**North Marston History Club**

2024 Annual Report to Parish Council

The North Marston History Club had a full programme of events during 2023. Particularly memorable was a talk in March about the Titanic and the connections with this area and then in November a talk entitled “The Women of Bletchley Park”.

The club AGM in January 2024 was well attended and John Spargo introduced his fascinating presentation “The Chearsley Pilgrims” which gave us a vivid insight into the journey undertaken by pilgrims on their way to John Schorne’s shrine in North Marston. In March “The Story of the Royal Bucks Hospital” included films from the 1930s and proved so popular that we may try to repeat it in 2025 for those who missed it.

John Spargo continues to give guided tours of the village to local U3A groups and the Club has engaged with the young people of North Marston, with Sue Chaplin talking to Years 3&4 at the village school and to the Cubs and Beavers about village life in the past. Talks on North Marston’s history have also taken place elsewhere.

John Spargo has been Chairman and a major driving force of the North Marston History Club since its formation in 2011. He has now decided that he would like to stand down as Chairman in order to have more time for historical research and the preparation of historical presentation material. At the AGM John was thanked for all his efforts and it was agreed that Sue Chaplin and David Bayly should take over as Joint Chairs. John will continue to make a valuable contribution on the Committee with Technical and Creative Support.

An exciting new project for the History Club is being planned. We have the agreement of the parish council to explore the feasibility of turning the Parish Barn in the Quainton Road into a diorama of how it would originally have been used in the late 1880s. The display will include the original hand-powered winnowing machine that has been in storage elsewhere in the village for many years (having been on display at Quainton Windmill). If the costed proposal is agreed by the parish council, the History Club will apply for grants to turn the idea into reality. The Club will soon be mounting an appeal for authentic examples of some of the hand tools, such as corn flails, that small-holders would have used in the late 1800s. The barn is already a feature of our Heritage Trail walk around the village.

In order to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the opening of the North Marston Memorial Hall in 1924 the NMHC suggested that two new bronze plaques commemorating those who died in both World Wars should be installed. This initiative was supported and assisted by Neil Tuckett and funding was secured by generous contributions from Buckinghamshire Council, Poor’s Piece and Clocklands, The Shop, MADS, Tuckett Brothers, NMHC as well as a number of personal donations. It is planned to unveil the plaques at the Remembrance Day Service outside the Memorial Hall on Sunday 10th November. There will also be an exhibition in the Schorne Room of photos and documents relating to the building and opening of the Village Hall along with photos of the men killed in action for whom the hall is a memorial.

Sue Chaplin

David Bayly