Pro-Biz

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WALK AND PUB LUNCH, THE DUKE OF CLARENCE, HAMPTON HILL, TUESDAY 3rd JUNE



Given the familiarity with the Park for many of us, and with several previous walks there, the task was to find a new feature; we decided to follow the Longford River through the Park. Starting from the pub, our eleven wet walkers left the Hampton Hill gate, to Upper Lodge,. This was once home to Lord Halifax, c18th Keeper (custodian), and an innovator and investor in the river and the features of the Water Gardens. What was then the New River was originally diverted on the orders of King Charles I from the River Crane at Longford Mill to supply Hampton Court.

After a stretch inaccessible to us, the river runs into the informal section of the Woodland Gardens, a little more taxing for walkers, through the Gardens to join one of the most charming stretches, with weeping willows and reeds. In earlier centuries competing claims on the water from farmers and local publicans, coupled with droughts and flooding, took their toll: in 1850, the river dried completely, necessitating a new pipe to supply the Palace. During the Civil War it was dammed, and the clue to its earlier conditions was the local name for one of the ponds: 'The Great Sewer'. Now, all is well, skirting the Diana Fountain and leaving the Longford, we wended our way back to the pub, itself with its own associations with a larger-than-life character, for a fine meal and good company as we were joined by our diners.

VISIT TO THE OVAL, TUESDAY 13th MAY



Our skipper for the day Phil Preedy led our 'access all areas' tour of the historic Oval, the home of Surrey CCC. The ground dates from 1845 and was the site of the first Test Match against Australia in 1880, and the venue for a few early FA Cup Finals. Our tour guide's explanations were helpfully augmented by Keith Burnett, a Surrey Member. We went through the Members' Entrance, and inspected the Test Match Honours boards, and a board detailing the holders of hard-earned Surrey CCC caps. Then into the Members' rooms, with an assortment of fine cricketing artwork, a museum, and the perfect viewing spot, a brisk look at the changing rooms and then we were squeezed into

the commentators' box (not that most essential item of cricket apparel, but the room used by broadcasters). Finally, we had a swift trot around the ground to field at third man above the corporate area.
We followed our tour with an excellent alfresco tapas lunch at Pico's restaurant near Vauxhall Station, twenty-one platters much enjoyed and highly recommended.
Thanks to Phil for his hard work towards this visit.



LUNCH TALK ON "WHY DIETS FAIL" by ALAN JONES, TUESDAY 20th MAY

Any apprehensions over this title by those expecting a heavy-handed lecture, were soon dispelled by Alan's light but sure touch. He led us through the bizarre world of extreme diets, to more serious issues. Examples of daft remedies included washing with 'Fat Off Soap', Mr. Fletcher's solution to chew food thirty times, then, weirdly, to spit it out. Others included "eat only cotton wool", to the extreme and potentially life-threatening idea that we should ingest tape worm capsules, and thus lose weight. Alan then moved on to more serious matters by examining the role of marketing, and the subtle strategies of the corporations in affecting our buying decisions, through the use of clever packaging, colouring and labelling, (especially amongst the vulnerable, image-conscious young generation). Even the noises products make can be pivotal; one major crisp manufacturer has patented the crackling sounds of their packaging!.



All this leads inevitably to the usual depressing statistics on fats, sugars and salts: our daily calorie intake is likely to exceeds recommended levels. Over-reliance on processed foods and excessive sugar consumption can lead to diabetes, and the scary 'fatbergs' in our sewage systems, all resulting in annual costs to the NHS currently around £7 billion p.a., and forecast to rise to £10 billion p.a.
Alan closed with a more uplifting magic show, surprising our member-volunteer Kel Razza using a laden shopping bag, to a fascinating scenario, the effects of auto-suggestion on a person which surprised not just the victim, but also those in the audience.
Thank you, Alan: Food for Thought indeed!

FUTURE EVENTS

TUESDAY 24th JUNE: Club Summer Party, Tamesis Club, Trowlock Way, Teddington TW11 9QY

TUESDAY 1st JULY: Walk and Pub Lunch, The Red Lion, Shepperton TW17 9HX

TUESDAY 22nd JULY: Club Lunch, Speaker : Anita Mosey "The Falkland Islands"