



Pro-Biz



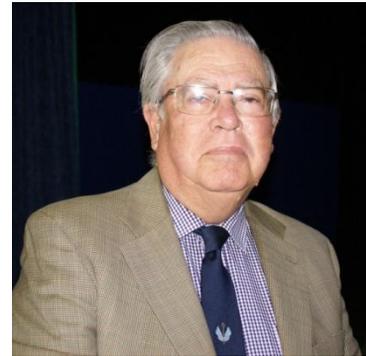
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DOING THE MAGISTRACY FULL JUSTICE

Being a Magistrate was the theme explored by **Mike Chambers**, introduced as our guest speaker by Chairman Keith McArthur at the Club's September Luncheon Meeting. Mike enjoyed a 38-year career in the Royal Air Force, being appointed Wing Commander in 2003 and gaining extensive experience of matters legal in his post as **Permanent President of Courts-Martial**, and subsequently by ten years' service as a magistrate. He treated members to an enlightening and entertaining account of the attributes required of a modern-day JP. He explained that the magistracy dates back as far as Richard I, with the key requisites being impartiality, sound judgement and plain common sense. All criminal cases begin in the magistrates' courts which in fact deal with 95% of all cases. Our three Probian retired magistrates (Messrs. Donaldson, Thomas and Woodford*) could not but agree that the principle of 'local justice' had become sadly eroded and that magistrate numbers were declining alarmingly, in part due to the increasing involvement of paid District Judges (controversial). Mike continued by telling us that anyone aged 18 – 65 could apply to become a magistrate and would be required to undergo a rigorous 2-stage interview process. The mandatory retirement age remains at 70 (contentious). Benches are for the most part composed of three justices (a Chair and two 'wingers'), with legal advisers to ensure that the laws are applied correctly. Crimes are categorised as 'summary', 'either way' or 'indictable' (this last having to be referred to the Crown Court). The most recurrent crimes are motoring offences (think Wayne Rooney), shoplifting (often to fund a drug habit) and domestic violence. Sentences, subject to strict guidelines, can comprise fines, unpaid work in the community or time in custody. Magistrates can also agree or refuse bail. Time constraints precluded Mike from mention of the important work carried out by the specialist Family and Youth Courts. Questions covered suspended sentences, police cautions and much else, after which Malcolm O'Connor proposed a polished vote of thanks. The applause could well have denoted that members considered justice had been well served.... or maybe they thought it might be as well to stay on the right side of the magistracy. (**Please be sure to address them as 'Your Worship'.*)



(Jim Woodford)

WALK AROUND HORSELL COMMON, WOKING

A fine day greeted the walkers, in contrast to the journey which was marred by the fact that the A3 had been shut, with all the traffic being diverted on to local roads. It was pretty well gridlocked all the way round, so the 10 walkers and Finn didn't set off until 10.30 am. The car park at Horsell Common was packed out with dog walkers, including professionals who seem to have up to 10 dogs in tow. As has been mentioned before, our Finn is not too keen on other dogs so until we cleared the area he was quite wary. First of all it was through the woods to the famous sandpit, which was the scene of the Martian invasion in H G Wells' War of the Worlds. Luckily there is no archaeological evidence there now. We were then on the route through the common to the back of Fairoaks Aerodrome, where Denzil could display his extensive knowledge of light aircraft. This airfield was used by the RAF in WW2 to train over 6,000 pilots, using the redoubtable Tiger Moth. A welcome toilet break was taken at the airport café, and enquiries made as to whether we could jump on a bus to the lunch venue as time was getting short. Unfortunately, no buses run past the aerodrome so it was upwards and onwards towards the Maclaren factory with its adjacent park. We witnessed one or two aircraft taking off, glad to report they were all successful. Once out of the Maclaren park and back on to Horsell Common, we came across a strangely carved totem pole by the side of one of the tracks which quite handy for Finn who can always make use of a tree or a post. We were soon back at the cars, and then it was a race back to the Miller & Carter steakhouse at Ottershaw merely half an hour later than intended, where we met 8 other diners who by then were well on their way to finishing their meal. As they have a No Dogs policy, Finn had to be left in the car, but Denzil being the kind chap that he is popped out to feed him one limp looking chip which had been donated from Bill Rawcliffe's plate. Needless to say, Finn didn't look too impressed.



(Keith McArthur)

PROBUS GOES DUTCH

Wind and rain followed the 44-strong Probus contingent across the Channel en route for Amsterdam at the start of our 5-day break in the Netherlands. From Calais, our coach travelled through a rather flat and featureless countryside – no windmills, but a plethora of wind turbines. On arrival, we boarded the MS Monet, a Croisi/Europe ship and were introduced to the crew members at the Captain's Cocktail Party. We were thoroughly well wined and dined, accommodated and entertained by Croisi throughout our stay. Next morning we set out to take in some of the architectural and cultural features of Amsterdam, all the time dodging to avoid the peloton of potentially lethal cyclists (no tulips for them!). Then it was on to the fishing village of Volendam, with a stop-off at the Simonehoeve complex where we were initiated into the intricacies of cheese and clog making. In the evening there was a quiz, won by the Brits (of course) followed by some strictly un-Strictly dance floor activity. Next morning we sailed to Utrecht from where we made an excursion to Delft, one of the best preserved of the historic Dutch cities. We marvelled at the beautiful New and Old Churches and admired the exquisite porcelain for which Delft is famed. Back on board we were treated to a lively accordion concert by the Monet's musician-in-residence, followed by a fast-moving revue staged and performed by the crew members, with a little bit of help from the passengers. On day 4 we continued our cruise to a rain-lashed Antwerp where we made a tour of the city in the aptly named Hop and Stop bus, noting particularly the enormous port and the spectacular Street of Diamonds. A superlative Gala Dinner made a fitting finale to a memorable trip. On our homeward journey we stopped at Ieper (Ypres) where we were able to pay tribute to the multitude of memorials honouring the thousands upon thousands who so gallantly made the ultimate sacrifice in the Great War. During the journey, warm thanks were paid and presentations made to our unflagging and unflappable group leaders, Chris and Pauline, and to our peerless coach driver, the evergreen John. Thanks also to Mitchellwood Travel for another holiday package which was right on the Monet.

(Jim Woodford)



Aboard the tour train in Antwerp



In Ypres before setting off for home



Delft



Our home for five days



Conventional windmill

Photos:
Brian Dinnage: Denzil Isaaks
and Ray Lynch



Clog Making



Amsterdam



Amsterdam

FUTURE EVENTS:

Thu 19 Oct: Coach trip to Brighton. Organiser - Hywel Thomas

Wed 1 Nov: Concert at Cadogan Hall. Organiser - Chris Oprey

Tue 7 Nov: Pub Lunch/Walk – The Fox & Grapes, Wimbledon Common. Organiser - Keith McArthur

Tue 21 Nov: Club Luncheon. Speaker - Capt Lorimer Burn, Flying from a Pilot's point of view.

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