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# TOWER<sub>AND</sub>TOWN

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St John's Edition



‘The Old Lie’

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NOVEMBER 2016 50P

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# TOWER AND TOWN

THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES

NUMBER 665 NOVEMBER 2016



## ‘The Old Lie’

This month’s edition of Tower & Town is a somewhat solemn one. However, I feel it is one of the most moving compilations that we at St John’s have ever put together.

As ever, I wanted to give the students free rein over the style and direction of their writing. Inspired by their study of World War I literature during their first term of Year 9\*, I found that this year I had no need to cajole, or prompt, or even to advise. I received sixty four pieces in total, and the task of narrowing them down was as hard as it has ever been.

This time – in a break from previous tradition – the choice of title was entirely their own. Notable suggestions included, ‘Shell Shock’, ‘The Legacy’ and, perhaps as a nod to one of the most memorable poems studied this term, ‘Futility.’ But it was another great Wilfred Owen poem that eventually gave this edition its title, ‘The Old Lie.’

My special thanks go to Emily Coplestone, who – in addition to penning the spine-tingling poem ‘Jerusalem’ – produced the artwork for our front cover this month. Thanks also go to all our wonderful contributors: to Ted Warner, Charlotte Walker, Natasha Englefield, Lily Jackson and Charlie Melbourne for their thought provoking narrative works, and to Ross Beesley, Katie Hayward, Caitlin Lowe and Izzabella Coombes for their poetry.

I want to take this opportunity to thank these tremendously talented young people for all their hard work, to praise them for their vivid and artful crafting of language, and to commend them for the genuine and thought provoking compassion I have seen shining through in all of their work.

I hope you enjoy reading their work as much as I have.

**Georgie Hibberd, Editor**

\* 13 to 14 year-olds.

**Front Cover:** by Emily Coplestone (St John’s)

# Jerusalem by Emily Copplestone

---

While you sing Jerusalem,  
and the milk cow chews her cud,  
the khaki boys bite the bullet,  
and the poppies are watered with blood.  
We all have death on our hands now,  
and white spirit won't take out the stain,  
and while you all sing your Jerusalem,  
the khaki boys trudge through the rain.  
The newspapers are all full of lies now,  
propaganda has invaded *en masse*,  
and while you're all singing Jerusalem,  
the khaki boys choke on the gas.  
You don't know the hell you send them now,  
to be struck down before they reach their prime,  
and while you all sing your Jerusalem,  
a young man is shot for 'cowardly crimes'.  
A mother now sits at her table,  
looking at the empty place by the stove,  
as while she was singing Jerusalem,  
her son was shot while facing his foes.  
One day we'll all sit and wonder,  
just what there could have been,  
if we hadn't been singing Jerusalem,  
while the khaki boys died overseas.

## **“Brilliant Young Musicians in St Peter’s Church”**

### ***Castalian String Quartet***

**Sunday 20 November 7.30pm**

In this current season they are playing in the Wigmore Hall and at the Aldeburgh, Cheltenham and Edinburgh Festivals. “Richly romantic energy and passion” – Strad magazine.

#### **Programme**

Maurice Ravel - Quartet

Thomas Adés - "The Four Quarters"

Johannes Brahms - Quartet op.67

Tickets £10 at the White Horse Bookshop and Sound Knowledge

# Robots by Lily Jackson

---

My grandfather loved to tell stories. He would sit there, next to me, on my old creaky bed, telling me stories of bravery, stories of tragedy. And stories of war.

My dear granddad. Oh how he would go on, deep into the night, as if unaware of my presence, engrossed in his vivid memories. Yet what I did not realise at that time – being only a child - was that these stories possessing him were not stories at all. They were not made up; they were not fiction. They were true. True down to the tiniest detail, and I now know this because no one, not even someone with the wildest of imaginations, could have even merely hoped to produce such stories of horror, pain and cruelty.

Some tales stood out among the rest to me as a young girl, but one in particular will never leave my mind. It went like this:

“I was not born a killer. Instead it was forced upon me with such brutal strength that I had no choice but to obey. Going against all my moral beliefs I stepped out onto the battlefield with only one thought in my head - if I was going to die, it would be for good reason.

“Obsessed by this thought that had been hammered so violently into me, I walked in a trance through the ever thinning mist. I was a robot controlled by my country, a killing machine that was programmed to self-destruct. I knew when the shield of mist cleared I would be in firing line of our ever watching enemies. But I did not fear them. I simply knew they, just like me, had no choice.

“The silhouette of a figure appeared on the horizon; readying my gun, I knew it was time. Just as I was about to step out I heard a shout: “NO!” A familiar man’s voice echoed across the battlefield, I immediately knew who it was. Panic struck through my body like lightning, shaking me from my trance. The sound of gun fire rang in my ears and before I knew it, bullets were shooting past my head. The next series of events all happened much too fast; someone called my name, and then I was pulled by the back of my uniform...and then it happened. There was a bang, and the man who was pushing me away flung himself in front of me, shielding me, before collapsing and falling to the ground...”

