

MARDEN SOCIETY MEETINGS 2020

| Date | Subject | Speaker |
|----------------------------|---|------------------|
| Wed 26 th Feb | Back to their Rootes | Steve McArragher |
| Wed 25 th March | Margaret of Anjou | James Dickenson |
| Wed 22 nd April | History of Anaesthesia | John Dickenson |
| Wed 27 th May | Winston Churchill and Chartwell | Paul Laundry |
| Wed 24 th June | Summer Outing TBD | |
| Wed 23 rd Sept | Hopping in Kent and the Hartlake Disaster | Geoff Doel |
| Wed 28 th Oct | The Dambusters | Guy Bartlett |
| Wed 25 th Nov | Wildlife around Marden | Ray Morris |

MO'S (NOT) MOANS

Actually not a moan this time (although I have plenty brewing!) but a pat on the back for our young Kent police. Two years ago I was stuck in the mud having been diverted down a one horse country road due to an incident. Attempts to bounce me out had failed when a police car from the incident turned up. 2 young policemen jumped out, bounced my car back on firm ground - job done.

Last Saturday, 25th January I had travelled back from Ashford in rather foggy conditions. To my horror Linton Hill was closed (due in fact to a rather unpleasant happening in Marden and 2 criminals making their getaway). I diverted left at Coxheath and spent 20 foggy minutes in narrow muddy deserted roads until finally I arrived back halfway down Linton Hill (I had flagged down 3 strange cars asking for directions - one of whom was a Bulgarian lady who was as lost as me) to find cars were coming up Linton Hill so I decided to turn right towards Marden.

Immediately a police car drove up and said traffic was only going one way, i.e. up the hill. Therefore he insisted I go up not down. I refused and explained why. 'Follow me' he said, so with the Blues flashing he stopped the oncoming traffic and conducted me safely down the Hill. Phew! Back home.

I think our police get a lot of criticism, so it is good to congratulate them on occasion. Also on the subject of the police, I had a phone call the other day telling me there is a warrant out for my arrest, but suggesting I ring the number quoted when I could talk to someone about my felony. Another scam obviously, but I wonder how many will ring that number and be charged exorbitant sums of money.

Mo Clayton

The Parish Pump

THE JOURNAL OF THE MARDEN SOCIETY – FEBRUARY 2020

Our first talk in 2020 will be “**Back to their Rootes**” by **Steve McArragher on Wednesday 26th February**. From humble beginnings in a Goudhurst workshop, the Rootes brothers, Billy and Reggie built up a worldwide motoring empire. They were not serious engineers but very shrewd businessmen who judged the markets well. At its peak in 1960, the Rootes Group was the fourth largest vehicle manufacturer in Britain, with over 10% of the UK market, and exported to over 180 countries worldwide.

Then on **25th March James Dickenson will tell us about “Margaret of Anjou”**. Margaret was the Queen of England and nominally Queen of France by marriage to King Henry VI from 1445 to 1461 and again from 1470 to 1471. She was one of the principal figures in the Wars of the Roses and at times personally led the Lancastrian faction.

The meetings will be in the **Vestry Hall at 7.30 p.m.**, with refreshments and raffle as usual. The full programme for 2020 is shown on the back page.

AND FINALLY, A REMINDER THAT 2020 SUBS ARE NOW DUE – STILL ONLY £5 per person.

DON'T SNEEZE AT THE MICROPHONE

In our final talk of 2019 Wilf Lower gave a nostalgic and enjoyable review of entertainment from the Victorian age to the present day. At the end of the nineteenth century life was hard, so to cheer themselves up people would gather around the piano and sing. About this time the phonograph appeared. Drink was cheap and public houses would open a room for variety



acts to encourage people to come and drink and spend money. These became the Music Halls. The acts would move around the country providing work for many people. With the onset of WWI tickets for these shows were taxed and individuals joined together to create revue shows.

About that time the gramophone and records were becoming popular with singers like Nellie Melba making records. Silent films were being shown but live performers were concerned about the lack of interaction. By 1922 silent films were

giving way to talking films and radio broadcasts were becoming popular. At that time the BBC had no-one to run the Entertainment side until Gerald Cook took over and introduced the BBC Concert Party and the big names started to appear. These variety shows continued until WWII when they started to change again into shows like ITMA and comedies like ‘Much Binding in the Marsh’ reflecting the life and humour of the different branches of the forces.

After the war radio flourished with many acts from the theatre moving over, the big bands having regular slots and ex-servicemen providing new stars. The advent of the Goons changed the comedy format but Management preferred the established artists and comedians were often not popular. They were forced to find work at places like the Windmill Theatre and Servicemen clubs. New scriptwriters were in demand, who created a huge problem with bad language and so the Green Book Policy was introduced. This provided a series of rules regarding language and behaviour which must be followed when performing at the microphone, one of these, the title of the talk, was 'Don't sneeze at the microphone'. New faces and new sitcoms were introduced but the golden age of radio was interrupted by the coming of television. In 1936 there were 2,000 sets in London. By 1946 15,000 licences were issued but the 1953 Coronation boosted TV, so licence numbers increased dramatically and theatres and Music Halls started to close.



