
TOWER AND TOWN



Marlborough College Edition

APRIL 2023

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TOWER AND TOWN

THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES

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Marlborough College Edition

For the April 2023 edition of 'Tower and Town' pupils of Marlborough College have contributed work inspired by the Mound that lies at the very heart of the school and by the chalk that forms so much of the land around us.

From the College website on the Mound Project:

The majestic Neolithic mound, supposedly the place where Merlin is buried, stands at the centre of our campus and has long been a special place for our community and part of the Marlburian soul. We lead our busy daily lives enriched by the shadow of four and a half thousand years of human aspiration, endeavour and creativity.

Across the academic year 2021 and 2022, art scholars and art teachers created their highly regarded collective response to the enduring history and archaeology of the Marlborough Mound. This has produced a beautiful portfolio of work containing 50 individual prints by the contributing artists which were exhibited in the Mount House gallery at the end of the last academic year.

From the College website on the Marlborough Chalk Project:

This new project, spear-headed by the academic scholars, aims to capture and present some of the qualities of the College, its history and its area. 'Marlborough Chalk' refers both to the land below and around us – the wonderful chalk downland which has sustained such rich and varied civilisations for thousands of years – as well as the tradition of pedagogy represented by the College ('chalk' once being pretty common in classrooms!). The articles, written by pupils and members of Common Room, will be about anything and everything connected to these topics.

Christopher Moule, Head of Academic Scholars and Head of History

Richard Sandall, Editor

Cover picture by Fleur Halstead

For over 200 years, Marlborough has been home to one of Wiltshire's thirteen white horses. Over time, five of those amazing landmarks have faded back into their natural surroundings, leaving eight white horses visible in Wiltshire today, which date from 1778 to 1999, and in total these make up half of the white horses visible in England.



Each white horse in Wiltshire has its own unique history and meaning and the one right on our doorstep is no different. The Marlborough white horse was designed by William Canning, son of Thomas Canning of the Manor house in Ogbourne St. George, and cut in 1804 by the pupils of Mr Gresley's school. It is believed to have been created to celebrate the 600th anniversary of the granting of the Town's Charter. The construction was rather crude; the turf was removed and the space filled with lumps of chalk, with the horse scoured every year. Since the Marlborough white horse has been built, it has been restored to its former brilliance multiple times. When the horse was first built, maintenance work was done on it every year to keep it in good condition.

However, following the death of Mr Gresley in 1830 the horse was neglected, with only two legs and no eye, until 1873 when a former pupil, Captain Reed, organised the repair of the horse. This must have been the time when the horse gained an eye and two more legs, and the figure also became more defined and a better representation of the original horse.

The next time we can be sure that the horse was restored was 15-20 years ago by the Marlborough scouts, and since then a new restoration project for Marlborough's white horse was launched last year by Marlborough College.

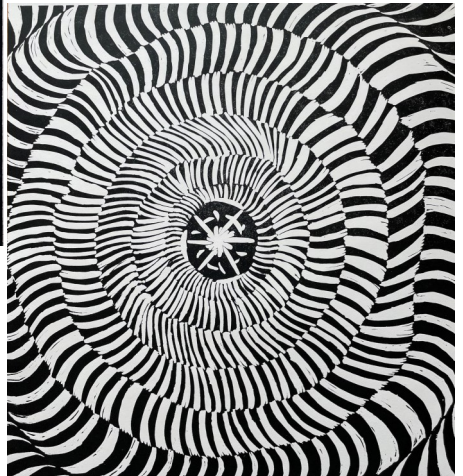
This white horse is still very important to Marlborough, as it keeps the history of both the town and the school alive and is an iconic symbol to represent Marlborough, being one of the eight Wiltshire white horses. The white horse is even mentioned in the Marlborough College school hymn where it says "*Ab, then*

we'll cry, thank God, my lads, the Kennett's running still, and see, the old White Horse still pads up there on Granbam Hill."



Clemmie C. (Hundred)

Alara F. (Hundred)



How chalk is used in Hindu culture: Aoife G (L6)

Traditionally, rangoli is an everyday art of decoration using chalk that originated in India drawn on the entrances of homes. The word, rangoli, comes from the Sanskrit word, *rangaavali*, which is made up from two words: *rang*, meaning colour, and *aavali*, meaning creepers or lines, so the literal translation is “*coloured lines*”.

The most important element of rangoli patterns is their bright colour. The usage of vibrant colours is associated with Hindu festivals, marriage celebrations, auspicious observances and other important milestones and gatherings. Rangoli patterns are often symmetrical and are made up of simple, geometric shapes. They combine straight and curved lines with images taken from nature. The symmetry of these designs is a symbol of prosperity, growth, and good fortune. The designs used are passed down from one generation to the next in order to keep the art form and tradition alive. Each design varies as they are unique to each area or family, reflecting different traditions, folklore, and practices.