We don't all have to be robots.

# The King of the Forest by Ross Beesley

---

I am what I am, no-one else is like me,  
Got the gift of a life in the form of a tree,  
Seen as the tallest by the people around,  
The King of the Forest, that's how I am crowned.

I taught humans ways that the wild flower grows,  
A drop, and a twinkle, and that's how it goes,  
We've had a great spring and the summer's on time,  
To me and my friends, our lives seem sublime.

But what is this gunfire? These shells? That explosion?  
The work of the humans? Well, wow! what a notion!  
The bullets that send creatures running in fright,  
Cause my branches to tremor and leaves to ignite.

Now surrounded in wire, all twisted and barbed  
Laid down by young soldiers, in uniforms garbed,  
The looks on their faces, masks of their terror.  
How foolish of them not to notice their error.

Now I'm burned to the ground to a certain degree,  
Too much to survive for an ancient Oak Tree,  
Once seen as the tallest by people around,  
My deathplace? Well, simple. The great battleground.



**Open evening at Mustard Seed**, with mulled wine, Thursday 24th November 5-8pm for evening Christmas shopping. During the evening there will be two authors speaking about their books:

**6-6.30pm** Penelope Wilcock will be talking about her very popular series of novels *The Hawk and the Dove* set in St Alcuin's medieval monastery; in the books she portrays the human heart and all of its struggles in a way that leaves one full of hope and love.

**6.45-7.15pm** Tony Collins will talk about his sabbatical during which he walked the Camino to Santiago de Compostella. He had expected the Way to be arduous, and so it proved. But he had not expected so bracing an internal journey; nor had he expected such moments of intense spiritual encounter; nor so many precious friendships. He discovered that the Road leaves an indelible mark.

Do come along for all or part of the evening.

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# For You by Katie Hayward

---

Watching you wave me off at  
the train station, holding tears,  
Promising to come home safe,  
I will miss you.

Waiting for the sun to rise,  
Sitting, eating cardboard food,  
Listening to the shells explode,  
I will wait for you.

The raw bite of barbed wire,  
Blood seeping from my left leg,  
Dodging the enemy fire,  
I will survive for you.

Ducking below the trench side,  
Limping across no man's land,  
Wave after wave of soldiers,  
I will fight for you.

Pulling you under cover,  
Shielding you from constant  
rounds, bullet after bullet,  
I will protect them for you.

BANG

A metallic bullet strikes,  
The artery is severed,  
Dark crimson liquid flowing,  
I will die for you.

Remembering your first steps,  
The feel of your tender love,  
Not seeing your smile every day,  
I will love you.

Breaking my promise to you,  
As I lie here losing hope  
I'm sorry. Truly sorry.

# Branches and Stars by Charlotte Walker

---

It was cold on the ground. The kind of cold that chills your bones and numbs your fingers. The kind that forces the breath out of you with a nauseating strength.

The soldier sat huddled under a naked branch, clutching a gun close to his chest as if it were a comfort. There was only a thin, curling line of barbed wire between him and the bitter world outside, and - not for the first time - he heard his mother's voice in his mind: 'You're just a boy, it is not right!' He shook his head as if to dislodge her distressed cries that lingered there from so many months ago. So many months since he had seen her face, pale, white and worried, as he had marched away. So confident he had been then, full of hope and honour, convinced he would return home at Christmas time to thanks and popularity, to love and joy. Yet here he was, sat in a corner of some distant field, with Christmas Day just around the corner.

The darkness had closed in and the sky was an impenetrable mass of inky blackness, when the soldier looked up. A few stars had flickered into being and twinkled softly down at him, teasing his eyes which had grown accustomed to only the harsh light of gunfire, of bullets passing between the trenches. He glanced into the shadows ahead and saw nothing. Nothing except for a distant light, shining through the mist, showing him the place where the battery began.

The soldier was so immersed in his thoughts of warmth, love and better days that he was deaf to the crack of a twig and the click of a bullet being slid into its chamber; deaf even to the shouts of Frenchmen who had seen what was about to happen, long before it actually did. A sudden pain slammed through his chest, propelling him backwards and wrenching a scream from his frozen throat. His hands flew to his chest and hovered there, rapidly awash with hot crimson.

The blood continued to pump steadily from the wound in his abdomen. He could feel the sharp agony where the metal had lodged and through the blur of shock and pain, a bleakness had replaced the horror he had felt moments before.

'I don't want to die here...I want to see ...' A single pearly tear slid down his colourless cheek at the thought of his fiancée, waiting for him to return, and he realised in that second that his returning home was no longer even a vague possibility. This thought pierced him through the haze of agony and his heart throbbed with unbearable pain. As he lay, slowly weakening, other men hurried up and began to gather, calling unintelligible things to people, hidden from view. The soldier was oblivious to it all, his eyes glazing over and the ground underneath him moist and warm from the blood that had soaked slowly down into the mud.

