

marlow museum

Court Garden, Pound Lane, Marlow SL7 2AE
www.marlowmuseum.org Reg. Charity No. 1187853

Affiliated to the Association of Independent Museums
Working Towards Accreditation with Arts Council England

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2024



Part of the Marlow Bottom Scarecrow Festival, October 2024

**We are now in Winter Opening Hours:
Sundays only from 2-4pm from November
to the end of February**



'Writers in Marlow - From Frankenstein to Noddy': On display from July '24 to March '25.

This exhibition has been very well received and was one of the finalists for *Best Exhibition* in the Bucks Culture Sparks Awards! Children enjoy colouring characters from some of the books and many visitors have been surprised at the range of writers through the centuries who have made the Marlow area their home. We were delighted to have a visit from one of them – Chris Bradford, author of the

Young Samurai, Bodyguard and *Soul* series, 'a multi-million copy selling author whose life goal is #GettingKidsReading.'

The exhibition includes a unique watercolour, on loan from Eton Museum, of the *Don Juan*, the boat in which the poet Shelley lost his life when it overturned in a violent storm off the coast of Italy in 1822. His famous poem '*Ozymandias*' was written while he lived in West Street, Marlow, where his wife Mary Shelley was finishing her novel '*Frankenstein*'.

If you're planning a Sunday afternoon stroll, call in at the museum and buy a *Literary Trail* to guide you round Marlow, highlighting all the places related to the writers in our exhibition. There's a *Writers in Marlow* booklet too.

Community Survey 2024

We are always seeking to make the museum more appealing to visitors and encourage more volunteers too. This year's survey was very helpful: we have raised local awareness of the museum, so that 86% of respondents know there is a museum in Marlow and 48% had visited it, a third of these more than once. Many of the comments about improving it, such as adding interactive displays, are already in our Forward Plan. Unfortunately we can't wave a magic wand and make it bigger, as everyone would like.

Thank you to everyone who took part. Those who completed the survey and left their email address were entered into a prize draw. The lucky winner was Sue Berry, seen right, collecting her prize.



Don't forget, on December Sundays (1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th) we offer visitors minced pies and mulled wine! Come and join us.



Welcome!

Since the AGM in July, there have been several changes and some people have taken up new roles. So we are delighted to welcome:

- new Secretary and Trustee, **Jacqueline Roberts.**



Della will continue as Trustee with responsibility for Accreditation.

- new Researcher, **Heather Adams.** Yes, the lady who created the 'Writers in Marlow' exhibition, the booklet and the Literary Trail.



- new Volunteer Rota Supervisor, **Barry Wilson.** He manages the new online Rota, Three Rings.



Our sincere thanks to **Barbara Wallis** for all she did managing the rota over the last many years.

- new Collections Volunteer – **Claire Rabanal.** She will help Della and Rebekah with the inventory of our collection and the transfer of the database to the collections management system for museums, Modes Compact.



- new Data Protection Volunteer, **Janet Cursi**, who is also a steward.
- new Duty Managers – **Barry Wilson, Jackie Guttfeld** and **Bruce Vaughan.**
- new website content makers, **Tony Mitchelmore** and **Heather Adams.** We are having a new website, built by the company it'seeze, which should go live before the end of the year. They built the new Marlow Society website so we expect it to be good.
- new Marketing and Publicity Volunteers – **Bruce Vaughan, Jackie Guttfeld** and **Sue Winter.**
- new leaflet designer, **Kate Hull.**

Thanks to all of them.

Volunteer Training

At least twelve of our volunteers have recently attended training sessions with Della to refresh knowledge of:

- using the Three Rings rota;
- opening and closing routines;
- greeting visitors and helping them enjoy the museum;

- welcoming children and helping them enjoy the museum;
- where useful things are kept in the museum;
- completing the Day Book;
- using the SumUp and GoodBox machines;
- the Volunteers' Agreement;
- answering visitors' questions;
- what to do if someone brings an item to donate to the museum;
- who's who in the museum;
- helping people with a disability enjoy the museum;
- what to do if someone has an accident or becomes ill;
- what to do if you feel threatened;
- what to do if the alarm goes off;
- what is Museum Accreditation and why is the museum trying to become Accredited.



RIP Michael Eagleton



We were all extremely saddened to hear of the recent death of Michael Eagleton, one of Marlow's true legends, who was a great friend of the Museum. This photo was taken by one of our members, Peter Kemp, in May 2024, when Michael opened our '20 Remarkable Marlovians' exhibition, celebrating the Museum's 15th anniversary. Michael was someone who could always answer

questions about the history of Marlow and could usually provide a photo or two on the subject as well.

Here he is at the opening of our Story of Marlow exhibition in 2019.

Our sincere condolences go to his widow, Ann.



A Message from the Chairman

Dear Members, Volunteers and Supporters,

I trust you are all making preparations for the forthcoming Yuletide celebrations. The museum is in its Winter mode at present but that is not to say we are inactive.

Your committees meet regularly to deal with day-to-day management matters as well as preparing for the New Year, including new exhibitions and displays. As always nowadays our priority is preparing to submit our application for Accreditation in February. That means the Trustees and Management Committee are drafting the final but important elements of the submission.

Have you signed up for the 'Volunteers' Christmas Lunch at Cote Brasserie on 27 November? This will replace our usual monthly meeting in the M Cafe at the Leisure Centre. The December meeting would have been 25 December but I guess we will all be busy then, so its January for the next coffee or hot chocolate together.

You will be aware that we are now open on Sunday afternoons 2-4pm. If you are not on Steward duty but visiting Higginson Park, why not call in at the museum and chat to those on duty and share some early Christmas cheer.

Meantime your Chairman must get back to sweeping up the leaves.

*Best wishes to you all,
Mike*

Our next exhibition starting in April 2025

will commemorate our internationally-famous lace maker, the late Pamela Nottingham-Johnson and illustrate the wide influence of her books, as well as the social history of lace through the ages.



If you have any stories of lace making locally, or photos or memories of Pam that you'd like to share, please email Della at contact@marlowmuseum.org

Next Volunteer get together

After the **Christmas lunch on November 27th**, the next volunteer meet-up will be 2-3pm on **22nd January 2025** in the M Café in Court Garden.

Meanwhile have a look at our vacancies column...

Vacancies! Something for everyone here.

Museum Development Project Manager

The museum is currently advertising for someone with sound museum experience to work for us part-time on a 2-year Museum Development project. This is a paid role to take forward the plans we have made during working towards Accreditation, including part two of the museum makeover. If you know someone who might be interested, full details are available from contact@marlowmuseum.org

Volunteer Stewards

Although opening hours are reduced in the winter, we are still looking for more people to join our volunteer team as stewards to welcome visitors. Again, full details can be obtained by emailing contact@marlowmuseum.org

Learning Volunteers

We are looking for volunteers to work on our Learning Programme for local schools. You don't need to have been a teacher to take on this role, but experience of working with children and an interest in local history are key requirements.

Full details from contact@marlowmuseum.org

Event Volunteers for 2025



We hope to plan a programme of events next year to raise our profile in Marlow and take aspects of the museum to more people in the community. We have an eye-catching gazebo and plenty of ideas, but we need people to be involved. This is an occasional commitment and can take into account people's holidays, we just need sufficient volunteers to put our plans into action. The events are always hard work but good fun. Could this be something for you? Full details from contact@marlowmuseum.org

Collections Volunteers

People to help us look after all our objects and archives. Email contact@marlowmuseum.org