
TOWER AND TOWN



"Where now are the bones of wise Merlin"



Civic Marlborough

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TOWER AND TOWN

THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES

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Civic Marlborough

On Monday, 10 February, 11 'Form' students aged 13 from Marlborough College interviewed six members of the Town Council and the Town Clerk at the Town Hall.

In our weekly lessons it had become apparent to me how very keen the pupils are about politics. We had earlier taken a close look at the televised campaign debates for the recent election that brought Prime Minister Johnson to power, and not a single student was short of an opinion. It is truly heartening to see that young people are aware of the issues confronting and challenging their generation, and they keenly sought information they didn't already know, that might affect their opinions and attitudes.

Not just at the international and national level, I discovered that issues like parking and the Mop Fair right here in Marlborough were subjects about which they liked to debate and they devoured whatever information they could find about these opportunities and challenges.

It occurred to me that a wonderful opportunity was close at hand. I approached past-Mayor Lisa Farrell and she put me in touch with the Town Clerk, Shelly Parker, and an evening of interviews was arranged.

Before the actual interviews, we researched what makes for a 'good interview' – even taking into consideration the style of Larry King, who had such a natural skill at getting to the heart and soul of what motivates those whom he interviewed. The students received personal biographies of each of the interviewees, and then they crafted questions about what they knew about them, to try and 'tease out' what motivates a Town Councillor or a busy Town Clerk.

All the students came away from the experience with a true appreciation for the strength of the civic responsibility felt by those with whom they had a conversation; realising in particular that such people go well above and beyond what is expected of them to make Marlborough the wonderful town that we all enjoy. With such civically-minded people and keen, young students, our future is in good hands.

Rev Tim Novis - Chaplain to Marlborough College

Town Clerk, Shelley Parker

Interviewed by William Walduck and Charlie Kirkwood

We interviewed the Town Clerk, Mrs Shelley Parker. She oversees the sixteen town councillors, which is a challenging job and she works very hard. Shelley has been there seven years, and in that time, she has accomplished many things from refurbishing the Youth Centre and making it better and more useable, to reopening the public toilets.

But she has one continuing difficulty - parking. Throughout her time, parking has always been a problem for the town as there isn't much space. In the High Street, there are only some places where you can park, including in the middle of the road. The Town Council has had some ideas, like using the Common, but there are many problems because local people love walking there, and schools and clubs want to use the grass for sport pitches.

Over her seven years, she has seen a lot of changes in the popularity of the town and how well known it is. But many things have not changed; for example, the traditions and atmosphere of the town. One tradition is the Marlborough Mop Fair, which is a small amusement park that comes twice a year on a Saturday, and sets itself in the High Street. There are rides and places where you can buy sweets and chocolate.

Mrs. Parker spoke about how hard it is to please everyone. For example, during the annual Mop Fairs some shops and businesses on the High Street find it more difficult to attract customers, but this is a long tradition spreading over many, many years and so popular with residents and visitors. The occasion closes the A4, the main road from London to Bath, and can cause traffic disruption too so this, like many other decisions, are difficult and take a lot of thinking through by our Councillors.

Coronavirus and Cancelled Events

In response to the advice and restrictions concerning group gatherings and self-isolation, many, probably most of the events advertised in this edition of Tower and Town may be cancelled. It would be advisable to check with the promoters before venturing forth.

Do however peruse and remind yourself what a socially active town and area we live in. Let us hope our community is revitalised before too long.

Councillor Mervyn Hall

Interviewed by Dom Cheng and Harry Meister

Mr. Mervyn Hall is Marlborough's 709th Mayor. He joined the Council in 2013 and is now in his second term. Alongside being the town Mayor, he is also the Chairman of the Marlborough Area Neighborhood Plan Steering Group and is Chairman of the Council.

He is a retired electronic engineer and a local historian. In his free time, he enjoys playing tennis, badminton and bridge. He is a Leicester City supporter. His grandchildren inspire him to be a better person, and his proudest moment as Mayor was the reaction of his grandchildren when they found out he had been elected.

“The position of a town councillor is very hard but very rewarding,” he said. He encourages people to become councillors, but says you'll need lots of free time. His advice is to try and understand where the majority of voices are and not to get distracted by minor ones; don't give in to everything.

