



# The Probus Club of Locks Heath

Volume 20: September 2023: [Autumn is upon us](#)

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## Welcome

Our club (official title "Probus Club of Locks Heath") was formed in 1981 and has developed over the years. We now have a membership of fifty which is the maximum we can accommodate at our venue. As such, we do have a short waiting list, but encourage those on it to attend meetings periodically when space permits!

We meet at 12.00pm. on the first Thursday of every month 4at [Sarisbury Green Community Centre](#) when we have a short business meeting and a Ploughman's Lunch followed by a Speaker and finish around 2.00pm. A pay bar is available.

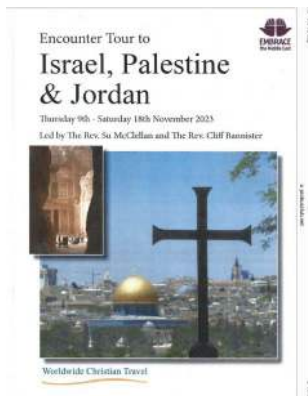
We arrange group holidays, local visits and meals out for our members and their wives. We also organise outings, for example a visit to the Morgan Motor Factory, and visits to the Chichester Festival Theatre as well as local events such as the annual Sarisbury Festival. A *Ladies Day* formal dinner is held in November.

If network connected, you can see [the video presented at our Ladies Evening](#) stored on Dropbox outlining the Club's activities over the past twelve months. Pictures taken on the evening are available in [the Photo Gallery section of our website](#) and a review of the evening can be seen in the [Recent Events section](#) of this page along with reviews of our Probud Picnic, visits to Lysses Hotel and Avenue 141 and more. Details of [Recent Speakers](#) are also available via this link including all our speakers so far this year.

Note that for easier navigation you can [link directly to all sections of our web site from here](#) including previous Newsletters

## Latest News

### Arts Society trip to the Holy Land



Jim has advised that spaces are available on the Arts Society trip to the Holy Land due to late cancellations. The trip runs from November 9th through to November 18th.

Details have been sent to all members, please contact Jim directly if interested

### Probus Lunch at Lycées Hotel 28th September 2023.



Please advise Mike directly if you intend to attend along with your choice from the menu which is available online

### Ladies Dinner – Tuesday 14th November



The Ladies Dinner will be held on Tuesday November 14th 2023 at Warsash Sailing Club as in previous years. Cost Estimate is £40 per person, further details to be provided in due course

### Avenue 141



A date has been booked for our next visit to Avenue141 in February 2024, details to be provided in due course.

## Recent Events

### “The Sound of Music”



Around 30 Probus members and friends enjoyed a matinée performance of “Sound of Music” at the Chichester Festival Theatre. It was a packed out performance and finding a parking space nearby challenging. . Despite seeing the film countless times this show was quite different. Additional songs that may have been in the original, but dropped for the film, had been included.

Whilst there were several aspects that did not match the time period around which the original movie was made and cast the (for example the seven children did not look like they had the same father) this had no impact on the performance which was enjoyed by all those present.

The acting and singing by the whole cast was brilliant as were the scenery changes. Many of us had the opportunity to go behind the scenes a few weeks ago and saw costumes, wigs and backstage staff and viewed the mechanics of moving scenery and centre stage lifts.

### Visit to the Morgan Motor Factory



Visit to the Morgan Motor Company I think everyone loves a Morgan motor car, especially those of the older generation. I suppose you could say it is nostalgia for our youth.

A group made up of Probus and The Arts Society members took a full coach to Malvern on Tuesday 15th August to see the manufacture of these wonderful cars. After a short stop we arrived in Malvern about mid-day where we all found various establishments for our lunch. We quickly made our way back to the coach and after a short journey we arrived at the Morgan Motor Company only a mile and a half outside the centre of Malvern.

The factory on this site has been manufacturing cars for over 100 years. We were met by two tour guides who split us into two groups to take us around the factory. We walked the production line getting within metres of the manufacture. The production is very much old school with each part of the manufacture being done within individual spaces and as necessary the car being moved around. What was nice to see was that when a bell rang the whole factory stopped for tea break!

There is no speculative construction. Each car being made was for a particular customer who had not only chosen the type of car but had also made their selection of colours and finishes. We could see the great pride being taken on every aspect from the metalwork to the woodwork. We were all tempted but I don't think that anybody made a purchase and unfortunately we did not have enough time for a test drive. Maybe some will come back for that.

James Fox

**Note:** The following text extracted from the [Company's Website](#) provides background to what was covered on the visit.

The Morgan Motor Company welcomes over 30,000 visitors from around the world to tour the factory each year. Each one of those visitors gets within metres of the vehicles being crafted, as they walk the production line. The experience of a Morgan factory tour is unparalleled within the automotive industry, with visitors being able to immerse themselves in the production process.

The Morgan Experience Centre is situated on the same site as the factory and is where your Morgan experience will begin.

The Morgan Experience Centre is home to a range of other visitor attractions including sports car hire, experience drives, the Morgan Experience Café, the official Morgan shop and interactive museum, The Archive Room.

The authenticity of Morgan, one of Britain's longest established motor manufacturers, has remained unchanged for more than 110 years: from design and engineering, to craft and manufacturing, through to sales and tailoring, every Morgan is designed and built to be as individual as its owner.

Now in their fourth generation, the Morgan family continue to act as stewards for the brand, upholding the values of the company and ensuring their family legacy lives on with each new Morgan produced. The Morgan family retain a shareholding of the company, alongside majority shareholders Investindustrial, who announced in 2019 that they would be investing heavily in the Morgan Motor Company and its long-term future building cars in Britain.