In 1955 ITV was introduced, its adverts providing the money to fund bigger and better shows and pay for the big stars. The popular radio shows moved over to TV and all the big entertainment was now to be found on the screen. The shows got bigger and more expensive to produce with shows like the Eurovision Song Contest, the Royal Variety Show and Sunday Night at the Palladium. The singers of the Music Hall became the pop stars of the screen and once established, the lengthy list of comedians and variety acts found a ready audience. So, entertainment has moved back to the sitting room but can now be found on a small screen rather than round a piano.

Barbara Dubois

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

The 2020 AGM on 22nd January was very well attended by some 33 members. Chairman Mo welcomed all to the meeting and thanked the members of the Committee for their work during the year. She commented on our successful year of talks, and especially the summer outing to Allington Castle. Once again she asked for volunteers to join the committee, and for someone to take over her role as Chairman.

Mike presented the annual accounts which showed a healthy current balance of £2395. Last year's deficit was reversed with an increase in income to £413. Speaker fees and hall hire were slightly up, but total expenses down, mainly due to purchase of the projector and production of walking guides last year. However income from sales of the Walking Group guides has now covered 75% of the printing costs so they should go into profit soon.

Carol reported that we had lost 5 members this year but recruited 10 so total membership is now 117. Efforts to recruit members from the new estates had not been successful, but we did have one new member at the meeting. There are two options for our summer visit: - PROVENDER HOUSE, a 13th century house and walled garden near Faversham. The house provides a fascinating record of English life over 7 centuries and is currently home to the Russian princess HH Princess Olga_Romanoff, a great-niece of Tsar Nicholas II. - HERSTMONCEAUX CASTLE, is a 15th century moated red brick castle in East Sussex, one of the earliest examples of brick buildings in England. It is set in 300 acres, with extensive themed and formal gardens to enjoy.

Members were asked to show their preference for one of these.

Reports from the History and Walking Groups were presented. Steve gave a short planning report, explaining that the **Marden Neighbourhood Plan** had now reached the Referendum stage, when all residents may vote on it. In fact, Polling Cards from MBC appeared the next day! Steve urged members to vote to accept it, as that will give the Parish Council a much bigger say in planning matters. Finally, all Committee members had agreed to continue, and were elected en bloc, as in the table below. Following the formal meeting, members enjoyed a wine and cheese social event.

Steve McArragher

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| Chairman: | Mo Clayton | 831529 | tillergirl2913@aol.com |
| Secretary: | Steve McArragher | 831007 | steve.mcarragher@btinternet.com |
| Treasurer: | Mike Lockett | 833346 | opplock@btinternet.com |
| Membership Sec. | Carol Hogg | 832900 | carol.hogg@hotmail.com |
| Members | Barbara Dubois | 833058 | barbara@dubois.org.uk |
| | Diane Fisher | 831672 | w.fisher@btinternet.com |

MARDEN AT CHRISTMAS

Christmas came to Marden on 7th December last and the Marden society played its part. The day prior Mo, Steve, Mike and Barbara set up and decorated a Christmas tree in the church. Hilarity ensued when Robin Judd arrived and announced he was representing the W.I. I'm afraid we pulled his leg a bit, sorry Robin.

Saturday proved to be a perfect day weather wise. The Silver Band and carols kicked off proceedings with the Parish Council elves providing hot drinks. The Morris Dancers were as entertaining as ever although once people realised that Father Christmas was going to appear only at the Memorial Hall the audience started drifting in that direction. This didn't deter Weald of Kent and Boughton Monchelsea Morris as they were having as much fun as those of us watching and joining in.

Once in the hall the usual suspects manned various tables. Mo, Mike and myself were on the Marden Society Wine Bottle game, but as Catherine was flying solo for the first hour or so I moved to the History Group table until reinforcements arrived. Steve, Carol and Barbara ran the FOMH treasure hunt table. The idea behind having a presence there (apart from having fun) is to advertise and try to attract new residents of the village to become members. The fact that we made a small profit using only empty bottles is a welcome bonus.

Marden at Christmas is an illustration of what our village does best – all sorts of organisations, groups and individuals joining in:- on the way from the Allens past the Devil in the stocks, the Christmas trees and soup in the church, the Scouts with their marvellous smores, Matt and his burgers behind the hall and the shops and pubs. The hall was full of tables and the W.I. café was very popular with their home-made cakes. I believe Father Christmas was kept busy until the very end of the afternoon. He certainly needs a lot of stamina.

Thanks must go to the Parish Council for organising another fantastic day.

Diane Fisher