

*The
Marcham
Society*

FEBRUARY 2025
Volume 8, Issue 2

Newsletter

Our next talk in the Marcham Centre

"Coleshill: Nerve Centre of British Resistance"

A talk by Gillian Cane

*Monday 24th February 2025 at 7.15 for 7.45pm in the Main Hall,
Marcham Centre, Barrow Close, OX13 6TY*

Coleshill is now owned and managed by the National Trust. Today it is a very beautiful and peaceful spot in the Oxfordshire countryside. But it is here that you can still see the Guardroom where, during WW2, recruits were greeted for their training to become saboteurs who would help to slow down an invasion of the country by the Germans.

Coleshill House was the headquarters of this top-secret operation which trained and coordinated as many as ten thousand men dispersed around the country who would secretly go into action at a moment's notice. It was in effect a suicide mission. Those connected with this secret movement, mostly went to their graves never having told a soul of their courage and willingness to do something quite extraordinary. Now their story can be told.



Gillian Cane lives in Oxfordshire with her husband and lively labradoodle. Her love of history which she studied at university, and her later experience as an Army officer, (she was the first woman to serve with The Royal Green Jackets), led her to appreciate the stories she heard about the bravery of those connected with the history of Coleshill.



**THE BELL
INN
at
Crowmarsh
Gifford**



AGATHA CHRISTIE TRAIL

Agatha Christie
The world renowned writer Agatha Christie was a resident of the village of Cholsey. She was born on the 15th September 1890 in Torquay, Devon. Agatha Christie and her husband in 1928. There was one child from the marriage.

In 1930 she married her second husband, the archaeologist, Max Mallowan. They bought Waterlooside House in 1934. Agatha Christie and her husband attended St. Mary's Church Cholsey and are buried in the graveyard.

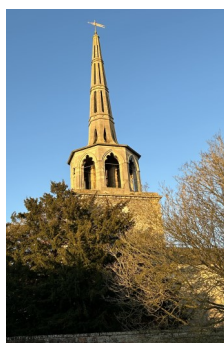
Agatha Christie
Waterlooside House, in the hamlet of Waterlooside, was their residence from 1934 until Agatha's death in 1972.

