



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

I hope you had an enjoyable festive period and are now geared up for the New Year ahead.

As previously communicated, we have been able to secure the future of our monthly meetings due to volunteers coming forward. We are very grateful that Barry and Jennifer Wilson have stepped up to book the speakers. Equally we thank Jackie Willis and Sue Mayne for their sterling contribution to this important role over many years.

I am pleased to inform you that John Pearson has volunteered to act as our Independent Examiner in the current year. We are extremely grateful to him for continuing to undertake this critical function. Had we been unable to fill this role with a volunteer, we would have had to employ an external professional - with a consequential impact on our financial resources.







We are beginning to plan our celebrations to mark 20 years since Marlow & District u3a was founded, and we will be communicating more about this shortly.

Our membership continues to thrive and enjoy the various activities available. As we enter the coldest time of the year it is more important than ever to look after ourselves and support each other. We are stronger together....

Roger Shipton

YOUR COMMITTEE

<p>Roger Shipton 478968 Chairman chairman@marlowu3a.co.uk</p>	
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<p>Pauline Pearson 483717 Secretary and Safeguarding Officer secretary@marlowu3a.co.uk</p>		<p>Helen Glover 484074 Joint Groups Convenor groups@marlowu3a.co.uk</p>	
<p>Chris Eyles 487295 Treasurer finance@marlowu3a.co.uk</p>		<p>Sue Irwin 487292 Joint Groups Coordinator groups@marlowu3a.co.uk</p>	
<p>Barbara Lawrence 486734 Membership Secretary membership@marlowu3a.co.uk</p>		<p>Niki Ralfs 473377 Newsletter newsletter@marlowu3a.co.uk</p>	

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to our new members:

Inka D'Agostino, Stephanie Davies, Jane Bungey, Cheryl Stamp, Bill Richards, Pat Bellamy, Jeffrey Smith, Su Jones, Lynn Kirk, Clare Booth, Steve Wilks, Sinon Galvin, Julia Bennett, Janet and Simon Lawson, Margaret Wingrove and Jonathan Johnston.

For any queries regarding membership please contact the membership secretary either by email: membership@marlowu3a.co.uk or phone **486734**

Barbara Lawrence



MONTHLY MEETINGS

Liston Hall 2.30 on the 4th Thursday of the month

A huge Thank You to Sue Mayne and Jackie Willis for organising our speakers for so long, and welcome to Barry and Jennifer Wilson for taking on the role of our Speaker Seekers!

Thursday **29th January 2026**

Angela Delgado-Corredor **Shackleton's Antarctic Survival**

This is the story of Ernest Shackleton's expedition to Antarctica in 1914, one of the greatest survival and leadership stories of maritime history.

Thursday **26th February**

John Tyler

Australia

Isolated from the rest of the world for millions of years, Australia is rich in wildlife, much of it unique (and some of it uniquely poisonous!), living in habitats ranging from tropical rainforest to desert. Here we follow the journey that plants and animals made many millions of years ago from the coral seas to the dry interior, introducing some of the characters and looking at how they survive in some of the harshest environments on Earth.

Any help with putting out chairs would be greatly appreciated. Please arrive early.



GROUP NEWS

groups@marlowu3a.co.uk

LET'S TALK carries on at the Donkey every Monday morning at 11am. There is usually a committee member there to answer questions. It is especially useful for new members to meet other members and to ask any questions they may have.

New Groups?

Contact Helen or Sue at groups@marlowu3a.co.uk

Guitar Players: Are there any members who are interested in forming a guitar group? It would be for Beginners to Intermediate players with the aim of developing skills through helping each other and enjoying playing and maybe even singing together. The only requirement would be an acoustic or Spanish style guitar and enthusiasm.

Visiting Gardens: Is anyone interested in visiting gardens?

Creative writing: Will Beth Rogers article on page 3 encourage any members?



MONTHLY MEETINGS IN LISTON HALL

December

IAN KEABLE – The Birth of the Hoax in the Eighteenth Century



The choir from Marlow C of E Infants School (Sandygate) were, admittedly, a hard act to follow but what did come next was Ian Keable's performance which had the audience mesmerised. The slick way in which December's guest speaker delivered his material, as an eloquent and distinguished member of the Magic Circle, was to leave everyone, in the style of Oliver Twist, wanting for more.

What a way to end the year, which has been uncertain in so many ways.

It was a fitting privilege to thank Jackie Willis and Sue Mayne for the great service that they have provided in engaging such an interesting line-up of speakers over the last few years and to wish them a healthy and relaxed retirement from duties. As I remarked that afternoon, Jackie could do worse than look to a new career as the next Debbie McGee, should she choose to take up that option of being Ian's glamorous assistant.

When Jackie's disappeared ring was returned to her, there was a whiff of relief, throughout the hall, as the audience at this mystery, just one of the amazing tricks that Ian performed. What seamlessly added to this, was a whole new angle to the act as Ian, being a historian of considerable repute, was simultaneously describing, in great detail, some of the absurd hoaxes that were commonplace in 18th and 19th century entertainment.

