



The
Marcham
Society

DECEMBER 2021
Volume 4, Issue 10

Newsletter



Our Christmas Party will be a little different this year due to Covid, but a party nonetheless to celebrate the season of goodwill!

We will provide a bar, decorations, a Christmas Quiz and carols.

We ask you to provide a dish and come ready to celebrate.

Party frocks, glitter, Christmas jumpers and hats will all add to the fun.

Covid safeguards prevent us having a self-serve buffet style, so we ask that you don't bring such food as canapés, dips and crisps.

However, dishes that can be served out, such as quiches, pizzas, drumsticks, sausage rolls, mince pies, stollen, panettone, Christmas cake, chocolate cake would be fine. But these are only suggestions, you will, no doubt, have many other special recipes to share.

We need to know numbers in advance, so please email shirley.marsoc@gmail.com with the details.

We look forward to seeing you there.

OUR THIRD TALK IN THE MARCHAM CENTRE

Richard Venables: "His role as High Sheriff of Oxford"

22nd November 2021

The High Sheriff of Oxford is an ancient and important post and Richard Venables said that he was honoured to accept this voluntary, non-political, role in 2018. The Marcham Society was therefore pleased to welcome him to our November meeting to find out more about this unusual office and we were treated to a most informative and highly entertaining talk.

It is likely that the post of "Shire Reeve" was established by King Aethelred in 995 A.D. for a number of purposes: the collection of taxes, law and order and raising an army. Today, the appointment is made by the Queen, following an unusual tradition from Queen Victoria's reign by simply pin pricking the ratification document.

There are a number of different ranks of Sheriff, with Lord Lieutenant being the highest, just above High Sheriff. Thankfully, he said, the obligation of rounding up cattle on Port Meadow falls to the 'Sheriff of Oxford' and not to him as the High Sheriff !

Like previous High Sheriffs, Richard donned an impressive costume for certain occasions, complete with ceremonial sword. He told us how he avoided great expense and managed to obtain a second hand costume from the High Sheriffs' "Dark Web" and he then explained his difficulty in donning those black tights, often in confined quarters before an event!

During his year long tenure, Richard continued to work full-time in his professional role. Clearly, his valuable skills and connections in business and sport enabled him to enhance many different people's lives through a variety of local organisations including his chosen charity, children with autism. His term of office involved 350 engagements and he also had 65 speeches to make. There were many high points, such as the Queen's garden party and prison visiting. Of particular importance was the High Sheriff's obligation to act as the Returning Officer for parliamentary elections.

Richard also had his own, personal goals during his year in office: to plant a tree, open a building and launch a boat... this last wish he managed to achieve during the dedication ceremony for Oriel College when he named their Women's VIII boat, "*The Blessed Mary*".

Although no longer High Sheriff, Richard has continued to support local organisations and is particularly concerned about areas of deprivation in the county, emphasising that levelling up is certainly needed. Many thanks to Richard and also to the Marcham Society technical team for helping to make the November meeting a most enjoyable one.

