
TOWER AND TOWN



CHANGES

AUGUST 2022

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TOWER^{AND}TOWN

THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES

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Changes

I happened to be walking along the High Street a few months ago when the social distancing corridors outside the cafes and restaurants (with the exception of The Polly Tea Rooms) were being removed. I am aware that they were controversial, being considered unsightly and taking up valuable parking spaces. However, I really liked the way they encouraged cafes and restaurants to spill out onto the pavements giving the High Street a lively social atmosphere on fine days.

This short-lived change prompted me to reflect that it is only one of many I have seen in the High Street since I moved to Marlborough in 1986. So I asked some individuals who have lived here longer than I have to reflect on the changes they have seen in the town. David Chandler tells us of his childhood in George Lane and the town's old businesses while David Davidge considers big changes in policing in Marlborough in his career. Trevor Dobie reflects widely on a lifetime in the town while Betty Dobson gives us a view from St John's Close.

By way of contrast Peter Marren writes about the names we give to our butterflies and Nick Baxter tells the story of Isabel of Gloucester, a remarkable woman with strong connections with Marlborough.

As always I am very grateful to all this month's contributors and hope that you enjoy reading what they have to say. Perhaps it will prompt you to think of changes you yourself have noticed. Please feel free to contribute an article of your own if you are moved to do so. (See **p 28** for information on how to go about it).

Sarah Bumphrey, Editor

The Marlborough of my childhood was a very different place from today and not just because the war dominated my early years. We children were allowed a lot of freedom and from the second year at St Mary's primary school (then in Herd Street) it was reckoned that boys made their own way to school across town.

We lived in George Lane and used to play along the length of what was then more of a "lane," with only an odd couple of houses on the north side.

The George Inn (where the Catholic church is now) was derelict and forbidden territory. In the bitter winter of 1946 it was being demolished by Italian POWs and they had built a beautiful snowman which they had placed in the middle of George Lane. The POWs shouted to us not to damage it and this was far from our minds as we were overcome with its beauty.

There was very little traffic apart from military convoys (mostly American) and we used to play football on the road. If a rare car came by we stood aside, while an even rarer police car meant we dived behind a hedge.

The shops and businesses in the town were mostly locally owned such as: Mundys for shoes; Philips & Dales for ironmongery; F J Chandler for saddlery; Ducks for cycle repairs; Stratton Sons & Mead for grinding and blending coffee and Turners the gunsmiths. Many had workshops behind them. This lack of attached workshops to retail shops is the biggest change in the retail trade from those days.

It was not felt that there was much to hold young people in Marlborough when they left school so no change there! The commuting to work that people find normal today would have seemed extraordinary then. The farthest people would consider travelling would have been to Swindon.

It is sad that the town has lost community centres like the British Legion Club, the Conservative Club and a couple of the churches. Although Marlborough has never had the sense of community that say Pewsey, Aldbourne, Devizes and Calne had and have, there is a lot going on with music & choral groups, U3A for senior citizens, the History Society, Church groups and a Literary Festival to keep anyone interested and busy.

Chandler's Saddlery – Two Snapshots



Chandler's saddlery (pictured here in what is now the White Horse building in about 1880) was established by Thomas Chandler in about 1860. The 1861 census lists him here with a workshop and three apprentices. Thomas was then in partnership with two of his sons, Albert and Frederick. Albert carried on the business until he retired in 1924.



After Thomas's death in 1885, the two brothers carried on in a partnership until 1887 when Frederick James, the younger brother, set up on his own in the London Road. This photo is from before 1910 and on the left is Frederick Henry Chandler (David's grandfather) with one of his sisters and younger brothers.

Changes in policing

David Davidge

I was posted to Marlborough in October, 1969 and remained there until I retired in March, 1987. *(The photograph shows David on his last day in uniform standing under the entrance lamp of the old Police Station.)* Marlborough was a subdivision of Swindon Division, commanded by a Chief Inspector or Inspector, and consisted of the town and surrounding villages. As a County Force, officers were provided with housing and as well as the houses in Marlborough all the larger villages had a Police house.



The officers living in the villages were part of two sections that covered the area in 8 hour shifts over 24 hours. The Home Office at the time stipulated that a section should consist of 1 Sergeant and 6.5 Constables! All that changed when it was agreed that officers could buy their own property, which meant that some officers were living outside the area. Eventually all the properties were sold and the old Police Station was demolished and replaced by a smaller building.

