



MARLOW AND DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

APRIL AND MAY 2026



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

We have all experienced a very wet winter but there are signs that Spring is on its way. I'm sure we will all be pleased to see some sunshine.

It has been a busy time. Our 20th anniversary lunch set for 20 August 2026 has been successfully launched. There are still some available places for anyone who missed the February deadline. Just let us know if you are interested in attending.







Our membership secretary, Barbara Lawrence, will shortly be stepping down from the role as she is moving away from Marlow. So, we are looking for someone to take over that responsibility. You need to be comfortable using a computer, including spreadsheets, but otherwise no particular skills or experience are needed. Please let Barbara or me know if you are able to help (or would simply like more information as to what is entailed).

Finally, I hope you have a happy Easter.

Roger Shipton

YOUR COMMITTEE

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

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to our new members:

Simon McDonald, Keith Panter, Russell Haley, Susan Peperell, Steve Lewis, Steve Johnson, Jess Eve, Sharon Fox, Jill Cornwell, Rhonda Barclay, Stuart McNicol, John Paterson, Stephen Betts, Ann Luckett, Brian Ward, Rosemary Rawlinson, David Howell, Nicola Senda, Fred Platt, Richard Claessens, Janet Derde, Madelaine Westwood, Catherine Day, Mike & Nina Dodge, Clair Dawson, Ken Walls, Elizabeth Warren, Wendy McNicholas, Tim Beetham, Andy Hamilton and Tracy Coleman.

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

Thursday 30th April

Mark Hopwood CBE

The GWR

Mark Hopwood CBE is Managing Director of GWR, the UK's unique railway, running around 1700 services a day covering the South West, South Wales, the South Coast, the Cotswolds, the North Downs and the Thames Valley with both an overnight Sleeper service and Pullman restaurant dining. Mark was brought up in Marlow and lived there during his formative years. As a teenager he joined the local railway society and successfully achieved improvements to the Marlow line timetable. Mark has held a wide variety of roles in the railway and was awarded the CBE for services to rail in 2021. He is now leading GWR through the transition back to public ownership, and will talk about his career, the train services on the Marlow Branch today and his thoughts for the future of rail services in the Thames Valley.

Thursday 28th May

Heather Adams

The Rise and Fall of Emma, Lady Hamilton

Not Just Nelson's Lover - The Rise and Fall of Emma, Lady Hamilton: The lover of Lord Nelson, the celebrated hero of the Napoleonic Wars, and a muse to painters across Europe, Emma was born into a blacksmithing family a far cry from the society glitter of London. With the exciting backdrop of Georgian society this talk will explore Emma's rise, and fall, alongside a celebration of some of the latest fashion, events and advances that make up our understanding of this time.

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.

Guitar Group

This group has got off to a great start – we have a range of abilities and welcome complete beginners ... we have a couple of guitars available to use. If you have an old guitar gathering dust somewhere, come along and strum a few chords with us. We have enjoyed playing 'When I'm 64', 'Hi Ho Silver Lining', 'Sloop John', 'Sweet Caroline', '500 miles', 'This 'Ole House' and many more. If you'd like to come and just sing along with us or bash a tambourine you would be very welcome.

Contact **Jeff 07775 957090** jeffreysmith170@gmail.com

Gardens Group

Initial meeting was very well attended but no one was prepared to act as convenor!! A few people are prepared to get together and organise a visit to a local garden. We will see how that goes! Watch this space!

New Groups?

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



MONTHLY MEETINGS IN LISTON HALL

January

ANGELA DELGADO-CORREDOR Shackleton's Arctic Survival



(Angela is pictured speaking to member, John Wheeler, who will be travelling to Buenos Aires to join an Antarctic cruise, following the route of his father's Second World War naval experiences.)

What a pleasure it was to welcome Angela Delgado-Corredor and her husband, Julio, to a well-attended Liston Hall for the January monthly meeting's Shackleton's Antarctic Survival talk.

Angela's excellent presentation was professional (both she and Julio lecture on a wide range of topics, on ocean-going cruises), and fascinatingly interesting, accompanied by a slideshow presentation which brought home the hardships and agonising aspects that such adventurous challenges bring. So much of the heroism and the personal strength of Shackleton himself came

to life as he commanded his men on his Antarctic missions. The sheer geographical conditions became hard to imagine as disasters were confronted and overcome with what would now be considered seriously limited resources.

