



Merretttable



Times



The summer is over and normal service has been resumed. The first Council meeting in person took place at my house and the star of the night seems to have been our cat Tilly who took over from me while I sorted the refreshments. It seems she did a better job than me! However, normal service returning was what we had hoped. Nevertheless, as those who came to the September meeting already know, the unfortunate events of the last year were set to continue.....

Although we had had two informal meetings at the Three Tuns, Bransgore in July and August, September was to be the return of the first meeting back at the St Leonard's Hotel. So 30 of us turned up to hear Shelley Lozano tell us about her career in show business. Although on top table we were all ears listening to her tales of belly dancing, fire eating and limboing around the world, she had our full attention as we had eaten the splendid fish and chip supper. However the five other tables were left to wait and wait and wait for their supper to arrive. So late was the food delivery that we had to start the meeting and our guest speaker was taking final questions as the last table was served. So words were had and our meal supremo, David Phelps, has extracted promises from the hotel management that this will not happen again. So let's hope they get their staff shortage issue sorted for our October meeting which is planned to still go ahead at the St Leonard's Hotel. Maybe we should now re-name it and call it The Last Chance Saloon!

As we move into the Autumn the Social calendar is already looking pretty full. The first event is the re-commencement of Keith & Sue Anderson's Zoom Concert Nights on the 11 October. The season opener is the all-time favourites, The Planet Suite followed by Scheherazade. Look out for the concert flier on page 4 for more details.

We hope to be fielding two teams for the Area Quiz to be held in Christchurch. We have a number of experienced quizzers taking part plus me. We hope to be upholding Ringwood's reputation, although as I write this I am not quite sure what our standing is in this event so upholding it may not be too difficult.

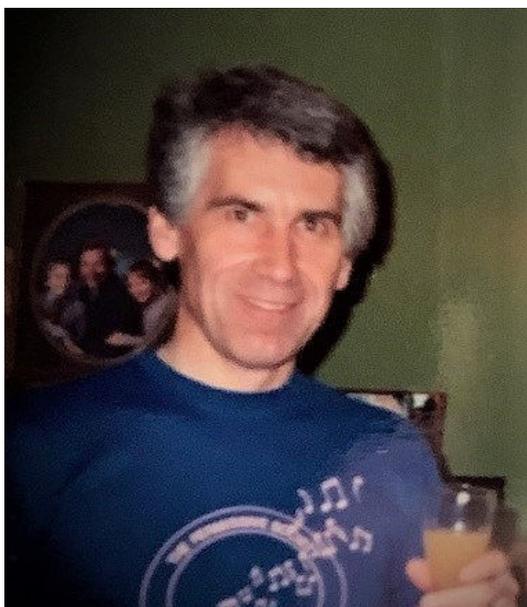
No Carnival this year but congratulations to Lyn and Jeff Wickens on being awarded with the Spirit of the Ringwood Carnival prize for their sterling work over many years. As Jeff says, let's get ready for the Carnival return next year and with all the roadwork grief Ringwood is going to suffer, maybe there is something there to be the theme for a 41 float? Brings back memories of that remarkable 41 float from when the A31 was again being repaired, that was called something like "What Ringwood Needs is Another Hole in the Road".

Anyway, look out for all the event fliers in the Merretttable Times but can I use this space to make a particular mention of Caroline and my 'At Home'. It is being held at the Ellingham Church Hall on the 16 October starting at 12.00 with a welcome drink. See page 2 for more details but if anyone hasn't yet got back to Caroline or me to book in, it's not too late. But don't leave it too long.

Lastly for this month, Sara and I will be off to Nottingham on the 1 October, joining Anne and Richard Dyson at the 41 Big Weekend. I will be attending the SGM on the Saturday and voting on the 6 motions and will report back on the outcomes in the next edition. What an exciting life 41 Club Chairmen lead.

Have a good month; hopefully see you at an event soon.

Bob



Just as I finished writing this month's piece, I received the very sad news that Mike Fraser's battle with his illness was over and he has died. I was never in Table with Mike but Sara and I got to know Mike and Liz from 41 & Tangent. Mike was one of the most dedicated, hard working yet friendliest of 41'ers it has been my pleasure to know. His support and enthusiasm was always obvious and the Club will greatly miss his presence. Our thoughts and support go to Liz and the family at this very difficult time.

