



Pro-Biz



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WALK/PUB LUNCH, THE OLD PLOUGH, STOKE D'ABERNON, 4th MARCH 2025



The sixteen walkers and dog set off on a beautiful, sunny, early Spring morning which warmed up after overnight frost. After a stretch along the main road to start (passing the Chelsea FC training ground), the first stage of the walk was along paths (sometimes muddy) bordering fields, rising on a slight incline giving good views of the Surrey Hills.

After crossing the tracks of a railway line (a train came down just as we reached this point), we reached Brickpit Lake. This was an idyllic spot in the sunshine, with assorted species of waterfowl visible. The lake is a flooded pit from which clay was previously excavated to make bricks. We ambled along the bank, and came across a small group of lady walkers, one of whom said her husband was a member of the Ashted & Leatherhead Probus club.

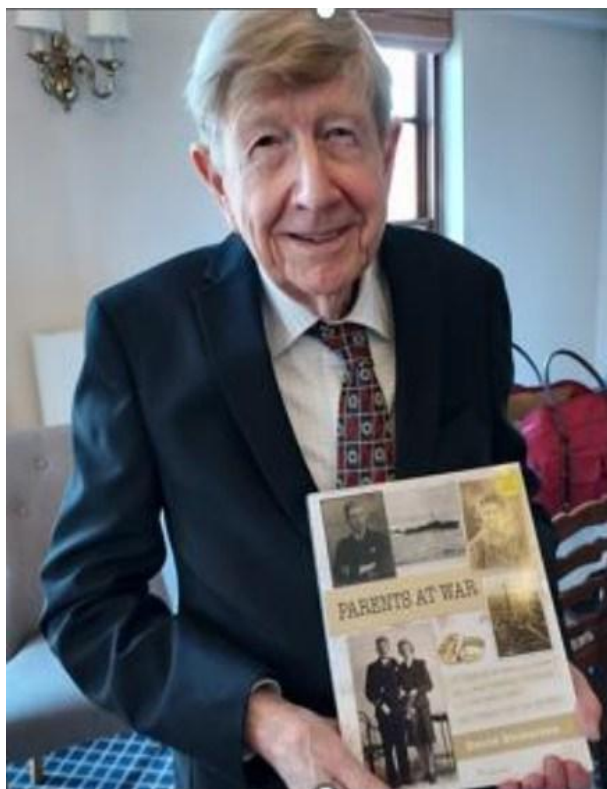
From here, we continued along paths which took us to the main road close to the Old Plough, where twenty of us enjoyed a very good meal at a long table in our own barn.

LUNCH AT THE VIEW RICHMOND-UPON THAMES COLLEGE, THURSDAY 27th FEBRUARY



Members and guests, thirty in total, visited the View, the training restaurant at the Richmond-upon-Thames College to enjoy a delicious three course meal for £20 each, prepared and served by the students. The View lived up to its name as we appreciated a spectacular view in fine weather over the Capital. Well done and thanks to Hywel Thomas for organising this event.

LUNCH TALK ON “PARENTS AT WAR”, by DAVID BICKERTON



When David Bickerton was clearing his parent's effects after they had died, he came across a treasure trove of letters written when the engaged young couple were corresponding throughout the second world war. His parents were Don and Linda. They met in 1942 when Don was based in Milford Haven and Linda was based in Haverford West, and it can fairly be described as love at first sight.

Don spent his war in the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve where he was aboard HMS Dorsetshire during the sinking of the Bismarck.

He then underwent officer training and was assigned to Coastal Forces as an officer on several HMS ML (Motor Launch) vessels the last of which, HMS ML 338, he commanded at the age of 25 with the rank of Lieutenant. The MLs were ostensibly mine sweepers but would carry out other functions as necessary.

Under his command, HMS ML 338 was involved in the North African Campaign for which it was based in Algiers. It then moved to Malta and subsequently Ischia. It was active in the invasions of Sicily, Elba, The Bay of

Naples and France. David's mother Linda was no less active, joining the WAAF, becoming a radar operator at five different RAF stations and attaining the rank of Corporal. Don finally arrived back in England on 4th July 1945, and they were married on 14th July.

David's father received various medals for his service career but as was the way at the time members of the WAAF were not awarded any. In recent times this has been rectified, and David has acquired two medals that were awarded to his mother, but sadly not until after she had passed away.

FUTURE EVENTS

TUESDAY 2nd APRIL: Walk & Pub Lunch – venue TBC

TUESDAY 16th APRIL: Annual General Meeting and lunch, no speaker
