



Pro-Biz



Web site - www.probus-teddington-hampton.org.uk

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WALK FROM THE VICTORIA, WOODHAM – 7th MARCH 2023



Back to the countryside, after the sophistication of ‘the Smoke’ in February. This time, there was no need for Freedom Passes, just robust walking boots. For the nine walkers plus Pippa, it was pretty much as advertised... narrow paths of “closed boarded right of way”, with some housing at the start, then much larger housing estates, and a view over fields to a ever larger planned housing project.

Then open fields and some street walking in Rowtown village, followed by a necessary deviation to avoid a particularly-muddy section caused by recent rains, (although the longer route still involved walking boots and careful steps). There was rather a lack of factoid opportunities, but some insights into the derivation of local names: crossing the River Bourne, (in Anglo Saxon, ‘an ultimate stream from a spring), Brox village, named from Dutch/German roots (not Brock the Badger), and Ottershaw was originally the ‘outer wood’: no connection to otters. Back to the Victoria, and the staff coped efficiently when faced with our arrival, joining the unexpectedly-large number of thirteen diners, and a welcome and satisfying meal.

LUNCH AT “THE VIEW”, RICHMOND-UPON-THAMES COLLEGE, 1st MARCH 2023

Thirteen members and their guests were greeted by Daniel and his students who had up to three years training as waiting staff prior to finding employment in the hospitality industry. Their first task was to take the drinks orders and deliver them appropriately. After all the diners were seated, those who had ordered pate were informed that the college had been unsuccessful in obtaining all of the ingredients. The chefs had prepared a ham hock terrine which was offered as a replacement or there was an adequate quantity of soup available.

Once the plates for the first course had been cleared, the three vegetarians were identified, and the main dishes of chicken were delivered to everyone else. The buzz of conversation suggested that all was to everyone’s satisfaction. The tables were cleared again, and the cheesecake and ice cream desserts received followed by tea or coffee. At the end of the meal the students stood in line and, on behalf of everyone, Brian Brignall thanked them followed by spontaneous applause. Daniel explained that the chefs were so efficient they had already cleared away and left the kitchen.

LUNCH TALK ON PEMBROKE DOCK by IAN MACRAE



Ian Macrae set out to his fellow members his interest in Pembroke Dock and its Trust, especially the role of RAF Coastal Command and its Sunderland flying boats in WW2. The Sunderlands had a vital role in the Berlin Airlift as their design allowing transport of vitally-important salt which other aircraft couldn't. The RAF flew ten Sunderland flights a day into Lake Havel west of Berlin and were greeted ecstatically by the German populace after the impact of starvation, the forcible removal of thousands of its workers and factories, and the destruction of some 70% of its buildings. When icing on the Lake halted operations in December, they had transported over 6,200 tons carried, a tiny but vital percentage of the 2.3 tons carried from 1947 to 1948. The Airlift played a key role in preventing a Russian takeover of the city, and ultimately the demise of the Russian empire. Thanks to Ian for speaking to us so well at short notice.

IN MEMORIAM – A TRIBUTE TO JAMES WOODFORD

Sadly, James Woodford died on 14th February. Our condolences go to his wife Mary, and their children Philip and Harriet and their respective families.

James had a remarkable flair for interviewing and then writing insightful profiles of our members for publication in Pro-Biz. His profiles continue to be available in our Archive webpages.

As a tribute to James, here is an edited version of the late Denzil Isaaks' excellent Pro-Biz profile of James, written in 2006.

“PRO-BIZ PROFILER – PROFILED – JIM WOODFORD

Jim, our press-liaison representative, has written umpteen profiles of club members. It seems only appropriate that we learn something about him now, and it was my good fortune to meet Jim and his charming wife, Mary, on a beautiful sunny morning for a cup of coffee at their comfortable home in Strawberry Hill.

The only child of a famous sculptor and a mother who combined homemaking with a keen business mind, Jim was born and spent most of his young life in Chalk Farm, apart from evacuation to Chinnor (Oxford) during WW2. His impeccable educational credentials - Hall School, Hampstead; Westminster School and Christ Church (Oxon) (German/French) - led him into advertising copywriting for twelve years. He later joined IPC Magazines, retiring twenty-three years later as the Creative Co-ordinator of the corporation.

He met Mary, then a nurse at Great Ormond St. in 1966 on a skiing weekend trip to the Cairngorms. Jim did not mind the absence of snow at all! Mary says he invited her to come and cook a meal for him at his flat in Kensington - and she's been doing that ever since!

Jim enjoys country music and, complete with Stetson, is shortly to appear on the cover of a CD for which he has composed both music and lyrics. The couple enjoy visiting Mary's extended family in Eire - where Jim has been known to go swimming in the Atlantic!

One of the club's clutch of JPs, having sat on the Richmond Bench since 2000, Jim had to take compulsory retirement this year on reaching three-score-and ten.”



FUTURE EVENTS

- Tuesday 4th April : Walk/Pub Lunch, The Belvedere Arms, Sunninghill SL5 7SB
Organisers Ian Macrae and Mike Fraser
- Tuesday 18th April: Club Luncheon /AGM- Fulwell Golf Club (no speaker).
- Tuesday 2nd May: Walk/Pub Lunch, The Barleymow, Farnham, GU10 1NE
Organisers Ian Macrae and Mike Fraser