A big problem in Marlborough when I first arrived was the traffic. As the A4 was a major holiday route, traffic on Saturdays in the summer was horrific and point duty was required at the London Road/Salisbury Road junction to keep the traffic flowing as much as possible. It was not unusual for traffic to be queuing back as far as the Stitchcombe turning. The change came when the M4 opened.

The Police were also responsible for prosecutions at the Magistrates Court which was held every Thursday at the Town Hall. This had a very useful advantage in that if there had been a major incident over a weekend the people involved could be brought to Court the following Thursday, which told the local population that the matter had been dealt with swiftly. The Crown Prosecution Service was created to relieve the Police of this duty. The decisions to prosecute and the actual prosecutions were then made by lawyers based at Chippenham.

When I started at Marlborough the public office was always manned by a Police Officer, but they were gradually replaced by trained civilian staff. Throughout my time at Marlborough morale was very high and every one worked hard to provide a good service to the population of this lovely area.

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Changes - a view from St John's Close

Betty Dobson

On moving to Marlborough (in 1983), I felt welcome – a sentiment echoed by the contributors to the June edition of T&T. Gratifyingly, it's good to know some things do not change. It might seem little has changed in St John's Close where I live, from the time when the houses were first built. Whilst exteriors may look the same, closer inspection reveals extensions; front gardens are often gravel drives; the allotments in the middle, formerly full length, have now been halved; where once families of 6 or 7 lived there is now often a single occupant.



Buildings are an obvious sign of change. St John's school, on two sites in 1983, is now on one. I felt there were benefits to the two smaller sites: particularly Savernake which was less daunting for children from small village schools. But being on one site is a good change. Children going to the one-site school seem to adapt well to it; things that worry us don't worry children!

Many buildings have changed use: Waitrose was once a cinema while the new cinema, now in The Parade, used to be a church and then the Antiques Centre. The Police Station in the car park was a children's centre and before that the tourist information office. Prospect charity shop has moved to the other side of the road leaving the premises empty and the previous Susie Watson sign showing. Before that it was Gerald Smith the greengrocer.

Some amenities have been lost altogether. The Job Centre is now in Devizes. Citizen's Advice once had outreach sessions in the town. We now have to go to Devizes for that too. Organisations have to decide how to use their money for the best. Rural services are expensive to run but closure of offices makes it difficult for people to access them.

Few of us readily welcome change, particularly when we don't know the reasoning behind it. We need explanations and although we may not agree, we at least have an understanding. What do we hang onto? Why? Would we still want thick smoke coming out of chimneys rather than the red kites and buzzards which now fly overhead?

During my lifetime (b. 1955), there have been many changes to Marlborough, not all for the better. I have six older brothers, all still local, who have contributed to this article.

The closing of the railway occurred when the last passenger train departed Marlborough 'Low Level' station in 1963. We used to live at the top of Cherry Orchard adjacent to the 'High Level' station, nicknamed The Ark, where wartime movements, animal transfers, a steam engine shed, a goods yard with Bert New's scrapyard all contributed to an interesting and lively upbringing for my brothers.

One of my oldest memories was being shown a string of elephants, tail to trunk, walking underneath the bridge, with me looking on them from above, on their way to The Common with the circus. There was a dedicated siding for animals, next to the signal box. One of the busiest times was during the annual Sheep Fair. Youngsters would acquire a stick in order to 'help' with the herding of flocks of sheep from the station to the Common.

The **town boundaries** are under pressure. The railway line marked the southernmost limit of the town until the retail/industrial estate was built off Salisbury Road and Marleberg Grange/ Premier Inn development over the road; I worry about the creep of development towards Savernake Forest and the Westward expansion of the town that now almost engulfs Manton. Luckily, The Common is mostly building free, and northern expansion is thankfully limited.

Although Marlborough is working hard to keep an independent, thriving High Street, many **shops and pubs** have been lost since my birth: Grocers (Don Burgess, Jack Smith, Hilliers) have all now been replaced by new supermarkets. Bob Loney fishmonger, Mrs Copplestone's homemade sweets, Linney's confectioner, Waldeck's Bakery, London Road Post Office, Green Parrot Sweets and many more small but busy shops have all disappeared or been repurposed. A number of pubs have gone (Five

Alls, Jolly Butcher, Queen's Head, Cricketers', Cross Keys) and the accommodation rooms of The Aylesbury Arms Hotel and Ivy House Hotel lost to offices or College dorms.

