

## **Our Meetings in May 2024**

### **THE ASTRONOMY GROUP**



Member contributions and then a new film about our Astronomy Group  
**Thursday 16th May 2024 at 7.30pm in the Small Hall, Marcham Centre**

### ***“The Lost Abbey of Eynsham” - a talk by Steve Parrinder***

**Monday 27th May 2024 at 7.15 for 7.45pm in the Main Hall, Marcham Centre**



Steve Parrinder read History at Kings College London. For 30 years he taught History and Archaeology at Richmond-upon-Thames College. He is an active member of Eynsham History Group and has written a number of articles for the Eynsham Record.

Eynsham Abbey was in continuous use from the late Saxon period to the Dissolution. Its first Abbot was the internationally renowned scholar and teacher, Aelfric. It was frequently visited by medieval kings and achieved fame in the 12th century with the Vision of the

Monk of Eynsham and later with the acquisition of the arm of St Andrew. Following the Dissolution the huge structure was demolished and nothing of the Abbey now remains above ground.





## Thursday 4th April - Midweek Walk

Eric and Sheila Dunford organised another walk setting out from  
*The Plough, Long Wittenham, OX14 4QH*



For information about the next Midweek Walk from the Masons Arms, South Leigh  
on Thursday 2nd May please email: [sheila.dunford@btinternet.com](mailto:sheila.dunford@btinternet.com)

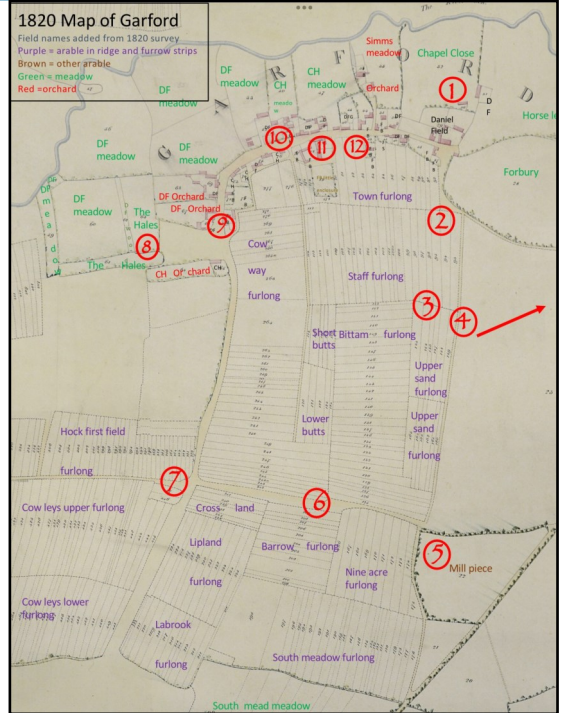


# Pictures from the visit to Garford Village Page 3

Thursday 17th April 2024



The 1820 Map of Garford on the right shows our numbered route and points of interest round the village.



Eighteen Marcham Society members met at the Village Hall in Garford to follow the circular route prepared by Mike Greig. We saw the Church, the Bronze Age barrow, ridge and furrow fields and fine views over the Downs. Once back at the Village Hall we enjoyed tea, cake and biscuits while appreciating Mike's maps and displays.

Many thanks to Mike for organising the tour and providing so much information on local prehistory and history.



# The Astronomy Group

Thursday 18th April 2024

We had an exciting talk last night from Mike Hapgood from the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory who was telling us about how critical astronomy is to maintain operation of a huge range of technologies, reliant, for example, on precise GPS tracking and accurate timing. We don't realise just how much of what we do on a day-to-day basis depends on this.

He also talked about space weather, principally due to solar activity – geomagnetic storms and mass ejections, which lead to problems with satellites, electronics in space and on the ground, power and telecommunication grids. Mike also described specific disruption events documented over the past 150 years. National governments, including UK, now build in space weather into their major risk assessments and strategic planning.

He ended his talk with a brief discussion of the small risks posed by Near-Earth Objects and how we are monitoring them to keep a watch on potential collisions. The message was to be concerned, but not to worry too much!

