

The Marlow Society



AGM 2024

Published April 2024

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Front cover Marlow Bridge (image selected from the Society's website blog)

Chairman's Report

The last few months it has been "water, water everywhere".

River levels have been as high as they were 2013/14, maybe demonstrating climate change, and there has been flooding. Not all bad news as the flood defences installed in recent years appear to have reduced the water level's impact on housing. Higginson Park has had a lake for a few months, much to the delight of youngsters when it froze and became a skating rink.

The rainfall has exposed the lack of maintenance of the road drains and the sewage system. There are dozens of places in Marlow where the flooding occurs on a regular basis: Causeway, Station Approach, Oxford Road, Fieldhouse Lane, just to name a few. The houses at the bottom of New Town Road are particularly badly affected.

Thames Water tankers are seen collecting and queueing at the British Legion and other locations. The reputed cost is £2,000 per tanker per day. There is an even worse impact with sewage excess discharging by Little Marlow Water Treatment Works directly into the Thames. You will have no doubt seen national press coverage on water quality in our rivers. In town there have been sewage leaks in South Place and Station Rise. Will this be addressed given the financial state of Thames Water?

To be looked at later, Dido Property has submitted major amendments to their plans. The executive committee have divided up the new documents and are reading through in order to make another submission to the County planners.

Please put 7th May in your diary. Aside from the statutory AGM business there will be a presentation on Marlow Bridge - Past, Present and Future. This will be an interactive session so you can have your say on how you see the future of the bridge. Hope to be able to greet you then.

Co-Chair, Richard Parker

Environment - Marlow Bridge



The Bollards are back as width restrictors. The strain on Marlow Bridge should have lessened to some degree. It is disturbing to discover how heavy some of the newer vehicles are and so a longer-term solution is required.



We now have an excellent line of communication with the Contractors that will be carrying out important works to our bridge. All the work has been identified with important structural repairs detailed, including replacing bearings, improving drainage and replacing junction absorbers (cont p4)

(Environment from p3)

- these apart from the painting. The concern is that there are no specific timings for the work; but it's certainly good to have it all listed and identified. There are rumours that the work will extend into 2026 due to budget constraints.

One major problem to be addressed is the need to relocate the Canoe Club, temporarily or permanently. The Canoe Club owns the freehold of the land overflowed by the bridge on the Bucks side. The existing building will have to be demolished. The Club's position is simple: they will move provided that they are compensated. Any move to a new location (and potentially then back again) will require planning permission. Clearly this could delay the repair work unless preemptive action to negotiate with the Club is taken by Bucks Council very soon.

An obvious way of restricting inappropriately heavy vehicles that uses minimally intrusive equipment, so keeping the bridge views as pleasant as possible, would be to use Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras to enforce the weight limit - full vehicle data is centrally held against the licence plate. Cameras will be in use on Cookham Bridge. This Bridge is managed by The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. They understand they hold the power to do so under the Traffic Management Act 2004 (section 6). RBWM have informed the Society that Buckinghamshire Council has the same powers. So why will not Bucks do the same? This would not only protect the Bridge but raise money towards its maintenance from the very people causing the need.

Liston Gardens

As promised, we have been monitoring the work in Liston Gardens have met with Sorbon Estates (SE) to establish the latest position.

The work has been completed. There is small section from Liston Road that will not be undertaken as planned due to the owners of New Court asking for a significant amount of compensation.

The diagonal path across the garden lawn is a Right of Way. It is not usable at present as SE wants to allow the newly laid grass to grow. Members will note that there are some bare patches already due to the use of the newly grassed areas during the winter.

There is safe access as all footpaths allow disabled access from all existing entry points. Four CCTV cameras have been installed. There have been issues with quite large groups of youngsters using the area at night. As a result, some of the tables and benches have been put into storage in order to discourage this disruptive use. A security firm has been engaged to patrol the area.

Temple Bridge

We have been liaising with interested user groups on the repair/ replacement of the footbridge just beyond Temple Lock.

It has been agreed that the existing bridge has reached its design life and is becoming beyond economic repair. The consensus is that current legislation and the economic cost of maintenance going forward rule out the use of timber for any new structure. Estimates for a replacement are being obtained based on the use of steel primary beams. The anticipated bridge would have similar width, cross section, platform and parapet as Volvo bridge (over A404). The elevation and span will match the elegance of the existing river bridge.