I was born in **Savernake Hospital**. Apart from a maternity section, (revamped just before it was closed) there was an operating theatre, a much-used minor injuries unit and several wards for treatment and convalescence for local people, all overseen by doctors from the Marlborough surgery in the High Street.

Many improvements have been seen with local state **schools** in Marlborough during my lifetime. I started my education in Church Cottage in Silverless Street, before going to St Mary's in Herd Street (now houses). I then went to St Peter's (to start with in what is now the Library, then in the old grammar school building in The Parade) and on to Marlborough Grammar School (now St John's). All of these buildings have now been rebuilt or repurposed with, I hear, many improvements. (No more sitting crossed legged on the floor, hoping for some heat from the single large fossil fuel heater in the classroom). Some private schools have disappeared (Kingsbury Hill House School and Mayfield College in London Road), transformed into housing but Marlborough College seems to be continually growing.

Churches have been undergoing change too. My father, Robert Francis Dobie (Bob) was the last person to have their funeral in St Peter's and St Paul's Church at the western end of High St, where he was a choirboy. The building was undergoing a clearance of furniture following the decision to make it redundant, apparently because of the effect of heavy vehicles passing close by on the A4. The Catholic Church of St Thomas More in George Lane was a corrugated 'Nissen Hut' (*The photo shows its opening in 1948*) but was rebuilt in brick and stone to its current pleasing design. The Congregational Church in The Parade was transformed into an antiques centre and now a splendid cinema. Now we fear for the future of the Methodist Church in New Road with revenue cuts in the offing.

“Adventure lit their star.”

In 1949 journalist and broadcaster Kenneth Allsop wrote a charming book (part fact, part fiction) about a pair of Little Ringed Plovers nesting at Tring Reservoirs at the end of the War. Until 1938 when the first pair were discovered there, these small plovers were no more than rare vagrants in Britain. “Adventure lit their Star” was one of the first natural history books I read, and given the species’ liking for drained or working gravel and sand pits, the title is appropriate. Allsop’s book features a fictional egg-collector’s foiled attempts to rob the nest and records the pair’s eventual triumph over adversity and danger.

The Little Ringed Plover is a small wader bird with a black and white face, yellow eye-ring and flesh-coloured legs. Compared with the similar Ringed Plover we see on sandy and shingle beaches, it is daintier, lacks the pale wing-bar and calls with a soft “pee-oo!”, unlike the Ringed Plover’s melodious “toolee!” Arriving in March and April in a precarious environment with trucks and bulldozers for company and water levels variable, nesting success is by no means guaranteed.

The butterfly-like display flight is a delight to the eye, the male circling endlessly with slow wing-beats, calling loudly during steep ascents or vertical dives. Courtship displays are noisy, but the birds become secretive while nesting: like other plover species they sometimes resort to injury-feigning, dragging a faked broken wing to draw a potential predator away from a nest site. By August they will have left to winter in the Mediterranean and further south, recovering perhaps from a stressful breeding season. From those first nesting successes in the war years numbers have steadily risen. Birds return each year to breed in most English counties: a recent estimate suggested there are now well over 1,250 pairs. At the Cotswold Water Park pairs vary from 6 to 10 year by year, according to the availability of suitable sites, and there are one or two other locations in Wiltshire where they have bred.

There are other species that have joined us through northward expansion: Cetti’s Warblers, Collared Doves, Firecrests and Little Egrets. We have reintroduced the Great Bustard, reversed the decline of the Tree Sparrow and Red Kites outnumber Buzzards in our county. Alongside these gains we have witnessed the drastic reduction in native species such as the Nightingale and Turtle Dove and some of our farmland birds.

But now White Storks and Bee Eaters are our latest starlit adventurers, proof that the future is not all doom and gloom!

Little Ringed Plover

The wonderful names of our butterflies

Peter Marren

Everyone loves butterflies. They are colourful, delightful to watch and, in some way, beyond words; they make us happy (that's why you see butterflies on greetings cards). All our butterflies have names, but not always the ones you might expect. At one end of the spectrum, such names are simply descriptive: Small Copper, Large Blue (*photo right*), Marbled White. But others are more mysterious. Have you ever wondered why a butterfly was called a Painted Lady (*below left*), or how one of our best-known butterflies came to be called a Red Admiral (*below right*)?

I am the author of a book about the strange names of British butterflies and moths called *Emperors, Admirals and Chimney Sweepers* (Little Toller, 2020). The first thing to understand about butterfly names is that they are not recent. Apart from the butterfly of that name, you probably last came across the word 'ringlet' in the works of Jane Austen!