Bob



The Tangent Telegraph



So, Jean had sorted out the menu, numbers were looking good, the agenda was written, welcome speech prepared, plates were warming, no coat rack (but you can't have everything), all was looking good for our first meeting back at St Leonards in September. But it was not to be, cancelled at the last minute. Luckily the troops rallied and the message got through to everyone but what a shame! I hope Jean has recovered! Fingers crossed for a successful second attempt in October.



The third Saturday in September, as we all know, is Carnival day. Not this year unfortunately but there was still a Carnival spirit in the air with the Carnival Committees rededication of the sun dial in the market place. The committee and partners have refurbished the sun dial and provided new seating in the market place and there was a small ceremony to mark the occasion. Local clubs were invited and so Lynne Salsbury and I represented Tangent. After cakes and fizz, carnival trophies were presented and who should be presented with the Sampson Trophy for the spirit of Carnival our very own carnival and community superstar Jeff Wickens!! Very well deserved! (see picture below)

On the community theme, Greyfrairs held its AGM last week and were pleased to report that they had managed relatively well over lockdown and were now seeing groups return to the site. We will continue to be affiliated members.

In other news, Sue Anderson hosted a zoom proms night which was enjoyed by those who attended and plans are well underway for our joint Chairmans At Home on 16 October. More details in Bob's flyer below. Not such great news for our coach trip to Bath Christmas market. The organisers have had to cancel this year's market and so the trip will no longer be going ahead. We will think of an alternative!

I look forward to seeing you at our October meeting with our speaker Lyn Lambert from Bournemouth North Tangent telling us about her hobby of quilting.

YICF

Caroline

Caroline & Bob invite you to their joint
 'At Home'
LAST CALL
 The Village Hall Olympics





16 October 2021
Ellingham Church Hall



Approximate Timetable
 12.00 Arrivals
 Welcome Drink
 Lunch
 Fish, Sausage or Halloumi & Chips
 (All to be served at the same time 'ish')
 The Games
 The Medal Ceremony
 18.00 onwards carriages

STOP PRESS

Costs Slashed to £11 pp
Please bring CASH



Mike Fraser



It is with great sadness that the Merretttable Times reports the loss of a dear friend Mike Fraser who passed away peacefully on Wednesday 29th September. Mike fought his long illness with such positivity and was always so cheerful that many didn't realise how ill he really was. His passion for cars was obvious! He could talk fluently about any make or model, its good points and not so good, and in years gone by would think nothing of a day trip involving 300 miles of driving for a meeting with clients. Speed and precision were his watchwords. More recently he even drove to his London hospital appointments, although Liz always went with him. The club appreciated his much anticipated expert contribution and advice through his articles 'Pedal to the floor'. Would he give up work? No, he remained committed to the end, enabling him to keep focussed and determined. Mike had superb general knowledge, a wide ranging taste in music and was certainly a good person to have on a quiz team and a great speaker at club events. Remember his Desert Island disc choices? I can just see him driving speedily accompanied by Dire Straits pumping out on the radio! Mike often turned up late to club meetings, rushing in from work, yet still delivering an excellent 'Vote of Thanks' with great eloquence and attention to detail. He brought the same attention to detail to everything he did. How well he researched all the new products to the market that he used in the refurbishment of his and Liz's house, their home for well over 40 years, a family home.

Remember his contribution to the Carnival floats, for Table, Ex Table and Circle? Perhaps his contribution to the beer drinking too! He enjoyed walking, and the company of 'The Ringwood free fall cyclists' who together with the Ashley Heath pod, were able to follow his last 18 months more closely than most members. Jeff, a cycling team member has put together the following tribute to Mike.

"Where do you start when talking about Mike Fraser? To me certainly he was the cleverest, nicest, bravest man I have had the honour of knowing and calling a friend. As others have said, put simply a great man who was an inspiration to us all. He joined RT in the late 1970's, and Ex-Table in 1990. As many know, he had been suffering from cancer for 17 years and nothing was going to stop him from battling on. Until a few weeks ago he was still working and as a founder member of the Ringwood Free Fall Cycling Society he still joined the Sunday mornings' bike rides. During Covid we elected to take it in turn to organise the après beers in our back gardens. Even when Mike could no longer ride he still took his turn to do the hosting which he loved to do and we loved to see him. He may have been weak but he was still very sharp and knew all that was going on in the world.