One estimate of the cost is £600,000. The Environment Agency seem not to have any funding in the near term, so it will be 2027 at the earliest when a bridge replacement might be forthcoming. The user groups are now looking to crowd-funding to reinstate a crossing. The Society's executive have agreed to assist. One potential hurdle is that if the bridge does have to be replaced then the EA owned land would not be big enough to accommodate the 2024 regulatory requirements

Richard Parker

Higginson Park

In this edition of *Newsletter* we have re-printed a piece by Bob Savidge (p6)- I was struck by how many of the subjects covered are still issues! Look out for some campaigns by the Society over the next year or so. One will be focussing on Higginson Park. Not many know that the Park was purchased from General Higginson by the people of Marlow and is a registered charity in its own right.

The Park includes Court Garden House and Court Garden car park, from which the County Council enjoys income. The Society is very concerned about the state of the recreational side of this precious asset - the green part!



It should be better managed and maintained. With events such as Pub in the Park taking place there, we would like a say for Marlovians in how the Park is planted and cared for.

Andrew Wood

Environment ***(or Nothing Much Changes in 14 Years)***

Yet another year passes and although we have done much work we have not had much success. The bridge continues to deteriorate and Higginson Park remains poorly maintained. They are the Image of Marlow worldwide, yet are not given the priority they deserve by BCC and WDC.

Marlow Bridge

BCC state they bought the wood to replace the parapets over a year ago but cannot find the £60,000 needed to have it installed, Besides the wood, the bridge is desperately in need of cleaning, painting and having the lights removed or replaced as vandals have ripped some down. A major concern is whether the working bearings of the bridge are being properly maintained to support the large volume of traffic.

BCC have only allocated £200,000 in 2009/10 to maintain all 600 bridges and culverts in the county, which is obviously totally inadequate. Most probably this total amount is needed to restore our bridge to a reasonable condition, plus a fund set aside to maintain it on an ongoing basis. Currently BCC say they have no plans to do any work in the near future even though the bridge is Grade 1 listed and the 'symbol' of Marlow.

The Society is calling for a meeting with Valerie Letheren, BCC Cabinet Member for Transport, to discuss the maintenance and funding of the bridge. We will also raise the issue of the promised review of parking in Marlow and what consultation is proposed now that the Special Parking Area has been in place for nearly a year.

Higginson Park

It is fully recognised that lots of successful events and nearly a million visits take place each year and the park has retained its Green Flag Award. However due to this high usage it desperately needs investment to ensure it is maintained to a very high standard.

Unbelievably WDC spent £732,477 on the toilet/café, £195,320 on the children's' playground, £106,130 on the skate park and £103,063 on the wall adjacent to No 1 Pound Lane over the last two years. These costs are grossly excessive and the overspends meant that the full proposals were not implemented. The expenditure resulted in an audit which identified some 22 recommendations. However its full details are withheld [even] under the Freedom of Information Act. We prepared a full report on the construction of the toilets/café. However neither the Government Ombudsman nor the Local Authority Audit offices would undertake an independent audit due to technical aspects of their mission statements. We now know that in the 2008/09 accounts of the Higginson Park Trust

the value of the toilets/café building was written down by £172,000 after revaluation, which questions again the excessive cost and value for money.

We Invited the WDC Cabinet member to walk the park and Court Garden with us. It took 5 months to arrange and a further 4 months to get any response but a significant number of issues were finally recognised and WDC stated they would endeavour to obtain funding. One result was the path from Pound Lane, which was built earlier this year. We will continue to press WDC to accept their responsibility to maintain the Park to a standard that recognises its importance to the town.

Court Garden has been poorly maintained over the years and it is hoped that the new Management will raise standards. WDC, who are responsible for the building, still have not resolved the major issue of water ingress into various parts of the building. They have however, after our visit, recognised that significant work needs doing and will be seeking funding.

We will monitor progress.

