



Wilmington Axstane Probus Club

NEWSLETTER - February 2026

*Our speaker on 26th February will be Pete Allen and his subject is
"Through the Stage Door". (see page 4)*

*Lunch will be Roasted chicken with Chef's choice of vegetables or Fish and Chips
followed by a choice of puddings and coffee or tea.*

Chairman's Welcome

Welcome to our February meeting and I am sure that like me, you are looking forward enjoying a good lunch and then hearing stories of theatre-land.

For any of you who wonder why I have reverted to sporting a beard. A trip in the garden left me with facial cuts which discouraged me from shaving for a week or two. I'm not sure how long the hirsute appearance will last but I now look more like my driving licence than my passport.

By the time we meet the Club will have run its Bunny Races night, an event which your committee organises to provide an opportunity for a social gathering, a bit of fun and to raise three figures for Charity. In the week before the event we had a healthy 46 bookings but 15 of these were friends rather than members or their partners. It may be that like Quiz Nights the Bunny Races have become "Old Hat". (Unless of course Lenten abstinence was a factor).

Your committee attempt to provide an attractive programme of events and inevitably not all of them please all of the members. You may be thinking same old, same old. There is however an opportunity for new. Nomination forms for next year's committee will be available as you pay for your lunch. The committee meets 11 times a year on a Wednesday morning 8 days before the lunch meeting.

This year we have been running with vacancies and I am extremely grateful to the longer serving members

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Welcome Continued

for their hard work and commitment. If I am to leave a legacy I would hope that it would be that I leave my successor with a full committee with a blend of experience and bright ideas.

A reminder that bookings are open for the Chairman's dinner on Saturday 18th April. Jess Wright who you warmly received in July, has successfully auditioned for a touring production of Annie and is therefore not available. The entertainment in April will therefore be provided by her equally talented sister Emily. (No there is no nepotism they are no relation to me but they are daughters of one of the stars of my wife's school productions).

Enjoy your lunch and our company. **David**



Social Committee Report

Bouncing Bunnies - On Friday, 20 February 2026, enjoyed by all! See report from Steve Brown below.

Social Lunch - Wednesday, 1 April 2026, The Plough 65 High Street, Wilmington DA2 7BW, 12 for 12.30 please let Colin know if you are coming. colin.very@sky.com

Chairman's Annual Dinner - This year it will be held on Saturday, 18 April 2026 at Princes Park. The menu flyer has been sent to you all. Please let Keith Cass know whether you will be coming and send him your menu choices on 07711 640068 or email keith.cass@me.com

Spring Break. - Our break this year is to Warners at Littlecote Manor. All those booked will receive final instructions in due course.

Future Planning - I have sent to you all our plan for 2026 to whet your appetite, if anyone didn't receive it please let me know.

Colin

Bunny Report

We had a very successful Bunny Racing night last Friday with over 44 people attending. The racing was good fun and the food excellent but if it wasn't for the help we received, we could not have run it. My thanks to Phil Elliman and Peter Marsh for the excellent job they did in running the tote including taking the bets and paying out the winnings. Thanks to Joe Irwin who stepped in at the last minute to run the "Tattersalls" stand selling the "horses" and paying out. Finally thanks to Phil Burt who does most of the work behind the scenes including setting up the track and printing the betting slips and of course was our fantastic MC for the evening. Thanks very much gentlemen.

Steve



ROOM WITH A VIEW ?

A room for two has become available for our Probus Spring Break, 5 days from 27 April. It is half board at Warners, Littlecote House Hotel, Hungerford. Set in lovely surroundings with Warners excellent evening entertainment, this exciting opportunity is not to be missed. Coach travel throughout included, with interesting days out whilst there.

We can't guarantee a room with a view but we can guarantee lovely views on the beautiful Wiltshire/Berkshire border on this Break! Please talk to Roy for all details.

Roy Freeman can be contacted by email at aroyfreeman@btopenworld.com or telephone 01474 813231

Walks Report

There will be a walk on March 11th, the location will be decided closer to the date to allow for the ground to, hopefully, dry out! I will send an email giving details by the weekend before but I would appreciate it if you could let me know if you would be interested in walking.

Phil

Doctor, Doctor

A man goes to the doctor with a painful leg. The doctor hears a tiny voice coming from the man's kneecap and listens with his stethoscope. The knee keeps saying, "Lend us a tenner, lend us a tenner..." "My ankle hurts too", says the man, so the doctor listens there and hears another little voice saying "Lend us a tenner, lend us a tenner..." The doctor tuts and says, it is worse than I thought. Your leg is broke in two places"

Birthdays

A Happy Birthday to everyone with a Special day in February and March

Ron Armstrong, Paul Butler, David Cooper, Tony Duffield,
Andrew Dunk, Bernard Nash and Colin Verry



The Club's Finances

The current financial position is as follows:

Chairman's Charity	£ 2,362.22
Race Night	£ 590.00
Spring Break (1)	£ 6,395.00
Chairman's Dinner	£ 600.00
Contingency Fund	£ 1,700.00
General Fund	£ 672.66
Amount in Bank	£12,319.88

(1) Spring break: Includes £40 for uncashed cheque for overpayment

Ian

Notice of AGM on 23rd April

Nominations are now due for the Committee members. The Committee is very worried that it is viewed by the rest of the club as a 'closed shop' but it isn't at all. If you would like to be part of the team that helps make our club the success it is or you think you can make a difference, please put your name on the nominations form that will be by the stewards. You don't have to have a named role but maybe just as a 'member without portfolio' to get an idea what happens. If you want any information, guidance or 'inside' information, please don't hesitate to contact me or one of the current committee members.

That's all folks!

Phil

Education

Son, to father, "Dad, can you help me find the lowest common denominator in this problem?"

Father, "Don't tell me they haven't found it yet! I remember looking for that when I was a boy!"

Pupil, to teacher, "would you punish me for something I didn't do?" Teacher, "No of course I wouldn't." Pupil, "That's good because I didn't do my homework."

Lunch on 26th February will be will be Roasted Chicken with Chef's choice of vegetables or Fish and Chips followed by a choice of puddings.

The next Lunch will be on Thursday 26th March and the menu is to be confirmed.

Speaker's Report

Our Speaker in **February** will be Pete Allen and his subject is "Through the Stage Door: A Dramatic History of London's Theatres.

Whose play was staged in the West End before he took up post at the Vatican? Which theatre keeps two seats free each performance for any ghostly members of the audience? This talk explores extraordinary tales on-stage, back-stage and front of house across 500 years of London Theatres.

Our Speaker in **March** will be Paul Henry. Something different this time because Paul will be talking about Bookbinding—Old and New. His talk is conversational in nature and he will come armed with lots of samples and examples. He doesn't use a computer or screen preferring to use actual examples, which can be viewed during the talk.

I hope you can join us for both talks.

Steve