Each Morgan is hand crafted using three core elements: ash, aluminium and leather. Every car is entirely unique, built to the highest standards by passionate craftsmen and women, whose skills are handed down through generations and perfected over a lifetime, bringing together heritage, innovation and cutting-edge technology.

**The question is whether any of our visitors were tempted to add themselves to the waiting list?**

### Recent Speakers

I. K. Brunel – Graham Walters



A very detailed and interesting presentation taking the audience through the career of our subject and his very many engineering successes as well as those that he would perhaps not want to remember.

A Victorian engineer who was one of the main architects of Britain's industrial revolution. He was famous for his pioneering work on Britain's railways and ships. He built railways and designed bridges, tunnels, viaducts and passenger ships and today's talk gave us an insight to them all.

Brunel made outstanding contributions to marine engineering with his three ships: the Great Western (1837), Great Britain (1843), and Great Eastern (originally called Leviathan; 1858), each the largest in the world at its date of launching.

He was responsible for the construction of the Thames Tunnel, the Great Western Railway and the Clifton Suspension Bridge and so much also designing the Temple Meads Station in Bristol and Paddington Station in London.

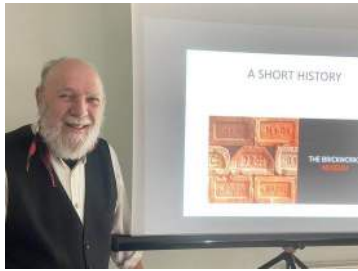


A man with so influential in the world that a University is now named after him, there is much more history than can be covered here or in a single presentation and much of it is available online if you're interested in following up. The selection of links below will provide you with plenty of further information.

But finally, our thanks to an excellent speaker and a very interesting presentation

- [The Brunel Institute](#)
- [Isambard Kingdom Brunel Portal](#)
- [BBC History – Isambard Kingdom Brunel](#)
- [Wikipedia – Isambard Kingdom Brunel](#)
- [Our History – Brunel University](#)
- [Network Rail](#)

**Bursledon Brickworks – Richard Newman**



Richard gave a fascinating and very interesting and entertaining talk about Bursledon Brickworks, its history and perhaps more importantly its saving from being demolished.

Rather than add my own comments on the talk, I'm adding the introduction given on the Bursledon Brickworks website, no doubt well worth a visit when you get the chance

To see Richard's Document detailing the [Overhead Ropeway](#) that used to exist at the Brickworks referred to at the meeting click the highlighted link above.



Bursledon Brickworks was founded in 1897 by the Ashby family. The Ashbys were partners in Hooper & Ashby, successful builders merchants in Southampton. They also made bricks. The first brickyard was at Chandlers Ford but when an opportunity to start making bricks at Bursledon arose they jumped at it. There was abundant clay at the new Bursledon site and very good transport links by both rail and river.

The clay was originally dug by hand in pits close to the buildings. The clay pits were deep – nearly 40ft – and very extensive. The clay was brought back to the factory using narrow gauge railway wagons but eventually the pits were too far away for this to be practical. Mechanised digging started in the 1930s. As time passed the clay was worked out further and further away, finally being brought to the works on an overhead cable system from the clay pits ( see picture at left ), now the lakes that form the [Swanwick Nature Reserve](#).

The original 1897 works (the southern complex) was added to in 1903 with the addition of the northern complex. This was further extended in 1935. With the extra capacity, the brickworks was producing in excess of 20 million bricks a year. They were one of the main producers of bricks in the region.



Bricks were made during the Great War and the Second World War. Brick making was considered a reserved occupation but production was dropped to a lower level and the Ministry of Defence requisitioned parts of the site during both wars. After the Second World War the family business was amalgamated with the Sussex and Dorking Brick Company and in 1959 became Redland Holdings Ltd. The site closed in 1974 for a number of reasons, the M27 split the site in two, the clay was getting very expensive to extract.

However, probably the main reason was the introduction of the Health and Safety at Work Act. What makes the Brickworks so unusual is the fact that they were not updated during their working life. Turning them into a modern plant that could meet the safety requirements would have been almost impossible. The factory slowly ran down, first to go were the clay diggers and last the kiln burners. But eventually the last kiln chamber was emptied and a new chapter for the history of the factory started.

In 2012 the museum was awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £666,300. This grant was awarded to help create the museum. Bursledon Brickworks Museum Trust was registered in 2015 and now runs the museum. Volunteers with the help of part time 'staff' currently run the museum. The volunteers carry out most of the restoration work and help to man the site when the museum is open. The museum is completely independent and relies on visitors for its income.

Richard has kindly provided us with three more related documents which you can see here:

- [Clay from the Hamble](#)
- [Bursledon Salvage Depot – World War 1](#)
- [Morris vs Redland](#)

**View from the Wings by Brian Freeland**

Brian Freehand gave a very entertaining talk to Probus at July's meeting. He gave numerous anecdotes collected from his time in the theatre, both on stage and 'In The Wings' with many well known personalities in the 50's, 60's and seventies.

He had played many roles – particularly comedy. Of all the personalities he worked with he considered Tommy Trinder to be the best. Kind, considerate and companionate, unlike many of the others.

Brian's career started in 1959, direct from National Service, as a trainee manager at the London Palladium and it has taken him to 43 different countries including 3 residencies in the Middle East, 8 tours of the Indian sub-continent and around the globe twice. Approaching retirement, he branched out into directing amateur dramatics, writing scripts and giving talks – and finally found time to write his long-promised autobiography called "Meanderings: a River and a Life".

**Please send your input for future Newsletters (which will be now be produced approximately quarterly) via the website or send a message to [probuslocksheath@gmail.com](mailto:probuslocksheath@gmail.com)**