Flooding

Having worked with the Environment Agency and their consultants for four years on the bunds proposed for Pound Lane and Gossmore areas I was pleased that they finally put in a planning application. The proposals cover both the ground water and run-off problems that we fought to have resolved, as well as the flooding of the river. Levels of ground water and run off will be electronically measured and trigger pumping to avoid flooding behind the bund. This is a first for the EA and will facilitate the Marlow Sports Club to build their much needed hockey pitch. We have been assured that the flood compensation areas proposed would ensure no additional flooding to Bisham or further downstream. WDC's decision on the planning application is expected by the end of April.

We will continue to work on the major issues reported here as well as many others. These include maintenance of grass verges, replacement of trees, road signage, advertising, recycling facilities, Thames Path, foot paths, unsocial behaviour etc. In a number of cases we have made some progress but overall it is very slow as the authorities have prioritised their budgets elsewhere.

If you have anything you wish us to look at please do call the Secretary or me. Hopefully the coming year will be more successful.

Bob Savidge

Ed: BCC is the current 'Buckinghamshire Council' of course. This article reprinted from Newsletter of April 2010. Nothing Much Changes!

Transport

Latest by Dido Properties under planning application 22/06443/FULEA

The latest Transport plans reveal that the developer has effectively made an admission that the Westhorpe junction (A4155 and A404) will be heavily used. The developer insists that a target of 60% of the workforce traffic (this omits lorries and supply vehicles) can be achieved and cites Warner Brothers Leavesden studio as an example where this works. However that studio is essentially a visitor attraction for Harry Potter and cannot be used as a comparison.

It is one thing to boast “4000 jobs” and quite another to assume that over 2000 extra vehicle movements a day to the Westhorpe junction can be safely managed to maintain traffic flows and with no backing onto the A404, owned by National Highways and part of the Strategic Road Network. Parking for only just over 1000 vehicles on site doesn't scratch the surface of the traffic that will be generated .

The installation of traffic lights will greatly impede the flow of traffic on the A4155 and the access and exit roads to Globe Park - an important local provider of employment, something that the Marlow Film Studios cannot deliver. The widening to extra lanes and the installation of traffic lights at Westhorpe is not a solution. Re-construction of what is now a 50 year old elevated roundabout will be polluting and extremely disruptive. The public transport plans are vague in the extreme....

(continues p18)

Constitution

February Exec agreed for four changes to be voted at this year's AGM:

- o Clause 3 - to remove the last para referring to a grace period for Oct-Dec joiners. Removal would facilitate ability to run memberships from date of joining [this may be useful for a future on-line joining process].
- o Clause 6 - to add post of Membership Secretary to the Society's Officers.
- o Clause 19 - to add the Member's registered email address for delivery of notice of Society meetings.
- o Clause 20 - to add that on winding-up, the Society's record books be deposited with the Civic Trust.

The current *Constitution*, as amended at AGM in 2017, may be found on the website, under 'About Us' / 'Aims and Objectives'.

Hon Secretary

AGM

The Marlow Society 63rd Annual General Meeting will be held
7.30pm for 8pm on Tuesday 7th May 2024 in Liston Main Hall, Liston Road.
Light refreshments will be served

Meeting Agenda

1. Chairman's opening remarks and introduction of the Society's President
Sir Keith Stuart as chairman of the meeting
2. Apologies for absence
3. Adopt the Minutes of the 62nd AGM
4. Receive the Trustees' Report *
5. Receive the Statement of Accounts, year ending 31st December 2023 *
6. Approve changes to the Society's Constitution *
7. Elect the Officers of the Society:
Chairman, Vice Chairmen, Hon Treasurer, Hon Secretary, *and Membership
Secretary* (subject to item 6)
8. Elect an Executive Committee
of between five and fifteen Members of the Society, including the Officers
9. Appoint an Independent Examiner of the 2024 Accounts
10. The President's closing remarks

After the conclusion of the formal meeting:

talks & discussion "Marlow Bridge, Past Present and Future"

Any Member of the Society is eligible to stand in these elections. Nomination, noting the role or roles for which you wish to stand and supported by a seconder who is also a Society Member, should be submitted in writing, which may be by email, to Hon Secretary on or before 23rd April.

*If you would like to talk with current members of the Committee to find out more about the work, please contact the Co-Chairs,
Andrew Wood or Richard Parker at tmschair@marlowsociety.org.uk*

* These documents are printed in this *Newsletter*.

THE MARLOW SOCIETY
Registered Charity No. 262803

The Trustees present their report for the year ended 31st December 2023.

