

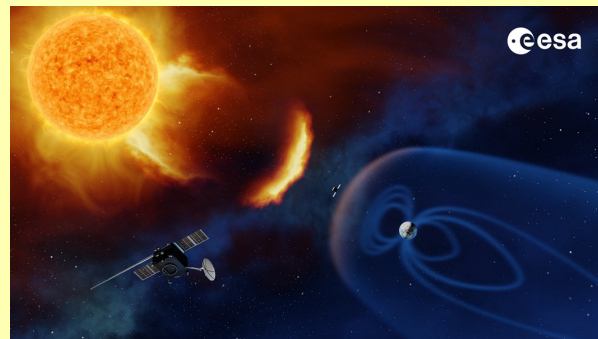
## Our Meetings in April 2024

### ASTRONOMY GROUP

#### “Why Astronomy Matters: Space Weather and other examples”

by Mike Hapgood RAL

This talk will bring out how astronomical knowledge affects modern human societies in practical ways - its continuing importance to technology for position, navigation and timing as well as hazards posed by space weather and near-Earth objects.



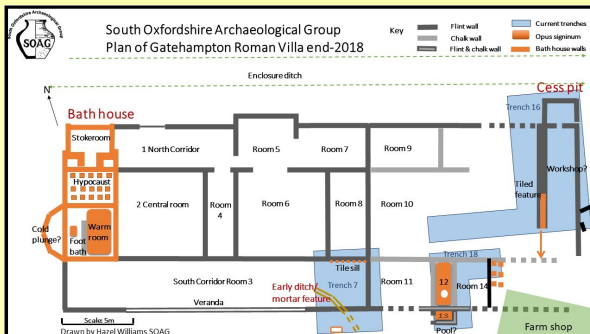
**Thursday 18th April 2024 at 7.30pm in the Small Hall, Marcham Centre**

### MEMBERS EVENING

#### “Gatehampton Roman Villa”

A talk by Hazel Williams from SOAG  
(South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group)

and a chance to learn of work done in Marcham by volunteers and MarSoc members to help evaluate the finds, some of which will be on display in the hall.



**Monday 22nd April 2024 at 7.15 for 7.45pm in the Main Hall, Marcham Centre**

**Thursday 7th March - Midweek Walk**  
Eric and Sheila Dunford organised another walk setting out from  
*The Bull, The Green, Great Milton, OX44 7NS*



For information about Midweek Walks email: [sheila.dunford@btinternet.com](mailto:sheila.dunford@btinternet.com)



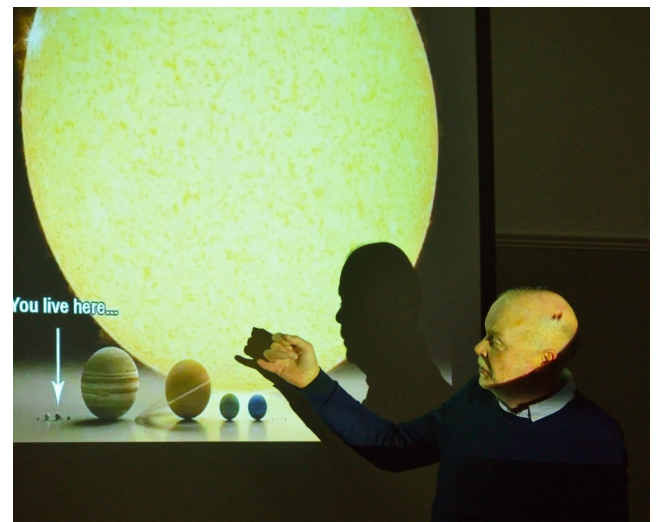
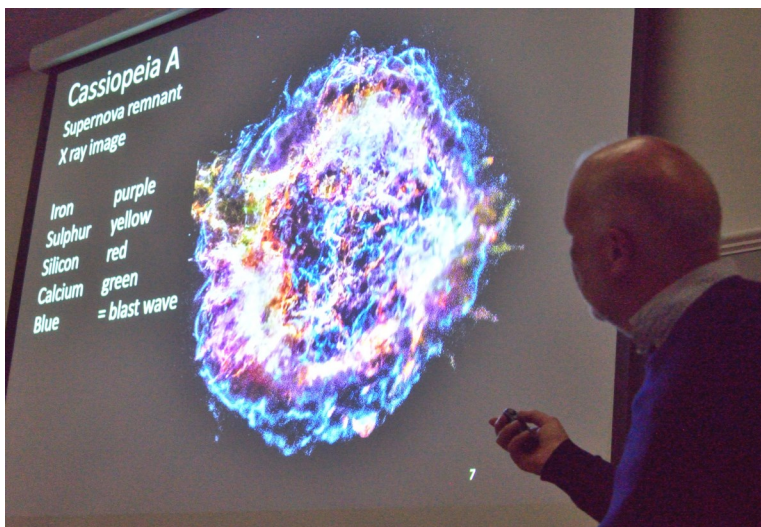
The next walk will be on 4th April from **The Plough Inn, Long Wittenham, OX14 4QH**