It was truly difficult to draw the curtain down on such an absorbing afternoon of merry pleasure.

As we did.

Dave Part



2026 – A TIME FOR REFLECTION? A TIME TO WRITE YOUR MEMOIR?

Perhaps 2026 could be the year that you capture memories to explain to your grandchildren how you survived your long and rich life!

Chatting by a friend's firepit on Christmas Day, I thought about how Stone Age families would gather round the fires they built to keep the elements and predators at bay. The elders probably told stories of their exploits to entertain everyone, but perhaps also to guide them.

So how do we share our home-spun wisdom with our nearest and dearest today? Sending them WhatsApp messages? Have you ever wished that your parents and grandparents had left some of their memories to add meaning to what you can deduce about them from census records and old photographs?

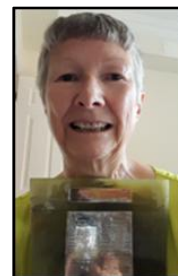
It is a wonder to young people how we managed without mobile phones and takeaway pizzas. I remember talking to students in the 2010s about the world of work that I entered in 1972. They looked at me as if I had walked the earth with dinosaurs. For the very newest generation, even the lockdown years are history.

Does it have to be unflinchingly true? Well, truth is not an on/off switch between fiction and fact. It is a spectrum from – "it is something I perceive" to "this reliably happens all the time because tests can prove it". You might want to do a bit of research to check your dates, but it is your memories that are precious – the bad and the sad as well as the good times.

Of course, if you want to imagine another life for yourself but set in your times, that is also a worthwhile endeavour, but you need to be fair to your readers and acknowledge that it's a fiction!

Marlow u3a member Beth Rogers is an author of textbooks, and, under her pen-name B B Elsin she writes stories and blogs – see www.bbelsin.com

Beth Rogers



COFFEE AND CHAT

The group meets every Friday morning at Da Luca in Marlow Bottom at 10.30 until 11.45.

Dot Jaques 07767 703552

ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND TRANSPORT (ETT)

Tuesday 6th January at 2.00 pm was the first ETT meeting of 2026 in our new home in the Methodist Church (ARK Cafe). After holding our monthly meetings for 10 years in the Marlow United Reformed Church our new home beckons. The Church has state-of-the-art video projection and audio facilities, so our monthly speakers will be well catered for. Meeting there has the added benefit of being able to have a coffee or a snack in the ARK cafe before the meeting starts at 2.00 pm.



New Members Welcome

New Members are welcome but, prior to coming along, please contact us through the Marlow and District u3a website for details on how to join the Group or email ett@marlowu3a.co.uk

ETT Member Well-Being

The ETT is keen to safeguard the health, safety and well-being of its members and requests that potential attendees do not come along to the Monthly Meetings if they have, or show signs of having, any illness.

Alan Fitzgerald



HAND AND FOOT GROUP C



After a challenging game of our alternative version of the game, Group C Hand and Foot players enjoyed a festive 'bring a plate' buffet and mulled wine, to celebrate a year of enjoyable playing and social interactions.

We look forward to some more hard fought, friendly battles, with lots of laughter to dispel the moments of frustration!!

Patsy Kennedy



I'm making sure I'm getting my 5 daily portions

HOLIDAY GROUP

2026



Belfast Holiday 20 – 24th Sept 2026 – There are 5 spaces available, due to withdrawals. Available rooms are twin/double. For dual occupation the cost will be £935 pp. If single occupancy is requested, a supplemental charge of £205 pp will be payable. If interested, please contact Ann Mary Ware on annmaryware@gmail.com or 07775 733871. Depending on when you contact her, the cost of the airfare might have increased as seats were booked end October 2025. If not all five available places are taken up, the cost will rise to £985 pp for dual occupancy. Again, family and friends are most welcome.

Devon holiday 22 – 26th June 2026 There is still one twin/double room available costing £539 pp, plus 6 people on the waiting list for single rooms. Again, contact Ann Mary Ware annmaryware@gmail.com 07775 733871 if interested.

Deposits have been collected for both these holidays

2027

We have contacted various companies for holidays in Scotland – Edinburgh, Fife, Cairngorms – and Vienna, Salzburg, Tyrol. Both holidays would be absolutely fabulous with plenty of interesting things to do but unfortunately have come back too expensive for the majority, (£1100 7 days for Scotland with 40 members, and £1450 for Vienna and Salzburg for 30 members) so we are now reducing the scope to 4/5 days in both Edinburgh/Fife and a City break in Vienna as well as approaching more holiday companies. Cost is important, so we are being realistic! We will continue exploring and negotiating until we find something suitable, but have plenty of time! Watch this space!

Ann Mary Ware 07775 733871



MOTO GROUP

This group is for members on their own who wish to meet others in a similar position. We meet for coffee and a chat at The Old Brewery Public House in the middle of Marlow High Street on the third Tuesday of every month at 10-30.

