiling giving the illusion of being in an inverted room.

Their eldest son, Sir Francis, was especially indulgent being known as a spendthrift, womaniser, glutton, gambler, actor, and “friend to all”. His antics included an “invasion of France” when he took the local villagers on a day trip to France. As his fortune dwindled he married a 60 year old wealthy widow, many years his senior, in the hope of funding his lavish lifestyle. And, it certainly did, as her fortune of £100,000 had reduced to £25,000 by the time she died at the age of 65.

Sir Francis's reputation was known nationally, and when he died, unsurprisingly while overeating in London, his coffin was taken to Seaton Delaval in a carriage slowly travelling through many towns where large numbers of people lined the route to pay their respects. (Interestingly, his London house was 10, Downing Street.)

Known for his wild gambling he bet that he could build a castle in 24 hours! Amazingly, it was done – a small, fortified building with several rooms in the grounds of the Hall.

Another colourful member of the family was Sarah Hussey Delaval, allegedly the illegitimate child of the Duke of York, and known for her audacious living. This led her to be referred to as, “brazen Hussey”, again, another Deleval epithet that has entered the lexicon. She died at 37, and, interestingly, is buried in Westminster Abbey suggesting that her royal connection may have been true.

Coal was the mainstay of the wealth from the estate and lands owned by the Delavals. Over the years most of the coal was shipped out, but its availability as a power source, and access to an ideal harbour, gave rise to other industry at Seaton. It became an important centre for the production of glass. Salt pans were also created, and Seaton was a significant producer of salt. Such was the shipping activity that a canal was cut through a rock ridge to provide an additional access between the harbour and the sea.

A large fire ravaged the house in 1822 causing much damage to the interior of the house, and the removal of the then recently built southeast wing. Since then the house has been unoccupied. Over the years much repair work was carried out, but today it is mostly devoid of furniture, fittings, and decoration, but the

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magnificent interior features are still in existence and can still be appreciated. Of particular note is the stable block, which has the most impressive interior with graceful stone vaulted ceilings. Phil advised that the house and grounds are well worth a visit.

Following thanks from the Chairman for a fascinating, and very informative presentation, Members expressed their thanks and appreciation to Phil in the customary manner with a hearty round of applause.

JE 19.11.24

Business Meeting Minutes 19/11/2024

- 1. Members in attendance:** 28 Apologies: 8 Guest: 1
- 2. Minutes of previous Meeting** held on 15th October 2024: Accepted
- 3. Matters arising:** Chris Griffiths has been co-opted to the Committee as a GM. Chris will stand as Speaker Finder at the next AGM when Bob Scott stands down.

4. Committee Reports

Treasurer: All in order. Accounts up to date apart from one query with bank concerning a deposit of £48 which is showing only £18 as having been credited.

Secretary: Nothing new to report.

Website Manager: Website up to date. Brief demonstration of website navigation to be given at January meeting.

Speaker Finder: One speaker has withdrawn from the 2025/2026 programme, however, suggestions made during Committee Meeting were helpful and it is anticipated that a replacement will be booked shortly.

5. Trips

Suggestions at previous meeting did not garner sufficient support and have been dropped.

Visit to Quorn factory, suggested and researched by Ron Dalton. Visit declined by Company.

6. Member Lunches

The Panda, Stokesley: held on Thursday 21st October. 17 attendees, 8 apologies. Very good food and value. Enjoyed by all. Convenient location and ideal venue despite being small.

Christmas Lunch at The Wainstones Hotel, Great Broughton: Chris Lee thanked Members for their quick response. To date 47 booked (last year attendance was 41). For those not yet booked and wishing to attend please inform Chris and arrange payment. Menu and payment details shown on website.

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Lunch dates for 2025: Thurs 6th March, Wed 30th April, Thurs 5th June, Wed 8th October.

Suggestions for 2025: The *Queen Catherine* at Osmotherley proposed by the Chairman,

Miller and Carter at Nunthorpe suggested by Maj Chuhan, the *Blacksmith's Arms* at Swainby suggested by Mike Lawrenson and a pick of previously visited venues suggested by Jim Gannon.