The major symbols used in Hindu rangoli patterns include lotus flowers, birds, and foliage. There are more specific designs for special occasions. For example, at Diwali, rangoli designs comprise of Hindu deities (Ganesh and Lakshmi), peacocks and round floral shapes. As these motifs are traditional to India, rangoli symbolises India’s rich heritage and that it is a place of festivals and colour.

Rangoli is a sand mandala. The word “mandala” in Sanskrit translates as “circle” or “centre”. A mandala is an object of meditation to aid someone with spiritual development. The Hindu tradition focuses on the realisation of the self as one with the divine. The design of a mandala is a geometric pattern. It represents the cosmos metaphysically and symbolically. Mandalas refer to the wholeness of life itself. They act as cosmic diagrams that show the relation to infinity and the world that goes beyond to one’s own mind and body. Mandalas can also be interpreted as symbolic of a spiritual journey through the layers of the rangoli pattern.

For some typical designs, see next page.



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Marlborough's Russian connections:

Dmitri M (L6)

Whilst leafing through Thomas Hinde's *Paths of Progress*, a History of Marlborough College, I came across a photo of the 'Brasser', the College's wind orchestra, with its long-serving Head of Wind, Robert Peel, as conductor, in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, in 1980, when they gave the first Western world premiere of Khachaturian's *The Battle of Stalingrad*. Khachaturian had composed the music for a 1949 Soviet war film on the epic battle which portrayed Stalin as a military genius. The photo attracted my curiosity because my mother is from Stalingrad, which is now called Volgograd. As my contribution to this scholars' project on Marlborough, I have put together some anecdotes about connections which Marlburians, and people associated with Marlborough, have had with Russia.

Blore's Crimean Palace

The iconic photo of Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt seated at Yalta in Crimea is where the victors of the Second World War met to decide the fate of post-war Europe. Stalin went out of his way to impress the British and American leaders, so Roosevelt was housed at the Tsarist palace in Livadia whilst Churchill was made to feel at home in the grand Vorontsov Palace in Alupka, the work of Victorian architect Edward Blore who also designed the main facade of Buckingham Palace and various buildings at Marlborough College including Morris House, B1 House and the Master's Lodge, as well as the original chapel and dining hall (both subsequently demolished and rebuilt for lack of size). Prince Mikhail Vorontsov (sometimes spelled Woronzow), who chose Blore to design his palace, mixing various Oriental and British architectural styles, was an Anglophile having spent his childhood and youth in Britain where his father Count Semyon had served as Russian ambassador from 1784 to 1800 and from 1801 to 1806. Semyon's daughter Ekaterina had married George Herbert, the 11th Earl of Pembroke, in 1808, becoming chatelaine of Wilton House in Wiltshire (her son Sidney Herbert was Secretary of War during the Crimean War. Her Russian sleigh is displayed today in the cloisters). Blore would have been known to Mikhail as he had done work for his sister Ekaterina, the Countess of Pembroke, at Wilton and also for Sir Walter Scott, a friend of the Russian Prince.

In April 1919, children of the Russian aristocracy with their English nannies assembled around the white stone lions which grace the terrace of the Vorontsov Palace as they waited for a Royal Navy warship to rescue them from Crimea and bring them to safety in England. (Churchill, who greatly admired the lions, asked

Stalin if he could take them home to Britain, to which Stalin said no. The Soviet dictator could have been more generous, given that he was granted half of Europe at Yalta, but he did send Churchill 400 bottles of Armenian brandy.)

Russian studies at Marlborough

Thomas Hinde writes that *'acquiring teachers of exotic languages has not been easy and some have been sent abroad to study them,'* so in 1937, George Turner, the ninth Master, sent one of his beaks, Leslie Coggin, to Russia. Coggin was Housemaster of A House (now Morris House) between 1938 and 1941. His wife Mary also taught at the College. Going to Russia in the middle of Stalin's Great Purge (or Great Terror as it is also known) would not have been an easy assignment. Nevertheless, the College's Russian Department was born that same year. In 1987, Marlborough celebrated 50 years of Russian teaching with a Russia Day.

In the early 1960s, Oxford-educated Russianist, John C Q Roberts, was appointed head of the Russian Department at Marlborough College, spending over a decade teaching at the school. He left Marlborough in 1973 to take over as Director of the Great Britain-USSR Association, a British government funded organisation designed to promote cultural contacts between the UK and USSR, and remained in this position for 20 years retiring from the body in 1993 (the Great Britain-USSR Association having been renamed the Britain-Russia Centre in 1992).

In 2000, Roberts published a book called *Speak Clearly into the Chandelier* with a foreword by John le Carre. The book deals with cultural politics between Britain and Russia 1973-2000, and has a number of references to the author's Marlborough days, describing how in the mid-1960s Roberts accompanied groups of Marlburian O level and A level Russian language candidates on two trips to Russia, where on one occasion the boys were taken to meet Lord Brimelow at the British Embassy in Moscow. The Independent's obituary of Brimelow claims that he was the best Russian-speaker in the Embassy in Moscow during the Second World War and recounts how the young diplomat was sent to cope face to face with Stalin, who after drinking his vodka, was in the habit of summoning the Embassy late at night to convey his views to Churchill. Marlborough has a long tradition of organising foreign trips and exchanges for language students. For instance, in 1987 there was a joint visit to Russia with St Paul's of 35 pupils. In 1990, exchanges began with School No 57 in Kiev which was still a largely Russian-speaking city at that time.

