



Pro-Biz



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FORENSIC GEOSCIENCE The Great Detective

At the Club's May Luncheon Meeting – the first of Chairman Martin Hart's year of office– it was particularly gratifying to see 'one of our own' step up to the speaker's rostrum. The Probian in question: **prominent geoscientist Peter Bide**, whose penetrating and revealing presentation titled **The VERY SILENT WITNESS** showed exactly how the application of this ultra-precise discipline validates Locard's exchange principle that *'every contact leaves a trace'*. Peter's professional credentials are formidable: a geology graduate of Cardiff University, his distinguished career took in spells at the British Geological Survey and the Department of the Environment. As a member of the Government's Planning Directorate he led a series of important policy development projects. He still works part-time as a private technical consultant on water planning issues while maintaining an active Fellowship of the Geological Society.



Peter defined forensic geoscience as the application of geoscience (geology, geochemistry, geophysics) to detective work. This enabled the linking of perpetrators to crimes, checking alibis, finding of bodies, weapons, illegal proceeds et al and the identification of fraud and environmental crime. It was used by Prof. Christian Ehrenberg to unravel the mystery of barrels of silver being substituted for sand, featured in the Sherlock Holmes stories, and again in the solution of a number of murders and kidnappings.

New geochemical and geophysical techniques in the late 20th and 21st centuries gave rise to huge advances. Geochemistry can identify the presence and concentration in parts per million of 30 different elements at once from the same sample of rock, soil or pigment. Biogeochemistry can link pollution to source, identifying polluters and link products to source. Pinpoint dating also is made possible.

Space constraints preclude mention of all the many case studies cited by Peter, but three examples give a flavour of the possibilities: Phoenician and Minoan trade routes have been traced by geochemical fingerprinting; detailed soil geochemistry and geophysics identified a Spitfire in a North Wales peat bog, and a team of geoscientists using all the geoscience techniques, combined to solve the mystery of the extinction of the dinosaurs.

Peter having taken questions, was congratulated by Chris Pollard for bringing clarity and colour to a complex and demanding subject. Members' plaudits underlined the recognition that today's geoscientists are well equipped, to quote Peter, for *'finding both the bullet and the smoking gun'*. (Jim Woodford)

Forthcoming Attraction!!

Do not forget that flyers are still available for the Club's Annual Barbeque at The Tamesis Club, Teddington on Tuesday 25th June. Tickets are priced at a very reasonable cost of £12.00 - so please support the Club and come along, and you can also bring friends and even relatives!!



We look forward to seeing you on the 25th.

WALK FROM THE ROYAL OAK, PIRBRIGHT, 4th JUNE

A slightly greyer day welcomed our 12 Probus walkers, with two new recruits in the shape of Brian and Linda Brignall. No dogs with us this time, which is a great shame as it reduces the amount of copy. Usual factoids were read out, and warnings given as we were venturing into the army ranges of Pirbright, Bisley, and Ash. Our new recruits arrived a few minutes late, owing to a satnav malfunction which put Brian and Linda in the middle of one of the many local army camps. It turns out that Brian is fairly familiar with these camps, and therefore decided to ignore his satnav and rely on his extensive local knowledge, as his father had been a Royal Artillery reservist for some 29 years.