7. AOB

Derek Whiting will start taking photos of Members from the next meeting. This is entirely optional. No photos will be posted on the website and they will only be used when required.

Fun Draw: The Chairman brought four boxed sets of Royal Horticultural Society postcards depicting wildflowers. The lucky winners were Brian Sturrock, Norris Wilson, Brian Hall, and Bob Lee.

Next Meeting: Tues 21st Jan 2025. The speaker will be Bob Scott: "The World's Worst Airport".

JE19.11.24

STOKESLEY PROBUS CLUB

Minutes of Members Meetings 2024-2025

Minutes of Members Meeting held on 21/01/2025

The Chairman was very pleased to introduce our very own (soon to be stepping down) speaker finder, Bob Scott, to present his talk, "The World's Most Useless Airport, and the history of travel to Saint Helena".

Before retiring Bob was Divisional Commander serving Hartlepool Fire Service. He now follows up his various hobbies, which include being an amateur archaeologist and geologist. He is also a passionate soccer and cricket enthusiast.

Bob has a keen interest in the remote and small island of Saint Helena – the reason for which will be apparent at the end of his presentation.

Saint Helena: a British Territory way out in the Atlantic Ocean, 15 degrees south of the Equator, 1800nm east of Brazil, 1000nm from the west of Africa, and accessible by ship, a five-day voyage from Cape Town.

It is believed that the island was not discovered until it was sighted by four Portuguese ships under the command of Joao da Nova on their return to Lisbon. Earlier explorers had sailed wide of its location when making their way to the Indian Ocean and beyond via the Cape of Good Hope.

Although being an ideal staging post for voyages to the Orient, the Portuguese did not initially settle there but introduced plants and animals to provide provisions for passing ships. However, this damaged irretrievably the natural eco-system, but the verdant and tropical nature of the island was ideal for growing fruit and vegetables. Later, after establishing a small community there, the Portuguese brought slaves from Mozambique to work on the plantations.

During a period of high seas rivalry between European nations competing in the lucrative trade with the Orient, the Dutch took control of the territory in 1633. This period of control was short lived and in 1657 it was officially claimed by Britain's East India Company on the grounds that neither the Portuguese nor the Dutch had formalised their colonisations of the territory. Oliver Cromwell declared it Britain's second colony after Bermuda, and established it a free port. The island then thrived as a supply post for shipping for many years.

The island's population in the 18th Century was around 2,500. Due to its location between Africa and the Americas, St. Helena was involved in the slave trade and saw many slaves arriving, being traded, and shipped off to the New World colonies. This continued until the practice was banned in the 19th Century. When the British navy started to rid the seas of slave ships, they used Saint Helena as one of their bases from which to carry out their attacks.

Around that time Chinese labourers were introduced to work on the plantations, and this is evident in the population make up today.

Following his defeat at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, Napoleon Bonaparte was exiled on the island by the British. Being a small, remote island of 49 square miles

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comprising rough pasture and volcanic rock, it was considered distant enough to deny Napoleon the opportunity to plot a comeback, and sufficiently bleak to remind him he was certainly not on holiday. He was housed in a very modest dwelling, Longwood House, which became, and continues to be, a French possession. It is now restored to how it was during his residence and operates as a museum.

Far from being in solitude, Napoleon had an entourage of around thirty including two generals, their families, and servants. To guard the island at the time a garrison of around 3,000 British troops was established. Napoleon spent several uneventful years on the island and died there in 1821 at the age of 51.

Upon the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 Saint Helena saw rapid decline. Its survival since has depended on supply ships, more latterly from Cape Town: a ten-day round trip.

In the early 2000's the dedicated supply vessel, RMS St Helena, was nearing the end of its serviceable life and the idea of building an airport was hatched. Why an airport for 5,000 people? As other colonies and protectorates of similar or even smaller size had them, a feasibility study was undertaken in 2005: airport or ship?