In his foreword, John Le Carre writes that he invited Roberts to accompany him to Moscow in May 1987 and be his guide there, since he was researching material for his book *the Russia House*. Le Carre pays tribute to Roberts' considerable knowledge of Russia and concludes that *"he wasn't a spy, though I suspect it took the Russians a long time to believe this, as it did me."*

In 1976, Roberts organised an evening of recital for the Russian poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko at the Royal Festival Hall, and wrote to John Betjeman inviting him to be the guest of honour, *'mentioning his old connections with his old school.'* Betjeman replied with a nice letter dated 29 July 1976, which is published in full in the book. The last paragraph reads; *Dear Mr. Roberts,..... My goodness Marlborough is a more cheerful place now those glorious girls like your daughter have entered it. I feel I wouldn't mind going there myself. Give your daughter my love and tell her how sorry I am she had to be kept all those hours in the Chapel. I hope the Master gave them all a reward for their labours. When I was at Marlborough to get off games was the best reward available. Yours sincerely John B.*

Notes from a Ukrainian mother

My name is Taisiya, and I currently live in Marlborough with my children. I have a son who is five years old and who is a pupil at St Mary's school. I would like to share with you my impressions on his learning experience in an English primary school.

There is a very high level of motivation, which seems to start right from the children in kindergarten. My son received a certificate in front of the whole school, and he was given a star pendant with his name in cube-shaped beads.

This has encouraged him to go to school and to approach his studies with great enthusiasm.

I see many forms of motivation in the school: colouring books as gifts; a birthday celebration for Froggy the frog, who teaches them letters and reading; lessons in making cakes and baking bread with their own hands; and letters of thanks to the children, presented at school assemblies with lots of applause. There is so much to inspire the children. It's wonderful.

Isdi N. (L6)



Diya C. (Remove)



Stonehenge, Durrington Walls and Woodhenge:

Poppy G-C (L6)

Stonehenge, Durrington Walls and Woodhenge are sites that are all part of a large 'Neolithic complex'¹ centred around the nearby River Avon. They are now part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites which also includes some of the oldest recorded settlements in Britain. There are multiple links between these sites as well as just the geography, and this article will explore their history and how this is true.

How are the sites connected?

Before beginning to explore the connection between Stonehenge, Durrington Walls and Woodhenge, it is worthy to note that Stonehenge is the most famous of the sites being discussed and therefore is often the point of comparison and link between the sites. With this in mind, the first and most obvious connection there is between these sites is the many geographical similarities, which are highlighted by the fact the sites are all part of the Stonehenge Avenue and the same World Heritage site.

Physical similarities also play a key part in arguing for the connection between the monuments. Around the same time the sarsen stones were erected in the second period of building Stonehenge, two sets of concentric timber circles were built within a large settlement two miles northeast of the monument. One of these circles, called the 'Southern Circle', was at the centre of an ancient settlement. By 2460 BC the ruins were enclosed by the bank and ditch of Durrington Walls. Outside of the south entrance of the same settlement a third concentric timber circle was built, now known as Woodhenge. This parallel between the sites in terms of structure strongly suggests a connection exists.

At Durrington Walls the avenue was built in roughly 2500 BC between the 'Southern Circle' of the site and the River Avon and closely resembles the one from the third stage of Stonehenge's construction, reinforcing the idea that the sites are linked. The discovery of this road also meant that there was a possibility that Durrington Walls was part of a larger Neolithic complex that was linked to Stonehenge and Woodhenge as both were connected to the river by roads as well. The multitude of physical similarities between Stonehenge and Woodhenge was also a key factor in the naming of the site as Woodhenge². The lone entrance of the site also faces Durrington Walls, further proving the sites' connection.

The sites of Stonehenge, Durrington Walls and Woodhenge are linked in another

way too. One of the circles at Durrington Walls, called the ‘Southern Circle’, was at the centre of an ancient settlement. This was a short-lived community but is thought to have been the camp of the builders of Stonehenge, providing yet another link between the two sites. Similarly, although origins of Woodhenge remain unknown, many historians believe it was built by the same group that built Stonehenge too³.



However, more obscure links also exist. All three sites have focuses on solstitial alignments. The Durrington Walls avenue was aligned toward the summer solstice sunset, while the ‘Southern Circle’ faced the winter solstice sunrise which was the opposite to the road at Stonehenge, emphasising the parallels between the sites. This alignment based on the main solstices therefore emphasises the possibility of Stonehenge and Durrington Walls being built as parts of a single complex based around the Avon. Stonehenge and Woodhenge also share the same alignments to the summer and winter solstices as both contain either timber or stones in an oval that face in those directions. These similarities suggest all three sites had spiritual or ceremonial importance and may have been used together in processional routes or ritual ceremonies.