In Mr. Hall's opinion, affordable housing, traffic congestion, air pollution and the lack of car parking are the biggest problems facing Marlborough. All these big issues are being addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan hopes to get some more affordable homes and more parking spaces over the next 15 years. “Marlborough is an expensive place to live and many young people find it very hard to find homes here.” There is also a bit of a labour shortage and many shops around the High Street have advertisements for jobs.

Mr. Hall has accomplished many things in his two terms as Mayor. He helped to reopen the Youth Centre and to refurbish all the public toilets. If the Council didn't refurbish the toilets, the town would have none. But it's not always easy to make the changes he wants, since Wiltshire Council cut the town's budget and they have had to pick up the slack. “Working on a tight budget isn't always easy,” he said.

The High Street in Marlborough is a very interesting street, with its market, four churches, the Merchant's House, art galleries and many interesting shops. And when asked what he would change about the High Street, he replied that he would like to get rid of the parked cars which are causing congestion. But it is hard to find space and he is looking to put car parking on the side of the Common near the rugby club. “It has to be at the edge of the town because the land in the middle of the town is too valuable to turn into parking space.” He hopes this will help the parking issue in Marlborough.

The lack of a bypass around the Town was a hot topic in our interview and Mr. Hall firmly said that he was in favour of one and thought the town would benefit

massively. They were planning to open one in the 1980s and the funding was there, but many people objected to it and farmers disapproved as they didn't want it going through their farmland. This was their last chance because the land has now been sold and is unavailable. He is currently looking at how traffic flows in Marlborough, governed by 5 roundabouts, and he is investigating whether changing them into traffic lights would improve quality of movement.

Another project he is working on is to promote tourism in Marlborough. The town is involved in a project called the Great West Way which runs on the A4 between London and Bristol. There are many different towns and villages along the road which will hopefully draw tourists in. Mr. Hall is hoping to have Marlborough as one of the stops to promote tourism. A new hotel has recently opened up and this will help because now more people can stay overnight.

He also said that crime and drugs are an issue in Marlborough. "Marlborough has had some drug problems in the past, but we're quite lucky that it's low." The town is regularly working with the police to catch people smuggling drugs up the M4 from London. Minimizing crime has also been one of Mayor Hall's objectives. One of the solutions includes increasing the use of small, but advanced, CCTV cameras with the footage connected through WIFI to a receiver on top of the town hall and directly on to the police.

Mr. Hall is a fantastic mayor, and Harry and I could really see that he is committed to making Marlborough a better town. He has already done many wonderful things for the town and has plans to make it even better.

Councillor Mark Cooper

Interviewed by Nancy Mollo and Iona Jones

Mr Mark Cooper is the Deputy Mayor of Marlborough Town Council. Many of his relatives have been involved in local government. He said that growing up with an awareness of area politics has had a big impact on him in that he always knew what was going on politically in the town. He has lived in Marlborough his whole life and has had close connections with both St John's and Marlborough College. He was a pupil at St John's and had cousins at the College. He remarks on the fact that he likes the cheeky banter between the two schools and believes that it is healthy. He believes that Marlborough Town is extremely lucky to have two incredible schools.

Mark has many aspirations, such as Open Spaces for children and making sure the community comes together. We asked if Mark found being a councillor hard work and, without missing a beat, he replied, "I love having a positive impact on

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the Town and serving my community.” Mark told us that the Council are putting in new play areas that are environmentally friendly and that they are also taking environmental issues very seriously. When asking him about his views on getting a train station in Marlborough, he said that he was open to looking at the economics and sustainability of reopening a station. The Council are considering whether it would be justifiable.

We asked Mark why he decided to focus on School and Child Facilities. He answered that he loves the incredible and beautiful open spaces that are accessible for everyone. We asked whether Brexit would have an effect on the town and, understandably, he thought it was too early to say and that, if there were to be an impact, it would not begin until next year.

Mark said that, all in all, Marlborough is a great town but like most things in life there’s always room for improvement, and one thing that would improve Marlborough would be more affordable housing to allow young people to stay.

The interview was very interesting and we had no idea how much work went into being a councillor, and how passionate you have to be for your town to strive and do well. Mark is putting his right foot forward for Marlborough and striving to make the town a better place.