The island continued to decline, and as a ship was not arresting this trend support for an airport grew as this would enable the growth of tourism, which was seen to be the island's future. Albeit small, there are sufficient activities to support tourism ; diving & snorkelling, sports fishing, ecotourism, hiking, etc. features such as Jacob's Ladder, 599 steps up from Jamestown to a fort with spectacular views above the town, and a reputed 200-year-old tortoise are among the popular attractions.

The study showed that over a 10-year period the construction and operation of a ship was estimated to be £447 million, and the construction and operation of an airport £285 million. Not only being cheaper, an airport would potentially bring in many more visitors. It was, therefore, decided to proceed with its construction.

The project was announced in 2005 with a planned delivery in 2010. After numerous delays the successful tenderer was Basil Read, and they were appointed as the main contractor on a design and build basis.

Construction commenced in 2011. Physically and logistically, construction was problematic. The most suitable site was on a fairly flat remote plateau, and almost all materials had to be imported. Consequently, a quay and long-haul road needed to be constructed. In addition, as the labour force was nearly all brought in, temporary accommodation had to be provided. Furthermore, as the ground comprised much volcanic rock, its porosity required pumping water a considerable distance to supply the site.

In spite of all the difficulties the airport was completed on time and received its first official landing on 18th April 2016 – a British Airways B737 – 800. Regular flights commenced in 2017.

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It soon became apparent that wind shear was a frequent hazard, and that periods of unpredictable lingering mist & fog both caused much disruption to flights. Moreover, the fuel reserve carried by planes to reach an alternative destination is particularly large in the case of flights to Saint Helena due to its remoteness.

Of these problems the only one that can be addressed is wind shear. Although expensive, its effects could be lessened by reducing the height of a nearby hill or building an additional runway. But, as neither of these is seen as economically viable, the airport operates as best it can despite its drawbacks.

There are two inbound flights a week (one in winter) carrying around 5,000 passengers a year, 3,000 of which are tourists. A return flight from Heathrow is around £1600. This disappointing number of visitors has proven too few to make the island self-sufficient.

The MV St Helena was withdrawn and sold, and the island is now served by merchant vessels as required to import and export goods.

The island's annual UK subsidy expires in 2028, and it is not clear yet what will happen after that date.

Bob has a connection with Saint Helena - his daughter lives and works there with her family. She has an official appointment to oversee the replanting and reintroduction of indigenous species, and to restore and protect the bio-diversity of the island. Bob and his wife have visited several times and have another trip planned shortly. We wish them a smooth and punctual landing & take off.

Following several questions and thanks from the Chairman for a fascinating, and very well researched and informative presentation, Members expressed their thanks and appreciation to Bob in the customary manner with a hearty round of applause.

JE 21.1.25

Business Meeting Minutes

Eddie Moore
1936 – 2024

1. Attendance and apologies: Members in attendance: 31, Guests: 3, Apols: 3
2. Minutes of previous Meeting held on 19th November 2024: Accepted
No matters arising
3. Committee Reports

STOKESLEY PROBUS CLUB

Minutes of Members Meetings 2024-2025

Treasurer: Accounts in order. Subscriptions may have to be reviewed as Speakers' fees are rising. In addition, Town Hall room charges are increasing marginally.

Christmas lunch: record attendance (29 Members and 22 Guests). Money received from Members in timely manner, good meal and good value. Some timing issues with serving as some diners were having two courses and others three. Next Christmas lunch: Tues. 9th Dec. 2025 at the Wainstones.

Secretary: Nothing new to report.

Website Manager: Website up to date.

Speaker Finder: Programme for 2025/2026 now in place. It was noted that speakers' fees have risen and £50 is the current benchmark.

Committee Tenure: Five Committee Members' tenures are due for renewal at the AGM on Tuesday 15th April 2025. During today's meeting the fifth confirmation to continue or stand again (as applicable) was received. Any Members wishing to serve on the Committee please contact the Chairman or the Secretary.