In his silent fog of struggling, he suddenly felt a touch, as light as a whisper,

brush his cheek and he froze, all his attention focused on a silhouette just above the heads of his comrades. The figure of his fiancée was standing in front of him, and as he stared, she extended a hand to him.

“I want to come home,” he whispered, and his voice caught in his throat.

“I know, my love,” the figure murmured back, reaching out to run her translucent fingertips over his damp cheekbones.

‘Why am I here?’ he asked, unsure whether he was asking himself or the figure only he could see.

‘A single moment of glorified stupidity. Hundreds of boys, their heads filled with deceitful promises of honour, of heroism. That is not what fighting is really about. It’s about hiding, hiding and hoping you’ll make it through to the other side...’

And then his chest heaved, and he was still.

The shells whined on even after the soldier had gone. One night, the stars winked into being once again and the naked branch under which he once sat, in the corner of some distant field, was laden with snow.



You may have heard that Easter Saturday, April 15th 2017 is the date of the Marlborough Community Passion Play, a performance that will be in the open air in various locations at the eastern end of the town. This exciting project that aims to involve as many people within the town and wider community as possible.

We have secured a professional actor to take the role of Jesus, but there will be many other opportunities for actors with and without experience to take to the stage. Many local children and adults will have important roles that won't demand line learning. With one or two exceptions, most speaking parts will not involve an enormous learning commitment and we are now looking for people of all ages to play these roles, including Disciples, Pilate, High Priests, Mary, Martha ...

Auditions will be held in Marlborough during November. Could YOU be one of our actors? Do YOU know someone who would be interested? Don't let this opportunity pass you by.

For further details Please email Helen Stokes under the title 'Auditions' at [marlboroughpp2017@gmail.com](mailto:marlboroughpp2017@gmail.com) as soon as possible.

# The Barn Owl by Ted Warner

---

Light fell upon my wings, filtered by a minuscule crack in the roof. I blinked my eyes open. A cacophony of clatters startled me into the real world: Someone was in my barn. Cautiously, I peered over the edge of my nest down into the barn. Several large creatures wearing green pelts were stomping around and making a racket. They appeared to be putting a shiny grey thing together. Then I realised I had more important things to do than watch strange creatures doing strange things.

I spread my wings and took off through the entrance of the barn, out into the criss-cross of honeycomb fields beyond. The landscape unfolded before me, and I felt as if I ruled the world as I glided over forest after forest, field after field. As I flew on, the fields became green and full of black-and-white specks making unfamiliar noises.

The next valley contained a wreckage of grey and red rock, patrolled by more two-legged creatures, this time wearing black pelts and holding black sticks that threw out metal. Over the next hill was a once green, tranquil place; but as I swooped over, I saw that this was now an ugly brown mess full of green-pelted two-legged creatures and machines, hurling metal at black-pelted creatures and machines. The noise was deafening and the field ran red with blood as the creatures fought on to the death.

Beyond this graveyard, the area was decimated and the ground was covered with the white-china forms of bones, and the shrivelled remains of dead plants. As I circled back, I soared over a shiny grey square of rock, full to the brim with two-legged creatures. One of them was elevated above the others and was shouting in his own language. The others seemed to respond, and marched onwards out of the area shouting rhythmic sounds as they followed the lead creature.

I glided low through a once dense thicket of trees, now a spooky-looking cluster of gnarly brown dead trees. Once, this place was full of birdsong and prey, but now it was deserted, a wrecked grove of stunted shrubs where no birds called and no prey ran.

Two valleys further on was a ruined settlement, once full of tall brick towers, now a distorted pile of rubble and shiny grey rock. The air was thick with debris and dust and the streets were still traversed by slightly unusual-looking beings wearing ragged pelts and sucking small, fat sticks, before exhaling grey clouds.

I flew on. Eventually the golden fields spread to the horizon again, and the world was a peaceful place, where I could be without a care

*Continued opposite*

# Sentenced in 1914 by Caitlin Lowe

---

The silence of our guns deafen those that listen,  
but we can't hide in the still forever,  
We must fight this war, though our connections to it seem to sever,  
The sun shines light over the darkness in which we cower,  
Never sure if we're more scared of the enemies  
or the guns that give us power  
I became a killer today, but I was sentenced in 1914

He stands beside me as he falls, and my heart falls with him to the mud,  
I watch as he dies, amongst millions in a battle of blood,  
It's not our war, we lost sight of what we're fighting for long ago,  
Sometimes it doesn't even matter to me just who's friend and just who's foe.  
I lost my mind today, but I was sentenced in 1914

The coldness around me turned me numb to the core,  
I've forgotten the cause to which I swore,  
It's not killing now, it's just stealing breath,  
This is the Great War, how else could it be?  
I stole from them today, but I was sentenced in 1914

I saw the bullet fly, and I saw regret flicker over his face,  
saw his heart clench,  
His sad smile was the last thing I saw,  
and it was as fake as our hatred for the men in the other trench.  
My heart's a ticking clock, but it's a countdown  
and I've run out of time,  
The irony is as I lose my life, I find my mind;  
death in war isn't a crime.  
I died today, but I was sentenced in 1914.