Currently many of these theories rely on much speculation and educated hypothesis. However, these monuments are still being explored and being further investigated, which in time may reveal more connections to each other, as well as to other sites along the Stonehenge Avenue or possibly the rest of the country (which there is some rationale for due to the similar styles of settlement that exist in the Orkney Islands in Scotland). Although, for now the main links between these Neolithic wonders is their unique focus on solstitial alignments and the closeness of their locations.

Footnotes:

¹Naomi Blumberg, *Durrington Walls* (Britannica) <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Durrington-Walls>

²*The History of Woodhenge* (English Heritage) <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/woodhenge/history/>

³Evan Evans, *You've heard of Stonehenge, but what's Woodhenge?* (Evan Evans) <https://evanevanstours.com/blog/youve-heard-of-stonehenge-but-whats-woodhenge/>

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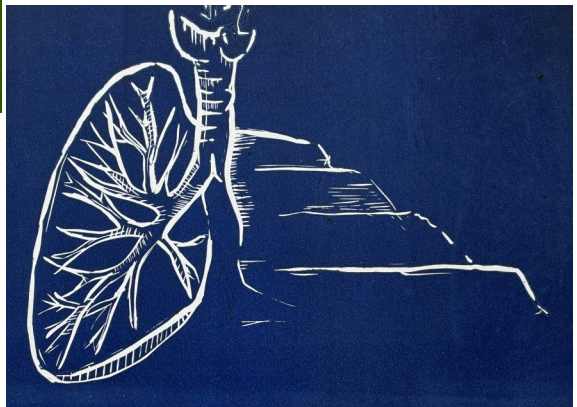
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Ottilie R. (U6)

Phoebe C. (Hundred)



Update on Love Marlborough Kids Meals

Since the last update on Kids Meals back in December 2021, our charity has continued to support Marlborough area families who find themselves struggling .

We are part of the charity, Love Marlborough and are an active part of Marlborough Area Poverty Action Group. We cover Marlborough and villages within an 8 mile radius.

As anticipated, the changes to universal credit, fuel prices and cost of living increases have impacted many members of our local community. Kids Meals is now supporting 47 families who have children under the age of 18 years. Most families self-refer, others come through schools, children's centres or social services. Families tend to remain with us long term at present but occasionally a parent will let us know that their circumstances have changed for the better and they no longer need our support.

We cook on Friday afternoons, at Sue Brady Catering, generously provided free of charge by Kymee Cleasby. We have a rota of cooks and kitchen assistants, cooking and packaging close to 60 meals each week (some larger families receive double portions). We always cook a roast chicken with roast potatoes and mixed vegetables. We also offer all our families a slow cooker with healthy, budget-friendly recipe suggestions.

Currently, we have a rota of delivery volunteers, covering six delivery routes each week. In addition, there are coordinators for cooking, liaising with families, onboarding volunteers, IT support and overall management of the project. We continue to be very helpfully supported by St Mary's Church Treasurers.

We have received grants and funds from the Wiltshire Community Fund, Marlborough Town Council, The Rotary Club, local businesses and supermarkets, commercial companies linked to some of our volunteers, volunteers running fundraising events, a local charitable trust and from individuals. Kids Meals is also one of the Mayor's charities this year. However, we need to continually fundraise to remain sustainable.

How you might help:

Every donation is received with thanks. Every penny will be used to feed families who are struggling. Perhaps you can make a donation or help us fund-raise ? We often need extra help in the kitchen and for deliveries on Friday afternoons, between 2.30-5pm.

You can find out more if you follow the link at: www.lovemarlboroughkidsmeals.org/home

or contact: deliveries@lovemarlboroughkidsmeals.org

Easter Services for Holy Week:

All are warmly welcome to any of these services.

Palm Sunday: 2nd April

Dramatised readings of the last week of Jesus' life

9am, St John the Baptist, Minal

10:30am St George's, Preshute

10:30am St Mary's, Marlborough

11.00am Blessing of Palms will take place at the Mass, St Thomas More.

Monday 3rd– Wednesday 5th

Compline (Night Prayer) at 7.30pm.

Monday 3rd St John the Baptist, Minal

Tuesday 4th St Mary's, Marlborough

Wednesday 5th St George's, Preshute

Maundy Thursday: 6th April

7.30pm Mass of The Lord's Supper (St Thomas More)

7:30pm Fellowship Meal, St Mary's Church Hall, Marlborough

9pm - Midnight The Watch (St Mary's, Marlborough)

Good Friday: 7th April

9am Stations of The Cross for Children (St Thomas More)

10:30am All-age Worship (St Mary's, Marlborough)

12 noon Stations of The Cross (St Thomas More)

2 pm 'The last hour before the Cross' (St George's, Preshute)

3.00pm Celebration of The Lord's Passion (St Thomas More)

Saturday 8th April

11am Easter Procession, Marlborough High Street

Meet in St Mary's, Marlborough at 10.15am

9.00 pm Easter Vigil Mass (St Thomas More)

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms - we welcome

12 March Daisy Little at St Mary's

Departed - we pray for the families of

17 January Rev Christopher Evans (known as Jo) (79) , Manor Road, Gt Bedwyn

St John the Baptist, Minal

2 February Susan Evans (77), Manor Road, Gt Bedwyn

St John the Baptist, Minal

It is nearly 10 years since the first meeting of MAPAG, when a group of us met to try to find out what the levels of poverty were in the area and to discuss ways in which to tackle and alleviate them. We discovered that Devizes Foodbank had set up a weekly coffee morning in Christchurch to distribute Food Boxes, offering advice on organisations that may be able to help individuals and families.

