



Pro-Biz



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News from Teddington and Hampton Probus

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LES PLAYS BLINDER UPFRONT FOR BEAVERS

On loan to Probus – our July guest speaker was **Les Rance, Club Historian of Hampton & Richmond Borough FC (aka the Beavers)**. Brought into play by Chairman Chris Pollard at our July Meeting, Les gave an encyclopaedic and entertaining history of the football club's origins and development, giving an intriguing glimpse of life in the lower leagues. Les explained that volunteers are the mainspring of nearly all non-league clubs. He and his whole family have given dedicated service to Hampton since 1990, along with a host of stewards, turnstile operators, programme sellers, caterers and Club Shop staff. The Supporters' Trust promotes and fundraises for the Club which has an impressive community outreach, fielding over 20 teams (including ladies) aged from 6 to 18. Hampton FC was founded in 1921 (the Richmond Borough was added in 1999) playing at Hatherop Recreation Ground, basically 'park football' in local leagues, before moving to the Beveree, off Station Road, Hampton in 1959. Les's research reveals that Beveree may be a corruption of Bever, hence the soubriquet of the Beavers, with the stadium also lying adjacent to Beaver Close. Les went on to chart Hampton's progression through the Spartan, Athenian and Isthmian leagues to their current berth in the National League South, just two jumps away from the dizzy heights of League Two! Last season the team narrowly missed promotion in a nail-biting penalty shootout with Braintree Town, roared on by over 3000 spectators. With a new Manager, Gary McCann from Hendon and a largely new-look squad, this season's target is the play-offs, though given crowds averaging around 600, a tight budget and fierce competition, this constitutes a big 'ask'. Hampton have never been short of big personalities: much-missed Probian Alan Duddy could claim a 70-year association with the Club; popular pianist Winifred Attwell was once a Patron; actor Larry Dann and playwright Steve Morley are longtime aficionados, never forgetting the legendary Alan Simpson, Club President and benefactor for 50 years. The most notable Manager was Alan Devonshire of West Ham and England fame. Upwardly mobile players include Dwight Marshall (Plymouth and Luton), Leroy Griffiths (QPR) and most recently, Jamal Lowe, now starring with League One Portsmouth.



In moving a vote of thanks, Jim Woodford exhorted members and their families to join the Beveree faithful and enjoy a very special match-day experience. The verdict on Les's presentation: *"The lad's put in a very good shift"*.

SAD TO SAY Les's mentor Bob Hayes, a former Hampton Patron and Chairman, died suddenly, shortly after Les's visit to Probus.

(Jim Woodford)

NEW MEMBERS

Since the publication of the Membership in May we are pleased to welcome two members to the Club.

They are:

Christian Franceschi, semi-retired from Sales and Marketing who lives in Whitton, and Andy Stephen, a retired Lecturer in Engineering who lives in Strawberry Hill.

Welcome to the Club. We hope you both enjoy your membership of Teddington and Hampton Probus.

WALK FROM HAPPY MAN, ENGLEFIELD GREEN, 7th AUGUST

With the forecast announcing that our walk day would be the last of the really hot weather, 8 over-heated walkers plus Pepper the dog set off for Savill Gardens, where the walk started with the usual very, very, interesting factoids. It turns out that Savill Gardens was named after its designer Sir Eric Savill, who was the grandson of the 19th century estate agent of the same name. We set off down to the Cumberland Obelisk, and then around the small lake where Pepper took advantage of the clearings that had been made for the fishermen by leaping in and out of the water, and then spraying the rest of us with his doggy shake. The weather man had got it right again, as the temperature was around 88 deg F, so the shade around the lake was very



welcome. We were soon out into the open by the side of Smith's Lawn, where the Royal Polo matches, which you may have seen on the television, take place. It was then along the footpath by the side of Savill Gardens, hopping from shade to shade that the tall trees afforded us, until we reached the Cumberland Gate, where a bit of a surprise awaited in the shape of a portly chap on his bicycle wearing a thong and nothing much else. It would have been a bit of a shock if this had occurred just about anywhere else, but in Windsor Great Park it shows how standards have slipped. After much mopping of foreheads to recover from the shock, we set off for Cow Pond, but had to navigate through a cross country course for horses and riders which was being timed by groups of volunteers, comfortably seated in the shade in their camping chairs at each jump. The intended route at this point had gone a bit haywire, most probably due to the heat, so we decided to give Cow Pond a miss and made our way on the other side of Savill Gardens back to the car park. It was then a short drive returning to the pub to meet another 17 diners. The pub does very nice meals, at extremely reasonable prices, as its main business comes from Holloway College, but as the students were on their summer break there was plenty of room for us in the garden under the sunshades. *(Keith McArthur)*

JOKE TIME

Identity Crisis

A celebrity went to visit an old people's home but was a bit nonplussed when none of the residents recognised her. In fact, this unusual lack of recognition finally made her say to one of the brighter-looking ladies, 'I hope you do not mind my asking, but do you know who I am?' 'No dear,' replied the old lady, 'I'm afraid I don't. Ask one of the carers, they'll be able to tell you.'

Dog's Dinner

A young man went to see his great-aunt. She lived alone, having never married, but was very fond of dogs. The aunt had prepared a very nice meal for her great-nephew but, as he ate it, one of her dogs stayed by his chair, wagging its tail.

'Why is he watching me like that while I eat, Aunt?' the nephew asked after a while.

'Oh, it's not you, dear,' replied his aunt. 'It's just that you're eating off his plate.'

FUTURE EVENTS:

Tuesday 4 September: Pub Lunch and Walk – The Queen's Head, East Clandon. Organiser – Keith McArthur

Tuesday 18 September: Club Luncheon – Mr Alan Haswell – 'from birth to present'

Wednesday 19 September: Theatre Visit – 'Chicago' Phoenix Theatre