The principal address of the charity: c/o 22 Rookery Court, Marlow, SL7 3HR

The Trustees of the Society are:

Michael New OBE, Richard Parker, Geoff Wood

The power to appoint trustees is vested in the Executive Committee of the Society.

Governing Document

The charity is administered and managed subject to and in conformity with the provisions of the Constitution, the current version of which was approved in May 2010. Minor revisions were approved at the 2017 AGM.

Objects of the Charity

These continue to be for the protection and improvement of the environment in the Marlow area, which consists of the parishes of Great Marlow, Little Marlow, Marlow Town, Bisham and Medmenham by:

- 1) Working to protect features of historic or public interest and improve the environment.
- 2) Educating the public in the geography, history and architecture of the Marlow area.
- 3) Promoting high standards of planning and architecture in or affecting the Marlow area.

Trustee Participation

The Trustees have continued to oversee the Society's assets and its legal obligations, including reporting to The Charities Commission, by attending Executive committee meetings. The President has been kept informed of the Society's activities.

Main Activities undertaken

To further its objectives the Society's Executive Committee met with local councillors on ten occasions, using Zoom technology, to discuss matters of planning, transport, river issues and environment. This enabled the constructive exchange of information and opinions that has characterised the sound working relationship established over many years.

Mindful of its origin as the Bridge Preservation Society the Marlow Society continued to demand that Buckinghamshire Council introduce comprehensive measures to prevent overweight vehicles crossing the Marlow Bridge. There has been an ongoing dialogue throughout the year

involving our Member of Parliament, Bucks councillors and the engineering team at Highways for Bucks. We recognise the value of current repair programme but are concerned at the length of time they are taking.

Achievements

The Society monitored all local planning applications submitted throughout the year and the Society submitted its comments to the Planning Authority where appropriate. Advice has been proffered to members when sought. The Society has sought the advice of its Members on the approach to be taken to the Marlow Studio Project located in the Green Belt. The Society contributed financially to an independent study into the impact on traffic as a result of the Studio plans. The study confirmed that the plan would have a major deleterious impact on traffic flows. A decision on the application was deferred and will now be reconsidered by Buckinghamshire Council in March. *[Ed: Decision again deferred, now expected May 2024]*

The Society's Local History Group has continued its research into the local history of Marlow and its surrounding parishes. Many requests for information come in from around the world and Group members have been able to answer most of them. In person and online presentations were given by guest and Society speakers.

The Society made representations to Sorbon Estates and the local council authorities to the plans to bring the condition of Liston Court, a part public-owned commercial and garden, up to an acceptable standard. The works are now complete and the provision of improved footpaths and security are much welcomed.

The Society has launched a new website providing updated information about its activities for its members and local people. There has been an ongoing partnership with Marlow Archaeological Group.

The Society has been prioritising increasing membership by use of email, leaflet distribution and attendance at the Marlow Carnival. As the result the Society's membership has increased by 63 and now stands at 727 Members.

The Executive Management Committee has met every month throughout the year with the exception of January and August and has received regular reports from its sub-committees and officers. Nominated Executive members participate in the 4 action groups of the South West Chilterns Community Board.

The Society has published and distributed three editions of *Newsletter* during the year to all Members. The *Newsletter* was made available to the public at the Bucks Council's Information Centre in the town.

These activities were undertaken by volunteers: there are no employees.

The Marlow Society
Registered Charity Mo. 262803
Accounts for the Year to 31st December 2023