We were also aware of the need to pressurise the government to implement changes of policy to reduce the need for foodbanks and to challenge the myths and stigmatisation of those who require our help. Subsequently we organised the Marlborough distribution of Food Boxes, as an offshoot of the Devizes Foodbank, under the expert leadership of Ann Yates and her deputy Sarah Hicks. This coming year Ann will be standing down and Vincent Stokes will replace her. We thank Ann for all the hard work she has put in to build up a good team.

We continue to network with others who share our aims, namely Love Marlborough Kids Meals and the Community Fridge, the Wiltshire Council Area Board and Marlborough Town Council, and now attend Cost of Living Crisis meetings which coordinate Warm Spaces.

It's been a busy and productive year:

- * We have worked with Andrew Jack to get replacement provision for Activ8, and before Christmas the council ran a programme called FUEL at the Youth and Community centre, providing fun activities and a hot meal for 4 days, which we hope will continue in other school holidays.

- * In the summer we supported a number of children attending a holiday programme, FACE (Fun, Active, Creative Events) at St. Mary's Primary School. This was open to children from other schools. We also organised a successful trip for families to the Cotswold Wildlife Park.

- * At Christmas we provided Tesco vouchers for 45 families, distributed through St. Mary's Primary School, Preshute School, Kids Meals and the Foodbank.

- * We refer local rough sleepers to the Wiltshire Rough Sleeper Team, and continue to respond to one off applications for funding for particular needs of vulnerable families.

Thank you to all who have donated and made the above possible.

Caroline Thomas has taken over as our Treasurer, and in her role as a Wiltshire Councillor has alerted us to many grants and opportunities available to us. She has also established a Marlborough Area Youth Forum that is in the process of appointing a youth worker. As a Governor at St. John's, Caroline is working with 6th formers on volunteering and organising a summer event for teenagers.

What's On in April

April Calendar

1st (Saturday)

7.30pm St Mary's Church. Marlborough Choral Society – Spring concert

2nd (Sunday)

7.30pm St Peter's Church. 11th Series of Brilliant International Musicians: Michael Ronan (Baritone) and Benjamin Mead (Piano). Join us for our second exciting instalment of 2023. See more details on the St Peter's website: stpetersmarlborough.org.uk/event. Tickets £10 for members of St Peter's Trust, £15 for non-members, and free for schoolchildren and students

3rd (Monday)

7.30pm-9.30pm St Peter's. AGM for the College Fields and Barton Park Residents Association

4th (Tuesday)

10.30am-12.30pm The Merchant's House. Spring Study Series: Chris Rogers. 'An age of unbridled optimism and widening horizons'. Tickets (£18 or £15 for Friends) via the website themerchantshouse.co.uk/event

6th (Thursday)

2pm Mildenhall Village Hall. Marlborough Floral Club. Demonstration by Pam Lewis – 'The world awakes to the sound of Spring'. Treat yourselves to an enjoyable afternoon out on the first Thursday of each month. For more information, please call Micky Graham on 01672 514301

7th (Friday), 8th (Saturday) and 10th (Monday)

10am-4pm St Peter's Church. Art Exhibition: Angelo De Mello and Neil George. Angelo De Mello brings his colourful paintings of African nature and wildlife to St Peter's. Neil George will be showcasing his wonderful photography of the British Isles through its flora and fauna. Free entry

17th (Monday)

St John's: Term 5 starts (to Friday 26th May)

St Mary's: Term 5 starts (to Thursday 25th May)

18th (Tuesday)

Marlborough College: Summer Term starts (to Friday 30th June)

19th (Wednesday)

7.30pm-8.30pm The Merchant's House. Talk by the Merchant's House head gardener Suzanne Milward – 'Global warming and the impact on our gardening year'. Tickets (£15 or £12 for Friends) via the website themerchantshouse.co.uk/ event

20th (Thursday)

7.30pm-9.30pm St Peter's Church. History Society talk by Nick Baxter: 'From Slave Trade to Parliament'. Tickets available on the door £5, free to History Society members

26th (Wednesday)

10.30am-2.30pm St Peter's Church – The Auction Hub will be joining us to value your antiques and collectibles. Please bring along any items for valuation. Open to all. Visit <http://theauctionhub.uk> for more information

May events:

1st May (Bank Holiday Monday) Bushton Manor Plant Fair and Open Garden SN4 7PX, in aid of St Peter's Church Roof Fund, Clyffe Pypard. Entrance £3, children free and free parking. Dogs on leads are welcome.



