

Chairman's Report to 2025 AGM

2024 was another very busy and successful year for the History Club.

We continued our programme of bi-monthly talks on the diverse topics of the Chearsley pilgrims, the Royal Bucks Hospital, the Suffragettes, air travel safety, medieval bee-keeping and trench humour in the Great War. All were well attended and, by popular demand, we have invited John Flewin back in November to give us the talk on the Royal Bucks Hospital again as several people missed it.

Our calendar this year entitled "Marston Through the Seasons" once again proved extremely popular and was virtually sold out by Christmas. Many thanks to David Bayly for again dealing with the internet company to get it ready for publication, a task which can sometimes prove very frustrating.

Our thanks to John Spargo for his two talks to U3A members from Thame and Wendover who visited the village this year and also to the committee who provided refreshments.

Our website continues to generate a lot of interest and hosts enquiries from people around the world. It remains our major portal for links outside the village and helps with sales of publications, family history searches and general research. This year, for example, we were contacted by a gentleman writing about his grandfather who had been a pupil at Schorne College, the private school sited in the churchyard which was demolished in the 1930s. On a typical day the site gets between 20 and 30 views. Occasionally these might spike to over 50 when there has been an event such as Remembrance Day or some History postings on Facebook. A very big thank you to John for monitoring the webpage and promoting the club on The North Marston Community FaceBook Group which has nearly 1600 members so assures the club of wide-ranging publicity.

Without doubt the biggest event of 2024 for the History Club was the erection of the two bronze plaques on the outside of the Memorial Hall commemorating the dead of the First and Second World Wars and the Malayan Conflict. When we came up with this idea and designed the plaques we thought it would be apt for their unveiling and dedication to coincide with the centenary of the opening of the Memorial Hall in 1924. Remembrance Sunday seemed the perfect occasion. We are indebted to Neil Tuckett for all his help arranging for the foundry in Scotland to cast the bronze plaques and to James Tattam for putting them up. We would not have been able to do this without the generous donations we received which David has already mentioned in the Treasurer's report. As I said in my introductory speech on Remembrance Day: 'In the Bucks Herald newspaper article about the opening of the Memorial Hall in April 1924 was written "It is

hoped in due course to erect a memorial tablet in commemoration of the men who died in the service of their country". Now, 100 years later, that has been accomplished'.

2025 sees the 15th anniversary of the founding of the History Club and the 11th anniversary of the publication of "The North Marston Story". David and I would like to thank the Committee for all their hard work and support throughout the year as well as the band of distributors who deliver our newsletters throughout the village. And to end, we'd like to thank all of our members who continue to support us and help keep the show on the road.:

*Sue Chaplin
Co-Chair*