



# Pro-Biz



Web site - [www.probus-teddington-hampton.org.uk](http://www.probus-teddington-hampton.org.uk)

Issue No 263    News from Teddington and Hampton Probus    December 2022

## CHRIS OPREY -HONORARY MEMBER



Chris Oprey was confirmed as a Honorary Member of the Club at our November luncheon. Not only is he a Past Chairman, the record of his activities in support of the Club was overwhelmingly lengthy. He was congratulated by our Chairman Eric Eustance and received hearty applause from our members.

## LUNCH TALK: “INTRODUCTION TO FORENSIC PHILATELY & IDENTIFYING YOUR HIDDEN TREASURES” by PAUL LEONARD, BSc.(Hons), C.Sc, FRPS

What treasures may be stashed away in your attic? Many of us, particularly from a pre - I.T. generation, were brought up with the hobby of stamp collecting, or may even have inherited a collection of stamps when younger. But are we sitting on albums of hidden treasure, or a book of worthless small pieces of paper? Paul Leonard is someone with some valuable hints - but he readily admits that he doesn't know all the answers, and even he is still learning. As a distinguished Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society (“RSP”)’s Expert Committee, and a retired Chartered Scientist in atomic research, he is called upon for his forensic skills in verifying the authenticity of some of the most valuable stamps from around the world.

Like so many aspects of life today there are, as ever, some expert crooks and forgers around, who will be happy to take your money and sell their crafty handiwork to the unsuspecting for astronomical sums.

One stamp Paul has handled for his expert scrutiny was of ancient origin from China, pre-Mao Tse-Tung. After rigorous examination by a panel of experts, it was found to be genuine, and valued accordingly at £73,000! But even skilled forgers can make mistakes, and minor variations in letters, numbers and watermarks can show that a stamp has been tampered with - so his advice is, buyer beware and if in doubt, seek professional advice, preferably from the RPS!

He has been to Florida and Stockholm in the course of his investigations. Most philatelists who collect Great Britain stamps have one or perhaps several examples of the 1880 ‘Penny Red’ stamp. One such was sold at auction for £495,000. It was submitted to the RPS for authentication, which established that it was not one from the rare printing Plate 77 as it purported to be - of which only 12 stamps are known - but was actually printed on Plate 73, worth substantially less - doubtless to the dismay of the buyer! Did you know that sixty million of the famous Penny Black stamps were produced? There are many in collectors’ albums but of course widely varying in value and price. Stamps today have many more security features, such as the £10 GB stamp, but the advice is still - *buyer beware!*



## WALK AROUND BUSHY PARK, 6th DECEMBER 2022



A bright crispy winter's day greeted our 13 Probus walkers as they met at the entrance to Duke's Passage, which leads directly into Bushy Park. A few factoids were read out, but since most of the walkers were locals these were kept to a minimum.

The salient points were that Cardinal Wolsey grabbed common land to build a house and estate, which after a visit from his then good friend King Henry VIII he very wisely offered it to Henry as a freebie, thereby keeping his head on his shoulders. The park stayed as a royal hunting ground until Queen Victoria allowed the public access in 1838. All sorts of other historical events regarding the park have occurred over the centuries, but that is what Google is for. Entering the alley we could see the water aerobics under way in Hampton Pool, with thumping music and plenty of splashing around. The photograph shows us crossing the Longford River, and then we were soon into the Woodland Gardens passing the Hornbeam Avenue, and then on to inspect the totem pole which celebrates the silver jubilee of our late Queen.

After weaving through the gardens, we then made our way to the Pheasantry for a coffee break and loo stop. From there it was over to the main Teddington gate, where the hunt was on to find the stone plaques which mark the corners of the US Army's World War 2 buildings, which were used to plan the D-Day invasion. After clearing away the leaves and other debris, you can read a little history of Camp Griffiths. A short walk back to the main gate brought us onto the road into Teddington, where we met three diners in The Teddington Arms which had, unfortunately, run out of draught beer, most likely due to our World Cup run. Lunch was consumed and washed down with those drinks that were available, and most of us returned to Hampton by bus.

---

### FUTURE EVENTS

Tuesday 3 January: Walk/Pub Lunch, The Anglers, 3 Broom Road, Teddington TW11 9NR  
Organiser: Keith McArthur

Tuesday 17 January: Club Guest Luncheon

Thursday 26 January: Tour of RFU Twickenham Stadium,  
Organiser: Hywel Thomas