# The Astronomy Group

Thursday 14th March 2024

We enjoyed an evening of extreme condition astronomy on Thursday 14th March – thank you again to everyone who came. The regular items of News and Sightings and the Members Matter images were followed by a talk by Mike Greig on “*Supernovae*”.

Mike explained the physics of how stars develop, ignite and burn and what happens when their nuclear fuel runs out and the intense pressure of gravity in large stars leads to implosion and then explosion on a unimaginably massive scale. Stellar explosions of these kinds lead to the production of heavy elements. We are all, literally, made of stardust. Mike showed stunningly beautiful images of various nebulae – the expanding aftermath of these explosions. A big ‘thank-you’ to Mike, our ‘star’ speaker for an explosive talk!



*On the left* : Comet 12P/Pons-Brooks as seen from Marcham on 6th March 2024

Pons-Brooks has a period of 71 years (a Halley-type comet) and is one of the brightest to pass our planet - up to magnitude 5 at perihelion. It was discovered at Marseilles Observatory in July 1812 by Jean-Louis Pons and on its next appearance in 1883 by William Robert Brooks. There are also ancient records that may have been this one. Perihelion: 24th April and closest approach to Earth: 2nd June 2024. Its nucleus has an estimated diameter of about 30km.

# "Everyday life and accidental death in 16th Century Oxfordshire and Berkshire"

A talk by Professor Steven Gunn given on Monday 25th March 2024



Professor Steven Gunn gives his talk on life and death in Tudor Oxfordshire and Berkshire

Above : a picture taken in the Marcham Centre where sixty people attended this amusing and informative talk.

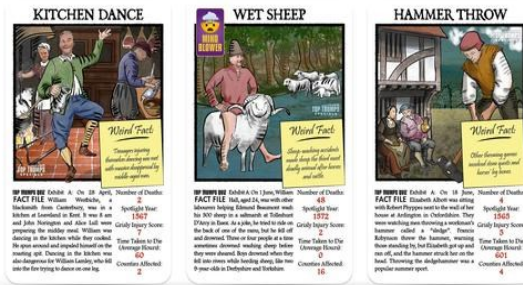
## GUN BLUNDER



**TOP TRUMPS QUIZ** Exhibit A: On 22 September, Richard Spice of Lenham in Kent was in an old orchard at Grafty Green, hoping to shoot pheasants. His gun was loaded with lead pellets, but would not fire because the gunpowder was wet. He looked down the barrel to see what was wrong, and shot himself when the gun went off unexpectedly. By the 1590s rich farmers like Richard were the most likely people to own guns.