Rosemary Harwood

PHOTOS FROM RICHARD VENABLES' TALK



Ceremonial Duties



Cultural Challenges



Sporting Challenges



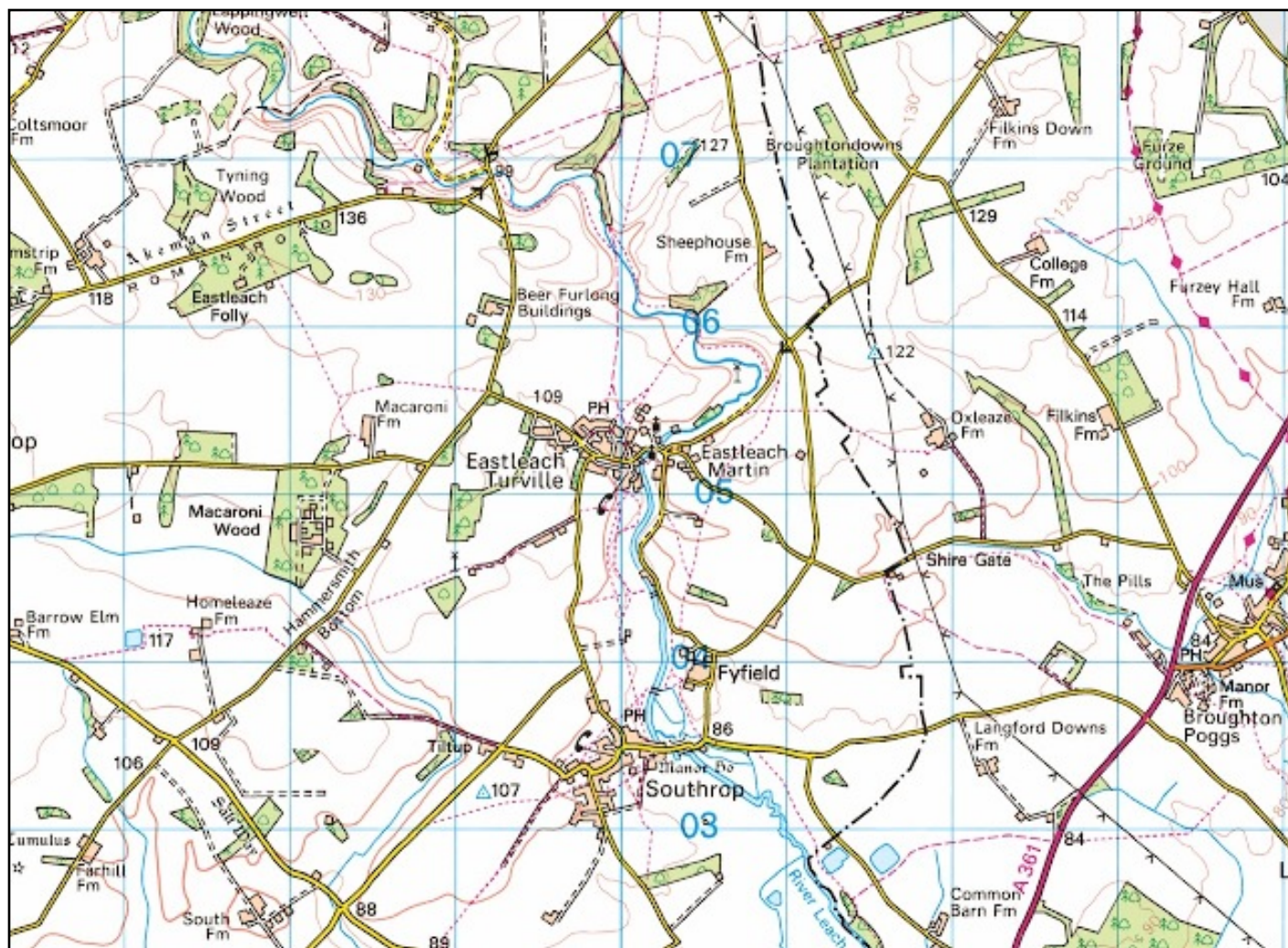
Official Engagements



Mid-Week Walk from Eastleach Turville

Eric and Sheila Dunford organised another enjoyable midweek walk on Thursday 11th November. The meeting place was *The Victoria Inn*, Eastleach Turville, which is about four miles north of Lechlade. It was an excellent pub with delicious food!

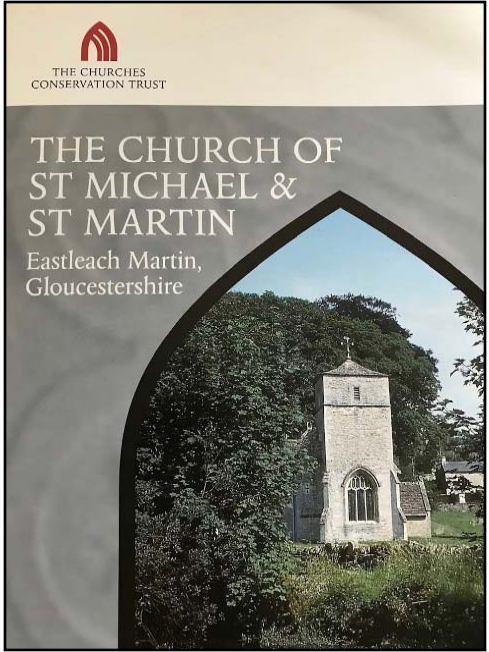
We all arrived at the usual time of 12.30 and after lunch we started walking up the Leach valley towards Akeman Street, passing by the two fine churches either side of the river. The walk was a very picturesque circuit of about 5½ miles (see the OS Map below).



**The Victoria Inn,
Eastleach Turville,
Near Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 3NQ**



A FEW PHOTOS FROM THE MID-WEEK WALK



Many thanks to Bartle Frere for the photographs — more are online, available upon request!

FUTURE DATES



The Christmas Party in the Small Hall at the Marcham Centre

**Monday 6th December,
6.30-10 pm**

We welcome all members to join us for a buffet meal, drinks, a quiz and some entertainment during the evening. It promises to be a jolly occasion.

All those who plan to attend, please sign up to bring a dish for the buffet, either savoury or sweet.

There is no fee, drinks will be free, but we do need to know numbers.

So please let us know by email to shirley.marsoc@gmail.com or phone 01865 391180 if you plan to attend and what you will bring to the party.

Please know that all possible Covid safety measures will be in place just as at all our talks.

Details of the protocols are available on the programme page of the Society website.

Dates for the Diary

Unless otherwise notified, future meetings will be held in the Main Hall of the Marcham Centre (7.15 for 7.45 start)

2021

Monday 6th December, 6.30-10 pm :
Christmas Party
in the Small Hall at the Marcham Centre

2022

Monday 24th January :
Annual Lecture : James Gilbert describes his life and work as Consultant Transplant and Vascular Access Surgeon

Monday 28th February :
"The Watlington Hoard"
by James Mather

Monday 28th March :
"The Lost Villages of Oxfordshire"
by Dr Muriel Pilkington

Monday 25th April :
Members' Evening - speakers to be announced

Monday 23rd May :
"High Society Scandals in Oxfordshire"
by Julie Ann Godson

Monday 27th June :
"The History of Kingston Baguize House"
by Virginia Grant

Saturday 16th July :
Summer BBQ