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## The Barn Owl, *continued*

in the world once more. As I coasted on the thermals beneath my wings, I began to admire the true beauty of the landscape around me. The woods were a lush green, the fields were as gold as the feathers of an oriole and the valley was alive with the calls of songbirds, the squeaks of rodents and the trills of cicadas as I wheeled across the aquamarine sky.

Uplifted, I descended back into my barn for the night.

# For King and Country by Izzabella Coombes

---

Bullets and bombs, like flies everywhere,  
Blood, bodies, smoke: death fills the air,  
Terrified and exhausted, we must continue to fight,  
Wounding, destroying, through our lethal sight.  
Our uniforms are tattered and inside we weep,  
And the nightmares we live, when we wake from our sleep,  
Our boots are sullied by the red stained clay,  
We half-exist in this tomb, all night and all day,  
We hold hope in our pockets to ease our pain,  
Crumpled sepia faces, we long to see once again.  
Back home, the papers tell such a good story,  
Honour, and pride, and decorated glory!  
Not of destruction, nor horror, nor gore,  
Ghastly, eternal: it will haunt us evermore.  
We cry out from within, wanting this noise to end,  
Through the dirt and tears, we see a fallen friend,  
Blank eyes, wide open, yet he cannot see,  
This teenage life, snuffed out so prematurely,  
Somebody's boy, somebody's son!  
Killed with one shot before his life had begun.  
Oh Mr Lloyd George, please help us out here,  
Don't let these young voices fall upon a deaf ear,  
This Western Front, it isn't what they said.  
But we must keep on fighting, 'til we're all but dead.

# Clergy Letter

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Autumn is one of the loveliest of the seasons and it is a real joy to see the rich colours as the leaves change and the autumnal mists wrapped around the trees, river beds and slopes of Savernake Forest.

It is also a season that reminds us of the fact that death is part of the cycle of life and that within this is also the promise and hope of new life next spring.

For me, autumn and spring are the richest of the seasons. They are seasons of transition and seasons of hope whereas winter and summer seem so much more definite in their character.

I also love autumn for the harvest festivals - now past - that we celebrate in our churches to remind ourselves of God's provision.

This year Christchurch chose to support Tools with a Mission as its harvest charity. This meant that instead of the usual produce displays we collected old unwanted tools. There was an amazing collection of tools of every description at the front on Harvest morning. These will be refurbished and sent out to Africa where they will be used to help people establish work for themselves. Our unwanted tools will become carpenters' kits, farmers' kits, scholars' kits, tailors' kits etc. All of these designed to help people become independent and self - supporting. The motto for TWAM this year is "The gift that keeps on Giving".

An old sewing machine or a garden pitchfork may seem a far cry from the baskets of apples and collections of garden veg of old harvests but each in their way are reminders of God's provision and our part in sharing our wealth with others. These are all gifts of hope and generosity.

As we enjoy the autumn beauty around us let's remember to be thankful that we live in a beautiful place and for all the signs of hope and promise that autumn holds.

Every blessing,

**Heather Cooper**  
**Christchurch Marlborough**

# What's on in August

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## Regular events

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### Every Monday

7.30pm: Christchurch. Marlborough Choral Society.

### Every Tuesday

10-11.30am: Christchurch. Friendship Club.

2.45pm: The Parlour, Christchurch. Women's Fellowship.

### Every Wednesday *(or some Wednesdays)*

10am: Jubilee Centre. Drop-in, Tea/Coffee. 12.30 Lunch.

1.30-3.30pm: Town Hall. Sunshine Club for the over 55s.

2-3pm: St. George's. Teddy Prayers & Picnic for under 5s and carers *(2nd & 4th Weds)*

7.30-9pm: St Peter's Church. Marlborough Community Choir.

### Every Thursday *(or some Thursdays)*

10am: Jubilee Centre. Drop-in, Tea/Coffee. 12.30 Lunch.

10:30-12 noon: Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. Singing for the Brain. Alzheimer's Support. 01225 776481. *(Every Thursday during term-time.)*

1.30-3.30pm: Wesley Hall, Christchurch. Macular Society *(last Thursday in the month)*

### Every Friday

10-12 noon: Christchurch Crush Hall. Food bank and coffee morning.

### Every 2nd Saturday

10-12 noon: Library. Marlborough & District Dyslexia Association. Drop-in advice. Help line: 07729 452143.

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## November calendar

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### 2nd *(Wednesday)*

7.30pm Wesley Hall, Oxford Street. WI. 'Make a Christmas Wreath' with Pauline Berryman and Helper. Guests welcome.

### 3rd *(Thursday)*

7pm Town Hall. Recorded live on 12 Oct from RSC: 'King Lear'. To be confirmed.

7.30pm Coronation Hall, Alton Barnes. The Alton Talks. Dr Robert Bewley on: 'Endangered Archaeology in the Middle East and North Africa. £8. 851859.