Mike was a Quantity Surveyor and worked all over the country. He was dedicated to doing a good job and worked long hours and travelled thousands of miles in his trusty high performance VW Golf. He reckoned that it was just about run in when there were 250,000 miles on the clock and because he could not find anything better, had it completely refurbished ready for another thousand or two. It probably still holds the world land speed records for certain stretches of the roads to London and the North. My fondest memories of Mike were working with him decorating all sorts of venues for Ex Table events but most especially building Carnival floats. Lots of people can have ideas but making them happen and putting tons of equipment, including at one time a full scaffold structure, on to a low loader or flatbed lorry without it falling off takes some working out which is where Mike would quietly and confidently come in. He was able to immediately grasp a concept and get on and sort out what needed to be done. He was also the best back up man. A group of us would go up to London at Christmas for a wander. To be fair I often did not know where I was going but Mike was always there to suggest an alternative route, make sure everyone got onto or off buses and underground trains and looked after the ones who didn't!! Mike was a great asset to the club. His knowledge of the world, his wit and his wise words will be sorely missed. Our thoughts are with Liz and the family - a very sad time".



David Phelps reminds us that when he was organising the 50th Anniversary of our Club and forming a working Committee, who was the first person he would ask to help? Mike Fraser. He did a tremendous amount of work acting as Secretary, contacting other Clubs and was always there at committee meetings. Again, when David took on the preliminary work of reforming Round Table in Ringwood it was Mike who was the first person to be asked to work on that task with him. They had many meetings and together they achieved a fantastic conclusion, the reforming of Ringwood Round Table. Mike was a great organiser and ideas man and had that valuable knack of finding more hours in a day than most people.

Both clubs send love and best wishes to Liz, Alison and Stuart and offer our sincere condolences. If there is anything we can do, the clubs are here to support you in the weeks and months to come.



RINGWOOD AND DISTRICT EX-TABLERS CLUB
INVITES EVERYONE TO THE

SEAWEED AND BRACKEN
CAR TREASURE HUNT

on Sunday October 24th at 1.30 pm

A motorized and stimulating interrogation of our lovely forest and coastline with remarkable prizes

Entry fee: £5.00 per car...no charabancs please !!



Meet in the SW corner of the cliff top Car Park in Highcliffe on Sea , BH23 5DF, at 1.30pm.

Depending on the weather you can picnic at 12.30 pm with a view of the lovely Needles and further west the home of the infamous Hengist.

Your Clue sheets will be handed over in a Dettol Ziplock bag, entry fee taken then off you go. After about 90 minutes of alert driving the final stop will be a cosy barn deep in the New Forest.

Here you can handover your completed answer sheets and scavenged items to the Head Hunt Marshall (Mike Edwards) and if you wish enjoy some cake and coffee or tea.

Fear not: Local and National Covid 19 guidelines will be applied

Bring your friends, lunch, folding chairs, pen, satnav, mobile phone, compass, sense of humour, cash money and plenty of sharp eyes.

To join in just send names, car reg and mobile number to Ian Stockdale

ian@isosco.com or 07930340624

ZOOM CONCERT NIGHT with Bob, Keith & Sue
BEGINNING AT 7.15pm 11 October 2021 (Joining on ZOOM)
THE PLANET SUITE by HOLST
Andrew Gardiner and THE NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA

<https://youtu.be/be7uEyyNIT4>

Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade - op.35

https://youtu.be/17lEx0ytE_0

THE FAMOUS ANIMAL RACES
ARE BACK!

This time with Supper too (no, not the animals!)

Venue: Ibsley Safari Park
Date: Saturday 13th November
Please note that no animals will be harmed at this event. Fur trading not allowed.

Final details in next month's M Times





CHRISTMAS IS FAST APPROACHING!!

Chairman's Christmas Drinks



Dress Code: Seeeeexxxxxyyyyy

Saturday 4 December 12.30pm

Greyfriars

Please save the date

WANTED

YOUR PHOTOGRAPHIC

MASTERPIECE

To adorn our 2021

Club Christmas Card

Any format to..

mike_callaghan@talktalk.net

Why is it getting harder to buy Advent calendars? Their days are numbered!
What does the Queen call her Christmas Broadcast? The One Show!
What do you call Santa's little helpers? Subordinate clauses.