Angela's description of such difficulties, both physical and psychological, was brought home to us by her skilful, factual explanations. In terms of national heroes, Sir Ernest Shackleton was rightly recognised for his ability to maintain the loyalty of his crews and for them to have the strength of mind to sustain the problems such as food shortages, for example, living off seal and penguin meat, to practicality, to serve their nutritional needs.

The feeling of such cold climes was tangible for the members present, for whom the January weather conditions outside the hall, on leaving, were far more merciful than those experienced by Shackleton's expeditions.

It was heartening to see such popular support for the seamless revival of the monthly meetings which so recently were in limbo.

Dave Part



February

JOHN TYLER Australia's Natural History

Those who attended February's monthly meeting were mesmerised by John Tyler's talk on Australia's natural history, beautifully illustrated with his slideshow highlighting a fascinating array of native animals, sea life, unusual plants and amazing landscapes.



John's description and explanation of the wondrous phenomena, that Australia offers, of a hugely informative insight into an area of the planet, largely unknown to most of us was brilliant. The evolution of habitats ranging from tropical rainforest to inland deserts to strange aquatic life in coral seas, was expertly described in great depth by John, in his trademark matter-of-fact language style.

Deadly denizens of the deep, from huge fleets of yellow-bellied sea snakes, to

Portuguese Men o'War and predators such as Australian pelicans were dealt with, eloquently accompanied by anecdotes and factual comments, from John's copious treasure chest of knowledge, and with his spectacularly-captured slides.



The effect of climate change presented a huge arena of thought about the future of the planet and measures being used and projected to help slow down the rate of destruction, were detailed. The exploration of medicinal use for rainforest plants and new uses being discovered, for natural products, figured highly across this geographical journey through Australia.

The ability of all natural forms of life to adapt to modern environments, laid open a strong belief in how nature can heal itself. Yet, with the monumental damage that has happened over centuries, some casualties can never be revived. This whirlwind tour of nature 'Down Under' was massively appreciated by the Liston Hall audience, impressed as they were, with the impact of this most riveting of talks.

Dave Part



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



BOOK GROUP

Calling all booklovers!

We are a small friendly group who reads books across a wide variety of genres and would love to welcome new members! We meet on the 2nd Monday of the month between 2pm-4pm in each other's homes for a lively discussion on our latest book and to enjoy some tea and cake.

The most recent books on our list, have been "Frankie" by Graham Norton, and "The Butterfly Room" by Lucinda Riley – both books have been very enjoyable reads!

Mary Godfrey 07900 511943



DISCUSSION GROUP

The discussion group is going very well and we have all settled down to our quirks and opinions! It's taken a while!

Our most recent discussion was on "The National Trust – Friend or Foe?" which was enlightening! We all loved it and had a lively discussion about the organisation, which many of us had previously admired and supported. Jim had a lifelong Membership and was completely put off by all he heard! However, Liz came armed with some surprising information about the National Trust's land holdings, treatment of staff, and volunteer management practices. It was a real eye-opener, and we all left the session with a newfound appreciation for the complexities of this iconic organization, unanimously agreeing it was Foe!



We have a WhatsApp group for us all and we discuss what we should talk about in our next meeting and Stan actually said "I don't think we'll get much out of the National Trust" but he was speechless at the end!

I think it highlights how valuable our discussion groups are, and why it offers a unique opportunity to explore a wide range of topics in a supportive and stimulating environment. From prisons to international relations, our group covers a vast array of subjects, and we always learn something new and interesting. Whether you're a history buff, a science enthusiast, or simply curious about the world around you, there's something for everyone! I actually go to two discussion groups as I like to learn something when I go out now, not just go to a pub!

These discussion groups bring people together, fostering a sense of community and camaraderie that's hard to find elsewhere. We learn from each other, challenge our assumptions, politics and develop new perspectives on the world. It's a truly enriching experience, and one that I feel grateful to be a part of.

I think u3a deserves praise for creating these opportunities for lifelong learning and social connection. By providing a platform for people to come together and discuss topics that interest them, u3a is helping to build a more informed, engaged, and connected community.

If you're interested in learning more about our discussion groups, I encourage you to get in touch with either Helen Glover or Sue Irwin who are the Group Co-Ordinators ... you won't be disappointed!

Lynne Leighton Hare 07714 030003



ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND TRANSPORT (ETT)

Meetings are on the first Tuesday of the month at the ARK Café in the Methodist Church, Marlow at 2pm.

