

marlow museum

Court Garden, Pound Lane, Marlow SL7 2AE
www.marlowmuseum.org Reg. Charity No. 1187853

Affiliated to the Association of Independent Museums
Working Towards Accreditation with Arts Council England

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2023



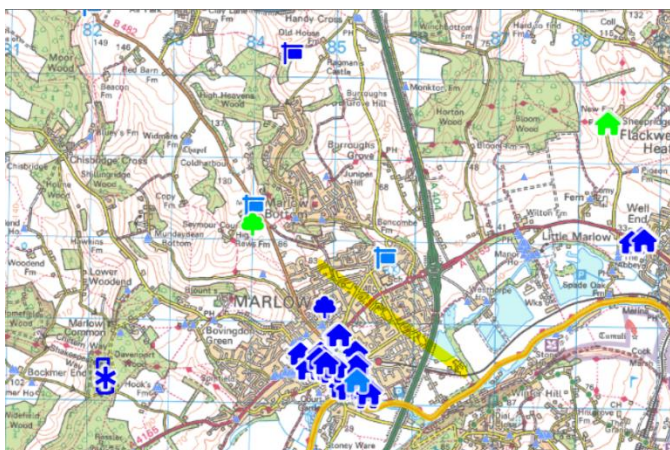
Thanks to MyMarlow

Bucks Local History Network Conference 7th October 2023

This was a first! Marlow Museum, the Marlow Society and Marlow Archaeology Group worked together to produce a joint display for a stand at this conference in Aylesbury. Part of this display is presently in the museum. The theme was Buckinghamshire's Local Heritage List.

This list 'will celebrate some of the buildings sites and structures that contribute towards making our communities and places special.' Anyone can nominate an 'asset' to be included.

If you'd like to know more, see the maps at <https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/buckinghamshire>
Example below:



Volunteers' News

- **Winter hours** start from November 1st, so from then until the end of February we will be open on Sundays 2-4pm only.
- **Monthly Volunteers' Get-togethers** in Court Garden Café have been well attended and are a useful way of exchanging news and updating the rota as well as getting to know new volunteers. 2-3pm on the fourth Wednesday of the month.
- **Message from Barbara:**
Thank you very much to all the loyal Duty Managers and Stewards who have made opening our museum possible this summer. I hope you have found it a rewarding experience.

I know some people have been discouraged by low numbers of visitors some days, but if we didn't open no-one would be able to come and those who do often make repeat visits or pass the word to their friends. If your shift is quiet there is a lot of Marlow's history available that you can catch up on, so you can impress the next visitor with your knowledge!

The visitors' book shows how much we are appreciated - read the comments if you need to know you *are* appreciated. Winter hours are fast approaching which will be a relief for me as this summer has been a bit difficult to fit people round holidays and the resurgence of COVID. Please let me know which winter Sundays you are available. Thank you.

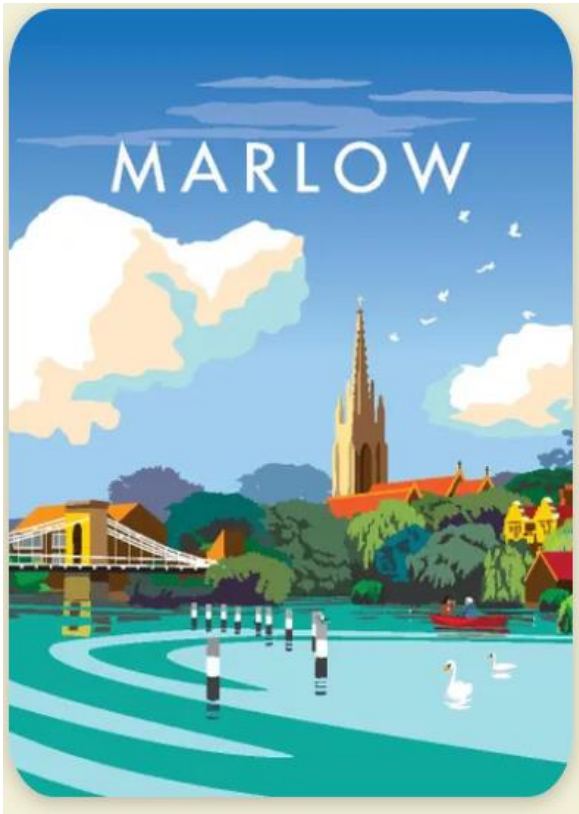
rota@marlowmuseum.uk or 01628 523444.

- **Volunteers' Christmas Lunch**
27 of us have signed up for lunch at Cote in Marlow on November 22nd at 12.30pm so it should be fun, but there is still time to join us if you've not booked – just email Della [by Nov.10th della.fitzgerald@marlowmuseum.org](mailto:della.fitzgerald@marlowmuseum.org)
- **December Sundays:** We will again have mulled wine and mince pies available for everyone. December 3rd, 10th, 17th and 31st.



Marlow Playing Cards

Have you heard about these? After the very successful Henley playing cards this year, Marlow is the next town chosen. The launch date is 24th November. Thanks to the generosity of one of our trustees, the Museum will have its own card in the pack. (Ssh, look for the 5 of Hearts!) They'll cost £8 a pack, soon on sale at the Museum, and could make ideal small presents at Christmas. Pre-order now!