It all seems to have begun around 300 years ago. Before that, it seems our butterflies had no names at all: they were

just 'butterflies', whether brown, white, blue or multi-coloured. In different places there might have been local names, but, if so, unfortunately no one wrote them down.

The naming of butterflies was the task of the world's first society devoted to the study of insects, the London-based Society of Aurelians, which flourished in the 1730s and 40s (before their premises were burned down in a fire in 1749).

Many of the Aurelians were artists, and their books about butterflies were

indeed works of art, full of luscious and expensive hand-coloured plates. Perhaps that is why many butterfly names are about colour. Clouded Yellow (*photo left*), for instance, is perfect for a butterfly which is saffron yellow with dark, cloudy smudges.

That rare butterfly, the High Brown Fritillary (*below left*), has a rich brown background colour, and that is what was meant by 'high'- not high-flying habits. And Silver-washed Fritillary (*below right*), is a perfect evocation of

the watered-silver markings on the underside of its wings.

As for Red Admiral, it has nothing to do with a senior rank in the Royal Navy. If you say 'admirable' fast, it tends to come out as 'admiral'. That is what it is: a Red 'Admirable'. Its relative, the Painted Lady, evokes seventeenth century make-up; rouge, flesh tints and thick black mascara, just like the butterfly. Its even older, possibly Europe-wide, name was 'Bella Donna' - pretty lady.

One mystery remains. There are no butterflies in the Bible, not one (though there are moths). There are no butterflies in Homer either, though he mentioned plenty of birds. When butterflies are, or were, so common, and so beautiful, one wonders why. Answers on a postcard please!

*I see trees of green, red roses too
I see them bloom for me and you
And I think to myself what a wonderful world*

What a wonderful world, as we go on holiday or enjoy the Wiltshire downs or spend time with a friend. Yet, as Louis Armstrong's beautiful song plays in the film *Good Morning Vietnam*, what an awful world, as scenes of death and destruction flash past.

At Emmanuel Church we've been studying the book of Revelation in the Bible. Looking over the apostle John's shoulder, we've seen a vision of a wonderful world to come, not marred by the empty pockets, empty armchairs and screens full of war, which shatter our present experience.

I used to think heaven was floating on a floaty cloud, in (at best) a floaty nightie, playing tiny harps forever. It didn't sound very exciting. One might think heaven would be like Wiltshire: bluebell woods, rolling hills and not too many people! But in John's vision, the heavenly paradise will be as concrete as a city. By the end of Revelation, Jesus Christ has returned to judge the living and the dead, he's wrapped up this cosmos and brought a whole new heaven and earth together. What a life to long for!

The angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. (Rev 22:1-3, NIV).

The Bible begins with the wonderful Garden of Eden. It says God made people, not as robots, but free to choose as it were from two trees. One tree represented life in relationship with our maker. The other tree symbolised rejection of our maker, a decision that we know better what is good and evil. As a stone shatters a window, so the wrong choice brought the world under curse.

The Bible ends with John's vision of a heavenly new world. Wonderfully, the only tree there is the tree of life, which spreads as far as the eye can see. The picture language reminds me of the prolific passionfruit which my parents planted at my childhood home in Gabon and how, every day, I'd collect in my t-shirt fruit after fruit after fruit. It says the leaves of that tree will be *for the healing of the nations*. Don't we long for that healing? Finally, as this world metamorphosizes into the next, God's promised blessing will swallow up the curse of Eden. What a wonderful world where God will live with his people forever!

continued on p.15

What's On in August

August calendar:

5th (Friday)

Marlborough College Summer School ends

25th (Thursday) – 29th (Monday) and 1st (Thursday) - 5th September (Monday)

The Common. Giffords Circus. ¡Carpa! The Sights and Sounds of Rural Mexico. For more information, and to book, visit www.giffordscircus.digitickets.co.uk

30th (Tuesday) - 2nd September (Friday)

9am to 12.30pm Christchurch, Marlborough. Eternity and Beyond Summer Holiday Bible Club. Bookings open now. Open to all finishing school years Reception to Year 6. Join us as we go on an adventure through time and space! There will be games, crafts, activities, songs and Bible stories. Contact Stephen@EmmanuelMarlborough.org for further information. £10 per family for the week. Registration necessary, via the website, www.emmanuelmarlborough.org/eternity-and-beyond See page 27.