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

FAMILY HISTORY

All meetings are the first Thursday in the month at 10:00 at Garden Room, Liston Hall.

January and February began the year with some new members, but we still have room for a few more. The talk in January informed us of many of the free sources for family history, both on and off line, and several members have started using some of these in their research.

In February, 12 of the 17 attendees brought and talked about an object, image, article, or story of interest about one of their ancestors or relatives, often with questions about how they could find out more. For example: One member found, upon visiting Liverpool, searching for the house where his father was born that it was no more because the site was now buried under a stand at Anfield. Another member brought a quaint teapot with an inscription, "Elizabeth Barker 1812", which has been passed down over the years to family members with Elizabeth as their first/second name. There were many more similar stories.

In March, Marguerite Fletcher, an experienced genealogist and editor of the Irish Genealogical Research Society newsletter, gave a great talk: "Beyond BMDs and Censuses - alternative records for the family historian", which was all about discovering and using lesser-known English records people may not have yet encountered.

Thursday, 3 April 2026: u3a member Richard Maidment will talk about his uncle Bertie using a collection of military photographs. Other members are invited to bring photographs along to the meeting.

Thursday, 7 May 2026: u3a member Karen Hemmingham will talk about Census Returns – how they developed, what they contain, where to find them, how to use them, different ways of searching, find missing people etc

Adrian Spearman: adrian.g.spearman@gmail.com



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 21st April

Tuesday 19th May

Tuesday 16th June

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



ITALIAN GROUP

The Italian proverb "Chi la dura la vince" reminds us that those who endure and stay determined will ultimately triumph. Keep going, because resilience always pays off! And so our Friday morning Italian class not only endures but goes from step to step as we seek to improve our conversational Italian (always useful on holidays) and get to grips with 'grammatica'.

We are a small friendly group of about 6-7, led by an experienced Italian speaker, always ready to welcome new members.

We meet on Friday mornings on Zoom between 10 am and Noon with a 10-minute coffee break.

Often, we are made aware of world events not reported on UK media, but always something interesting if not controversial.

"Tutto è bene ciò che finisce bene." All's well that ends well! So, at the end of the session, we usually relax with some light reading – in Italian of course – both to practise pronunciation, and translating into English to improve our vocabulary. If you would like to give us a try, you'll find a contact form under 'Italian Language Intermediate' on the Marlow u3a web page. Alternatively feel free to Email me direct on annmholden@yahoo.co.uk.

Ann Holden

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).

January meeting



A tremendous start to the New Year. Benjamin Carter is a young pianist from New Zealand currently studying at the Royal College of Music. What an upbeat and accomplished performance! He played music by Couperin, Poulenc, Chopin and Scriabin.

John followed this with a talk about Robert Schumann - the quintessential romantic composer.

February meeting

This was the first time we have had a viola soloist. Even more unusual, Katherine Clarke sings as she plays.

Katherine sung, played and sung, and John accompanied her for a couple of the items. The programme was music by women composers Sadie Harrison, Amy Beach, Hildegard of Bingen, Florence Price and Rebecca Clarke spanning a period of 800 years.

Women have written music throughout the centuries, but it's been a male dominated scene until much more recently. Dame Ethel Smyth stirred things up at the beginning of the 1900s (as well as ending up in prison with the suffragettes!) Gradually, since then, the balance has changed significantly. John talked about the women in Katherine's programme and some others that were notable in their own lifetime, but little known today.



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



PAINTING GROUP

A vacancy has occurred in our Painting Group which meets fortnightly on Fridays at 10.00am until noon. The venue is my home in Furze Platt, Maidenhead which is a 15-minute drive from Marlow and surrounds.

We are a small, social group working in any medium except oils and no experience is necessary.

I am not a teacher but have been painting for many years and am happy to pass on any tips as necessary. So, if you would like to develop your inner artist and have fun, contact **Anne Barrie** on **07913 425649** or email at anniebarrie22@icloud.com

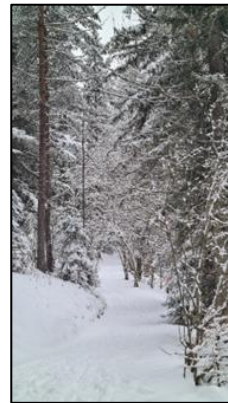


PHOTOGRAPHY

Since the last newsletter the Photography Group's two themes have been animals and pairs. Regarding the animals the group was reminded of W C Fields' observation that you should never work with animals or children.