New Freelance Museum Consultant

We are excited to welcome Emily Toettcher to work with us part time for the next few months. She was Director at Amersham Museum during their major extension and re-presentation a few years ago. You may have heard her speak about this at one of our AGMs.

Emily is going to help us review our approach to fundraising and find new ways to increase our income. We need to raise £10k a year just to keep running. She will also undertake an Audience Development Project for us. This means catering more successfully for our key types of visitors: families with children, schools, older people, and tourists. These developments will all contribute to our readiness for Accreditation with Arts Council England and provide a better museum for Marlow.

Museum Makeover

One of the things we'd like to do in 2024 is to re-arrange the inside of the museum to create more space for visitors and a better retail area. Next year we will have been open for 15 years (!) and it's time to give the museum a new look.

We are obviously constrained by financial considerations and the terms of our lease, but we think with some thought and a little effort we can give Marlow something better. If you have views about this, or would like to help, please let us know.

And introducing: Our Vice-Chairman's Blog

Marlow Museum is going through interesting times. This week, I had a meeting with [travel writer Duncan JD Smith](#), a regular visitor to Marlow who is resident in Vienna. Duncan's books are fascinating and the 'Only in' series are a really attractive proposition for those who like to seek out the unusual nooks and crannies of 'go to' cities around the world.

Duncan has donated 5 of his books for Marlow Museum to sell: - 'Only in' London; Dubrovnik; Edinburgh; Vienna and Seville. I was delighted to see that I have an acknowledgement in the latter.

In addition, Duncan has donated a Marlow stainless steel sugar spoon, the kind that you'd find in 'tourist traps', which he acquired from his mother in Sheffield – a 'coals to Newcastle' kind of 'how did it get there?' story!



One of our visitors – Duncan J D Smith, 'The Urban Explorer'

We met in the 'Duke of Clarence' on Marlow High Street where I'd promised to take him around the 38 reproduction paintings, framed illustrations and

murals, installed in the previous re-fit when McMullen's transformed the pub from 'Baroosh'.

Imagine my shock when we found very little left of what had been an impressive collection. Even the gory murals of the execution of the 1st Duke of Clarence (buried at Tewkesbury Abbey) had been removed or covered over with wood panelling. Such a loss from what had been practically a 'permanent' museum exhibition.

My mission now is to find out what's happened to the display. The history of George Plantagenet, 1st Duke of Clarence is linked in Marlow & Bisham's history. It's hard enough knowing that location of the remains of George's son, the 17th Earl of Warwick (beheaded at the Tower of London) can't be accessed on the Bisham Abbey site.

Sharing a duty with Adam Baxter, at the museum, is always a rewarding pleasure and Wednesday was no exception. Adam divides much of his time between the museum and the Marlow Society. He introduced me to the '[Marlow Ancestors' blog: https://marlowancestors.blogspot.com/](https://marlowancestors.blogspot.com/) diligently maintained by two sisters who have been researching Marlow families and organisations for a long time now and who, I must confess, I knew nothing about. It's a real treasure trove of information on a wide range of historical information on the town.

One of the bonuses of being a steward or duty manager at the museum is to meet our visitors, so many of whom bring their life stories with them. A case in point for Adam and me was a couple who spend their retirement days between Oregon and Arizona. The husband worked in air traffic control for the USAAF over here and his wife had been brought up in Marlow.

On the mention of Oregon, I leapt into a discussion about the coastal redwoods in that area and proudly mentioned the two examples that I'm growing (20cm high at the moment). Recently, I've discovered that Danesfield House has a fine example in its grounds. Tours of the garden are, on occasions, available and well-subscribed.

For a few years now I've been making a monthly radio appearance on Friday afternoons on [Wycombe Sound FM](#) (106.6). This is always on a Friday afternoon, in a slot between 3.15pm and

3.45pm. In this I update the listeners on Marlow Museum's latest news.

It was pleasing to see how the Marlow Donkey '150' film show at Marlow RBL on September 9, attracted a healthy number of visitors. The town walk and merchandise stall made for a full day of celebration following the previous sell-out event at the Liston Hall.

It was a remarkably busy local history day at the museum on the hottest day of the year, with the prospect of a visit by [Holy Trinity Year 6](#) pupils. We had 90 pupils and their teachers and support staff booked in. By the time it came to the afternoon, it became obvious that the last 30 were going to have to remain on the school site for health and safety reasons, so the experience for them didn't happen till the following week.

I understand that at Great Marlow School, judging by the numbers of their young historians visiting recently, they've been set work for the half term, also on local history. Bring it on!

Of course, very soon, from November to March, the museum will be on Winter Opening hours, Sundays and Bank Holidays 2-4pm.

Research is gathering pace for the '[Writers in Marlow' exhibition](#) which will be launched from the end of March. Heather Adams, Sophie Richardson-Dennett and myself have decided our roles in the documentation of this and welcome any contribution of artefacts and materials. Members of Marlow Museum, Marlow Writers and the Marlow Society are going to be involved in contributing to this landmark project.

It is planned to produce a 'road show' version of this exhibition for use in schools, care homes and community organisations.

Dave Part, Vice-Chair, October 2023



*Best wishes from Mike, Della, Barbara,
Dave & all the Trustees*