Future events:

17th September (Saturday)

12 noon – 3pm College Fields Public Open Space. College Fields/Barton Park Residents Association community picnic. All residents and friends are welcome to make this a community get-together. Please bring a picnic, as well as chairs and/or picnic rug, and join the party!

Mike Jackson

Those of you who read the small print at the bottom of the Editorial page will be familiar with the name of Mike Jackson, proof-reader extraordinaire for *Tower and Town* for many, many years.

Mike is stepping down from *Tower and Town* and handing his proof-reading responsibilities on to Diana Foster-Kemp.

He goes with our profound thanks for his meticulous work with the Oxford English Dictionary and his unflagging enthusiasm for the job.

Ukraine and Russia in 2015

It is surprising what you will find in Tower and Town! Many thanks to Barry McGowan for drawing our attention to the very topical article “Nick Fogg responds to emergencies” in the August 2015 issue. It casts an interesting light on the war in Ukraine and shows that every situation has nuances which are often missed in the media. If you wish to read it you can do so online at www.towerandtown.org.uk.

Afghanistan

Those members of the Marlborough community who attended the seminar at Marlborough College in 2011 – *Understanding Afghanistan* - will recall the screening of the outstanding film, directed by Phil Grabsky, entitled *The Boy Mir – 10 Years in Afghanistan*.

The follow up – *My Childhood, My Country – 20 Years in Afghanistan* which won the Best Single Documentary at this year’s Television BAFTAs and was also nominated for its cinematography will be screened at the Parade Cinema in the autumn. The exact date has not been fixed. Keep an eye on the website!

<https://theparadecinema.com>

Clergy Letter, continued ***from p.13***

I say to my friends, *Please make sure you’ll be there!* It was Jesus, meek and mild, who warned most boldly of the alternative. I know I’ve done, said and thought things which Revelation says would have no place in God’s heavenly new world. I’m so glad the guest list is called, *the Lamb’s book of life* (Rev 13:8) because Jesus is the sacrificial lamb. The first readers were called not to worship Caesar as Lord. Readers today are called to turn to Jesus as Lord and to trust that he died and rose to take our blame and to ensure our place in his wonderful new world.

Being in my early forties, I’m at the stage of having to fight off the mid-life crisis. No doubt there are many things I’m failing to achieve or experience. But I’m encouraged by C.S. Lewis that this life is just the *shadowlands* – the next life will be ultimate reality!

So, as we hear Louis Armstrong’s tune, let’s enjoy a holiday, the Wiltshire downs, time with friends. But as we see empty pockets, empty armchairs and screens full of war, let’s not despair but seek by faith the wonderful new world to come.

Recent headlines have talked of the tide of refugees coming ashore on the beaches of Kent. Let us not forget that back in the 1970s many of us became refugees ourselves in our desperate bid to find a better life beyond the ruins of strike-bound Britain.

In 1972 I became a refugee. In September the previous year I had married an American. During that first year of marriage, my new wife from the sunny state of Georgia had to endure a freezing English winter scarred by evenings without electricity because the unions were on strike.

By February she had had enough: “Hugh, I cannot live in this country”, she said. So we made plans to go elsewhere. Over the following months we bought an ancient camper van. Our local vicar was persuaded to write us a letter of introduction to his contact in the French town with which our hometown was twinned. And we left the country.

We had originally met when both of us had travelled abroad, she with the Peace Corps, I with an equivalent UK organisation. Stepping into the unknown was already a bond.

Fortunately, Montargis has an all-year-round campsite in the forest on the edge of town; a bit like Marlborough in fact. We set up there, presented our letter of introduction and were warmly welcomed as refugees from our benighted island.

However, finding work was another matter. We needed permits, and there was little chance of getting them. The man at the job centre tried his absolute best for us over many days, but to no avail. Finally, he asked if I would be prepared to be a butler if he were to start ringing round the local aristocracy. Yes of course, I said.

The first call was to a local Count. He didn’t need a butler but he was tickled by the request: “Ça m’amuse”, he said. So we drove nervously onto the beautifully raked gravel before his moated chateau and waited until he emerged to calm down the enormous Alsatian that had us cowering in the camper-van. “I will hire you for three months to live in and do up my gatehouse. How much do you need per month to survive?” We thought fast and in francs.

A figure was agreed, the bargain struck. We were still refugees but with luck we might find a way to become legal residents. “By the way”, he said, “the electricity in the gatehouse is still 110 volts and there’s no toilet; you’ll have to go down to the end of the garden”. Temperatures that winter were well below freezing.