	12 Months to 31 Dec. 2022			
	£	£	£	£
Receipts				
Subscriptions	4,147.25		3,037.25	
Activities: net surplus/deficit generated - Note 1	471.73		(182.17)	
Gift Aid refunds	445.04		477.16	
Interest	705.30		187.51	
Restoration of Bridge in Higginson Park: net surplus - Note 2	168.18		-	
Donations	-		140.00	
	<u>5,937.50</u>		<u>3,659.75</u>	
Payments				
Committee & sub-committee expenses - Note 3)	(2,600.56)		(1,259.96)	
Newsletters and reports	(667.02)		(618.00)	
Web site costs	(1,470.00)		-	
Insurance	(341.82)		(341.82)	
Annual General Meeting	(138.53)		(36.00)	
Society Storage Facility	-		(500.00)	
Contribution to traffic impact study of the Marlow Film Studio	(4,000.00)		-	
	<u>(9,217.93)</u>		<u>(2,755.78)</u>	
Funds absorbed/generated from general activities	(3,280.43)		903.97	
Received from Marlow/Budavar Town Twinning Association (MBTTA)	1,004.57		-	
Total funds absorbed/generated during the year	<u>(2,275.86)</u>		<u>903.97</u>	
Total accumulated funds brought forward	24,935.15		24,031.18	
Total accumulated funds carried forward (of which £1,004.57 is a restricted fund for MBTTA use)	<u>22,659.29</u>		<u>24,935.15</u>	
Represented by:				
Assets				
Cash at Bank - Current Account		6,526.43		9,507.59
Cash at Bank - Deposit Account		16,132.86		15,427.56
Total Net Assets		<u>22,659.29</u>		<u>24,935.15</u>

	£	£	£	£	£	£
Note 1 - Activities	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Payments</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Payments</u>	<u>Net</u>
Heritage open day	181.00	(55.90)	125.10	0.00	(61.38)	(61.38)
Town & river walks	178.00	0.00	178.00	177.00	0.00	177.00
History group talks etc.	1,611.17	(1,135.44)	475.73	0.00	(348.79)	(348.79)
Events - Marlow Carnival	0.00	(50.50)	(50.50)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Garden party	409.00	(792.00)	(383.00)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sales of publications	126.40	0.00	126.40	51.00	0.00	51.00
	<u>2,505.57</u>	<u>(2,033.84)</u>	<u>471.73</u>	<u>228.00</u>	<u>(410.17)</u>	<u>(182.17)</u>

Note 2 - Project to restore the bridge in Higginson Park	£	£
Donations received for the project	4,500.00	-
Less: Carpentry work & memorial plaque	<u>(4,331.82)</u>	-
Surplus	<u>168.18</u>	-

Note 3 - Committee & sub-committee expenses	£	£
Information & publicity	(1,324.50)	(194.00)
Executive & secretarial expenses	<u>(1,276.06)</u>	<u>(1,065.96)</u>
	<u>(2,600.56)</u>	<u>(1,259.96)</u>

Note 4 - Asset retained for Marlow Society's use	£	£
Historic Delivery Bicycle: £500 cost now written off	0.00	0.00

Ed: Unfortunately the detail necessary to convey the Accounts means the image above (reduced from A4) is possibly too small for all Members to easily read on this A5 page, so these Accounts will also be uploaded to the Society's website.

New Members

The Society is delighted to welcome Members who have joined recently:

Catherine Randall

Esther Searle

Jim & Audrey Platt

Richard Gyselynck

Ruth Bowler

Richard & Lynn Pells

Jackie Pepper

John Lloyd Parry

Clive & Olivia Borthwick

Susan Shierson

Philippa Harrison & Terence Whall

Andrew & Judy Crossley

Derek & Gillian Scholes

Sarah Osbourne

Tim & Dianne Ward

Jill Coleby

Editor's notes

'It's good to talk' was a BT catchphrase a long time ago (when your editor was developing telephone exchanges) and it still holds good of course. Check out the Society's spectacular new website (QR on back cover) which comes with a set of 'domain' email addresses (see p2). Exec is developing means to efficiently send emails to all Members (those who want them :) about the 'public realm' activities - just now focussed on the Bridge. While LHG has been using Adam's dedicated list (p14) to distribute news of the 'history and heritage' side of the charitable Objects. These together reflect our Society's nature as a full-function civic society 'supporting Marlow's future'.

George Lawrence

Supporters

The Marlow Society is very grateful for the generous support given by local organisations

Burger's Artisan Bakery - burgersartisanbakery.com

Cliveden Manor Care Home

Heighway Associates Ltd - haa-ltd.co.uk

LGP Solicitors - lgpsolicitors.co.uk

Mark Taylor Design - marktaylor-design.co.uk

MKB Designs - mkbdesigns.co.uk

Seymour Taylor Accountants - stca.co.uk

Temple Island Management

Marlow Society Local History Group

Film Show, Talks and Visits

In February we showed 'Marlow on Film' in the Royal British Legion Club and on Zoom. Both were successful. We had seventy people for the 'in person' showing in the RBLC on the Tuesday and then another twenty plus for the, shorter, Zoom version on the Thursday. Many who attended the Zoom showing were unable, for health or other reasons, to get to the physical showing of the films. Proceeds from the film shows were donated to the Royal British Legion Club and Marlow FM.