Councillor Susie Price

Interviewed by Millie Gardner and Milly Wetherhill

Ms Susie Price is the youngest councillor on Marlborough Town Council and she is very passionate about the Marlborough community. We asked what she would do for the town if she were Mayor. Her response was very interesting: “Go out and meet people.” We loved how young Susie is at heart and how enthusiastic her responses were to our questions.

Susie loves politics, but she never imagined herself being a councillor. A friend one day said that she might be good at it and put her name forward on the deadline day. She didn’t have any expectations and says that there are a lot of decisions involved in the process of becoming a councillor. We asked whether it was a lot of work: “It depends whether you make it a lot of work. The busiest times are the Summer, and November, due to the Remembrance Day services. The day marks a great national achievement and the occasion is very important.”

The inspiration behind her wanting to be Mayor is very simple. She is fascinated by her community and feels she would be giving back to the community in which she has lived most of her life. Since the new Mayor has arrived, she thinks that Marlborough has improved through new activities like Marlborough in Bloom.

She is very passionate about running the Devotion Youth Project because she regularly attended it when she was younger. The club has a long history in Marlborough, and it is important to keep it alive. Numbers have increased and decreased over time and now there are sometimes 30-40 young people on an evening.

Susie doesn't mind being the youngest on the Council. She feels that there is a very beneficial aspect to having a range of ages in meetings. She can use technology quickly and sometimes teaches other councillors how to use it. Susie says, "I am very lucky; it is a good job and I work with nice people. There is great staff working here and it involves a lot of teamwork." Susie says that being a councillor can be a lot of work if you make it a lot of work and Susie manages to make the most of every opportunity.

Councillor Lisa Farrell

Interviewed by Arthur Ho

Ms Lisa Farrell was Mayor from 2018 to 2019. In this post, she hoped to make a strong connection between the Council and the Town and do more community-based things, interacting with the local people and listening to their complaints or advice. Another big target for her was to help the youth by developing a new Youth Centre.

She feels she has achieved what she hoped for, but she wasn't perfect, as no one is. She wanted to be a member of the Council because she felt it lacked real connection with the town and was not representing the people enough. She also hates the drug problem in the town as dealers can always find a way to smuggle drugs into Marlborough. This problem has affected her and her family and she is passionate about trying to crack down on the availability of drugs in the town.

In general, she would like to build closer connections between the young and the elderly, so that each group understands the other better. She feels that residents have lost some of their sense of care for each other. Lisa works closely with the police for the good of the community and thinks that CCTV cameras are a good idea, particularly where there are vulnerable people.

As Mayor, Lisa was pleased to be able to reopen the new play area near Waitrose car park, with Mark Cooper. She also introduced Tesco to the town, which helped bring down supermarket prices. She was proud to have had the honour of lighting the beacon on the Common, commemorating the signing of the armistice in 1918, and pleased by how that event had brought the community of Marlborough together.

Ms Farrell hopes that the Council would build places where young people and

the elderly could meet together. She also feels that the town is lacking green spaces but also recognizes that land is needed to provide more social housing. She believes that there are not enough traffic lights around the town and feels that they are particularly needed around the entrances to local schools.

If she could get anything for the town, she would like to see an affordable café or restaurant, which people on lower incomes could afford to use. A lot of the shops in Marlborough are very expensive and many people have to go to Swindon to buy everyday things.

Councillor Don Heath

Interviewed by Atticus Fleming and Arthur Maculan

We interviewed Town Councillor Mr Don Heath and asked him what it was that inspired him to be a Councillor. Don considers that having been able to use open public spaces and Town facilities throughout his life he now wants to voluntarily give something back to the Town. He is on the planning committee and one area of his job is being a Wiltshire Tree Warden of Marlborough town. As Tree Warden, he considers applications to cut down a tree and decides if there is a valid reason to do so. At the very least, he will try to limit cutting to the tree's branches to hopefully address any problem and with minimal damage to the tree.

Don is very interested in the environment and maintaining Marlborough's status in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. He is trying to reduce Marlborough's carbon footprint along with trying to limit the growth of the town. He is also the Chair of Amenities and Open Spaces and has been working hard to protect and improve our natural landscapes and open public spaces. He is part of the Planning and Staffing Committees, and puts a lot of conscientious effort into the work that he does.