Our members found a number of very different ways to interpret the theme of pairs ...



The group continues to meet in the afternoon of the second Tuesday of the month at the Methodist Church

Steve Illman steveillman@tiscali.co.uk

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. Please contact the walk leader in good time to confirm attendance and if you are staying to lunch. If you need a lift please contact the walk leader.

Wednesday 25th 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 8th April Sue 485275 will take us on a walk from Pinkneys Drive car park to see the cowslips. From the Bisham roundabout take the Maidenhead turning onto the A308 Marlow Road. Continue uphill and past the large green area of Pinkneys Green. Turn right into Pinkneys Drive, past the Cricket Club, through the village and then look out for the entrance to the car park on the right amongst the trees. (If you get to the T junction at the Henley Road you have gone too far). We will then lunch at the Stubbings Garden Centre Cafe SL6 7PQ.

Wednesday 22nd April Hazel 07778 030640 will take us on a Marlow Town Walk and tell us some interesting facts about some of the buildings etc. on the way round. Park in the Pound Lane Car Park SL7 2AH and meet at the Marlow Museum by the Court Gardens Leisure Centre entrance. We will lunch afterwards at the George and Dragon Pub SL7 2AA.

Wednesday 13th May Sue 485275 will lead a walk to Marlow Lock and towards Bourne End. Drive down Station Road from 'Burgers', turn right into Lock Road, (passing the Pub), to the end of the road, then turn left into Gossmore Lane. Park in the Car Park near the river (down the lane opposite No25, SL7 1QQ). We will lunch afterwards at the Britannia SL7 1HL

Wednesday 27th May Jill 416998 will lead a walk from Hurley. Meet and park in the car park SL6 5NB at the end of the village. We will lunch afterwards at the Rising Sun SL6 5LT in the village.



HOLIDAY GROUP

2026

Belfast and Northern Ireland: 20-24 September, still 2 twin/double rooms left at £935 pp sharing



Devon: 22-26 June, the hotel has given us 1 more twin room at £539pp sharing. Ann Mary will arrange for everyone going to meet up beforehand.

2027

Scotland: 17-21 May: Edinburgh (Royal Yacht Britannia, The Real Mary King's Close), **Perth** (Salutation Hotel) and **Fife** inc. The Kelpies, Falkirk Wheel, Culross, Dundee, Glamis Castle, St. Andrews, Crail and Anstruther. Costs and leaflets are being finalised and will be sent out by email.

Vienna City break (4 days) or **Vienna, Salzburg and Innsbruck** (6 days). Only one will be chosen after a vote. The Vienna city break costs less! Both holidays include many exciting and interesting places to visit, too many to put in the newsletter! Costs and leaflets are being finalised and will be sent out by email.

Another holiday group meeting will be organised shortly for members to get together and include a vote on which Austrian holiday is preferred.

Ann Mary Ware 07775 733871 annmaryware@gmail.com

WALKING GROUPS SCHEDULE

Jane Statham 01494 881634 jes@withurst.co.uk

Walking through the Buckinghamshire countryside over the winter has been muddy, but the views have been amazing. We have kept walking every week despite all the rain.

We have had a few new members join the group. You must be a member of Marlow u3a and the walking group to join a walk. 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.

Wednesday Walks – Circular walks of around 5 miles

18 th March	Richard
25 th March	Chris and Mary
1 st April	Andie
8 th April	Win and Chris
15 th April	Jeff Short
22 nd April	Jeff and Jeanette
29 th April	Norma
6 th May	Tim and Jenny
13 th May	Mari
20 th May	Nicki
27 th May	Mary Bunker
3 rd June	Mike Basnett
10 th June	Sandie and Stuart
17 th June	Isobel
24 th June	Marianne and Anne

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

LONG LOOPERS 5th of each month

5 th April	EASTER
5 th May	Ian Singleton
5 th June	Laurence
5 th July	Mike Woollams

LONG LEGGERS 21st of each month



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

JUNE AND JULY 2026 NEWSLETTER The deadline for your contributions will be

4th May 2026 Please send your articles and photos to newsletter@marlowu3a.co.uk by then.

Thank you

WALKERS PHOTOS – A WALK IN WINTER



CARTOONS

These cartoons have been submitted by one of our members.



Stanley Port