

*The
Marcham
Society*

OCTOBER 2022
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Newsletter

Marcham Society Outing : A guided tour of the Harcourt Arboretum in Nuneham Courtenay



In 1947, the University of Oxford purchased the Harcourt estate and created an arboretum that has grown over time to 130 acres. It was acquired by the Botanic Garden in 1963. It was designed as a place of beauty, to preserve the collection of North American conifers, and to grow trees for which the Oxford Botanic Garden was too small or the soil too alkaline.

Today, visitors can discover trees from around the world, such as dawn redwoods, growing alongside tranquil British woodland and open meadows.

Wednesday 19th October 2022 from 10.30am Cost £10 per member
Please contact Shirley on shirley.marsoc@gmail.com to join the outing.

MARCHAM SOCIETY TALKS

“The Making of the Marcham Centre Sign”

by Suzanne O’Driscoll

Monday 26th September 2022

Suzanne O’Driscoll is a British artist who is both a painter and a designer of large-scale sculpture for public art commissions across the world. In 2020 Suzanne was selected by Marcham Community Group to design and fabricate the new Marcham Centre sign and this was unveiled in November 2021. It now stands proudly near the entrance to welcome visitors to our village Centre. It was therefore a pleasure to welcome Suzanne to Marcham Centre to hear about her work.

Public Art Installations

Suzanne explained how researching and piecing together visual imagery is part of the process in working towards and creating a final design which is then fabricated and installed. Suzanne regularly works with DMS Laser fabricators who bring her designs to life using stainless steel panels and laser cutting techniques.

After brief and enticing views of some of her early paintings, Suzanne took us on a journey through the large variety of the installations she has completed in recent years. Starting with the Ventura P&O Cruise liner, Oasis Spa in 2007 which crucially had to have bolts installed for the installation during the building of the new ship, we learned about the visual design components Suzanne worked on before bringing them together, seemingly effortlessly, to form an item of beauty.



This was a theme of Suzanne’s talk; she showed us the early sketches for each piece and then how she worked it all up to complete the final designs (listed here because you may like to look them up). They are all visually stunning and beautiful in every detail.

Meadow Gardens, North Oxford 2009; Lascar Works, Hounslow, London 2009; Bryan House Commission, Bicester 2012; St Lukes Yard, Queens Park, London 2013; Kingsmere Community Centre, Bicester 2018; Abbey Meadows outdoor swimming pool, Abingdon 2018; Collins St. Cowley Oxford 2019; Chainhill Cemetery, Wantage 2020 and then perhaps the most poignant of all Didcot A Power Station, Didcot Civic Hall, 2019, ‘Fragility and Strength’ and Resilience and Memory were made to remember the four men who lost their lives during the demolition of Didcot A Power Station and a third piece ‘Celebration and History’ which acknowledges and celebrates the 40 years history of the site.

MARCHAM SOCIETY TALKS



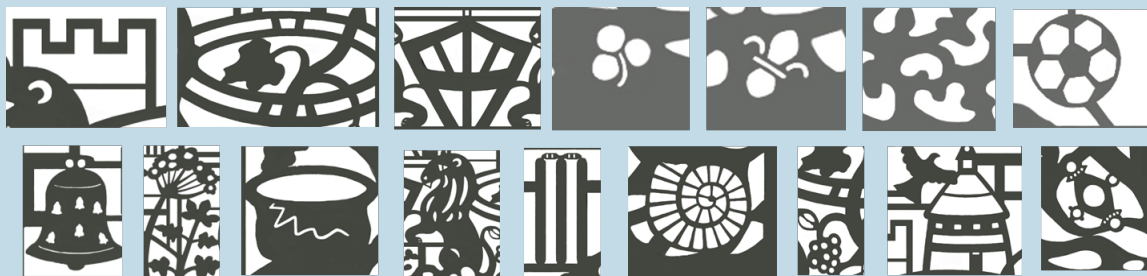
'Celebration and History'

Suzanne described this piece as follows:

'This artwork celebrates the history of Didcot A power Station. The station generated electricity from 1970 – 2013. Through the years it became an important part of the town and community, as well as an unforgettable landmark in the countryside. The design takes a birds-eye view of the site, depicting the key industrial elements and extensive network of roads, pipes and rail tracks. The artists intention in the three works is to create an individual interpretation of the site, that accentuates themes of history and memory.'

The Marcham Centre sign

Then Suzanne brought our attention to the Marcham Centre sign; the brief, describing the team who came together to manage the project and most importantly presenting the visual components which together incorporate the history and culture of Marcham as well as several village activities into the completed sign.