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### 6th *(Sunday)*

7.30pm Memorial Hall, Marlborough College. Concert: Band of the Grenadier Guards. £20 (students £10).



**7th (Monday)**

2pm Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. Embroiderers' Guild. Talk by Helen Colling: 'Gone – the absence of presence'. 861410

**9th (Wednesday)**

12.30pm 40 St Martins. Widows' Friendship Lunch. 514030.

7.45pm Wesley Hall, Oxford Street. Gardening Association. Talk by Terry Baker: 'Choice Plants for Lime Soil'.

**12th (Saturday)**

7.30pm St Peter's Church. Concert. Chippenham String Orchestra. Mixed programme in aid of Swift Medics.

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**13th (Sunday)**

7.30pm Kennet Valley Hall. Film: 'Love & Friendship'. £6 via KVH.

**14th (Monday)**

7.30pm Bouverie Hall, Pewsey. Pewsey Vale DFAS. Lecture by Lizzie Darbyshire: 'Jan van Eyck and Masters of the Northern Renaissance'. 07775 683163

**17th (Thursday)**

10am-1pm or 2-5pm The Merchant's House. Gift-wrapping Masterclass with Jane Means. £50 (£47 to Friends). 511491. Places limited.

7.30pm St Peter's Church. History Society. Lecture by David Du Croz: 'Lions led by Donkeys? The British Army at War 1914-1916'. Guests welcome: £4.

**18th (Friday)**

3-9pm High Street. Christmas Lights Switch On.

**19th (Saturday)**

Corn Exchange, Devizes. Conference celebrating 30 years of World Heritage at Stonehenge & Avebury. £45 incl..buffet lunch [www.stonehengeandaveburywhs.org](http://www.stonehengeandaveburywhs.org)

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**20th (Sunday)**

7.30pm St Peter's Church. Concert: Castalian String Quartet. £10 (£8 members MBG & St Peter's Trust). See page 2.

**21st (Monday)**

11am Ellendune Hall, Wroughton. Kennet DFAS. Lecture by John Ericson: 'Inn Signia: The Artwork and Stories Behind Peculiar Pub Names'. 01793 840790.

7.30pm Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. National Trust Association. Talk by Steve Williams: 'A Soldier's Life in the Trenches'.

**24th (Thursday)**

7.30pm Town Hall. Film: 'Eye in the Sky' (15). £5 in advance, £6 on door.

**30th (Wednesday)**

12 for 12.30pm Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. Embroiderers' Guild. Christmas Lunch with Surprise Speaker. 861410.

# Voting Leave Letter and Article

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*The following are much-shortened versions of a letter from Colin Gratton and an article by Matt Gom. Please read the full versions online at <http://towerandtown.org.uk>.*

I read with interest Andrew Unwin's comments on Brexit and although slightly younger than Andrew, have experienced all the ups and downs of the EEC/EU.

When the UK joined the EEC in 1973 the countries involved totalled nine and were mainly the larger northern European countries where economies were of similar strength and able to accommodate freedom of movement.

However, with the expansion to twenty-eight, economic union has become political and monetary union for some and UK voters did not vote for this huge bureaucracy to emerge. The Euro has proved a straight-jacket for many of its members and the EU seems very remote from its citizens, un-democratic and in no mood to reform, despite David Cameron's best efforts.

So what made me vote Leave? I read a very interesting, impartial book by David Charter (ex-Times Berlin correspondent), *Europe: In or Out*. which left me with no compelling reason to vote Remain. Along with most Wiltshire residents I voted to leave and believe strongly that we will continue to play our full part in the development of Europe, just not via the EU.

In conclusion, after 100 days the UK is still going in the right direction. What is refreshing for me is that all my friends and family, who voted either way, are still friends.

**Colin Gratton, Manton**

As a life-long student and teacher of Politics, I have been fortunate in having had the opportunity to visit all the EU institutions repeatedly as a tour guide. It is this intimate knowledge which underpins my confidence that we have made the right decision to leave a flawed project.

I have seen first-hand the lack of democratic accountability and bureaucratic waste endemic in the EU. Two years ago I took a group of students to the European Court of Auditors in Luxembourg where we were treated to a lavish lunch and presentation. The convivial mood turned sour when a pupil asked how it was that the ECA had not been able to sign off the EU budget since 1994.

Few readers of this piece will know their MEPs. MEPs do not actually have the power to originate legislation even though they are the only representatives in the EU who are elected! When I took pupils around both Parliaments they were stunned that NO debates occur in either chamber. Each block, arranged by

ideology, is given a timed allocation to make a statement.

I believe people's loyalties lie closer to home. Democracy is more effective the more local it is. The EU is just too remote.

Perhaps it's the economic arguments which most command people's allegiance. While both sides of this debate throw out statistics, everyone knows the EU is being outperformed by the developing economies as well as by the US.

Of course it will take time to see the benefits of Brexit but we will end up negotiating with countries like India, Australia and other commonwealth countries and ultimately we WILL be better off.

Divisive as this referendum has been, I believe wholeheartedly that one day those who voted OUT will be vindicated and my students reaping the benefits.