*Jim Asher*



**Technology on Earth exposes us to space weather**

Space weather phenomena are as old as the Earth – but:

- **Geomagnetically induced currents (GIC)** first reported as problem in 1847 on telegraph lines; in power grids from 1940, but particularly since 1960s expansion of grid
- **Aviation:** problems with radio systems since 1920s, now issues from GNSS and electronic control (instead of astro-nav & hydraulic)

*On the left : Mike Hapgood presenting his talk.  
Above : One of his slides about risks from space weather.*

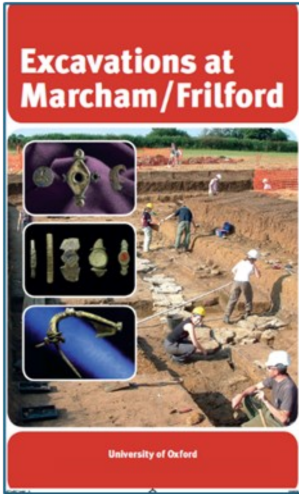
## Comet 12 P/Pons-Brooks

Taken from Cow Lane, Marcham on 9th April at 21:30



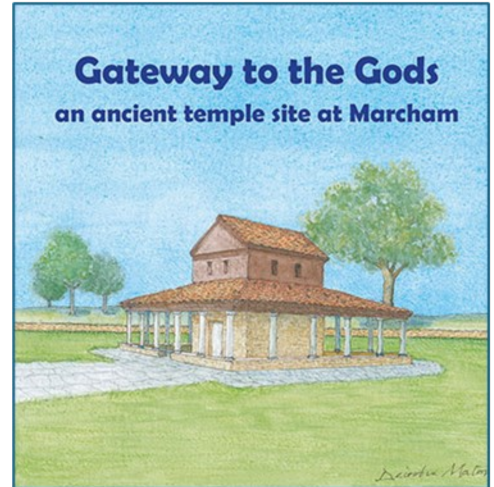
*Above to the right: Ongoing work on the film for the next meeting on **Thursday 16th May***





The topic of the *Members Evening* this year was the contribution of Marcham Society members and other volunteers towards the post-excitation research of local archaeological sites under the auspices of the Trust originally set up by Janey and Will Cumber.

Eric Dunford explained about the Roman Temple at the Noah's Ark and how the 'arena' site on Manor Farm was discovered by Will through chance aerial photography. This gave rise to the Oxford University excavations that lasted ten years 2001-2011. Several articles describing the progress of the dig appeared in volumes of Marcham Society's *Coral Rag* and also in the most recent publication "*Gateway to the Gods*".



The Trendles Project 2 2011 - onwards



Following the end of the excavations in 2011, there was another ten years at least of *Post Excavation* where Small Finds, Pottery and Bone were examined by volunteers based in the Portacabin housed on Manor Farm thanks to the Cumber family. Roelie Reed and Simon Blackmore explained how finds were assessed and recorded. This regular activity was extended to include other sites following excavations by Abingdon Archaeology and History Society (AAHS) and now, through Roelie's contacts, the Trust's facilities have been offered to South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group (SOAG) for the storage and evaluation of finds from Gatehampton Roman Villa (*see below*).

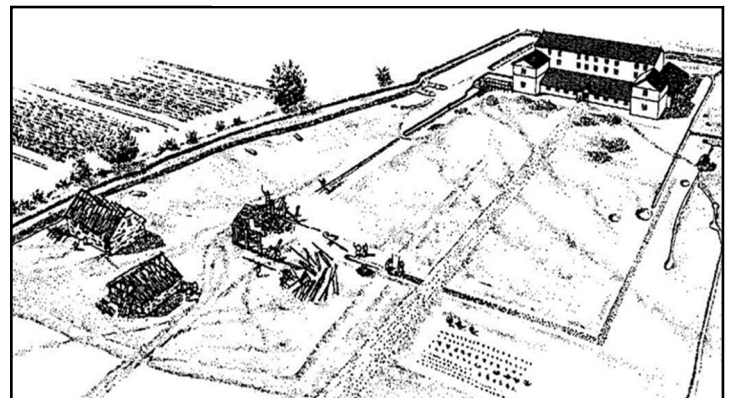
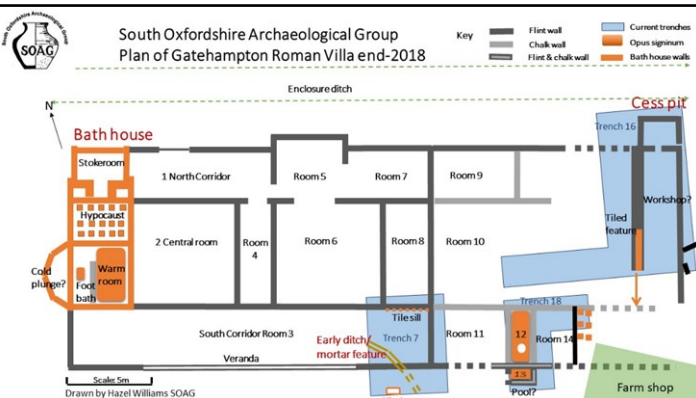
There was a short break for viewing the finds, a lot of chat, wine (served by Peter Steere) and plentiful food for 60 people (many thanks to Di Hutchings, Sheila Dunford and all their team).

