

KYRLE PROBUS 4 AUGUST 2016

The critical role played by the heroic Bletchley Park decoding centre towards the Allies' victory in the Second World War was highlighted by Nick Oldfield at the Kyrle Probus Club meeting on 4 August.

However, Bletchley Park's greatest achievement will probably never be known. Rescued from threatened demolition, and subsequently restored as a national museum due to the efforts of a small number of dedicated people, Bletchley Park was 'haunted by secrecy' for years during and after the War.

In fact, it was not until 1974 that the general public became aware of the vital part Bletchley Park played. Employees were sworn to say nothing about their work for many years after the War ended, said Nick, a Club member.

But it is known that Bletchley Park's work in breaking the Lorenzo Code with its brilliant Colossus technology helped to turn the tide in the Battle of the Atlantic. This came at a time when the number of Allied ships being sunk by German submarines presented possibly the greatest danger to this country's survival.

The mind-breaking work carried out by men such as the charismatic mathematician Alan Turing put Britain in the lead in the world of technology at the time. "When the United States joined the War they were behind us in some areas," said Nick. "Some of them were seconded to Bletchley Park and later they took information back home."

Another major code-breaking achievement came on D-day in 1944 when Bletchley Park's deception technique fooled the Germans into believing that the Normandy invasion was a feint. The main thrust was expected at Calais.

The Club meets on the first and third Thursday of the month at Ross Conservative Club when members hear talks, sometimes from fellow-members, sometimes from a guest speaker. To find out more about the Club visit www.kyrleprobus-ross.org.uk or contact Secretary Jeff Morris on 01989-563698.