REMEMBER, REMEMBER THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER

Celebrate Bonfire Night on Friday November 5th 2021

at 58 Ringwood Road, Alderholt SP6 3DF 01425 - 653074

A real bonfire with fireworks & sparklers.

(This depends on the wind cooperating in direction and strength)

There will be Julie's famous Pork Sausage Meat in an apple & onion 'gravy' with baked potato; otherwise known as O'Flannaghan's Sausage Supper.

She has not yet decided on the 2nd course, but knowing her, it will be well worth having.



Please bring your own crockery, cutlery, glasses and drinks.

Some more patio chairs would be useful.

A warming welcome drink on arrival.

Lighting -Up time at 6:00 pm

A very modest charge.

Tick Lists will be circulated at the October meetings for catering 'porpoises'.

Don't worry if you haven't booked in.

Just come anyway. All are welcome

Will & Julie Parke

I don't need to remind you that major traffic delays will affect the A31 at Ringwood from January to November 2022.

To give you the wider picture please take a look at the following links from Ringwood Council and the Highways Agency. Just remember to allow extra time if you are travelling to or through Ringwood over the next 12 months!

<https://www.ringwood.gov.uk/a31-ringwood-bridge-replacement-and-road-widening-scheme/>

<https://highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/south-east/a31-ringwood-road-widening/>.



From the Meals Shack.

Having spoken to the Management at St Leonard's they were very, very apologetic about the meal delays at our last meeting. They explained their restaurant was very busy that evening as well, which I can confirm when I visited the bar trying to get some answers for the delays.

It is a Management fault, but they only had one chef on duty that evening. They had no one else they could call upon.

I am awaiting some menu suggestions for our next meeting from Holly, the Manager. which are easy to produce and quickly served.

There is no easy answer to the problem. We maybe can look at other venues but the forthcoming roadworks for the next 12 months or so really preclude trying any venue in Ringwood. Onwards and upwards to our next meeting at St Leonard's on the 19th October.

Your attention to the booking rules was excellent for our last meeting and all worked well with numbers. Thank you.

David Phelps

Meals Monitor (on probation!)

PS The last meeting is something no doubt will stick with me for the rest of my life. I am only just getting over the Christmas Meeting some 20 or so years ago when we had a speaker 'Just in Time' who unfortunately we had to call time on!

Don't mention fish and chips. Hey Ho!!



Caption suggestions.....

"Is that you Bob?"

or.....

"I'm feeling a bit deflated"



SPEAKERS CORNER

Our Speaker for October is local Ringwood man, Robbie Forrester who was a Cameraman for the Ministry of Defence from 1958 to 1997. Having flown in over 60 different aircraft, with a wealth of interesting tales and tasks to tell.

Please join us for a great night on Tuesday 19th October.



LADIES NIGHT
FRIDAY FEBRUARY 11TH 2022
CAPTAIN'S CLUB HOTEL & SPA, CHRISTCHURCH

Dear Friends,

As you are all aware, Bob's Ladies Night is now taking reservations, and I thought I would give you all a copy of the list I presently am holding.

Due to Richard Carter's Night being cancelled due to Covid, several members were unsure whether I had received their 'rollover' instructions. So, please check the lists below and contact me if you wish to re-book!

Captains Club Double Rooms plus Dinner

- Peter Lomax
- Richard Carter
- Richard Dyson
- Bob Merrett
- John Kennedy
- David Okey
- Chris Kean
- Andrew Green
- Gordon Knott

Dining Only

- David Phelps x2
- Michael Callaghan x2
- Keith Anderson x2
- John Adams x2

Total attending to date.....26



As you all may realise, we have at least eleven very discounted rooms left at £135 bed and breakfast, and we have plenty of room in the restaurant!

I am hoping we can have your confirmation of attendance at the next club night.

Should the event be unable to take place due to pandemic, all moneys will be refunded , in full!

Many thanks for your co operation,

John
Mr. Vice

"TALKING NEWS" – a service for the visually impaired

I have been a reader with Ringwood & Fordingbridge "Talking News" for a couple of years. For more than 20 years "Talking News" has been posting out a free fortnightly round up of the local news on audio CD to blind and visually impaired listeners, both in their own homes and in care homes. Jimmie Gordon was one of many locals who enjoyed receiving his fortnightly CD during his later years.