Setting off from the pub was a little tricky as it is located on a long sweeping bend, giving the traffic a chance to build up to a good speed. Our attempt to cross the road resulted in only half the group making it, as a car duly appeared at high speed. The more pragmatic amongst us swiftly returned to the pavement, only to be put to shame by Eric Eustance who, along with his walking stick, seemed to put on a tremendous burst and make it to the other side in one piece. Once we were all safely across the walk commenced through pine woods, dotted with rhododendron bushes. The trees looked as though they had all been planted by British Telecom and would be our telegraph poles in about another 10 years. Passing some rather upmarket houses deep in the woods, we then came up to the edge of the army ranges, and sure enough the red flag was flying indicating that live shooting was in progress. With heads down, and cutting round the edge of the fenced off area, we passed through the side of a large steel gate and into a deeply wooded area which was spotted by Hilary Hart to include a notice high on a tree marked "PRIVATE". This, unfortunately, had not been noticed on a previous recce, and so it was decided to carry on and plead ignorance if approached by any sort of official. A little detour was taken off the main track, where some British Army artillery (circa 1750) was located. You can see from the photo potential gunners clustered around this slightly ancient piece. The whole area was littered with shotgun cartridges, as it turned out to be a clay pigeon range. We finally cleared this private wood, and were back on the main footpath to Rails Farm which has a great variety of abandoned farm machinery littering its fields and outbuildings. This marked about the half way stage of the walk, and as usual the walkers seemed to sense we were on the downhill run to the pub and this was once more proved correct, and the return was made exactly on midday with the main road being successfully navigated. We met up with 8 Probus diners, who were a little surprised to see us arriving on time as this is out of character for the walkers. The pub was quite crowded, and the landlady a little flummoxed at the number of customers she had to deal with, grumbling a little saying that we had not booked, but after making two phone calls and being assured that we were in the book it was decided to be just a failure of communication on behalf of the pub. The food took a little time, but it was worth the wait.

(Keith McArthur)

HAMPTON LADIES PROBUS CLUB TRIP TO THE LAKE DISTRICT

We had an early start on Sunday 14th April for our trip 'Up North' to the Lake District.

The traffic was kind to us and having had a coffee break on the motorway we arrived in good time for our lunch stop at Quarry Bank in Cheshire, a well preserved textile mill of the Industrial Revolution, now a museum of the cotton industry. Sadly we only had time for a quick look around as we still had a distance to travel to Kendal, where we were to spend the next three days at the delightful Riverside Hotel.

Our first day out took us to Brantwood House, former home of the artist, thinker and social revolutionary, John Ruskin. To get there we crossed Coniston Water on the 'Gondola,' a wonderful Victorian Steam Launch. The journey was cold in the biting wind but we were well wrapped up and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

On day two, we combined a visit to Windermere in the morning, followed by a visit to Sizergh Castle, a beautiful medieval house and gardens, home of the Strickland family.

Next day we enjoyed more stunning lake-land scenery when visiting Keswick, a very attractive town. Here we had lunch before journeying along Ullswater, thence over the Kirkstone pass. We were lucky to have beautiful, sunny weather, enabling us to see the stunning scenery at its very best.

Sadly the following day it was time to head home, breaking the journey at Salford Quays, Manchester. We had the option of choosing between visiting the Imperial War Museum North, the Lowry Museum or the Salford Quays Shopping Mall. Most chose the Lowry Museum.

We arrived in Hampton at 8 pm, tired but all agreeing we had had a fantastic short break; in fact, probably the best one we have had!



'The Gondola'



Flower Garden at Sizergh Castle



'Gondola' leaving Ruskin's jetty



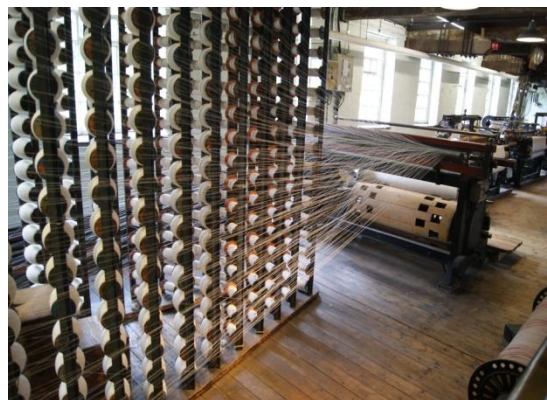
'Lunch at John Ruskin's House'



On the Kirkstone Pass



The Apprentices House, Quarry Bank Mill



Cotton Spinning at Quarry Bank Mill

FUTURE EVENTS:

Tuesday 25 June: Barbeque at Tamesis Club, Teddington. Organiser Chris Oprey

Tuesday 2 July: Pub Lunch and Walk – The Skimmington Castle, Skimmington. Organiser Keith McArthur

Tuesday 16 July: Club Luncheon – Speaker – Mr Pieter Morpurgo - Bushy Park and the Restorations of The Water Gardens & The Diana Fountain