Most of the film is now available on our Marlow Society Archive YouTube channel which can be accessed either via our website or directly and can be viewed at your leisure. You can see how Marlow has looked over the last eighty years and, perhaps, see yourself or family in their younger days.

We have also contributed audio material from our archives which has been used in recent *Marlow Memories* programmes by Michael Eagleton at 10am on Sunday mornings on Marlow FM.

Going forward we move back into Liston Hall for the spring and summer with talks on the contested 1841 election in Marlow where there were 'Votes for Sheep'; a talk by the editor of the history of Sir William Borlase school on its first four hundred years; and a talk on some of Marlow's literary figures.

We are also planning visits to Milton Manor House in June and to Rycote in August. Fuller details on how to join the visits will be made available nearer the time.

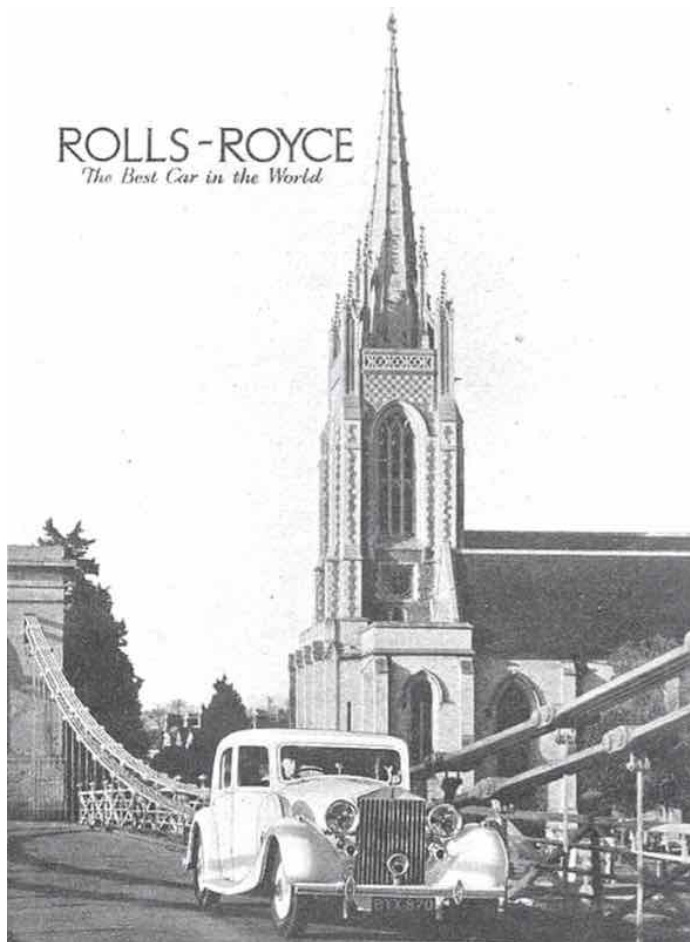
The latest details can be found on the Events section of our website while those on the Marlow Society Local History Group email distribution list will be emailed detailed information. To join the LHG email distribution list please send an email to tmshistory@marlowsociety.org.uk

Adam Baxter

The View from the Bridge

If you were to ask me how I'm feeling, what I always say is, the life of a bridge has its ups and downs. But just lately I've been feeling more down than up, a bit unloved and uncared for. I get the feeling that the people supposed to be looking after me have given up. They keep starting to clean me up, give me a coat of paint, or fit a new bearing, but then they stop and go away for ages. It's no way to carry on. I'm almost 200 years old you know, how would you feel to be still working at my age?

It's not always been like this, you know. Oh no. I've had some great moments and some very posh visitors. That Rolls Royce for instance back in the 30s, or Parker driving Lady Penelope over in the 60s to pick up his winnings at the Halifax. She was a one, pink Rolls Royce, FAB 1, that was me in those days. I must say I was a bit nervous back in 1943 when Bill Marshall flew his Spitfire right through my arches. Then he did a victory roll over the top! Trying to impress his girlfriend he was, she was having lunch with some bigwig in The Anglers next door. That was a close shave. Celebrities, you name them, they've all been here. Rod the Mod in a carriage with his lovely wife Rachel, Terry Wogan with his driver mate.



