



Pro-Biz



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

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A SALTY TALE OR PARADISE FOUND

New member, Andy Stephen, is clearly a brave man or a foolhardy one. He volunteered, or was his arm twisted by Peter Turner, to stand in at the last minute for our unwell lunch speaker. His chosen theme was VSO, Voluntary Service Overseas. Members did not know what to expect. They were in for a pleasant surprise. Andy was an engineering apprentice when he was selected to spend a sponsored year in the Turks and Caicos Islands as a volunteer technical teacher. As today's young people would say, how cool is that! For Andy it was a leap in the dark and where was it? A postage stamp of the island's flag seemed to incorporate an igloo. A flight took him to Nassau in the Bahamas and an onward trip landed him on an island one mile wide and seven miles long which was dominated by an American military base. The Americans were keeping an eye on Cuba. Andy was in the middle of the Cold War on a tropical island. At this point Andy began to show a series of sepia slides on an original slide projector. Not another session of holiday snaps! Andy had hit upon the ideal method of communication. Each slide was a story in itself and was brought to life as Andy remembered and relived his trip of a lifetime. Members were carried along with him. Initially the terrain was shown to be cactus ridden and populated by many donkeys.



He was surprised as we were, when he discovered that his home was to be a very basic caravan with the minimum of facilities - but how many apprentices in England had their own self contained accommodation? Andy was attached to the boys' technical school where he had expected to use his metalwork skills. He was now a woodwork teacher. His pupils were enthusiastic and respectful and he enjoyed their good natured approach to life and the support and friendship of their parents. The economy of the island was changing. Fishing was paramount and he learned boat-building with the help of his pupils. Sisal production was part of that sea economy. The salt industry which had been the basis of industry since the early days of imported slave labour was now in decline. Nevertheless, he discovered a well ordered and proud society which made a distinct impression upon him, Turks and Caicos is now prosperous from tourism. It may be that Andy was lucky to see it before that happened. Paradise Found?

Andy received a well deserved vote of thanks from Chris Pollard. Members now know the real meaning of VSO. It is an education money can't buy.

(Chris Oprey)

JANUARY LUNCH

A reminder to all members that the Lunch in January is open for members to bring their wives, partners or guest of their choice.

As this is our normal monthly Lunch Meeting, members are reminded to complete the application form which can be collected from the Secretary's table just inside the front door at today's lunch. Details of the menu and booking arrangements are on the form and we need to have the forms completed and returned to Chris Oprey by no later than Friday 4th January in order to assist with the catering arrangements. If you are not attending the lunch, the usual notification to the Secretary on the Friday beforehand will suffice.

WALK FROM THE ANCHOR, PYRFORD LOCK, 6th NOVEMBER

Yet another hole down the Hampton Court Road caused problems for our intrepid walkers, but as this now seems to be a local tradition people, as usual, managed, to fight their way round it and all made their way to The Anchor car park before 10.00am. The nine walkers set off dead on time, but with no dogs to lead the way this time. A few factoids regarding the Wey Navigation were read out to the group, and then we set off across Pyrford Golf Course on the first leg of the walk. It seemed an early start for the players as the grass was still very wet and the fairways had been churned up a little by some over enthusiastic mowing. This part of Surrey seems to be given over to either Golf Courses or paddocks, with some very expensive housing mixed in. The footpaths (with no stiles at all) soon brought us back to the Wey Navigation where we crossed into the very swish course of Wisley Golf Club, here Alice Fordham was able to tell us that this was, in fact, a very upmarket golf course frequented by many famous sports men and women. We soon passed Ockley Mill, which has some of the most fancy brickwork you will see anywhere, and then we were on a footpath through the centre of Wisley Gardens which is very well fenced off, although there is a little gap in the middle where you can bunk into the gardens for free if you don't mind chancing it. Once we cleared the Gardens we then picked up the ricket from both the A3 and the M25, but taking a long curve back towards the golf course we soon left the rumble of lorries behind and were once again dodging golf balls. Since we started the walk on time it turned out that we finished on time, which is quite unusual for our wandering group which tends to take the odd detour from time to time. It was then into The Anchor, where we met another 15 diners, and a very pleasant meal followed. Although The Anchor is a very busy pub, it can be thoroughly recommended as the young staff are very welcoming and their organisation is superb.

(Keith McArthur)

HOLIDAY TO THE LOIRE VALLEY

Details are out today for a five-day holiday to the Loire from the 8th to 12th September 2019.

Travel to France will be by coach via Eurotunnel. Our four night stay will be at the 4* Hotel Anne d'Anjou in Samur. Visits include the Chateau at Chenouneau, Azay-le-Rideau, and Rochemeiner Troglodyte Village, the gardens of Villandry and Gratien & Meyer the celebrated sparkling wine producer.

The cost of the holiday is £525 per person, and bookings should ideally be made by the end of November in order to maintain this price.

Please collect your flyer and booking details at the sign-in desk. For further details, please contact Chris Oprey.

FUTURE EVENTS:

Tuesday 27 November: Pub Lunch at The Royal Oak, Isleworth followed by a Tour of R.F.U. Twickenham
Organiser – Hywel Thomas

Tuesday 4 December: Pub Lunch and Walk –The Tide End, Teddington– Organiser - Keith McArthur

Friday 7 December: Christmas Concert at Cadogan Hall- Organiser – Chris Oprey

Tuesday 18 December: Club Christmas Luncheon – No Speaker