

The Aylesbury Club and the Duck Dinner

The Duck Dinner is held in Aylesbury each year by the Aylesbury Club, which was originally formed in 1810. Its objects then were “good cheer, good humour and good neighbourhood”, and its members met each month on the Friday nearest to the full moon during the period from November to April.

The club continued into the 1950's; the Bucks Herald recording in September 1954 that the author Sir Compton Mackenzie proposed the toast at the Bulls Head in Aylesbury. After this time the club seems to have faded away. However in 1973 Maurice Buckingham, the then Mayor of Aylesbury, reconstituted the club with the same laudable objects, and it is now as strong as ever.

The Club's only raison d'être apart from the above objects is to continue the tradition of the annual duck dinner, and the Club and its members hope that all its guests will enjoy tonight's dinner.

The Aylesbury Duck

Everybody has heard of the Aylesbury duck. Its fame has spread all over the world. Point to a large, white duck in the farmyard and some one will say authoritatively: 'That's an Aylesbury!' But the chances are that it is not. Most farmyard white ducks have their origins closer to Beijing than the English town in the Thame valley. If the bird has an orange bill, a smooth breast and stands more than slightly upright, it has Pekin blood in it and is nothing like a true Aylesbury.

The pink-billed Aylesbury was the mainstay of the English duck industry until well into the nineteenth century, when it became the victim of its own success and eventually was little more than a trade name, like *Thermos* and *Hoover*. *Aylesbury* became the synonym for any big, white duck. Then it was ousted in popularity by the influx of new foreign breeds, namely the Indian Runner, which had a phenomenal track record for egg-laying, and the large, cream-coloured Pekin, which could be crossed with the Aylesbury or the Rouen to produce more fertile and vigorous offspring. By the final quarter of the nineteenth century, the real Aylesbury had almost disappeared, whilst its name lived on like a ghost to haunt its virtual extinction.

Extract from *The Domestic Duck* by Mike Aston

The Aylesbury Club

Good Humour, good cheer and good neighbourhood



Founded 1810

Serving the Duck since 1810

DUCK DINNER

1918-2018 Commemoration

Saturday 2nd June 2018

At

The Aylesbury Canal Society,
Circus Fields,
Aylesbury.

President: Mr. Ray Ghent

Members of the Aylesbury Club

Welcome you to The Annual Duck Dinner

Menu

In homage to 1918

Oxford Potato Soup (v)

Or

Corned Beef & Piccalilli on a bed of leaves

Roll and Butter

Roast Duck

with The Aylesbury Club Plum and Brandy Sauce

Option Roast Beef

Roast and New Potatoes

with Fresh Seasonal Vegetables

Jam Roly-Poly and Custard

Selection of Cheese and Biscuits

Coffee and Mints



TOASTS

“The Queen”

by

Mr. R. Ghent

President of the Aylesbury Club

“The Aylesbury Duck”

by

Group Captain J. Brayshaw

Station Commander RAF Halton

“Response”

by

Mr. A. Knowles

World War 1 Historian