Ricky Gervais walks over me a lot, and Chris Evans once drove over me all dressed up to switch on the Christmas Lights. And what about when UB40 serenaded me in 1995 with an Elvis classic? Can't Help Falling in Love With You - that says it all really about my kerb appeal!

Mind you, strange how that doesn't seem to impress my so-called carers up at Aylesbury. Weight limits, bollards, signs, nothing they do seems to work. In the old days when I was young and stronger, all I had to worry about was strollers, little carts, the odd carriage with a couple of horses. Talking of horses, well, all I best say is, I did sometimes smell a bit in those days. Nowadays all I ever smell is diesel or petrol fumes. Big lorries and vans pushing through those useless bollards all the time. Some idiot drives through towing a caravan and they have to turn the bollards round to get him out! Then they never come to put them back properly. I tell you, it's enough to make me wanna give up! Of course, you remember that I did have to shut up shop for a while back in 2016 after some fool got stuck in a 20 tonne arctic right in my middle. I really groaned, I can tell you, but I bravely held my ground. Took them months to sort that one out though, and nearly killed the town and ruined Christmas. What a shambles! I hear that some of my relatives along the river aren't doing very well either. They're just not interested in keeping us old boys going any more. Wouldn't think I have a Grade One listing, would you?

Well, mind how you go, especially getting through those bollards.

Ed: the opinions represented in this article are those of the bridge as told to Geoff Wood and do not necessarily represent those of the Marlow Society. The Society takes no responsibility for the facts given or the views expressed!



Leo Ryan and Arthur Harris

For my final article in this occasional series about the five civilian names on our war memorial in All Saints Church, my subject is two men who both died in bombing attacks in the same month, though many miles apart.

Leo Ryan

He was the only wartime fatality in Marlow caused as a direct result of enemy action. His story has been well covered in recent times by Michael Eagleton in his Marlow Free Press articles, and I wrote about him in my newsletter article in autumn 2021 about bombing incidents in our area. There is also an article about him on the excellent Chalfont Crew website, see: <http://www.chalfontcrew.plus.com/page29.html>

Mr Ryan died on 30th September 1940 and lies buried with his son in our cemetery. He is always smiling in photographs and I think he must have been a happy man, as shown in this photo which I didn't use in my last article.



Arthur Harris

Four days earlier, Arthur George Harris was in his office at the Vickers-Armstrong Supermarine Works at Woolston in Southampton, where he was the Head Storekeeper. For months his company had been working flat out making the Spitfire, but constant air raid warnings caused production to falter as workers streamed out to the shelters. So, in late August the decision was made that aircraft workers should continue working even when the town's sirens sounded the warning. They had to wait until the last minute.

The Woolston Works were vulnerable, very vulnerable. Their location on the banks of the Itchen, alongside the naval shipbuilder Thornycrofts, and across from the docks and gas works, made them a prime target for the Luftwaffe. Everyone knew it. The air raid shelters, on Peartree Green, were too far away and took time to reach. Then, early in the afternoon of Tuesday 24th September 1940, a force of German bombers attacked Southampton and Supermarine's Itchen Works. By the end of the afternoon 42 men and women were killed with 174 wounded across the town, among them 29 from Supermarine.

Two days later, at 4PM on Thursday 26th, the Luftwaffe returned, and this time the attack involved over sixty bombers with fighter escorts. Arthur, aged just 32, was almost certainly killed by a bomb that fell on the new Stores building in the south-eastern corner of the works. After the rubble had been cleared, the top two floors of the stores no longer existed. That day's attacks ended the lives of another 55 men, women and children, including 20 from Supermarine.



An hour and a half later, Arthur's body was taken to the nearby Itchen Secondary School where a temporary mortuary had been set up.

There he was formally identified by his father George who collected the body the next day, and on 1st October Arthur was laid to rest in a family grave at St Mary Extra Cemetery in Woolston.