Constitution: The Committee recommends no changes to the Constitution for the upcoming AGM. Any Members having comments/suggestion please contact the Chairman or the Secretary.

4. Trips

Castle Howard (suggested by Norris Wilson and Jim Gannon). The Chairman has tried to make contact but it appears that it is closed for Winter. He will try again in the Spring.

Seaton Delaval. National Trust Members free, £12.35 for non-members. Avoid visiting during school holidays: May or June recommended. Cafe on site, no guided tours, but a talk each day at 12.30pm. Level of interest to be determined at February meeting.

5. Member Lunches

Thursday 6th March Blacksmith's Arms, Swainby. Menu will be circulated soon. Pre-ordering required.

Wednesday 30th April, Thursday 5th June, Wednesday 8th October.

Suggestions so far:

The Queen Catherine at Osmotherley – closed for lunch in Winter – to check at later date.

The Buck Inn, Great Ayton: Checked out, and considered not suitable.

Miller & Carter, Nunthorpe: Proposed by Maj Chuhan. To be checked out.

A pick of previously visited venues.

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6. AOB

Members thanked and showed their appreciation to Keith Bell for arranging mince pies for all - as he does every year at the January Meeting.

Also, Keith was congratulated on finalisation of his long-awaited settlement with the Post Office in regard to their wrongful persecution of Post Masters based on faults within the PO computer systems.

Fun Draw: The Chairman brought two books: "The 2025 Guinness Book of Records", and "Ripley's Believe it or Not".

The lucky winners were Mike Lawrenson and Norris Wilson.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 18th February 2025 when the speaker will be David MacCready presenting "Diving the North Sea".

JE 21.1.25

[Minutes of Members Meeting held on 18/02/2025](#)

Attendance and apologies: Members in attendance:27 Guests: 0 Apols. 11
The Chairman sent 'Best Wishes' to Jeff Prettyman, Derek Whiting and Chris Lee all currently receiving medical treatment.

Minutes of previous Meeting held on 21st January 2025: Accepted.

Matters Arising

No changes to Constitution proposed for AGM in April 2025.

Committee elections: no one yet has put name forward to serve on Committee.

Committee Reports

Treasurer: Apologies.

Secretary: Nothing new to report.

Website Manager: Apologies.

Speaker Finder: Apologies (in St Helena: the subject of his talk last month).

Trips

Seaton Delaval Hall and gardens. National Trust Members free, £12.35 for non-members, but price increase due 1.3.25. Avoid visiting during school holidays: May or June recommended. Cafe on site, no guided tours, but a talk each day at 12.30pm. Journey: 53 miles, around 1hr 15 mins.

Coach transport preferred (coach cost would be £25 if thirty people travel).

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Of those in attendance at meeting, twelve expressed interest in the trip.

To fill the day a visit to another venue was discussed. Suggestions were:

- Seaton Sluice – nearby, good pub (Kings Arms) at location
- St Mary's Lighthouse – subject to tides, opening times uncertain
- Tynemouth Priory – selection of restaurants available
- Souter Lighthouse (last visited by Probus 27.9.17)

Trip to be discussed further prior to decision.

Member Lunches

Thursday 6th March: Blacksmith's Arms, Swainby. Menu has been circulated by e-mail.

Pre-ordering required – please advise Peter Robinson.

Wednesday 30th April: After fruitless visits to the Miller & Carter (Nunthorpe), the Buck Inn (Great Ayton), and Fletcher's Farm (Little Ayton), which were all shut on the day of the visit, Peter Robinson and Keith Waller called at The Royal Oak (Great Ayton). They considered it suitable and booked lunch for 30th April.

Menus will be circulated in due course.

Thursday 5th June: Tockett's Mill, Guisborough.

Wednesday 8th October: Under consideration so far:

The Crown (Kirklevington), The Queen Catherine (Osmotherley), The Panda (Stokesley),

Jet Miners (Gt Broughton), and other previously visited venues.

The Jet Miners will be checked and reported back in March.