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Isabel of Gloucester - a remarkable lady

(part I)

Nick Baxter



We don't know what the weather was like on that late-summer day of 29th August 1189 when the 21 year old John, future king of England, married his distant cousin, Isabel of Gloucester, who was about 28, at Marlborough castle. The outlook seemed bright for both bride and groom. But there was a cloud on the horizon: John and Isabel had a common great grandfather in King Henry I. As cousins in the third degree of consanguinity, canonical law prohibited them from marriage. Only the permission of the pope could override it. No such papal dispensation had been given.

Isabel was earl William of Gloucester's youngest daughter. Her only brother died in 1166, leaving her and her two sisters, Mabel and Amice, to inherit the earldom of Gloucester. Isabel's paternal grandfather, Robert of Gloucester, illegitimate son of King Henry I, had sided with his half-sister, Queen Matilda, in the civil war known as the Anarchy, against King Stephen. Robert came to

Marlborough Castle in 1140 to take a prisoner there, the Flemish mercenary Robert Fitz-Hubert, to Devizes castle where he had Fitz-Hubert hanged in front of his men for treachery. Isabel would not have known her ruthless grandfather as he died in 1147 some 13 years before she was born.

The marriage agreement for John and Isabel was made at Windsor on 28th September 1176 with John's father, King Henry II, and Isabel's father, earl William of Gloucester. Isabel's sisters, Mabel and Amice, were by then married leaving Isabel the only unmarried daughter. It was agreed that John would become the heir to the earldom of Gloucester. Mabel and Amice were granted £100 annuities as compensation for losing their inheritance. King Henry promised to arrange an appropriate marriage for Isabel in the unlikely instance that the pope was to refuse

a dispensation for the cousins to marry. It was also agreed that if earl William was to have a son, John would share Gloucester with him.

John was betrothed to Isabel when he was only 9 years old. Isabel was about 16, we don't know exactly when she was born. They had to wait: girls could marry at 12 and boys at 14. Earl William died on 23rd November 1183. John would acquire, on his marriage, the county of Gloucester¹. King Henry II had arranged the betrothal in the knowledge that his son would one day have substantial lands of his own and no longer deserve his nickname, "John Lackland".

King Henry II died on 6th July shortly before the wedding: John's elder brother, Richard, succeeded him. Richard magnanimously granted the royal castles of Marlborough and Ludgershall to John. It seems John married Isabel at Marlborough castle for the simple reason it was his castle. John was now next in line to the throne and he had gained not just a wife but also a county.



The Mound is all that remains of Marlborough castle today

However, Baldwin, the Archbishop of Canterbury, opposed the marriage because of the three degrees of consanguinity². But the marriage went ahead anyway. After all, few would have gone against King Henry II, John's father. The fate of Baldwin's predecessor, Thomas Becket, who stood up to Henry II, would have been remembered. Becket had been brutally murdered by four knights in Canterbury cathedral on 29th December 1170. Writs condemning Becket had been sent out in December 1164 from Marlborough castle, where Henry spent Christmas that year.

But Henry was dead. Would the new king, Richard the Lionheart, back his brother's marriage? Baldwin was primarily appalled because the marriage had not had papal dispensation. He boldly forbade John to live with Isabel. He imposed an interdict on John's lands when John ignored him. John appealed to a papal legate, who happened to be in England at the time, promising he was seeking dispensation from the pope. The legate overrode Baldwin on the grounds that dispensation was pending. An appeal was sent to Rome but was never followed up. In the process of the appeal Baldwin died. No one else objected to the marriage.

1: Benedict of Peterborough I 1176, p. 124.

2: *Annales Londonienses*, p. 6. "*in tertio gradu consanguinitatis*"

Part I of this memoir appeared in the June 2019 edition of Tower and Town. We pick up the story in the middle of WWII.

At the top of Blowhorn Street were placed very heavy concrete bollards effectively blocking off Blowhorn Street from the Common. On the Rockley Road near to the Convalescent Home there was a First World War light tank, probably a Whippet tank, on which I used to play. One day this tank disappeared as scrap steel for the war effort. I loved looking at the military convoys and always waved at the soldiers passing through. No doubt with a young mother the soldiers liked waving back. One day, being frustrated about the convoys not crossing the Common, I moved a temporary signpost and so directed the convoy across the Common, unseen by my mother. Total chaos reigned, the convoy halted and a despatch rider on a motorbike returned not knowing what had happened to the convoy, and when he found his signpost turned, tore my mother off a strip.