This information
is available on the corner of the 18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25/26/27/28/29/30/31/32/33/34/35/36/37/38/39/40/41/42/43/44/45/46/47/48/49/50/51/52/53/54/55/56/57/58/59/60/61/62/63/64/65/66/67/68/69/70/71/72/73/74/75/76/77/78/79/80/81/82/83/84/85/86/87/88/89/90/91/92/93/94/95/96/97/98/99/100/101/102/103/104/105/106/107/108/109/110/111/112/113/114/115/116/117/118/119/120/121/122/123/124/125/126/127/128/129/130/131/132/133/134/135/136/137/138/139/140/141/142/143/144/145/146/147/148/149/150/151/152/153/154/155/156/157/158/159/160/161/162/163/164/165/166/167/168/169/170/171/172/173/174/175/176/177/178/179/180/181/182/183/184/185/186/187/188/189/190/191/192/193/194/195/196/197/198/199/200/201/202/203/204/205/206/207/208/209/210/211/212/213/214/215/216/217/218/219/220/221/222/223/224/225/226/227/228/229/230/231/232/233/234/235/236/237/238/239/240/241/242/243/244/245/246/247/248/249/250/251/252/253/254/255/256/257/258/259/260/261/262/263/264/265/266/267/268/269/270/271/272/273/274/275/276/277/278/279/280/281/282/283/284/285/286/287/288/289/290/291/292/293/294/295/296/297/298/299/300/301/302/303/304/305/306/307/308/309/310/311/312/313/314/315/316/317/318/319/320/321/322/323/324/325/326/327/328/329/330/331/332/333/334/335/336/337/338/339/340/341/342/343/344/345/346/347/348/349/350/351/352/353/354/355/356/357/358/359/360/361/362/363/364/365/366/367/368/369/370/371/372/373/374/375/376/377/378/379/380/381/382/383/384/385/386/387/388/389/390/391/392/393/394/395/396/397/398/399/400/401/402/403/404/405/406/407/408/409/410/411/412/413/414/415/416/417/418/419/420/421/422/423/424/425/426/427/428/429/430/431/432/433/434/435/436/437/438/439/440/441/442/443/444/445/446/447/448/449/450/451/452/453/454/455/456/457/458/459/460/461/462/463/464/465/466/467/468/469/470/471/472/473/474/475/476/477/478/479/480/481/482/483/484/485/486/487/488/489/490/491/492/493/494/495/496/497/498/499/500/501/502/503/504/505/506/507/508/509/510/511/512/513/514/515/516/517/518/519/520/521/522/523/524/525/526/527/528/529/530/531/532/533/534/535/536/537/538/539/540/541/542/543/544/545/546/547/548/549/550/551/552/553/554/555/556/557/558/559/560/561/562/563/564/565/566/567/568/569/570/571/572/573/574/575/576/577/578/579/580/581/582/583/584/585/586/587/588/589/590/591/592/593/594/595/596/597/598/599/600/601/602/603/604/605/606/607/608/609/610/611/612/613/614/615/616/617/618/619/620/621/622/623/624/625/626/627/628/629/630/631/632/633/634/635/636/637/638/639/640/641/642/643/644/645/646/647/648/649/650/651/652/653/654/655/656/657/658/659/660/661/662/663/664/665/666/667/668/669/670/671/672/673/674/675/676/677/678/679/680/681/682/683/684/685/686/687/688/689/690/691/692/693/694/695/696/697/698/699/700/701/702/703/704/705/706/707/708/709/710/711/712/713/714/715/716/717/718/719/720/721/722/723/724/725/726/727/728/729/730/731/732/733/734/735/736/737/738/739/740/741/742/743/744/745/746/747/748/749/750/751/752/753/754/755/756/757/758/759/760/761/762/763/764/765/766/767/768/769/770/771/772/773/774/775/776/777/778/779/780/781/782/783/784/785/786/787/788/789/790/791/792/793/794/795/796/797/798/799/800/801/802/803/804/805/806/807/808/809/810/811/812/813/814/815/816/817/818/819/820/821/822/823/824/825/826/827/828/829/830/831/832/833/834/835/836/837/838/839/840/841/842/843/844/845/846/847/848/849/850/851/852/853/854/855/856/857/858/859/860/861/862/863/864/865/866/867/868/869/870/871/872/873/874/875/876/877/878/879/880/881/882/883/884/885/886/887/888/889/890/891/892/893/894/895/896/897/898/899/900/901/902/903/904/905/906/907/908/909/910/911/912/913/914/915/916/917/918/919/920/921/922/923/924/925/926/927/928/929/930/931/932/933/934/935/936/937/938/939/940/941/942/943/944/945/946/947/948/949/950/951/952/953/954/955/956/957/958/959/960/961/962/963/964/965/966/967/968/969/970/971/972/973/974/975/976/977/978/979/980/981/982/983/984/985/986/987/988/989/990/991/992/993/994/995/996/997/998/999/1000.

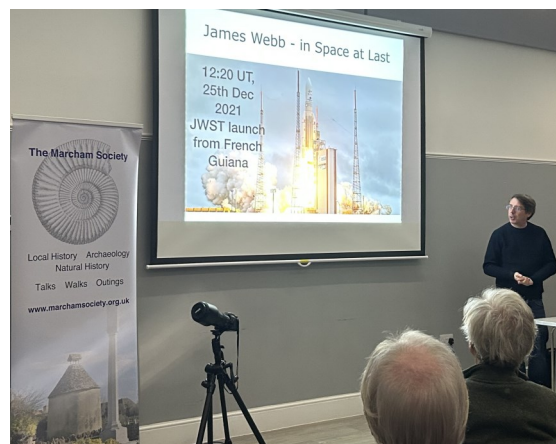
Trail
Heavily opposite, on the right, is Waterlooside Lane. The first becomes a gravel path and soon arrives at the system. Cross the road carefully at the green-painted junction. Keep going until you reach the railway site. The 'Agatha' can be found in the field. In regular use. Cross carefully, go through the gate and follow the gravelled path which runs parallel to the railway line. After a time on the path there is a curving footpath to the right. Continue on the path towards a stile and head diagonally across the field. Another stile will bring you on to the road. Cross carefully and you will have reached St. Mary's Church which was the parish church for Agatha Christie and her husband, Max Mallowan.