**Matt Gow, Head of Politics, Marlborough College**

### **A Thank You from Children and Parents in our Town**

As some of you may remember, this last summer MAPAG and the local Churches raised money to enable children, who wouldn't be able to afford it, to participate in the Camp Activ8 activities at the Leisure Centre in Marlborough. Many responded to the appeal with great generosity, for which our thanks.

But not only would we like to say thank you; the children themselves have given some feedback on how it made a difference to their summer holiday: "It was brilliant. I went swimming. I am much better at swimming. I liked the craft activities too." (7-year old). It was not only about learning things, but also making new friends: "I made loads of new friends. The helpers were really kind and I am much better at swimming now. My Mum can't swim so she can't take me." (8-year old).

Also the parents very much appreciated the scheme: "Thank you. I struggle leaving my house because of depression and anxiety. I am a single parent and during the summer often feel guilty I can't do things with my child. I think she had the best summer ever this year because she was able to go and see friends." (parent of a single child).

The scheme will continue during the half-term and term holidays. For more information, or inquiries how you can help further, please contact Janneke Blokland or Rachel Rosedale.

# Marlborough Churches Together

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*Please check pages 26 and 27 for special services and events.*

## **Usual Sunday Service times**

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### **Christchurch, New Road (Methodist - URC)**

- 9.00am Worship
- 10.30am Morning Service with Junior Church and crèche

### **Society of Friends, Friends Meeting House, The Parade**

- 10.30am Meeting for Worship

### **St George's, Preshute (C of E)**

- 8.00am Holy Communion (1st and 3rd Sunday)
- 10.00am All Age Service (1st Sunday)  
Parish Communion (other Sundays)

### **St John the Baptist, Minal (C of E)**

- 8.00am Holy Communion BCP (2nd Sunday)
- 9.30am Parish Communion (1st and 3rd Sunday)

### **St Mary's, behind the Town Hall (C of E)**

- 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP on 4th Sunday)
- 10.00am All Age Worship (1st Sunday); Parish Communion and Junior Church and crèche on all other Sundays
- 5.30pm Informal service except on 1st Sunday.

### **St Thomas More, George Lane (Roman Catholic)**

- 11.00am Sung Mass (See also below)

**Marlborough College Services** are shown at the College Chapel

## **Weekday Services**

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**St Mary's** Holy Communion: 10.30am Wednesday

**St Thomas More** Mass: 10.00am Mon, Tues, Wed and Sat  
Holy Days: 10.00am

**St George's** Tea Time followed by Evening Prayer: 4.30pm Weds.

# Marlborough Church Contacts

---

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## FROM THE REGISTERS

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**Baptism**

- 18 September Francesca Richards at St George's  
2 October Rowan Timothy-John Moore at St John the Baptist

**Weddings**

- 20 August Judy Lines and Stuart Meadows at Christchurch  
1 October Jess Pittams and Scott Bowen at St John the Baptist  
15 October Vicky Burgess and Stuart Bowen at St John the Baptist

**Departed**

- 7 September Elizabeth Lippert (89) of Copelands, Marlborough  
*St Mary's and Cemetery*  
7 September Frederick Wallace (91) of 2 Reeds Ground, Marlborough  
*South Oxfordshire Crematorium*  
10 September Eileen Audrey Bird (92) of Highfield Nursing Home, Marlborough  
*Kingsdown Crematorium*

# Buried like the Rest by Charlie Melbourne

---

I am a trench, dug out and supported, destroyed and rebuilt, used and... and then what? Now that it's over: the war is over. What will become of me?

Thousands of soldiers used me and hid within me. I watched, helpless, as they were taken... I watched the bullets, the shells, the gas take them all. To where, I don't know. But I hope that place is peaceful, somewhere without war and hatred. Somewhere safe.

The men with shovels come, and bury the taken. Burying with them the lies of a righteous war, one where to die for your country was 'sweet'.

*Dulce et decorum est ...*

Was it sweet and right to lose an arm? Was it sweet and right to be picked by the rats? Was it sweet and right to choke on the bitter gas? No, no it was not. And now what for them? Left alone, left to rot, left to be hidden away, left to be forgotten. Buried.

Let's go back, back to the beginning. The men, smiling, excited, blinded by fresh propaganda that foolishly led them to a fate worse than death, for the scars of war last forever. But they didn't know that. They dug me out of the ground and got ready for battle. They loaded their guns and they put on their helmets. And that's when the lightning came, explosions louder than the screams of the dying. And like rain drops, they pelted down into the mud. Where were their smiles now? Some ran, some hid; some, still blinded by the lie stayed put and held their ground. But all choices, all decisions led to pain and suffering.

The lucky few who lived will bear the curse of the deadly scars of war. Those scars will live with them forever, constantly taunting them, memories that will never fade. All were fooled by the lies of war.

Here we are now, back to the land of the forgotten. As I watch them I know...I know that soon... soon it will be my turn.

I will be buried like the rest.