Tuesday 20th January 2026

Tuesday 17th February

Tuesday 17th March

If you would like to join us but do not wish to come alone, please call **Carole Thorpe** on **483903**



MUSIC APPRECIATION (MAG)

Our meetings are held on the **third Monday** every month at Christ Church (URC), 18 Oxford Road, Marlow, SL7 2NL. We start at 10.30am and the group is open to all members of Marlow u3a. The Attendance Fee is £3.00 (payments cash or card).

November meeting

Young cellist Lia Matos-Wunderlich returned to play for us. We last heard her with Alice Chadwick-Jones and The Wigmore Trio in June. Lia is a very accomplished cellist and like Alice, is currently a student at the Royal Academy of Music. Her programme included music by Bach, Beethoven, Schumann.

This was followed by a talk from John Lenehan about Mozart and why the film "Amadeus" got it wrong.

December meeting

John introduced us to Mozart's Dice Game.

The object of the game is to produce a brand-new Mozart Minuet by throwing dice and collecting the music bar by bar until we have 16 bars. You've heard of A.I. Music, well Mozart was there 250 years ago!

We have established a tradition of having festive refreshments and this year was no different.



mag@marlowu3a.co.uk john@johnlenehan.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHY

Since the last newsletter the Photography Group was pleased to welcome some new members. With each new member comes different creative ideas which continues to enhance the group. In the last two months the 'homework' themes have been Cobwebs and Nighttime. In addition, the December meeting gave the members a chance to play with long shutter speeds to capture moving lights in a dark room.



Steve Illman steveillman@tiscali.co.uk



NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

THANKS! Many thanks to all the people who have provided input to this Marlow Newsletter – without you our members would be looking at just a list of events or even just blank sheets. Your Committee and Editor work hard to make the newsletter both informative and interesting, but we can't do it alone. **We need your help!**

We will be even more grateful for contributions that come unprompted – i.e. ones that arrive without the originator being cajoled – or even bullied a little – into writing a few words for the newsletter.

HOW DO I PROVIDE MY CONTRIBUTION? In any way you like! Email it; scribble it down on a sheet of paper – whatever comes easiest to you. Ideally, Email to newsletter@marlowu3a.co.uk

APRIL AND MAY 2026 NEWSLETTER The deadline for your contributions will be **2nd March 2026** Please send your articles and photos to newsletter@marlowu3a.co.uk by then.
Thank you.

STROLLERS

Jill Kemp 416998, Carole and John Battersby 474366

All walks are on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at 11am. Please wear suitable footwear for the ground conditions. The walk leader should be contacted the day before to confirm attendance and if you are staying to lunch. If you need a lift please contact the nominated walk leader.

Wednesday 11th March Geoff and Chris 01494 881122 will lead a walk from the car park next to the school at Cadmore End HP14 3PE. Take the B482 Marlow Road out of Marlow through Lane End to Cadmore End which is 1.4 miles past Lane End. We will lunch afterwards at the Grouse and Ale pub in Lane End HP14 3JG.

Wednesday 25th March Jill 416998 will take us on a walk along the Thames from the Brunel Sounding Arch Railway Bridge. Take the A4 out of Maidenhead towards Slough. Immediately after crossing Maidenhead Bridge turn right into River Road SL6 0BG and park. Meet at the Sounding Arch. We will lunch afterwards at the Amerden Lake Cafe SL6 OEA.



WALKING GROUPS SCHEDULE

Jane Statham 01494 881634 jes@withurst.co.uk

Winter is here but we keep walking. The cold crisp days are perfect for walking with the low sun and the uninterrupted views are beautiful.

We have had a few new members join the group.

If you would like to join the walking group, please e-mail Jane Statham jes@withurst.co.uk

Details of walks will be e-mailed to members of the walking group about 10 days in advance and only members can join the specific walk by contacting the walk leader by email. Please arrive 10 minutes before the start of the walk. Let the walk leader know in plenty of time if you are unable to join the walk. The numbers of walkers are restricted for any one walk. No dogs please.

These are the dates of the walks and leaders for the next few months.

Wednesday Walks – Circular walks of around 5 miles

21st January	Roger
28th January	Mike Basnett
4th February	Isobel
11th February	Mari Singleton
18th February	Ivan and Teresa
25th February	Clive and Olivia
4th March	Jill Cole
11th March	Christine and Mary
18th March	Richard
25th March	Win and Chris
1st April	Andie
8th April	Jane
15th April	Jeff Short
22nd April	Jeff and Jeanette
29th April	Norma

Long Loopers (Circular) and Long Leggers (from point to point) – Walks of between 8 and 10 miles

LONG LOOPERS 5th of each month

5th February	Jeff Short
5th March	Mike Basnett
5th April	
5th May	Ian Singleton

LONG LEGGERS 21st of each month

WALKERS PHOTOS



Never too old for Sparklers!!!