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As the first days of Spring slip by in late March, I begin to anticipate April days and all that gradually begins to emerge and flourish in the natural world. In recent years some birds, butterflies and flowers have been appearing earlier than hitherto and things you expect to see in the last days of April arrive a week or so before. I have decided therefore to compile a sort of aide-memoire, listing what to look out for and when, subject to fickle weather. The maximum April day temperature in Wiltshire is 13 degrees, with 14 hours of daylight offering up to 5 hours of sunshine, but we can expect 13 days with some rainfall- 45 mm in total.

First Week: If not already seen, Wild Daffodils will still be out, when standard ones are almost past their best. Golden-yellow is a recurring colour with early spring flowers: primroses, lesser celandines, gorse and, amongst my favourites, marsh marigolds, commonly known as “Kingcups”, since they resemble the goblet cups of Kings. White and yellow flowers attract insects such as hoverflies and bees to pollinate them. The first Chiff-Chaff begins his stuttering song in our village, while a visit to high ground at Liddington or Cley Hill might offer sight of a migrant Wheatear or Ring Ouzel.

Second Week: Brown trout season is underway on the Kennet. With limited flies about, anglers will be using Dark Olives, March Nymphs and Waterhen Spider flies to lure their prey. Riverside walks confirm the arrival of the commoner warblers: Blackcaps, more Chiff-Chaffs and the first Willow Warblers. If the sun is out, the yellow theme continues with Brimstone and pretty Orange Tips butterflies, and there are Peacocks, Red Admirals and the occasional Comma too.

Third Week: Make a visit to Clattinger Farm, Cotswold Water Park, to see the Snake’s Head Fritillaries, the first Green-winged Orchids and abundant cowslips. The Hirundines will have arrived: first the Sand Martin, then the Swallow and the House Martin, with the Swift yet to appear.

Fourth week: Things get hectic! If I know the various setts, earths and ponds, I might watch Badgers and Foxes with cubs in the twilight hours and the male smooth newts, looking superb with big black spots and a wavy crest, performing their courtship dances with the females. Further excitement occurs when I connect with Nightingales, Grasshopper Warblers, both Whitethroat species, plus Sedge and Reed Warblers. To quote Robert Browning: “God’s in his heaven, all’s right with the world!”

Marlborough Church Contacts

Fr John Blacker

513267; marlborough@catholicweb.org.uk
Parish Priest, St Thomas More RC Church

Reuben Mann

07894 048146
office@emmanuelmarlborough.org
Minister, Emmanuel Marlborough Church

The Revd Tim Novis

892209; twgn@marlboroughcollege.org
Senior Chaplain, Marlborough College

The Revd Pete Sainsbury

512364; revpetesainsbury@gmail.com
Team Vicar and Worship Director,
St George's Preshute & The Marlborough
Anglican Team

The Revd Stephen Skinner

512457; rev.stephen.skinner3@gmail.com
Minister, Christchurch Methodist

The Revd Chris Smith

514357; revcjsmith@outlook.com
Rector; Marlborough Anglican Team

Rachel Rosedale

512205; rachelrosed1@gmail.com
Member, The Religious Society of Friends

Penny Reader

marlb.anglicanteam@tiscali.co.uk
Church Cottage, Silverless Street, SN8 1JQ
512357; 07593 815609
(Weekdays, 0900 to 1300)

David Wylie

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A war in one's native country is a "scar" that instantly changes the consciousness of millions of people. And each man chooses for himself where to go, with whom, why, and whose side he is on. It is correct to say that the choice is made subconsciously; it is at these moments that you feel how some kind of force shapes our lives - not consciousness, not the heart, not life experience, not profit, but the subconscious rising from deep within and a new nature is born - a new person. And this is a chilling moment - when you realize that you are no longer: you are new, just born and you are starting to build your life again, from scratch. And magical things begin to happen in your life. Uncontrollable by you. And you can't resist them. And you accept them as a "gift of fate."

And at this moment, unexpectedly for yourself, you find yourself in England. With a child who asked you for a foreign education two years ago. And you couldn't afford it because it was too expensive! And now she is studying in one of the best schools in England, for free. What do you feel about it? That you are the hero of an as yet unwritten novel, when the whole of your life is built on the contrasts "like we have at home" and "like here in England."

England is such a comfortable, understandable and safe country, where the rules of life are clearly defined. And when you have understood and lived by these, it is simply impossible not to become a happy person, in a country that has created for itself the most powerful "protective helmet" in history.

Ukraine, however, is geographically located at the crossroads of world interests. It has been at war since 2014 and last year came a chance to be reborn.

What is the best way to start building a new society? Options may be different and, of course, controversial. One of the options is with a new generation of children! And what about Ukrainian children - what are their emotions now?

Dasha, writes:

My impressions of St John's School in Marlborough have been very positive. I was very surprised by the size of the school and its architecture. I always dreamed of studying abroad and was very excited before the first day of school. On that day, Ukrainian students and English teachers met me, took me on a tour and gave me a school uniform.