Arthur had no direct connection with Marlow and I believe that it must have been his mother, Clara, who arranged for his name to be recorded on our memorial. Clara Rebecca Gill was born in 1879 at Queen's Road in Wheeler End and married George Harris at Wycombe in 1904. He was a carpenter and I guess that the family moved round a lot in search of work. George died in Reading less than a year after his son, whilst Clara was living at that time at 30 Oxford Road in Marlow.

Our five civilian casualties of World War II then, all living such different lives, meeting their ends in such varied places around the world. Four killed by bombs, one by a torpedo sinking his ship. All were in the service of their country, either in their day jobs or in their voluntary service out of work, and I hope that they would all be proud to be remembered forever on our war memorial.

Geoff Wood

Community Board

The South West Chilterns Board which co-ordinates the four local 'Action Groups' met to review the last year's progress. Two major projects were supported in Marlow with provision of matched funding.

Marlow FM are moving to Great Marlow School into a former caretaker's building, which is being renovated as they depart from Longridge. The work has been partly funded by the Community Board grant. Marlow FM which broadcasts on 97.5MHz are still fund raising by selling bricks. So if you feel the station to be a very worthwhile community-based asset, please help with "another brick in the wall".

Marlow Energy Group was a second group given a grant towards running The Energy Show held last November at Court Garden. The very successful event showcased over a dozen exhibitors demonstrating energy-saving technology. Talks, given through the day by expert speakers, explained ways for householders to improve home energy efficiency. Around 300 visitors attended. MEG plans to rerun the event in 2025.

Members of the Society's executive participate in each of the four Action Group meetings: Environment, Economy, Transport and Community Engagement. The AG meeting calendar for 2024 has been pared back because of the reduced funding available to make grants following the recent Bucks Council budget setting.

Richard Parker & Olwen Elliott

(Transport from p8) New bus services are mentioned - one from Bourne End and one from Marlow. Where will they terminate? Are they just for Film Studio employees in the rush times? Will those film studio employees be parking in Bourne End or in Marlow? And a service from Handy Cross - where Buckinghamshire Council has already announced that the Park and Ride has no capacity for the demand that will be created. And from a so far unidentified location in Maidenhead. This is plainly not credible. Film industry people use their own vehicles to get to work and often have to be on set very early in the morning so this just doesn't stand up.

To re-cap you cannot reach a 60% traffic target without severe disruption to the local area - ask the people who live next to Pinewood studios and all will be made clear.

Andrew Wood

Calendar

APRIL

Tu 23rd 'Votes for Sheep' 8pm Liston Hall
Sue Cheetham

MAY

Mo 6th Early May Bank Holiday

Tu 7th Marlow Society AGM & Discussion 7.30pm for 8pm
about the Bridge. Refreshments Liston Hall

Th 16th Pub in the Park (to Su 19th)

Tu 28th 'Sir Wm Borlase School: the first 400y' 8pm Liston Hall
Dr Gregory Lim

Th 30th 'Cursus Monuments in Buckinghamshire' 8pm Liston Hall
Dr David Saunders (MAG talk)

JUNE

Th 13th LHG Visit to Milton Manor House

Sa 15th Regatta (and Su 16th)

JULY

Tu 23rd Delights of Literary Marlow: Famous 8pm Liston Hall
Authors & their Work' Heather Adams

AUGUST

Th 22nd LHG Visit to Rycote

Tu 27th 'Henley Workhouse' Liston Hall 8pm
by Valerie Alasia

Calendar Notes

Changes - please refer to the website (QR code on back cover) or subscribe to the LHG distribution list (see p14) for latest meeting details.

First and third Saturdays - 10am-3pm **Market** on Causeway; also **Repair Café** first Saturday 10-1pm at Christ Church URC, Oxford Road.

Second Monday 7:30pm - **Society's Executive Committee** (contact hon sec)

More about the Market, Repair Café and Green Coffee at transitionmarlow.org



<https://www.marlowsociety.org.uk/talks-walks-events/>

Talks / Walks / Events

Annual General Meeting

followed by discussion on

The Bridge

*Past, Present, Future with
Adam Baxter, Robin Atkinson, Richard Parker*

**Tuesday 7th May
from 7.30pm for refreshments, AGM 8pm**

**Liston Main Hall
Liston Road, Marlow**

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www.marlowsociety.org.uk

'SUPPORTING MARLOW'S FUTURE'

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