

Are you interested in Marcham and its surroundings?

Did you know



that **The Marcham Society** has published a number of booklets on the history and natural history of the locality?

The latest one is **Coral Rag 5** which has a series of articles commemorating the 60th anniversary of the end of the 2nd World War, as well as articles on the gravestones and plants in the churchyard and an update on the Manor Farm excavations. **£3.50**

Also available:

Coral Rag 4, Coral Rag 3 & Coral Rag 2 all **£3.50**

The Ayris Family Receipt Book **£3**

A Tale of Two Benches **£3**

Any 4 for £10

All a fascinating read about the village and the local area.

Available at Marcham Post Office and Stores, at Cumbers Farm Shop, Manor Farm, and at Marcham Society meetings.

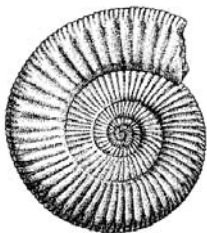
HISTORY OF HARWELL SINCE 1954

At the AGM on 13 September, the Marcham Society welcomed back Nick Hance, recently retired Public Relations Manager at Harwell. Following on from his talk on the earlier history of the Harwell site, given last year, Nick's "second episode" began with the setting up of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) in 1954.

In 1956, the site had a dramatic event when a US Airforce plane mistook the old Harwell runways for RAF Abingdon and landed thereon. A large crowd assembled to watch the plane take off again, aided by rockets attached to provide extra acceleration. Unfortunately the rockets on one side of the plane failed and it veered towards the Harwell buildings. Only the skill of the pilot avoided a tragedy. The plane was removed by road, directions to Abingdon and Benson painted on the runway and aircraft forbidden to land in future.

The Calder Hall nuclear power station was opened in 1957. Half of its capacity was in support of the atom bomb project and half for electricity generation. Much of the development work had been carried out at Harwell and in the late '50s the site built its own Materials Testing Reactors and by 1960 6,000 people worked at Harwell.

Work on the defence programme had reduced, but it was realised that much of the expertise built up could be adapted for other uses. The Science & Technology Act of 1965 allowed work to be undertaken for paying customers. Under the directorship of Walter Marshall, all kinds of research and development were carried out. Remote handling technology developed for use in active facilities was used to design robots for remote bomb disposal. Drying techniques were used for everything from restoring waterlogged books to improving the flow of custard powder. Materials development made cars more energy-efficient and produced longer-lasting hip replacements. Carbon dating established that the famous Round Table was not King Arthur's. Crack detection helped show why Big Ben's clock parts fatigued some years ago and established an annual checking process still going today (think about it as you put your clocks back). On a more sombre note, Harwell's computer technology helped pinpoint the cause of the King's Cross fire. Since the 1990s, Harwell has had the challenge of clearing the site of left-over munitions from RAF days as well as chemical and active wastes from more recent activities. True to form, they have used the knowledge gained to offer expertise to other organisations. The building of the new Diamond facility is keeping the site in the forefront of the newest technology - genetic research.

 <p><i>The Marcham Society</i></p>	<p>The Geology of Oxfordshire by Dr Jane Worrall of The Oxfordshire Geology Trust</p> <p>Come and learn about Oxfordshire's Jurassic past when dinosaurs roamed the Thames Valley and Marcham was on a coral ridge.</p>
<p>All Saints' Church Tuesday 11th October 2005, 7.45pm</p>	<p>Non-members £1 www.marchamsociety.org.uk Further details: Janey Cumber (391327) or Judith Fontaine (391275)</p>