# The Truth by Natasha Englefield

---

July 3rd 1916. Do you remember? Do you remember the men who died on that day? I remember. I remember that day, the day where everything I thought, everything I was led to believe, was shattered.

Woken by the distant sound of falling shells I was reminded of my dreams. For that was the sound that haunted me; visions of the dead flung on the back of trucks like sacks of dirt. My thoughts were disturbed by a pain like no other. Burning, it felt like my skin had been set on fire. Gas-flooded trenches leaving men to fumble with their masks in a race against time; a race that I was losing. But I was one among many. We were drowning, drowning, yet out of water. The trench seemed like a blur. I could see large black splodges the size of cats scurrying around the fallen bodies of soldiers. The sound of moans echoed, moans of pain, and the smell of rotting bodies from the last attack filled the air.

I remembered what we had been told before we went to that place of hell. 'There is no greater honour than to die for your country. You will be remembered for all that you have done. You will be celebrated, never forgotten, respected and looked up to.' That was what they told us. Respected? Never forgotten? They presented war as a glorious thing. Tricking young boys, saying it would make them men. But instead it takes them and turns them into a shell of their former selves, watching other people, other living things, waste away in the trenches of war. The trenches of hell. But you only ever discover the truth about war and its secrets when it's too late.

I was one of those young men. Led into believing war would make me a man. Most boys dreamt about being remembered for what they did; I did too, and I was blinded. Blinded by my ambition to be celebrated...and now look at me, dying here in the trenches. Rotting away with all the other men who had been tricked who, like me, were just realising the truth about the war.

References:            *Poems of the Great War*, Christopher Navratril, 2014.  
                              *Jack's War*, Jack Halstead, 2005.  
                              *The Somme: the Day by Day Account*, Chris McCarthy, 1993.

# Family News compiled by Audrey Peck

---

**Graham Smith** has moved in to a flat at Churchill Court. He had a serious stroke in July last year and has been living with his parents, Alan and Edna in Cherry Orchard while recovering. He took early retirement from Nationwide in Bournemouth and had been enjoying his hobbies, walking the coastal paths and reading. He recently sold his flat in Bournemouth to come back to Marlborough! Good luck to Graham in his new home.

**Alf Hopwood** died in Highfield Residential Home in September. Born in North Wales he started work in a bank. In 1945 he joined the RAF and spent the next 3 years in Singapore, Burma & Malaysia before returning to live in Birmingham and study at Aston Technical College. He met his wife Audrey at a dance and they married in 1954 moving to Swindon in 1960 where Alf worked at Metal Box Plc. They had daughters Kay & Jenny before moving to West London in 1966. Alf's interests included current affairs, travelling, camping, taking cars apart and Bowls. Alf & Audrey retired to Castle Court in 2007 where Kay was living in Marlborough with her family. Jenny left London the same year and settled with her family in Savernake Forest. Alf and Audrey enjoyed walking – particularly in Preshute along the River Kennet but Audrey was diagnosed with Alzheimers and Alf cared for her at home until June 2015. Alf was supported at Castle Court by Kay & Jenny but also by the brilliant Monica Hall. Audrey sadly died at Marlborough Lodge in March of this year and Alf never really recovered from losing her. Family and friends including Ken, Alf's brother and all his Welsh Relatives celebrated Alf's life at Kingsdown Crematorium on 27th September. Our sympathy to all the family

**Ann Johnson's** family are very proud of their super-literate mother and grandmother. She won Marlborough Literary Festival competition for a sonnet written to reply to a Shakespeare sonnet. She was presented with £100 prize and declared to be the Bard of Marlborough.

Over seventy friends and family gathered in St Mary's on 9th October for a service of thanksgiving for **Joseph Skeaping** who, with his wife Dot and their children, lived for many years in Silverless Street. Joe himself would have been delighted by the obvious affection with which he was held and by the warmth of the occasion. Joe's daughter, Lizzie, spoke simply but movingly of her father's patience, the way he didn't judge people and accepted them as they were. His son Joey, gave a vivid picture of life with Joe. People stayed behind in the church for the wake swapping stories about the many and different ways Joe had touched their lives. Our special thoughts are with Dot, Joey, Lizzie and the family.



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# St Non's Retreat by Debbie Ryman

---

This was my first visit to St Non's, and what a treat! St Non's is a peaceful and comfortable house where we were made very welcome by the sisters there. We were also extremely well fed!

The retreat was very ably led by Janneke who took us on a journey together looking at "Our Response to God's Love". The subject matter produced a great deal of honest and open discussion. I felt extremely privileged to be with a group of people from the Marlborough Christian community who were prepared to be vulnerable and real with each other. Throughout the retreat, I felt stimulated, challenged and supported.

Our days began and ended in prayer using a variety of formats and we had periods of silence which allowed some time for personal space.

The sessions spent inside were complemented by wonderful walks along the Pembrokeshire coast where the beauty of God's creation was all around us. We were blessed with lovely weather (indeed 3 of the group swam on two afternoons – being less brave, a paddle was enough for me!).