The presentation that accompanied Suzanne talk was rich with images of her finished pieces which enhance so many different environments locally and further afield. We await future projects that Suzanne undertakes with anticipation.

For more information about the Marcham Centre sign visit: www.marchamcentre.org/art.php where you will also find a link to Suzanne O'Driscoll's website.

MARCHAM SOCIETY TALKS

Comet Hale-Bopp over Marcham Church

“Looking back at the Stars”
by Jim Asher

The sky contains an amazing range of objects – from satellites to galaxies. Some are visible by eye but others need binoculars or a telescope to see them. Jim shared some examples of his amazing photographs that he has captured with his powerful telescope from his garden in Marcham.

He explained how long it had taken for the light to arrive from distance stars and he also put this into a historic context - the light for some images dating back to the time of the Egyptian pharaohs or even the Sumerian civilisation!



**Rosette Nebula:
5,200 light years
away
(3178 BC)**

Jim hopes to form a small astronomy group associated with Marcham Society members, so if you want to be involved, please register your interest by emailing: jim.asher@btinternet.com

MARCHAM SOCIETY TALKS

Orion: Flame and Horsehead nebulae



Two slides from Jim's talk

Orion Nebula: 6th February 2022



The Mid-Week Walk from Northmoor

Eric and Sheila Dunford organised a midweek walk on Thursday 15th September meeting at the Red Lion, Standlake Road, Northmoor, OX29 5SX.

The route took the walkers North between the lakes towards Payne's Farm And then down the road to Bablock Hythe. All along the way there were a multitude of blackberries to collect and eat as well as many butterflies to photograph.

The return went beside the river on the Thames Path and then back to Northmoor.

There was a brief visit to the church to see the medieval monuments and frescos. Thanks to the Dunfords for arranging the walk and to Bartle Frere for his photographs.

(See the map below for the location, with thanks to the Ordnance Survey).

The next Midweek Walk is planned for **Thursday 13th October**

For information, please email Eric : e.dunford@btinternet.com



PHOTOS FROM THE MID-WEEK WALK



The Red Lion for lunch first...



...then Eric leads the walk.



Bartle photographing....



...a Red Admiral (*Vanessa Atalanta*).



Bartle's group photograph en route.



Finally a visit to Northmoor Church.

FUTURE DATES AND EVENTS



The
Marcham
Society

Monday
24th October
7.15 for 7.45pm
Marcham Centre



Scandal in High Society Oxfordshire

Secret love affairs, murder, blackmail, poisoning and extortion: most of us enjoy a good scandal. And it's even more fun when it involves our so-called 'betters'.

Julie Ann Godson will present a selection of tales of Oxfordshire toffs in trouble, from the Tudor period right up to the modern age. Few will fail to be impressed by the sheer variety of ways in which the upper classes of the county have contrived over the centuries to behave badly – and often to get away with it.

All Julie's Oxfordshire history books are available on Amazon.

For more information contact membership@marchamsociety.org.uk

www.marchamsociety.org.uk

Facebook: [marchamsociety](https://www.facebook.com/marchamsociety)

**The publicity above is to
be found in the latest
October issue of MAD
News and also on
Facebook**

MARCHAM SOCIETY ARCHIVES

The Society's work organising, collating and recording the Society's archives continues and there are regular sessions in the Marcham Centre.

If you are interested in helping, please email: sheilajtilley@gmail.com

Programme 2022-23

Unless otherwise notified, meetings will be held at 7.45 pm in the Main Hall of the Marcham Centre

Monday 24th October 2022

"High Society Scandals in Oxfordshire"
by Julie Ann Godson **See on the left**

Monday 28th November 2022

"The Commonwealth War Graves Commission" by Karen Elliott

Monday 12th December 2022

Christmas Party in the Marcham Centre

Monday 23rd January 2023

ANNUAL LECTURE by Michael Worthing

"Sourcing 2nd century lava paving stones from Trajan's Market in Rome subsidized by plunder from the Dacian Wars"

Monday 27th February 2023

'The Wildlife of the Rare Fens and Salt Spring of the Marcham Area' by Judith Webb

Saturday 25th March 2023 (All day)

Berkshire Local History Association
Conference in the Marcham Centre
All Marcham Society members welcome

Monday 27th March 2023

'The Blue Plaques in the Vale' by Robert Evans

**Details on other talks and
future events can be found on:
www.MarchamSociety.org.uk**