He considers the impact on our public spaces when deciding on applications to expand or develop an existing house or build a new one. As Chairman of Amenities, his work is to get the best facilities for the town and help the town in every way he can.

Councillor Heath is very interested in the environment and wildlife. He likes to spend a lot of his time outside, whether it's walking on the Downs with his dog or riding his bike. He is also very interested in ornithology.

Being able to interview a Councillor was very enjoyable and we are grateful for the opportunity to have done this.

April is *not* the cruellest month. I reckon T S Eliot was just bitter because there were so many good books to read, and he was stuck writing *The Waste Land*. There's lots to enjoy at the moment.

To get us all in the mood for summer holidays (won't be long now), I recommend Polly Samson's *A Theatre for Dreamers*. Set in the glittering, exhausting sunshine of Hydra in 1960 it's an evocative and immersive recreation of the circle of writers, poets and painters centring around Charmian Clift (Australian essayist and novelist) and George Johnston (journalist and writer). The (fictional) narrator, teenaged Erica, observes the tangled lives of the group, and in particular the triangle of Axel Jensen, Marianne, his wife, and the young poet Leonard Cohen. (Yes, *that* Marianne....) It's about being young, and idealistic, and losing one's innocence, and the terrible double-edgedness of being a 'muse'.

On a vaguely related topic (well, it's about musicians) I feel strongly that not enough people are reading **Daisy Jones and the Six** by Taylor Jenkins Reid. The transcript of a fictional oral history of the stratospheric success and shattering split of an imagined rock band, it's entertaining and convincing, with characters you can completely believe in and songs you'll feel sure you could hum. You'll want to watch 'The Six' on YouTube – but they're *not a real band*. Sorry.

Next, **Peace Talks**, by Tim Finch, a first-person narrative of a man coming to terms with grief (I *know*, yawn. Stop rolling your eyes at the back, and bear with me, it's worth it). Edvard Behrens is a senior diplomat, arbitrating peace negotiations between governments/terrorists, dissecting barbaric acts and conflict, mediating conciliation. Through his internal monologue, addressed to his late wife, we learn about this civilised, cultured, honourable and discreet man trying to accommodate the atrocities in his own life and that of the world.

I *haven't* read Hilary Mantel's *The Mirror and the Light*, and am not likely to any time soon, but I'll be very happy to hear your opinions. So many of you came in and skipped out happily clutching all 900 pages of it – some people bought two copies. Very impressive, those Pilates classes are really paying dividends!

Illustrations in the following articles can be viewed in colour at
www.towerandtown.org.uk

The Marlborough Coat of Arms

The original borough seal (c.1280) was a three-turreted castle and by 1565 this turret, on a blue field, had become part of the new coat of arms that we know today. The full arms comprise a shield, a crest, a supporting beast on either side and a motto below.

At the top of the shield the castle is flanked on either side by a red rose, possibly referring to one theory that a local Mayor was either from a Lancashire family or a Lancaster supporter in the War of the Roses.

Below the castle and roses the shield is quartered diagonally red and blue and showing a bull at the top, a capon on either side and three greyhounds below. These represent the 'duty and homage' of the town burgesses and the community to present to the Mayor and aldermen the very same creatures, presumably for their pleasure or consumption

The greyhound supporters are not known to have any significance and were probably added simply to complete the coat of arms.

The crest is a helmet of a type that denotes an 'untitled person'.

The motto: 'Where are now the bones of wise Merlin' harks back to the twelfth century legend that Merlin, the Arthurian wizard, lies under the mound of the Marlborough Castle, a favourite of King John but long gone, that is now within the grounds of Marlborough College.



In the nearby garrison town of Tidworth is the Help for Heroes Recovery Centre, Tedworth House. Tedworth House is the Southern hub where H4H provide recovery, rehabilitation and support to veterans of war.

Two months after Help for Heroes became established in 2011, local artist Jenny Arthy joined the charity, and became part of the Rolling Recovery Programme. This was an initiative designed as a series of taster sessions for ex-service men and women, encouraging them to be involved in educational, mindful, creative and physical activities. Jenny developed both the art room and the painting and sculpture courses from scratch.

