

Exhibition marks 30th birthday of a lively lunch club

Weekly lunch clubs across Oxfordshire are often seen as a lifeline for the elderly, preventing loneliness and allowing older people to meet up with friends, enjoy a home-cooked meal and take part in a variety of fun activities. And the Bampton Bush Club is no different, with members calling it the "highlight of the week". This year the community lunch club is celebrating three decades since its launch. To mark the occasion, one local author has created a detailed photo exhibition in the village library, showcasing Bampton Bush from 1986-2016. MEGAN ARCHER reports

A THRIVING lunch club in Bampton, which is often the highlight of the week for many elderly residents, is celebrating its 30th birthday.

To celebrate its milestone anniversary, local author Anna Pitt has put on an exhibition at the library in Church View, detailing the Bampton Bush lunch club throughout its three decades.

The lunch club meets every Wednesday and welcomes everyone aged 50 and above. For the modest price of £3, residents enjoy a home-cooked lunch, a chat with friends and enjoy a new activity each week.

Matthew Perry, a former GP in Bampton, was the man behind the idea 30 years ago and still volunteers today by cooking lunch for more than 30 members.

Dr Perry, 67, said: "I was a GP and had a lot of elderly people in to see me, and I thought we needed something like this. I was working at the time so I didn't properly get involved until I retired."

"It's amazing what people have done here. It's really evolved over the years."

Anna Pitt, 49, who put together the entire exhibition and book in mere months, said she was so proud to be involved.

Mrs Pitt, who lives with husband Richard and dad Barrie in the village, said: "I'd never put together an exhibition before but had great fun doing it."

"The Bush club is an absolutely amazing organisation. There is such an array of people who have put this together and sustained it for more than 30 years, through thick and thin."

The exhibition is free to view and features photos from the



From left, Sally Proctor, Jo Lewington, Jenny Chaundy and Anna Pitt at the Vesey Room, Bampton Library building
Pictures: Denis Kennedy

lunch club from 1986 to 2016, as well as newspaper articles, comments from members and other information.

Ron Smith, 94, has only been a lunch club member for four years, but was a volunteer for decades before. He spent each Wednesday washing up after the meal.

Mr Smith said: "If I thought nothing of it here I would not keep coming back. It's the highlight of

my week. I'm going to make it to 100."

Fellow club member Ruth Wheeler, 84, also started off as a helper.

She said: "I started off helping out just over 29 years ago. Then I thought it's time to give up and sit down."

"I love everything about the club. It's just a lovely social gathering. I know everyone in the exhibition

photos, it brings back a lot of old memories."

The exhibition at the Vesey Room, Bampton Library, runs until February 28 and is open from 10.30am to 12.30pm and then 2pm to 4pm from Monday to Saturday. It is open 2pm to 4pm on Sunday.

Admission is free and there is wheelchair access. A book with photos and information on the exhibition is available for £12.



Ruth Wheeler at the lunch club



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Ruth Wheeler and Winnie at the summer outing to Horace Holfield's - 1999



Coffee morning and sale in June 1995. By this time these had become successful annual events organised by Kitty Jackson and her daughter, Daphne Pullen.



Dr Matthew Perry in front of the lunch club



Ron Smith at the lunch club



Joyce Anderson gets a cup of tea and cake from Sally Proctor



BUSH CLUB
30 YEAR
ANNIVERSARY



























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BUSH CLUB
30 YEAR
ANNIVERSARY













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Rear Hook Short - Head
Lead Hook Short - Head
Rear Uppercut - Head

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Rear Uppercut
Lead Hook Short
Rear Hook Short

























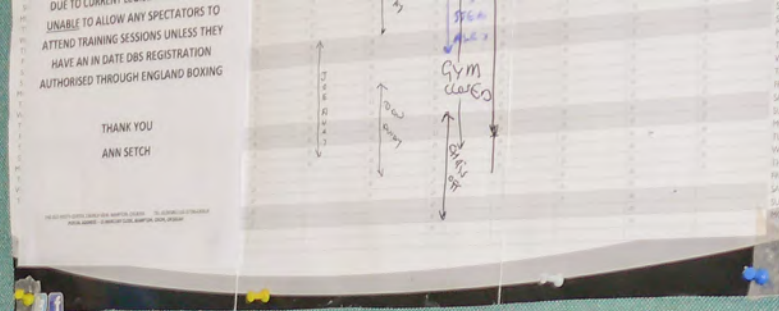






















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5. Stay calm



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Lead Hook Long - Head
Straight Rear - Head