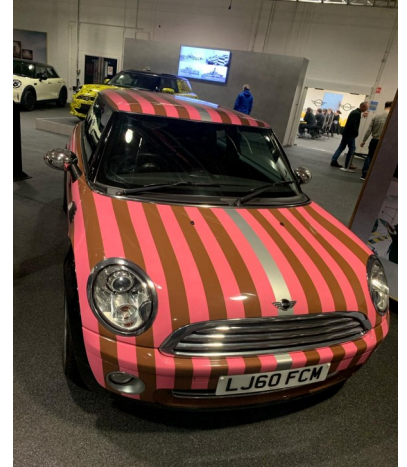
**Number of Deaths:** 92  
**Spotlight Year:** 1597  
**Gristly Injury Score:** 7  
**Time Taken to Die (Average Hours):** 26  
**Counties Affected:** 33

TOP TRUMPS invented by Steven Gunn with four sample cards illustrating some of the dangerous activities in Tudor England that he referred to in his talk!



For more information on Steven Gunn's game :  
<https://torch.ox.ac.uk/top-trumps>

# Pictures from Mini Visit



**Thursday 28th March.**

Many thanks to Malcolm Denton for arranging the visit to the Mini Production Line in Cowley.

Thank you to Phil Jennings and Bartle Frere for the photos too.

Send your own interesting or historical photos of the village or MarSoc events by email to:  
*MarchamSociety@gmail.com !*

The next Midweek Walk is on  
**Thursday 4th April 2024**  
meeting for lunch at 12.30 pm at  
**The Plough Inn,**  
**Long Wittenham, OX14 4QH**



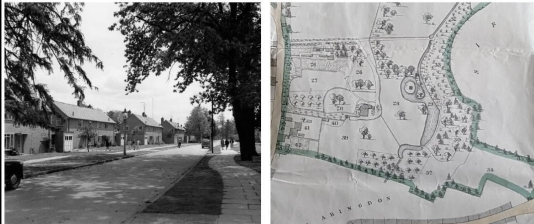
For more information please email:  
[sheila.dunford@btinternet.com](mailto:sheila.dunford@btinternet.com)



**Abingdon Area Archaeology  
& History Society**

**"The Fitzharry's Estate - From  
Medieval Knights To Atomic Spies"**

*Mike Evans (Archivist)*



**Thursday 18th April 2024 at 7:45 p.m.**  
**Northcourt Centre Hall**  
**Northcourt Road, Abingdon OX14 1NS**

*Tea and Coffee will be Served after the Talk*  
*Visitors Welcome - Suggested Donation £3*

***King Henry's Doctor  
from Hinton Manor***

***The life and times of  
Dr George Owen***

***Royal Physician to 3 Tudor monarchs!***



**An illustrated talk by Paul Whitton**  
**at Hinton Waldrist Church SN7 8SA**  
**Saturday 20th April 7.30 pm.**  
*followed by refreshments*

## Programme for 2024

*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.*

### Wednesday 17th April :

Tour of Garford Village with Mike Greig - at 2pm

### Thursday 18th April :

*"Why Astronomy Matters: Space Weather and other  
examples"* by Mike Hapgood RAL  
Astronomy Group at 7.30pm in the Small Hall  
*(see page 1)*

### Monday 22nd April :

MEMBERS EVENING with refreshments *(see page 1)*

### Saturday 11th May: Big Marcham Weekend

### Thursday 16th May :

A film about our Astronomy Group at 7.30pm in the  
Small Hall

### Thursday 23rd May :

Visit to Buscot House at 2pm

### Monday 27th May :

*"Eynsham Abbey"* - a talk by Steve Parrinder

### Monday 10th June :

Visit to Ewelme Church and Almshouses with Professor  
Susan Doran - at 11am

### Monday 24th June :

*"The Ridgeway and Lowbury Hill from above"* - a talk  
by Hedley Thorne

### Saturday 13th July : Summer BBQ at 5pm

***Dates for the rest of 2024 are kept up to date on  
[www.marchamsociety.org.uk](http://www.marchamsociety.org.uk)***