



# Marcham

## SOCIETY

March  
2026  
Volume 9  
Issue 3

### The March Talk



### “The History of RAF Abingdon”

*A talk by Alan Bovingdon-Cox*

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026 at 7.30 for 7.45pm  
Main Hall, Marcham Centre

RAF Abingdon was established as an airfield in 1932, serving as headquarters and the base for two bomber squadrons until the onset of World War II in 1939. Following the war, the airfield transitioned to Transport Command, operating aircraft such as the Dakota, York, Hastings, Beverley, and Andover.

Growing up near RAF Greenham Common sparked Alan's interest in aviation. In 1968, he moved to Abingdon and witnessed RAF Abingdon's final days as a Transport Command hub. From then until the airfield's closure in July 1992, he was captivated by its history and stories. His fascination continues today and he helps as a volunteer at the *Abingdon Air and Country Show* held each year on what remains of the airfield.



Thursday 12th February



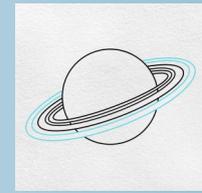
WELFORD PARK



Thank you to Shirley Eccles  
for organising this visit to view the gardens  
and the snowdrops, the church and the tea tent!

For more information about  
the fascinating history of Welford Park:  
<https://www.welfordpark.co.uk/history/>





## The Astronomy Meeting held on Wednesday 18th February

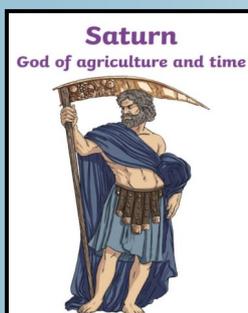
After the regular round-up of News and Members Matter, the main feature was the three-part feature: *Three Stories about Saturn*.

Simon started by relating the Greek (and then Roman) mythology around Saturn, the son of Uranus and Terra, descended from Chaos and Nox, and the terrible fate visited by Saturn on his father, giving rise to his association with a scythe (and the image associated with Old Father Time). Simon also showed the high position of planet Saturn in the ‘Seven Stars’ of the Ancients.

Jim laid out the early history of telescope observations of Saturn starting with Galileo and Huygens and what we know of the planet’s vital statistics – its low average density (lighter than water), short day length (a little over 10 hours) and 1,000mph winds. He also outlined the history of discovery of its many moons from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century; its iconic rings and what was deduced about their structure – all as observed from Earth.

Eric brought us up to date (and beyond) describing space missions launched to study Saturn, including Pioneer, Voyager I and II, and the Cassini-Huygens probes. He took us in close to the moons and the rings of Saturn, including a landing on Titan, and the astonishing discovery of volcanic activity on the moon Enceladus sending up plumes of water squeezed out from a sub-surface ocean and forming the diffuse E-ring, made of snow. Thank you to all who contributed to the meeting.

**Jim Asher**



**Copies of all the slides presented in the meeting are available by following the links on the Astronomy page of the Marcham Society website.**

The next Astronomy meeting is on **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March** at 7:30pm featuring “*Games in Space*” – a talk by Mark Buckley

## Those Other Village Voices

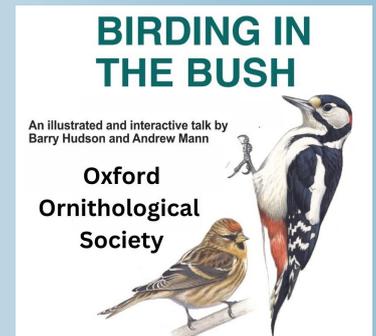
The Birds that share our Gardens with us



by **Barry Hudson and Andrew Mann**

Monday 26th February 2026

Barry Hudson, Secretary of the Oxford Ornithological Society, is a retired farmer. He spent much of his farming life locally and developed a special affection for farmland birds. He is author of *'Birding in the Bush'*. Barry and Andrew Mann, his copy editor and the Publicity Secretary of the OOS, take their presentations out to groups to promote the cause of birding locally. Their talk was an amusing 'double act' and it was engaging as well as educational.



**March 2026**

**Thursday 5th:** The Midweek Walk - from the Boar's Head in Ardington 12.30 pm  
(See below and for more information contact: [walks@marchamsociety.org.uk](mailto:walks@marchamsociety.org.uk))

**Wednesday 11th:** Tour of the Diamond Light Source Project at Harwell 10.30  
*NOW FULLY BOOKED*

**Wednesday 18th:** Astronomy Meeting at 7.30 in the Small Hall, Marcham Centre  
After a round-up of News and Members' Matter, "Space Games" by Mark Buckley

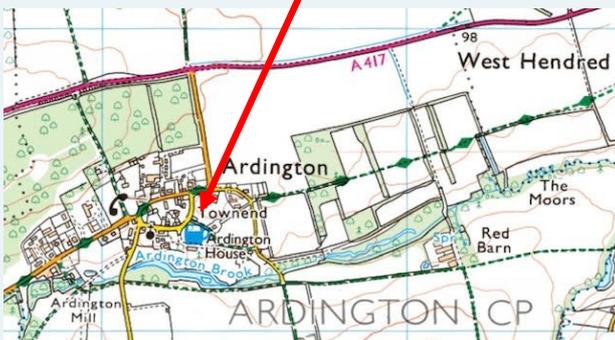
**Monday 23rd:** "The History of RAF Abingdon" - a talk by Alan Bovingdon-Cox  
at 7.45 in the Main Hall, Marcham Centre  
(see the front page)



Look out also for links, photos and reminders  
on the Marcham Society Facebook



**The March Midweek Walk**



**The Boar's Head  
Church Street  
Ardington, Wantage  
OX12 8QA**

<https://www.tbhardington.co.uk/>

**Abingdon Area Archaeology and History Society**



**The Medieval Streets  
of Abingdon**  
**Speaker: Roger Thomas**

7.45pm | **Thur 19 March**  
**The Northcourt Centre, OX14 1NS**  
£4 suggested donation  
Visitors welcome



[www.aaahs.org.uk](http://www.aaahs.org.uk)  
We welcome new members!  
Find us online: @AAAHsociety