Then the evening finished with a talk about *Gatehampton Roman Villa* that had been prepared by Hazel Williams of SOAG. Unfortunately Hazel had been taken ill but with the help of SOAG members Roelie, Anne, Stephanie present, Simon was able to give the presentation of the site.

On the right are three views of a Roman beaker made in Trier Germany but found by Anne Strick in the cess pit of the villa! Anne described to us her excitement when she first unearthed it.



AMANTI DA



Above left: The plan of the Roman Villa.

Above right: An artist's impression of the site.

For more information : <https://www.soagarch.org.uk/projects/villa/villa.html>

The Trust and SOAG are keen to welcome new enthusiastic volunteers to help.



The next Midweek Walk is on  
**Thursday 2nd May 2024**  
 meeting for lunch at 12.30 pm at

**The Mason Arms, Station Road,  
 South Leigh, OX29 6XN**

For more information please email:  
*sheila.dunford@btinternet.com*

**MARCHAM BIG WEEKEND**  
**MARCHAM CENTRE**  
**Saturday 11th May 2024**

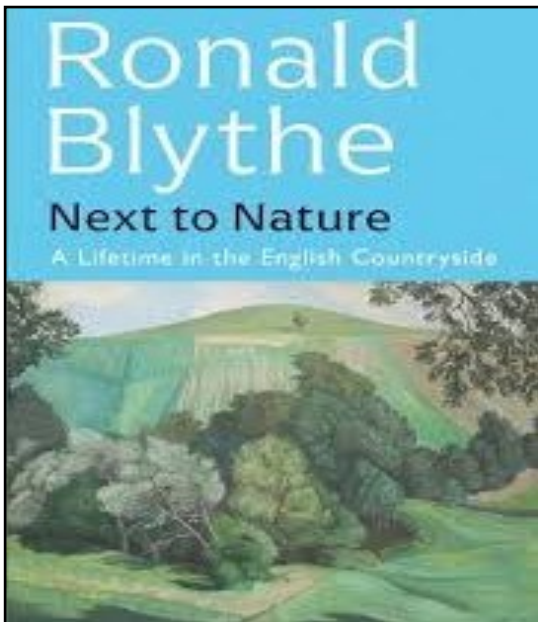
Fete 12 noon to 4pm  
 Lots of stalls and things to do including Bake Off!  
 Live entertainment from:  
 CanDo Martial Arts, Alpha Academy, Amanda Alder Dance, Abingdon Morris Men,  
 Abingdon Brass Band, Harmony Inspires Choir, and Magic Peter

Food available (12-4) from Thirsty Cafe, Baldies Bites and Howes Fish and Chips and  
 from 5pm Pizza  
 Bar will be open from noon

**4pm onwards**  
 Live Music from  
 Back in the Red  
 Shakedown Prophets  
 Tom Seth Johnson  
 Studio Six

Raffle prizes include:  
 Eurostar Tickets, Truck Tickets, Air Fryer, Battle of the Proms,  
 Red Funnel to the Isle of Wight  
 and many many more

This is a FREE family community event.  
 some stalls may be cash only!

*Above* : the cover of a book written by  
 Ronald Blythe.

*Right*: An excerpt from the book about  
 the importance of the village shop!

## 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.*

### **Saturday 11th May:**

Big Marcham Weekend at noon on Anson Field

### **Thursday 16th May :**

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

### **Thursday 23rd May :**

A visit to Buscot House at 2pm

### **Monday 27th May :**

*"The Lost Abbey of Eynsham"* - a talk by Steve  
 Parrinder in the Main Hall, Marcham Centre

### **Monday 10th June :**

A 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 in Main Hall, Marcham Centre

### **Saturday 13th July :**

Our Summer BBQ at 5pm (details will be emailed to  
 members)

### **Our Shop** *Written by Ronald Blythe (in the Chapter 'APRIL')*

**T**he retention of the village post-office-shop has of late become  
*the* rural essential. This vanished, and all is lost. Ours has been  
 tottering on the brink of oblivion for some time and since it is the  
 only store for several miles in all directions, we have been holding  
 our breath, myself particularly as it has been a crucial part of the  
 economy of Bottengoms Farm since the days when the order  
 included paraffin oil. Now all is saved. Faithful Margaret has  
 succeeded in passing on the business, and the familiar little place will  
 continue to buzz with our wants. The news deserves a peal of bells.  
 There are villages round here *sans* post-office-shop, *sans* school, *sans*  
 pub, *sans* much going on in the church beyond a monthly  
 Communion, *sans*, really, the right to style themselves 'village' any  
 more. I preach, though not in the pulpit, the duty of us all to buy  
 things in the village shop, to visit it weekly and to enjoy it for what  
 it is when in good hands, a holiday from the supermarket.