

Programme 2025–2026

2025

13 October: Liz Woolley *“Some may question its flavour, but none its potency”: a history of brewing in Oxford* Over the centuries brewing in Oxford became big business. Liz’s talk examines how and why Oxford’s brewing trade flourished.

10 November: Paul Booth *From Roman Britain to Early Anglo-Saxon England: archaeological evidence from Dorchester-on-Thames*. Paul describes the 2007-2018 excavation project at nearby Dorchester and discusses the significance of its findings.

8 December: Christmas event – details to follow

2026

12 January: Richard Dudding *Wick Hall: the story of a house and a family* Richard’s talk draws on his research for his new book about Wick Hall and the Dockar Drysdale family, which at one time owned almost all the land and cottages in Radley.

9 February: Steven Gunn *Everyday life and accidental death in 16th century Oxfordshire and Berkshire* In his talk Steven looks at everyday life in these two counties in Tudor times using examples of fatal accidents people had at home, work and play.

9 March: John Lowe *“Always Ready, Always Willing”: Fires and firefighting in the city of Oxford from 879 to 1974* John tells the story of how major fires and efforts to tackle them over more than ten centuries affected Oxford, including the tragic fire that led to the formation of the Oxford Volunteer Fire Brigade in 1870.

13 April: Hubert Zawadzki *My Polish father’s experiences in WW2 from Gulag to Normandy and Scotland* Hubert’s parents came to Britain with the Polish Armed Forces during WW2. Hubert describes his father’s time in a forced labour camp, his service with the Polish Army during the Battle of Normandy in 1944 and his return to Scotland where Hubert was born.

11 May: Mike Hurst *Tracks to trenches* Mike describes the range of railway activities in southern England and France during WW1, including the transport and care of the wounded back to Blighty with some focus on South Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.

8 June: Stephen Wass *Garden archaeology: “not that kind of digging”* Stephen explains how recent discoveries in historic gardens using archaeological techniques of have allowed a better understanding of their construction and development.

13 July: Victoria Bentata *Alice and the Dodo in Oxford* Victoria links people and places in Oxford to the happenings and thinly disguised characters such as the Dodo in Lewis Carroll’s famous book, *Alice in Wonderland*.

August: No meeting

14 September: Annual General Meeting followed by *Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough: taking the waters in Bath, Scarborough and Windsor Great Park* by **Melanie King**. Melanie shares some of the Duchess of Marlborough’s adventures in the 18th century while visiting various famous English spas.

See the Club website and newsletters for the latest information