Dame Agatha Christie Grave
After entering the churchyard, walk along the path to the south and then turn right across the grass towards the wall and the stone in the ground. The grave of Agatha Christie and her archaeological husband, Max Mallowan, is located in a corner of the churchyard. They were regular worshippers at St. Mary's, which was their parish church. Agatha Christie was awarded the Order of the British Empire in 1956. In 1971 she received the Order of Dame Commander of the British Empire. She died on the 12th January 1972 at the age of 82.

This project was financed by South Oxon District Council and Cholsey Parish Council



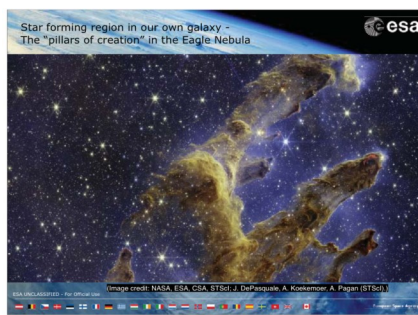
After the usual monthly round-up of news and sightings, we had a talk from Prof Andy Bunker (Oxford Physics) about *“The James Webb Space Telescope at the Edge of the Universe - seeing the most distant galaxies yet”*.



James Webb Space Telescope at the Edge of the Universe: Seeing the most distant galaxies yet
Andy Bunker (Oxford) on behalf of the NIRSpec Instrument Science Team and the JADES Team

James Webb - in Space at Last

12:20 UT,
25th Dec
2021
JWST launch
from French
Guiana



JAMES WEBB SPACE TELESCOPE

11 July 2022 first Early Release Observation SMACS0723 lensing cluster - NIRCcam image (and NIRSpec spectra)

CONCLUSIONS - what have we found so far?

- Have confirmed that many of the “faint red dots” from Hubble images really are very distant galaxies - proof from spectroscopy on James Webb
- Many of these early have lower fractions of ‘heavy’ elements such as oxygen than galaxies today - elements enriched by stars and star deaths over time. We have found one remarkable example of a galaxy which is rich in nitrogen
- Temperature of the gas between the stars is much hotter in these early galaxies than in our own galaxy
- Related to this, the spectra are very ‘blue’ (more high energy photons), with strong emission lines, consistent with young stars of low metallicity and little dust obscuration
- Some galaxies show light from material falling into a supermassive black hole

JWST is operational - many public surveys in archive already

JADES currently holds the “distance record”!

Our JADES collaboration’s data started in October’22 for multi-object spectroscopy.

Lots to look forward to - looking for “first light” in the universe



What to see in the coming weeks

January

- 16th: Mars at opposition (tonight!)
- 18th: Venus 2.2° N of dimmer Saturn (SW: early evening)
- Planets visible: (Me), V, Ma, J, S, U, N Moon: New: 29th Jan

February

- 1st: Thin crescent Moon between Venus and Saturn
- 6th: Moon forms triangle with Jupiter and the Pleiades
- 9th: Moon very close (7') to Mars at ~19:00 (occultation visible: Orkney/Shetland)
- 19th: Venus at its brightest in evening sky
- 25th: Mercury and Saturn in close conjunction (early evening low in W sky)

• Planets visible: (Me), V, Ma, J, S, U, N Moon: Full: 12th Feb New: 28th Feb



"World Youth Service and Enterprise Charity"

a talk by Dr Andrew McDowell

In this year's Annual Lecture, Andrew McDowell talked about his role with WYSE International, describing the rationale for the work, the activities of the charity, and some examples of its work to support emerging leaders around the world for positive global change.

Andrew is a psychologist, coach and leadership professional with more than 30 years experience working in the private, public and humanitarian sectors. He is also the pro-bono CEO of WYSE International, a global leadership charity that is affiliated with the United Nations. Andrew and his family are recent arrivals in the Marcham Priory and in our community.



