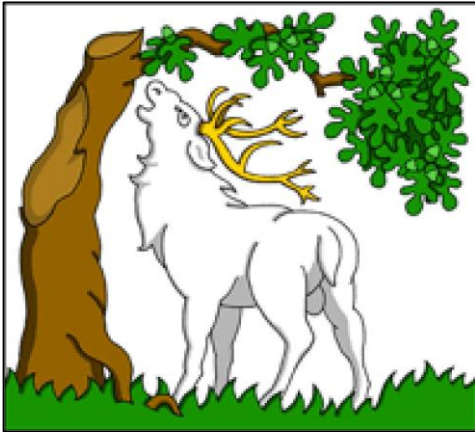


ISSN 0140 5950 (PRINT)
ISSN 2055 7756 (ONLINE)



Berkshire Local History Association



Newsletter No 144
January 2026

Contents

Chairman's Corner.....	4
A Word from the Editor	5
Notices and Articles	5
A Walk for Members.....	5
Berkshire Heritage Fair	6
Reading Abbey Model.....	6
News from the Royal Berkshire Archives.....	11
Book Reviews	12
Newbury Museum	15
Jim Smart.....	15
Society Contributions.....	16
Berkshire Family History Society	16
Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group	16
Hedgerley Historical Society.....	17
The History of Reading Society	18
Hungerford Historical Association.....	21
Longworth and District History Society	22
The Marcham Society	22
Oxfordshire Family History Society.....	23
Project Purley.....	24
Thatcham Historical Society	25
Twyford & Ruscombe Local History Society	26
Wallingford Museum	27
Wargrave Local History Society.....	27
History Societies	31
Archives, Libraries and Museums	33
Berkshire Local History Association	35

Longworth and District History Society

2025 has been a busy year with nine talks and two trips. We started with an interesting talk by Liz Woolley telling us about the development of Oxford city by the work of builders and businessmen during Victorian times. The next talk followed the branch line from Oxford to Fairford with Trevor Jackson. We learned about King Henry VIII and his connections with Hinton Waldrist from Paul Whitton, one of our local historians. Robert Evans gave us the illustrated history of our local footpaths, followed by Gillian Cane describing the life and style of the Mitford sisters.

Our summer outing was a guided walk around the next-door village of Buckland by some of our members who live there. It was so interesting that we only got half-way round before arriving at the pub, so we have to go again next year to finish it off!

During July we visited the Botley War Graves with Dick Richards, a volunteer from the British Legion. He will come and give us a talk later this year about the Unknown Warrior. In September, Marie-Louise Kerr brought us "Oxfordshire on Canvas", showing us many lovely local views. Then in October we had Andrew Long's "Naming of Oxfordshire Pubs", followed in November by Stephen Wass and "The Peculiar History of Fishponds and Fishing in Oxfordshire and around". Bill King is bringing "The Magic and Mystery of Glen Miller" to our Christmas meeting.

Our members are a good support to the Society, and we look forward to another successful year.

Pam Woodward

The Marcham Society

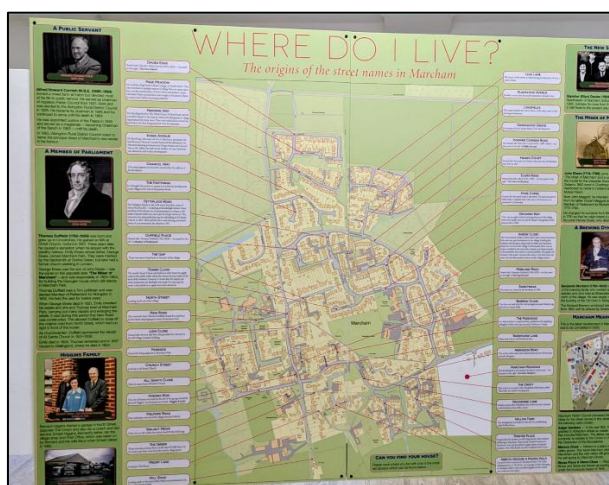


Over the weekend of 18 - 19 October 2025, the Marcham Society celebrated its first 30 years with "Marcham Uncovered", an impressive exhibition encompassing the past, the present and the future of our village and its surrounding area. Held in the new village hall, the 500 visitors enjoyed a walk through our fascinating history presented on well-prepared information panels, through photographs and ancient objects and then the modern world of telescopes and virtual reality.

In Geology visitors learnt about the local fossils including the Ammonite which is the emblem of our Society. In Archaeology there was a comprehensive explanation of the excavations of the Roman site on Trendles Field with a model of the Temple created by pupils from Marcham Primary School.

Pottery, bone and coins were on display as well as finds from all eras found in the recent test pits in the village. More recent history from Domesday to the Civil War was explored as well as detailed maps of the enclosures showing the changing shape of the village through time. A central display showed the modern layout of the village explaining the origin of the street names.

Looking forward, the Parish Council exhibited plans for village improvements and larger projects too, such as the local reservoir, proposed by Thames Water. Very much in the modern world with the latest in telescopic wizardry, the Astronomy group showed what can be seen in the night sky over Marcham. Meanwhile a virtual reality demonstration allowed visitors the experience of roaming the village without leaving the exhibition.



Our Society was pleased to welcome committee members from BLHA and other prominent local societies; the whole event showed how much interest there is in local history throughout Oxfordshire and Berkshire. While enjoying refreshments in the Hub, there was the opportunity to appreciate an evocative, scrolling display of photographs from Marcham's past and present. More details and photographs of the event can be seen [here](#).

Simon Blackmore, Membership Secretary

Oxfordshire Family History Society

At Oxfordshire Family History Society (OFHS) we continue to expand our Big Oxfordshire Names Database (BOND) with more monumental inscription, Parish Register transcripts and now Quarter Session records. Also surnames drawn from a multitude of different publications which have been scoured looking for name rich data. Our earliest records available to search date to 950 and offer insights to lives and places. Many of these sources reference what were Berkshire parishes. For example, Culham St Paul & College Chapel has been documented and illustrated with monuments and headstones. Please do check out the [What is BOND and what you can find](#)