The Chairman was asked to research Wynyard Hall for a potential visit.

AOB

Malcolm Beavis is closely following the progress of Jasmine Harrison in the Mini Globe Race challenge and gave an update. Members will remember Jasmine presenting a talk to the Club about her long-distance swimming, and her record solo row across the Atlantic. Competitors have now crossed the Atlantic and have arrived in Antigua ready for the official start of the solo round the world race in their 5.8 metre boats on 23rd February 2025. First heading to the Panama Canal they then circumnavigate the globe finishing back in Antigua.

Malcolm emailed Stuart Whincup at Look North following the TV feature on the 4 men rowing the Atlantic. Malcolm outlined Jasmine's Talk at Probus and suggested that the programme completes a feature on her achievements.

Fun Draw: The Chairman brought two sets of books: "Prince Charles" and

"The Kings and Queens of England".

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The lucky winners were Colin Hinton and Graham Tyrer.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 18th March 2025 when the speaker will be Phil Burton presenting

“The Pennymans of Ormesby Hall”.

JE 18.2.25

STOKESLEY PROBUS CLUB

Minutes of Members Meetings 2024-2025

Minutes of Members Meeting held on 18/03/2025

The Chairman was very pleased to introduce Phil Burton to present his talk, "Ormesby Hall – Home of the Pennyman Family, 1599 - 1983".

Phil had a long career in electrical engineering services with the General Post Office specialising in improving the effectiveness of the telephone service. Following retirement he became a National Trust volunteer at Ormesby Hall.

The Pennyman family were first recorded in the area at Stokesley in the 1400's and one member was a vicar in the town. They bought a minor estate with a farm in the Ormesby area in Elizabethan times. They were involved in the Rising of the North, and following Queen Elizabeth I regaining control, a Pennyman family member was arrested along with many others for their involvement, all of whom were subsequently tried, found guilty of treason, and executed in York. Interestingly, later generations of the family were ardent Royalists.

The original house was single storey, which over the years was increased to two storeys, extended, and finally transformed into an imposing hall. During the 1740's this was rebuilt into the grand house seen today.

The family inter married with other influential land-owning families, most notably the Wharton's of Beverley, and the Worsley's. With these marriages the Pennyman's status, lands and wealth grew appreciably. They owned extensive estates and houses in the area including Normanby Hall, Thornton Hall and Marske Old Hall, and were some of the most wealthy and influential families in this part of the country.

As with many wealthy families, sooner or later there comes along a black sheep who inherits the estates, and squanders much of the assets judicially accumulated by previous generations.

And the Pennyman's profligate son was Sir James, 6th Baronet (1736 – 1796).

Born in Beverley, James moved to Ormesby when he inherited the title, Hall and estates. He was an incorrigible gambler and spender, and eventually he bankrupted the estate, and had to sell off much land to pay off the debts. However, despite the eventual negative effect on the estate due to his lifestyle, he left a positive legacy by building the impressive stable block, with its grand clock tower and clock. The clock is quite unique being pendulum and chain driven and having unusual movement features. Remarkably, it is still keeping accurate time – a testament to its design and build quality.

Although with reduced wealth the family continued to have influence and impact on the area and built several local hospitals and numerous churches over the following years.

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James (Jim) Pennyman was the last to carry the family name. He served and was injured in WW1 having metal fragments embedded in his torso. These were subsequently removed during a difficult and risky operation requiring the removal of two ribs. During recovery he was presented with the ribs, which he displayed in the house much to the amusement of guests.

Interestingly, Jim was a staunch Tory and right leaning whereas his wife, Ruth, was very left leaning verging on being a communist. Ruth, against Jim's requests, went to participate in the Spanish Civil War. She returned with thirty Spanish refugees and settled them in the area. There are several descendants to be found now living in the Guisborough area.

Despite being at such odds ideologically, they enjoyed a fulfilling and happy period as custodians of the hall and estates. They were keen patrons of the arts and regularly held theatrical performances and workshops.

