

## Speakers for Weston Turville u3a General Meetings December 2022 – November 2023

22 December 2022

NO GENERAL MEETING IN DECEMBER

**2023**

**26 January 2023 – Rugby Club**

***The Most Heroic Failure of Modern time – Shackleton’s Antarctic – Jeremy Holmes***

When Ernest Shackleton set off to cross the Antarctic for the first time in 1914 he was already a celebrated explorer, but his ship quickly got trapped and then crushed in the ice. He and his crew camped for months on the ice with only rudimentary supplies, until he decided to sail a lifeboat 750 miles to South Georgia – a feat never before attempted. Arriving exhausted they had to climb a mountain range before eventually finding a remote whaling station and ultimately returning to rescue their comrades. Shackleton's leadership became the stuff of legend; and this talk explains why.

**23 February 2023 – Rugby Club**

***The Legend of Bob Hope – Howard Slater***

Surprisingly Scandalous Facts of one of America’s Entertainers.

People have called Bob Hope the “Entertainer of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century”, and he was no less than a titan of Old Hollywood. But behind the scenes of Hope’s family-friendly career is a life of rivalry, scandal and dirty little secrets.

**24 March 2023 – Rugby Club**

***Flying Concorde – by Gwyn Williams***

Covers how the crew flew the aircraft in passenger service, it also examines a number of the aircrafts unusual design features and contains film onboard during a supersonic transatlantic flight. It lasts just under an hour.

## **27 April 2023 – Rugby Club**

### ***The Sky at Night with a Laugh! – Gordon Rogers***

I am privileged to say that Sir Patrick Moore was my proposer for membership of the Royal Astronomical Society having filmed an entire "Sky at Night" Programme at the Crendon Observatory. The talk describes the imaging of Deep Space from the observatory and is regularly updated with recent astronomical discoveries. I recount the achievements of several amazingly gifted British amateurs where this in one area of science in which the sheer enthusiast gives great aid to the professional. Discoveries by these amateurs command the deployment of major observatories such as Hubble. Many things in astronomy go wrong and I recite some of them!

## **25 May 2023 – Rugby Club – AGM**

### ***Walking the beat to Nirvana – Mervyn Edwards***

Mervyn Edwards, is a retired former police officer, having served in Thames Valley Police for more than 30 years. He reached the rank of Chief Superintendent, but this talk concentrates on a part of his career where he served as a specialist firearms officer as a member of the Tactical Firearms Team for 15 years in three different ranks. His recently published book covers this period and the reasons for publishing it. It includes details of incidents which attracted national interest, as well as his involvement in serious crime operations, specialist tasks in a number of murder enquiries, and working with Crime Squads and Drug Squads. Despite describing the serious nature of such work, there is a great deal of humour throughout the talk and the book.

## **22 June 2023 – Rugby Club**

### ***Wild Life Photography – Tom Way***

A returning visit from this popular speaker.

## **27 July 2023 – Rugby Club – Social Event**

No Speaker

## **24 August 2023 – Rugby Club**

### ***The Life of Edward VIII – Paul Robbins***

Eighty-Five years after his abdication, an event that shook Britain to its core, King Edward VIII still generates controversy and debate. Did Britain have a lucky escape when he decided to give up the throne because he couldn't make Wallis Simpson, a divorced American, his Queen? Or was Britain deprived of a King whom some of his supporters believed would have reached an arrangement with Germany thus avoiding the horrors of the Second World War?, Paul Robbins reveals much about the complex character that was Edward, Prince, King, Emperor and finally Duke. The talk explains his early life, the strained relationship Edward had with his father, his quest for a purpose in life, and his often-disastrous personal life. Was he a Nazi sympathiser, and would he have regained the throne had Germany won the war? This is an enthralling talk that has as its backdrop a crisis that threatened the very existence of Britain's Royal family.

## **28 September 2023 – Rugby Club**

### ***Mad, Bad and Dangerous – Kathryn Harkup***

Scientists sometimes get stereotyped. Why are scientists depicted as chronically shy, slightly odd and carrying out crazy experiments to try and take over the world? Of course it's only Bond villains who are plotting to take over the world and most scientists are lovely sociable people. But the stereotype has to come from somewhere...

## **26 October 2023 – Rugby Club**

### ***The History of Photography and Kodak – Tony Earle***

I spent 40 years at Kodak working as a scientist. This talk covers the early years of photography and the founding of Kodak in the 1880's. Light hearted with audience participation.

## **23 November 2023 – Rugby Club**

### ***The Bob and Dot Show: A Christmas Entertainment – Graham Harrison***

A feast of anecdotes and music on a seasonal theme. Christmas songs from the Golden Age of Hollywood musicals combine with humorous tales about the artistes. We also look at the origins of some of our Christmas traditions and how one of them was (and still could be) illegal.