Back now in Marlborough, I am aware I have deepened some relationships and created new ones and I am very grateful for that. Reflecting on some of the deep questions posed during the retreat, I am looking forward to Alpha and the opportunity for more discussion. Being amongst other Christians with other backgrounds, experiences and insights helps me to consider more deeply my own views and to continue to grow.

Of course every year the retreat will be different, but I would recommend the St Non's experience to anyone who has considered it but not yet managed to attend – next year's dates are again in September: Tuesday 12th to Friday 15th.

*The Kempson Rosedale Enterprise Trust*

**Jake Meyer: Reaching for the Top**

**'A Marlburian's life of adventure: from Kilimanjaro to K2'**

**Memorial Hall, Marlborough College, SN8 1PA**

**Thursday November 24<sup>th</sup> 8pm**

*Jake discovered a passion for climbing whilst at Marlborough College and has since undertaken over 20 expeditions all over the world including summiting Everest when 21, and onwards to 2 attempts at K2.*

£10.00 adults, £5.00 students, from White Horse Bookshop, Sound Knowledge, or on the door.

# NEWS from the Churches

---

## **Women's Fellowship** November meetings at 2:45pm in Christchurch:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Members' Meeting.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Revd Heather Cooper
- 15<sup>th</sup> Pauline Palmer (Bring and Buy)
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Rosie Beal
- 29<sup>th</sup> Members' Meeting

## **Pub Theology**

---

Thursday 10th and 24th November from 7.30pm in the Green Dragon, Marlborough. All are welcome to come and join open and honest conversation about things that matter. The format is simple: a drink, conversation and God. Contact Janneke Blokland for more information: 515970, jblokland@gmail.com.

## **Marlborough Area Poverty Action Group (MAPAG)**

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MAPAG next meet on Monday 7th November at 7.30pm in Friends Meeting House in the Parade, and all are welcome.

## **Filling Station**

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Thursday November 24th at 7.30pm in St Peter's Junior school: with guest speaker Irene Broadley-Westerduin who, as well as running her Educational Psychology, is a Trustee and Director of Positive Parenting Publications, a charity committed to helping professionals and parents.



## **The Alpha Course**

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meets weekly at 7.00pm on Wednesdays in St Mary's Church Hall. Simon Mills 861632, www.marlb.anglicanteam@tiscali.co.uk, Facebook: Marlborough Alpha

## **Christchurch Sunday Lunch Club**

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in November is on 6th, and the next one on December 18th.

## **Mustard Seed Book Club**

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Next book group is Tuesday 8th November at 7.30pm when we will discuss 'Taking my God for a Walk' which is a leading Christian publisher's account of walking the Santiago pilgrimage way on his sabbatical.



## **Marlborough Churches Together (MCT)**

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The ecumenical Advent Sunday service will be on November 27th at Christchurch at 6.00pm. All are welcome.





## **Marlborough Deanery Bite-size Learning**

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Free and open to all. Four bites this month:

Monday 14th St James Church, Avebury 7.30–9.00pm; refreshments from 7.00pm. Session 2: *'Secret Church'*, an immersive experience by leading Open Door people.

Monday 21st and Monday 28th in Friends Meeting House, The Parade, 7.30–9.00pm. *Learning to live and love well: St Augustine's thought in the 21st century*. In two evenings with Revd Janneke Blokland we will look at what Augustine can show us. In the first session, we will discuss his thought on society, politics and living together. The second session will consider what living and loving well means for us as individuals and our personal relationship with God.

Wednesday 23rd November in St Mary's Church 12.30–1.30pm. *St Matthew's Gospel – Revd Janneke Blokland*. In the coming year, those of us following the Lectionary will work our way through Matthew's Gospel, looking at some key features of Matthew's accounts of Jesus' ministry, death and resurrection.

## **Remembrance Sunday, 13th November**

---

Christchurch has a 10:30am service led by Mrs Chrissy Whittington and will observe the 2 mins silence at 11am; members of the congregation are given the opportunity to leave and join the Parade at the New Road War Memorial.

All are welcome to follow the Parade in the High Street, Marlborough to the War Memorial for the laying of wreaths and the two minute silence before continuing to the Remembrance Sunday Service in St Mary's Church starting at 11.15am.

A shorter and more informal Remembrance Service, particularly suitable for children and families, will be held at 5.30pm in St Mary's Church.

St George's, Preshute and St John the Baptist, Minal will start their Remembrance Sunday Services at 10.00am.

## **Hangout**

---

Are you 11 to 14? Are you free Thursday evenings? Come and join us at Hangout@Devotion. Free entry, from 7–8.30pm in the Wesley Hall, Christchurch.

Hangout@The Mead - Devotion's Tuesday night youth club! Normally open from 6.30–8pm for years 6–8, 8–9.30pm for years 9–13, at the old Youth Development Centre in St Margaret's Mead. However for the next few weeks it is unable to meet due to a lack of volunteer helpers.

Contact Blayze White: youthworkermarlborough42@gmail.com.

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