



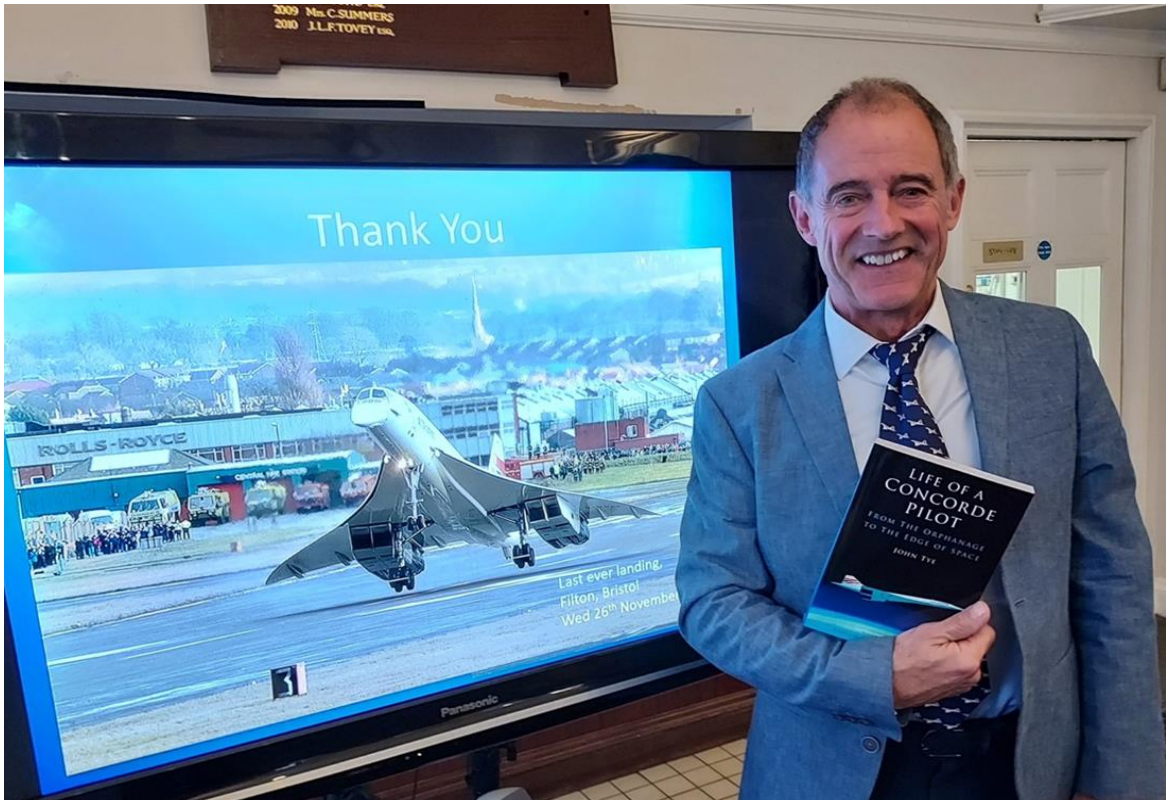
Pro-Biz



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

Issue No 275 News from Teddington and Hampton Probus December 2023

LUNCH TALK: 'FLYING CONCORDE', 21st NOVEMBER 2023



"3-2-1-NOW!" was the command to fire the reheat on Concorde's Olympus engines, sending out 12-foot long sheets of flame, and thrusting the aircraft onwards and upwards to speeds of Mach 2. For our latest talk, ex-Concorde pilot John Tye gave us a whole new perspective on an image so familiar to club members: this beautiful iconic aircraft was shown, in still and moving pictures, in formation over Buckingham Palace with its supersonic fellow aircraft, over the Bristol Channel and the Suspension Bridge, amongst others.

John lifted the veil on the development of the Anglo-French project, so innovative and technically-advanced. He also explained the meaning of a number of features unique to Concorde, arcane terms like 'no flap landings', 'weight on wheels'; the specific importance of balancing a fuel load of 93 tons, and 'trimming the nose': all was revealed. Equally fascinating was John's own personal history, as an orphan nurtured by his adoptive parents, educated at Hampton GS and so enthused by aviation that he started as the lowest level of summer job clerical worker with British Airways. He decided not to take up his university place, and via a series of mundane jobs in effect served an apprenticeship which after a nine-year training trajectory led to pilot status. He finally achieved membership of the exclusive club of only 134 BA pilots (including one lady); what separated his experience was his dedication and determination to achieve his goals, notwithstanding his own physical disability. He introduced us to some of the famous passengers he had flown and met face-to-face. He was frank when questioned about the reason behind Concorde's demise: economic pressures in a downturn, environmental factors, and the backlash on passenger loads after the tragic crash of the Air France Concorde (as flown that awful day with what has recently been revealed to be startling instances of negligence by the French crew). Taken together, they led to the end of an era which we all lived through. John received a round of well-deserved applause.

YULETIDE MARKETS RIVER CRUISE, 5th to 9th DECEMBER 2023



After travelling to Cologne by Eurostar and coach from Brussels sixteen of us arrived in Cologne at the river cruise boat 'Oscar Wilde' moored on the Rhine in time for a welcome dinner. Overnight the boat set sail to Rudesheim. However, the river was blocked due an incident involving a barge. Fortunately, we were able to dock nearby and coaches were successfully arranged at short notice so we could visit Rudesheim, the Christmas markets and musical museum as planned.

The following day we cruised in the morning back to Koblenz. This was followed on the next day to Bonn in the morning and Cologne in the afternoon. At each port of call guided walking tours were available plus free time to visit the Christmas markets and the cathedral in Cologne. We had some exceptional meals on board with a five-course dinner on the captain's dinner night. The boat was very well appointed with excellent Christmas decorations. The short break was considered a great success by all.



FUTURE EVENTS -- JANUARY- JUNE 2024, ALL WALKS TO BE CONFIRMED

JANUARY

- Tue 2 Pub Lunch/Walk – venue TBA
- Tue 16 Club Guest Luncheon

FEBRUARY

- Tue 6 Pub Lunch /Walk – venue TBA
- Tue 20 Club Luncheon. Speaker: Robin Field-Smith –
"The Capital Ring"
- Tue 27 Lunch at The View

MARCH

- Tue 5 Pub Lunch /Walk – venue TBA
- Tue 19 Club Luncheon. Speaker: David Hassard:
"The Great Aircraft Factory"
- Tue 26 Visit to The Poppy Factory, Richmond

APRIL

- Tue 2 Pub Lunch/Walk - venue TBA
- Tue 16 Club Luncheon - AGM
- Tue 23 Visit to Alan Greenwood's Fire Engine Collection

MAY

- Tue 7 Pub Lunch/Walk – venue TBA
- Tue 21 Club Luncheon. Speaker: John Nicholson –
"Molecules and Murder"
- TBA Visit to The Oval

JUNE

- Tue 4 Pub Lunch/Walk – venue TBA
- Tue 18 Club Luncheon. Speaker: Helen Naylor –
"The Coffee House Revolution"
- Tue 25 Club BBQ at Tamesis Club site