Round about the age of four, I experienced a rather sad time as my grandfather Pearce died followed shortly by my grandmother Newman. My grandfather Pearce had been very good to me, looking after me whilst my mother worked. My uncle Jack Pearce, who lived nearby in Laineys Close, had given me a large child's tricycle and granddad Pearce loved taking me out for rides. My grandmother Newman died suddenly aged 56 in the Railway Hospital in Swindon due to a strangulated hernia just a few weeks after my aunt Audrey (Benham) was married. My mother and I then went to Lydiard to look after her father as both he and Audrey were working fulltime in Swindon factories. Because of my age I had to attend school at Lydiard Millicent. After years of freedom it felt restricted and at each and every opportunity I would crawl under the laurel hedge and escape back to my grandfather's house with a teacher being sent to find me. Whilst staying at my grandparents' house, previously I was sat on their doorstep and heard and saw an aeroplane high in the sky circling around. I called my uncle Ron who had just joined the Airforce; he said it was a German plane and we should all take shelter under the kitchen table. Suddenly there was a loud whooshing noise and the roof tiles rattled. This was a bomb that landed about fifty yards away in what is now The Moors, but failed to explode as the ground was very boggy. The noise was probably due to the bomb falling at near supersonic speed. Maybe a year or so after, I was sitting on the doorstep of the same house, when a German bomber came over very low, painted all black. I clearly remember the white crosses and seeing the German crew. It was a Junkers 88 (I was pretty good at *continued next page*

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continued from the previous page: aircraft recognition even then), probably returning solo from a raid on Bristol, keeping very low, hedge hopping, to avoid fighter planes and anti-aircraft guns.

Coming home to Marlborough, I was enrolled at St. Mary's Infant School in Herd St. At that time there was no cut through from Blowhorn St. to Herd St.; Burgesses' Nursery was blocking the way. So, we had to go via St. Martins, past Baden's grocery shop on the corner of St. Martins and Blowhorn Street. This little shop was operated by an old couple, the Badens, and seemed to stock all our daily needs. We were registered for rationing at the London Road Post Office, next to the Five Alls pub (now long gone), as my mother was a friend of the owner. This was where we purchased our staples, butter, margarine, cheese, sugar, etc but we always obtained meat products from Coopers in The Parade. We used to get our free milk ration at St. Mary's; this used to come in a large churn and was doled out with a ladle into battered enamel mugs. I remember it did not taste too good on hot summer days. Some teachers, particularly Miss Bryant, were very kindly persons, but the headmistress, Miss Thomas, was a real tartar. Opposite the school were the school gardens, a lovely lawn and herbaceous borders, but we only ever went there once in my two years at the school. The school did benefit from visits by US servicemen, who distributed sweets (candies) to the pupils, a rare luxury.

I know I've said that it's a good idea to read something you might not normally think about- a male or female author, a new genre, or fiction or non-fiction. But sometimes one's first instincts are correct and that's fine too. I recently read – well, started to read – a book that has been enormously popular, raved about and a best seller. I shan't identify it, it's one of a dozen or so books which have been absolutely massive, either through clever publishing campaigns, or word of mouth. I thought it wasn't my sort of thing, and I was absolutely right, I found it unreadable. But that's just me... In the same open-minded spirit, one of my colleagues read a similarly hugely popular and easily-dismissed-as-schlock novel, and absolutely loved it. Do you see how as booksellers, being asked for recommendations can be both the best and worst part of the job?

So, I'll tell you about a couple of things I *have* enjoyed (I can do no more). I've written before about my fascination with the history of the American West, so Katie Hickman's *Brave Hearted* is just my sort of thing. Her previous book *She-Merchants, Buccaneers and Gentlewomen* about women in the early days of the East India Company was packed with absorbing detail, and now she's done the same for the stories of the women on the pioneer trails in the middle of the C19th. How the West was Won is an extraordinary story of horrific challenges and endurance, violence, isolation, disease and unremitting toil. It's also, of course, the story of how the west was lost – Hickman includes the testimonies of Native American historians, and their first-hand accounts of the life that was gradually and relentlessly destroyed through warfare, disease and continually broken Government promises. She also writes about enslaved and later emancipated African-Americans, and Chinese concubines sex-trafficked to San Francisco. Altogether I read this book with bulging eyes and gaping jaw at the sheer lunatic/audacious/persistent/criminal (delete as appropriate) enterprise of expanding the American nation.