We all enjoy picking up the local freebie papers with snippets of local news, gossip and chitchat. So many people who are visually impaired loose this pleasure as their sight deteriorates. Talking News helps people stay engaged with what is going on in their local community.

As well as the CD service, Talking News can be accessed through a downloadable App, on-line, or you can even ask Alexa!!

This service is FREE locally. If you know of anyone that you think would benefit from receiving the fortnightly "Talking News" then please let me know.





STAYCATION

The Best New Year's Eve 2021 Covid Compliant Event
Greyfriars Ebenezer Hall and Ann Rose Room & kitchens somewhere in between!!
Arrive at 7.00pm for your crafty cocktail welcome drink
Sit down at 7.45 for your own table's dinner and drinks
At Midnight toast the in the New Year 2022

Yes it's that time of year again – well almost – hopefully we will gather as usual organising your own tables of 6-12 people and nominate a spokesperson who should contact Mike Edwards as soon as possible after receiving this edition of the magazine. The theme for 2021 is **STAYCATION**. Please note Mike is away until 9th October, which gives you plenty of time to avoid duplication of your **STAYCATION** theme of caravan, cycling, golf, rambling, seaside, end of the pier or whatever else you have been up to over the past 18+ months including, of course, Covid related volunteering.

Each table will, as is traditional, be expected to provide some short entertainment at least loosely related to their table theme. If you wish to come but are struggling to force yourself onto a table then let Mike or his able deputy/honorary cocktail and fizz supremo David P know and they will find one for you. When the table spokesperson calls or emails Mike or David, hopefully they can give the number and names on their table, or at least a close guess.

It is anticipated that later in the evening, if still awake at the late hour after any earlier entertainment, there will be music courtesy of the Ian and Anne music productions Ltd, with dancing and frolicking into the New Year.

Any helpful and practical ideas will be much appreciated. A committee of vastly experienced NYE revellers has been formed, the victims volunteers on it are wildly enthusiastic but anyone else wishing to help beyond just decorating your own table after 3pm on NYE is more than welcome to join us. Our first meeting is 1830 prompt at St Leonards on 19th October before the monthly meeting.

Costs are not known at this stage but thanks to the generosity of the Treasurer in a weak and unguarded moment, should, as in previous years, be minimal.

DIARY OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER

Monday 11th.....Club Concert on Zoom returns at 7.15pm! Planet Suite and Scheherazade. See page 4.

Wednesday 13th.....Tangent Meeting at St Leonard's.

Saturday 16th.....Joint Chairmen's at Home. Ellingham Village Hall. See page 2

Tuesday 19th.....Club Meeting at St Leonard's. (Taxis booked for 2am when you've finished your meal!!) See page 6.

Sunday 24th.....Car Treasure Hunt around the New Forest from 1.30pm. See page 4.

Sunday 31st.....Copy date for Merretttable Times.

NOVEMBER

Friday 5th.....Will & Julie Parke invite you to their Bonfire Party in Alderholt. See page 5.

Tuesday 9th.....Tangent Meeting.

Friday 12th.....Golf Society Presentation Dinner at Ferndown Golf Club 7pm.

Saturday 13th.....Ibsley Park Animal Races and Supper Night. See page 4 and more details to follow shortly.

Tuesday 16th.....Club Meeting at St Leonard's.

DECEMBER

Saturday 4th.....Chairman's Xmas Drinks at Greyfriars from midday. See page 5.

Friday 31st.....'Staycation' NYE Party at Greyfriars. See above.

AND FINALLY!.....

I can see those tossers queuing for petrol from my bathroom.



Did you hear about the snail who got beaten up by two tortoises? When asked for a description he said "sorry it all happened so fast!"

A woman in India recently gave birth to a baby boy weighing 20kg. Doctors expect him to be walking 6 months before his mother.

Arthur

The end of petrol and diesel cars in the UK was scheduled for 2030. This has now been brought forward to Wednesday.



It's been raining for 3 days without stopping. My wife is in depression, she is standing and looking through the window. If the rain doesn't stop tomorrow, I'll have to let her in.



"I met this bloke with a didgeridoo and he was playing 'Dancing Queen' on it. I thought.....that's Abba-iginal."
"I'd like to start with the chimney jokes. I've got a stack of them. The first one is on the house"

Tim Vine



**COPY DATE FOR THE
NEXT EDITION OF THE
MERRETTABLE TIMES
SUNDAY 31ST OCTOBER**