I liked it that here each day there are only 5 lessons for 1 hour each: in Ukraine there are 7-8 lessons per day, 45 minutes each. It was very interesting too to find myself caught up in a new school rhythm. In the first month of study there were additional English lessons, which helped a lot to adapt to English at school. All the

teachers were very kind and treated us with great attention. It is very good that there are many Ukrainian children at school and in my class, and they have now become my friends.

At the same time, I study online at a Ukrainian school. After the start of the war, the school changed the educational process and divided all students into two school programmes: one program for those who live in Ukraine and a different one for those who live abroad.

Study at the Ukrainian school takes place in the evening. Periodically, joint online meetings are held when the entire Ukrainian class meets in full force. Also, video films are created to recapture our own stories, when each student makes a mini video about his life, which is mounted in a video film about the class.

It is very difficult to study in two schools, and the programme of the Ukrainian school is the more difficult and complicated, despite the fact that I follow it in my native language.

But all in all it has been an amazing experience.

The Pelham Blue Plaque:

Sara Holden

This is the story of Bob Pelham, creator of the famous Pelham puppets. Designed and manufactured in Marlborough from 1947 to 1980, Pelham's was for years the town's largest employer, with over 200 staff at its height.

Bob was studying architecture when he joined up to fight in World War II. He had a hobby of making "wonky" toys and when discharged, he decided to turn his hobby into a business.

Early on, a legal challenge forced him to change tack to the design and manufacture of puppets. It was a brilliant decision. Over the years Pelham's produced all sorts of puppets for children, for professional puppeteers and latterly, very successfully, for TV shows. They produced puppets for every children's programme you can think of, from Muffin the Mule to the Wombles.

The workshop was first in Silverless Street, then in Victoria House on the corner of the High St and Kingsbury St (site of the blue plaque). Later the operation moved to much larger premises on London Road.

Sadly, it was not to last. By 1980 the business was declining and Bob died in May of that year. His widow and loyal workforce struggled on but on April 4th, 1986 production ceased at the London Road factory and forty years of Pelham Puppets ended abruptly. It is sad to realise that, in any case, those lovable puppets would not have survived in today's world of computer generated images.



A new book by Curtis Sittenfeld is always a treat. **Romantic Comedy** is, as her fans would expect, a mildly subversive and entertaining deconstruction of – well – romantic comedy. It's a classic three-act story of contemporary dating and relationships, set in the world of American television comedy writing. With a wry eye the author gives us a narrator heroine who is sardonically aware of sexist double standards in the realm of attraction, talent and celebrity, and as a result self-sabotages her own romantic connections. It's an easy, enjoyable, faintly acerbic read. Perhaps the protagonists are slightly improbably articulate about their 'issues' and insecurities, but what do I know? They're American, and I don't really know how they do love over there. I did once have an American boyfriend, but we never got beyond a bit of clammy hand-holding, we didn't discuss emotions. Possibly because I was only seven at the time (he was eight).

Every so often there comes a book that sells and sells, either through clever marketing or word of mouth. *Where the Crawdads Sing* is one of those, and I confess I haven't read it, but frankly so many people talked about it (and the film) so much that I almost feel as though I have. And now, if asked 'what can I read if I really enjoyed WtCS?' I can answer **Go as a River** by Shelley Read. Set in the vividly described Colorado countryside, it's the story of a young woman whose life is radically altered by a chance encounter. If described, the plot and the action would sound relentlessly depressing (and it is grim), but the story is of endurance and resilience, ultimately uplifting, and I enjoyed it more than I expected to. That sounds like damning with faint praise, sorry, not what I intended.

Please do read **A Killing in November** by Simon Mason. Set in Oxford it's a police procedural, swift moving, with unexpected plot turns, and darkly funny in parts. The main emphasis though is on the relationship between the odd-couple pair of detectives, one of whom you'd cross the road to avoid in real life. Simon Mason also wrote the *Running Girl* series of YA crime novels which I regularly recommend to young (and not-so) readers.

Anyway, can't stop, I have a *Pruimenvlaai* to bake. **Dark Rye and Honey Cake**, about the baking and traditions of the Low Countries, is a beautifully illustrated cookery book, with informative chapters about the tremendously complicated history of Belgium (which I'm relieved to learn even Belgians don't understand!)


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Thursday, April 20, 7:30 pm, St Peter's Church.
Guests are very welcome, £5 entry.

www.marlboroughhistorysociety.co.uk/Facebook

News from the Churches

Easter Procession! On Easter Saturday 8th April

Marlborough Churches Together warmly invite all ages to take part in a semi-dramatized Easter Procession, 11am on Saturday, April 8th. We will assemble at 10.15am in St Mary's Church to practise the two songs and dress up in suitable costume if we would like to. Spare costumes will be available.



At 11am we will set off, walking from St Mary's to St Peter's Church, telling a very simple version of the Easter story on the way. The event should last around 40 minutes.