A meaty thriller for a good holiday read, Sir/Madam? The staff in the shop have been passing round Oliver Harris's *A Shadow Intelligence*. It's a clever, detailed, scarily convincing espionage novel. Dealing with cyber-intelligence and the dark web our hero is suave, damaged, competent, at home in various Middle Eastern and Central Asian cities – everything you want in this kind of book. The second in the series *Ascension* is out now, hurrah.

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Peter Jeffery was a true gentleman who lived his life to the full and passed away peacefully at home over the Jubilee weekend, after a short illness. After living in both London and Cambridge, Peter moved to Castle Court in Marlborough in 2014. He made a huge contribution to the social scene there, organising coffee mornings and drinks parties, as well as offering support and help to many of his neighbours.

He soon became a volunteer at the Merchants House. He was a keen guide and was always ready with a story. He enjoyed his involvement with the new museum and was happy to offer his suggestions.

Peter started riding when his daughter was young and continued to ride for many years thereafter. His love of horses led him to volunteer with the Riding for the Disabled Wansdyke Group where he organised rotas and even helped on the carriage drives, standing on the back of the carriages, opening gates etc. He became very fond of the West Woods.

One of his other great pleasures was driving, initially travelling the country for work and latterly as a volunteer driver for Link. This was a joy for him, and he made many friends from the lovely clients he ferried around.

He became a well-known figure in Marlborough; his daughter says he rarely walked down the High Street without bumping into someone he knew and always with a smile on his face. He will be sorely missed.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms - *we welcome:*

- 12 June Tabitha May Johnson; St Mary's, Marlborough
16 June Aurelia & Stella Kohrt; St George's, Preshute

Weddings - *we congratulate:*

- 11 June Sophia Musgrave and Thomas Meeson; St John the Baptist, Minal

Departed - *we pray for the families of:*

- 3 June Mr Michael Ponting, Castle Court, Marlborough;
St George's, Preshute
5 June Shirley Jackson, London Road, Marlborough
North Wiltshire Crematorium
15 June Moyra Piercy, George Lane, Marlborough
North Wiltshire Crematorium

News from the Churches

Christchurch <http://christchurchmarlborough.org.uk/>

As Christchurch closes its premises to outside hirers, members would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who has been part of their community over many years. This may be the end of a chapter but also the start of new opportunities. We will update Tower and Town on news of the future of Christchurch as we move forward. As a church we remain grateful for all the prayers and offers of practical support we have been given in recent months. We continue to worship as a congregation until the end of January. Anyone is very welcome to join us for worship at 10:30 on a Sunday morning in Christchurch.



Women's Fellowship

Will not be meeting in August but will resume on Tuesday 6th September at Christchurch, New Road at 2.45pm for tea, coffee and chat.

Marlborough Churches Together Fraternal

Will meet on Wednesday 24th August. Please use this meeting as an opportunity to raise any thoughts and ideas through the churches by contacting your minister.



Marlborough Quakers <http://www.marlboroughquakers.org.uk/>

are organising a meeting with Danny Kruger, our MP, to discuss the action we would like the government to implement on Climate strategy, particularly as regards things we can do to save energy, by subsidising fitting solar panels, insulation, air source heat pumps and the like. St Peter's Church, **Friday September 16th**, 7-9 pm. Please come and support this event.



Emmanuel Marlborough <https://www.emmanuelmarlborough.org/>

We are grateful to meet for a weekly Sunday service at 4pm at Christchurch, New Road, 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. **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



To Eternity and Beyond : Summer Holiday Bible Club

Bookings open now!

30th August – 2nd September. 9:00-12:30 at Christchurch, Marlborough

Open to all finishing school years Reception to Year 6

Join us as we go on an adventure through time and space! There'll be games, crafts, activities, songs and Bible stories! The cost is £10 for the whole week per family. If you're bringing multiple children you only need to pay once!

Contact Stephen@emmanuelmarlborough.org if you have any questions.

Registration is necessary. Sign up on our website:

<https://www.emmanuelmarlborough.org/eternity-and-beyond/>



Marlborough Anglican Team www.marlboroughanglicanteam.org.uk/



Wednesday prayer meetings:

All welcome to join the 8am meeting in St Mary's Church and in the afternoon, via a zoom meeting, at 5pm.

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Please send articles and letters to the Monthly Editor or the Chairman, other notices or announcements to the compiler. All items for the September issue by Tuesday 9th August 2022 please.

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