When Jim died in 1961 the Pennyman bloodline ended. He bequeathed the hall and grounds to the National Trust with the proviso that Ruth could live at the house for the remainder of her days.

When she died in 1983 the National Trust then had full access to the house and much work began in preparing it for opening to the public.

Following several questions and thanks from the Chairman for a fascinating and very unique presentation, Members expressed their thanks and appreciation to Michael in the customary manner with a hearty round of applause.

JE 18.3.25

Business Meeting Minutes 18.3/2025

Brian Dinsdale

1948 - 2025

1. Attendance and apologies: 30 attendees, 5 apologies, no guests.
2. Minutes of previous Committee Meeting held on 18th February 2025:
Accepted
3. Matters arising: None
4. Committee Reports
Annual reports from Committee officers.

STOKESLEY PROBUS CLUB

Minutes of Members Meetings 2024-2025

Note: Treasurer and Chairman will present reports at AGM on 15th April 2025.

Secretary: All in order. All minutes of meetings and talk summaries posted on Club website. Talk summaries are mainly for the benefit of Members unable to attend meetings and wish to keep up to date with the Club's excellent talks programmes.

Website Manager: (Apols. Report read by Chairman). Website up to date. Members invited to visit website and feel free to raise any queries, errors or suggestions.

Speaker Finder: Bob hoped that the programmes that he has arranged over the two years of his tenure have been interesting. Thanks to the Committee, especially Keith and Chris, for their support. And, thanks to all the speakers, some of which took no fee. When enquiring about potential speakers, fees now range from £30 to £100. The budget has not been exceeded to date, but it may for the coming year. Bob wished his successor, Chris Griffiths (subject to AGM endorsement) a successful tenure.

Bob was thanked by Members for his hard work in finding quality speakers and putting together a very good series of talks.

Constitution: The Chairman informed Members that the Committee are proposing to standardise the term of all Committee tenures to 3 years. It is currently a mix of 3 and 5 years depending on the role. This proposal will be put to Members for a vote at the AGM.

Committee Membership: The Chairman summarised the situation regarding the terms of current serving Members :

Bob Scott is stepping down as Speaker Finder at the AGM.

The tenure of the following General Members expire at the AGM:

Derek Whiting, Graham Howard, and Kevin Clifford. All confirmed that they will stand for re-election at the AGM.

Keith Waller, Chairman, confirmed he will stand for re-election - unless any Member wishes to stand for the role.

Maj Chuhan will stand for re-election as Club Auditor

The following Members will stand for election at the AGM:

Chris Griffiths as Speaker Finder

Paul Bruce as General Member

5. Trips

Wynyard Hall was checked out by the Chairman. Lunch quite expensive. House not open, but £6 to visit garden. It is mainly a wedding reception venue, and not best suited for our Club to visit.

STOKESLEY PROBUS CLUB

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Seaton Delaval Hall: A major renovation is underway, and much of the site is closed. As such, the entrance charge has been reduced by 50%. Consequently, a visit under these circumstances would not be worthwhile. A visit will be considered at a later date when it is fully open.

Castle Howard: Closed until April so no information yet available. To report back after opening.

Lunches

The Blacksmith's Arms at Swainby on 6th March 2025. Attended by 19 Members and 1 guest. Apologies 8. A pleasant venue and a very good meal, enjoyed by all.

The Royal Oak, Great Ayton: Wednesday 30th April. Details and menu will be issued shortly. Pre-ordering preferred.

6. AOB : The Chairman informed Members that this week John Richardson from Hutton Rudby and his wife Jean, celebrated their 70th Wedding Anniversary! Members expressed their congratulations and conveyed their best wishes to John and Jean.

Also this week will be the Birthdays of Jim Gannon, and David Bryson who will be celebrating 97 years. Best wishes to both were expressed by Members.

Fun Draw: The Chairman brought two boxes of Sudoku games, and the lucky winners were Chris Griffiths and Malcolm Beavis.

Next Meeting is the AGM on Tuesday 15th April 2025