The Link to the WYSE website : www.wyse-ngo.org

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEST PITS IN MARCHAM

Oxford University Department of Continuing Education (OUDCE)

Following the recent Marcham Society talk by Jane Harrison on the *Excavations in the village of Besselsleigh*, we have been asked if a similar exploration would be possible in Marcham as it would complement Jane's research already done in Besselsleigh and Appleton.

Although the excavations at Manor Farm and on Anson Field have given us insight into Iron Age and Roman occupation there are few finds from other periods on record and we would hope to learn more about the medieval past of Marcham itself.

This would involve a one metre square test pits dug in selected gardens carried out by mature archaeology students as part of the OUDCE Certificate in Archaeology. The excavations would be supervised by professional archaeologists. Clearly we would prefer gardens that are situated in the older parts of the village rather than new developments where archaeological survey has already been carried out.

If you would be interested in receiving more information or even 'hosting' one of these test pits in your garden, please let us know by email marchamsociety@gmail.com



A photo of a test pit dug in 2022 in Besselsleigh

CORAL RAG 13

To celebrate the **30th year of the Marcham Society**, we would like to publish a further volume, Coral Rag 13. We have a few articles already submitted but we would like to invite the members to write a contribution that involves the natural history, the past or more recent history of the village or its parish.

We would hope to review and collate articles by the end of February with the plan to be in print by Summer 2025. If you have a suggestion or an interest in writing a short piece in future, please contact:

Sheila Tilley: sheilajtilley@gmail.com

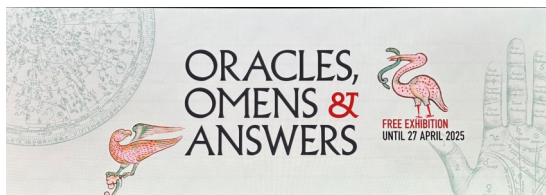
The next Midweek Walk will meet at the *George and Dragon*, Upton OX11 9JJ



Thursday 6th February 2025

For more details on this or future walks please contact Eric Dunford: e.dunford@btinternet.com 01865 391439

WESTON LIBRARY EXHIBITIONS



**Magna Carta
1215 1225**

The 800th anniversary of the definitive issue of Magna Carta in 1225

Free, no ticket required
<https://visit.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/events-exhibitions>



**SORRY
PLACES ALL
NOW TAKEN!**

Wednesday 5th February 2025:
A visit to the Energy Recovery Facility at Ardley 10am.



www.viridor.co.uk/energy/energy-recovery-facilities/ardley-erf

Programme

Unless otherwise announced, evening meetings will be held in the Main Hall of the Marcham Centre.
Doors open at 7.15 pm for 7.45 pm start.

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2025

Wednesday 5th February: Trip to the Energy Recovery Facility at Ardley 10am (see on the left) **Now Full**

Thursday 13th February: Astronomy Group 7pm
"Solar missions and the role of RAL" a talk by Richard Harrison

Monday 24th February: "Coleshill: Nerve Centre of British Resistance" a talk by Gillian Cane

Thursday 13th March: Astronomy Group 7pm
"A History of the Calendar - What happened to the Missing Ten Days" a talk by Kevin Langley

Monday 24th March: "A History of Christ's Hospital, Abingdon" a talk by Jackie Smith

Thursday 10th April: Astronomy Group 7pm (details to follow)

Monday 28th April:
"George Owen, Royal Physician" a talk by Paul Whitton

Thursday 8th May: Astronomy Group 7pm (details to follow)

Monday 26th May: Members' Evening (details to follow)

Monday 23rd June: "Birds of Otmoor." a talk by Peter Barker

Saturday 12th July: Members' Summer Barbecue

Look out for links, photos and reminders on the Marcham Society Facebook page
<https://www.facebook.com/marchamsociety/>



Marcham and District News

MAD News for February and also past issues are available on line:

<https://www.madnews.co.uk/index.php>

If you would like to help with the production of MAD News please contact the editor : editor@madnews.co.uk