If you would like to have a role in narrating, non-speaking acting or in any other way please contact Penny at: marlb.anglicanteam@tiscali.co.uk. or Helen: hcestokes@gmail.com

Easter Day: 9th April

- 6.00am Sunrise service, Martinsell Hill
- 8.00am Holy Communion (St Mary's)
- 9.00am Family Communion (St John the Baptist)
- 10.30am Family Communion (St Mary's)
- 10.30am Family Communion (St George's)
- 10.30am Quaker Meeting for Worship
- 11.00am Easter Sunday Mass (St Thomas More)
- 4.00 pm Easter Service (Emmanuel at Christchurch)

MAPAG

The next open meeting is at 5pm on Tuesday, April 18th on zoom. All are welcome. Zoom link details from Rachel (Rachelrosed1@gmail.com)



Marlborough Churches Together

The next Fraternal is on Wednesday 26th April, 12 noon at The Paddock, Kingsbury Street.



Marlborough Anglican Team

St Mary's: Friendship café meets on Saturday 1st April. (Poster Page 25)

Warm Wednesdays continue on Wednesdays, 10.30 am. (Poster below)

St George's: 10.30am Morning Worship - activities for children – 2nd & 16th April

Children are always warmly welcome at any of our services at St George's, but of special interest may be the All-Age service on the first Sunday of the month and



our new offering, a children's activity table at our Morning Worship on the third Sunday of each month. The dates are 16th April, 21st May, and 18th June. Looking forward to seeing children and their families at these services!

Christchurch Methodist Fellowship

Christchurch Methodist Fellowship contact details are:

e-mail : office@christchurchmarlborough.org.uk and the mobile phone number 07564 082092.



If only post will do it should be addressed to: Christchurch Methodist Fellowship, C/O The Manse, 18 Priorsfield, Marlborough.

Our website <http://www.christchurchmarlborough.org.uk> will continue to carry news of our witness.

Emmanuel

We are grateful to meet for a weekly 4pm Sunday service at our church on New Road, Marlborough, SN8 1AH with crèche and Sunday School groups. All are welcome to stay afterwards for refreshments and a sandwich tea for children. Mid-week we are also delighted to offer a variety of activities including homegroups meeting in Marlborough, Pewsey and Ogbourne St George and community groups as below - for more details and the latest updates, please check our website at emmanuelmarlborough.org:



Little Friends Toddler Group, Thursdays during term time, 10-11.30am at the Marlborough Community and Youth Centre. Come and enjoy free play, singing and story time, snacks for children and refreshments for carers.

Explorers, Fridays during term time, 6-7.15pm at the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough. Our kids club for school years 3-6. Fun, games, tuck and a short Bible talk (bring 50p for tuck)

Friday Nights Fridays during term time, 7.30-9pm. Our youth club for school years 7-11 at the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough. Friends, fun & faith – everyone welcome!

Hope Explored A 3 session short introduction to Christianity, from Luke's Gospel. All welcome to come and ask any question or just listen! For more details, email office@emmanuelmarlborough.org

Sparklers Monday 17th April 3.45-4.45pm (Doors open at 3.30pm) at the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough. A monthly kids club for school years Reception to Year 2. Games, Snacks and Bible Stories!

Quakers in North America

An open meeting to which all are welcome. Thursday 4th May at 2.30pm in the Friends' Meeting House. A talk about the Quaker presence in America from their arrival to the present day.



Tower and Town staff

Chairman	Sarah Bumphrey	chairman@towerandtown.org.uk 16 George Lane, SN8 4BX	516862
Advertising	Chris Rogers	advertising@towerandtown.org.uk	
Distribution	Sue Tulloh	distribution@towerandtown.org.uk	288912
Subscriptions	Peter Astle	4 Laurel Drive, SN8 2SH	515395
Treasurer	Peter Astle	treasurer@towerandtown.org.uk	515395

Production Teams

May

Editor	Raik Jarjis	may.editor@towerandtown.org.uk	527711
Compiler	April Nobes	may.compiler@towerandtown.org.uk	

June

Editor	Jo Payne	jun.editor@towerandtown.org.uk	07766 721799
Compiler	April Nobes	jun.compiler@towerandtown.org.uk	

Every Month

<i>What's On</i>	Ali Pick	whats.on@towerandtown.org.uk	512250
<i>News from the Churches</i>	Alison Selby	church.news@towerandtown.org.uk Crossmead, Kingsbury St, SN8 1HU	511128
<i>Family News</i>	Naomi Painter	family.news@towerandtown.org.uk	516862
<i>Arts</i>	Gabriella Venus	arts.correspondent@towerandtown.org.uk	
<i>Books</i>	Debby Guest	books.correspondent@towerandtown.org.uk	
<i>Nature</i>	Robin Nelson	nature.correspondent@towerandtown.org.uk	

Website, searchable article archive

<https://www.towerandtown.org.uk>

Webmaster, IT

hugh@towerandtown.org.uk

Contributions and comments from readers are welcome.

Please send articles and letters to the Monthly Editor or the Chairman, other notices or announcements to the compiler.

All items for the May issue by Tuesday 11 April 2023 please.

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