

MARCHAM SOCIETY ANNUAL LECTURE

During a stimulating evening many questions were posed as to when a hobby becomes an obsession or what is the difference between an anorak and an expert. With a subject entitled "Buses and Transport" you might have expected an empty hall but far from it, for anybody that knows Eddie Shirras was perceptive enough to know there was an interesting evening ahead.

To listen to anyone that knows a subject intimately is always an enlightening experience but to listen to someone talk enthusiastically but still question his sanity in following his interest was truly memorable. From a small boy Eddie has always been interested in transport, a legacy of his childhood growing up within a "steam-powered family". Without doubt those early rides on steam engines fired an imagination and interest that has not waned over the years.

To have photographed nearly every bus that has driven the roads of Scotland, to know all the route numbers and to be able to tell the original garage from the registration number as well as knowing all the timetables they operated under, is well beyond the comprehension of the layman, but to enthusiasts it demonstrates the intensity in which you become involved with something that truly stimulates you.

For any person who has ever travelled on the London Transport network prior to deregulation will be familiar with the Red and Green buses that operate in-either inner or outer London. Were you confused as to where services ran and why. If in doubt "Just ask Eddie".

It's not only the bus companies and buses however but the social impact public transport has on a community that really stimulates Eddie and if you can ever spare a few minutes, just ask him about the bus timetable changes and the effects they have on our own local community. Be prepared for a detailed overview and, by way of good advice, don't ask if you have a bus to catch!

I personally considered it a privilege to have been in the audience for this talk and for those that have listened to the enthusiasm in which Eddie delivers a sermon will realise that a talk given on a subject that is a real passion to him was an evening to cherish.

I personally can't wait for another talk about the social change a well-run transport system can provide. Perhaps we could invite some local councils and transport companies to attend and perhaps some of that magic wisdom will rub off on them.

MALCOLM DENTON

MARCHAM SOCIETY WALK

Midweek Walk, Thursday April 8th

The next Marcham Society Midweek Walk will be on the first Thursday of April. We will meet at the Crown and Horns Inn in East Ilsley (Map Ref: SU 493812) at 12.30pm to eat or 1.30pm for 5 mile walk on the Berkshire Downs, along the Ridgeway and back through West Ilsley. New walkers are always very welcome. Members free, non-members £1. Ring Eric Dunford on 391439 for lifts and further details.

SUNSHINE CLUB

March: The social afternoon, started with the AGM which went well. We would like to thank members for prompt payment of subscriptions, which is a help. Further details of the meeting will be written up in the minutes book and will be read out later.

After this we had the sale table which was cakes, tins, jars etc, these didn't take long to clear. Thanks as always to those who brought and gave, this was followed by a nice buffet tea, and ended with a raffle.

This month we've had quite a few birthdays with 2 specials. Each received a card plus plants to the specials. The youngest member of the club had her 50th birthday and hear she had a lovely time; and from the youngest to the eldest. She was Elsie Carter who reached the great age of 96 years and has been poorly and in the hospital, but pleased to say is now back home and with help is managing – our best wishes to her.

Florrie Batchor is in hospital, we hope she will soon be on the mend and back home amongst her friends. A card has been sent from the club. We have received a donation from Joyce Smith to the club, our thanks to her.

Sadly, we've been shocked with the sad news of the sudden death of Peggy Tarasewicz, affectionately called Tiddly Wink, her name not being easy to pronounce. She had only been amongst as a short while, but lived life to the full and enjoyed coming to the club. Certainly made an impact when she walked into the room, will really be missed. A card of condolence was sent to the family. Lots of people went to the funeral, it was a lovely service and her grandson's tribute on her life was very nice and meant a lot to those close friends. We would like to say thank you to the family for having the service in Marcham Church, it was such a comfort to those friends she had made while here and also a help for the family as well being able to meet those friends and see how happy she was amongst us all. It was a lovely send off, she would have been very proud and for once lost for words!

JOY CROOK

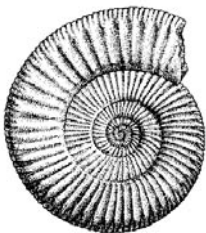
FOR SALE

A 14" hyper BMX universal boy's bicycle for age 4-6 years. Chrome and blue with detachable stabilisers, front and rear caliper brakes. As new, never been used. £25. Call 391457.

BLOOD DONORS – CAN YOU DO MORE?

We are all used to seeing signs calling for more people to give whole blood, but what about becoming a platelet donor? If you are already a blood donor and have no problems with fainting or bruising, are between 18 and 60 years old, weigh over 60kg and can spare about 2 hours every month – you could donate platelets at the JR Hospital, Oxford. Platelets are essential to stop bleeding and bruising in people who have leukaemia, bone marrow disorders or are being treated with chemotherapy.

For more information, call the national helpline 0845 7 711711 or ask at your next blood donor session.

 <p><i>The Marcham Society</i></p>	<p>David Clark will be showing us how to read buildings for clues to their past.</p>
<p><i>The Institute, North Street Tuesday April 20th 2004, 7.45pm</i></p>	<p>Non-members £1 Further details: Eric Dunford (391439) or Judith Fontaine (391275)</p>