Art at War is a mostly retrospective exhibition of work produced by these men and women. Their shared experience of war, and the unimaginable mental, physical and psychological consequences of conflict are displayed in many different ways - in sculpture, drawings and paintings.

This is a tremendously sobering exhibition. Evidently, there is a great number of truly talented artists sharing this space. Their work is raw, honest, powerful, difficult and complicated. No two pieces are the same. Each one uniquely tells a different story of trauma, pain and recovery. Of course, in a lot of cases, this is still very much an ongoing process.

Importantly, this is not an exhibition about patriotism. It is, in my belief, quite the opposite. It is about war, and what war is and what war does. It is, though, also about recovery and comeback.

‘This exhibition is, without doubt, a testament to the extraordinary healing ability of art; to release and give expression to experiences too difficult to verbalise.’ Jenny Arthy quotes from the artists themselves:

‘Art is the best painkiller I’ve ever had.’

‘Art has helped my recovery and reminded me I am capable.’

‘A return to dignity can only be realised when the chaos of reflection finds peace through expression.’

Art at War was at The White Horse Gallery between 27th February - 14th March 2020.

Colour photos of items from this exhibition can be viewed in the online version of this month’s edition..



Heart,
by Sarah Newman



Mask,
by Mike Matthews

In the February 2020 edition of Tower and Town we learned that cattle were being reintroduced into Savernake Forest to help control the unwanted undergrowth; but what of the fences that contain the cattle?

Two new fenced enclosures have been constructed and a third enlarged, and while the older fencing retains its fairly impenetrable character with limited access, the new work is far more ‘forgiving’ in understanding the needs of we visitors (and our dogs). The fencing itself has three strands of wire, the top two barbed, the bottom one plain and there is no netting, meaning animals can easily slip underneath as can young children and enterprising adults prepared to crawl. However crawling is not necessary as there are gates for every pathway, except one near the main gate. Further, as the contractors had to clear undergrowth to access their work, one can now follow the fences quite easily thus adding to our access.

I freely admit that fences in lovely woodland are something of an offence (pun intended) to the eye and to the feeling of freedom and solitude, but if the concept behind the cattle rearing works, then the forest should slowly return to its former glory with open glades, beautiful uncrowded trees and much less of a tangle underfoot. But it will take a long time.

The best wardens of Savernake in the past planted and planned for the future and never enjoyed the fruits of their visions. We may not see ‘Savernake restored’ but hopefully our grandchildren will.

My new map of the forest, complete with fencing, is available at St Peter’s Church and the White Horse Bookshop.

Music in Art

presented by Sophie Matthews

at The Merchant’s House

28th March at 7.30pm



A feast of images featuring historical woodwind instruments in their original social context interspersed with live performances of historical music using authentic instruments.

Tickets £15 (£12 for Friends of The Merchant’s House members)

Cash bar

Cancelled

What's On in April

Regular events

Every Monday

2.30pm Manton Village Hall. Social Dancing with tea and cakes. Come on your own or bring a friend.

Contact 07443 646695 or 01672 515151. (*Between September and Easter*)

6pm Recreation Ground, Salisbury Road. Bowls Club.

7.30pm Christchurch. Marlborough Choral Society.

7.45-9pm Bell-ringing practice at St George's, Preshute.

Every Tuesday

10.30-12 noon Mildenhall Village Hall. Music and Movement for the Mind, for people living with dementia & family carers. Alzheimer's Support (01380 739055) or www.alzheimerswiltshire.org.uk

11-12 noon. Savernake View Care Home. Parkinson's Café. 555200.

2-3.30pm Savernake Hospital. Carers' Support Café. (2nd Tuesday)

2.45pm The Parlour, Christchurch. Women's Fellowship. (2nd & 4th Tuesdays)

7.30-9pm Bell-ringing practice at St Mary's, Marlborough.

Every Wednesday

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

10.15-11.45am St Peter's Church. Carers' Support Cafe. (Last Wednesday of month).

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

7.30-9pm Bell-ringing practice at St John's. Mildenhall.

7.30-9.30pm St Mary's Church Hall. Marlborough Community Choir.

Every Thursday

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

7-8.30pm Wesley Hall, Ox
Devotion. Youth Club.

Every Friday

10-12 noon Christchurch C

6-7.30pm Marlborough Sc
ages 7+. Fun, games, tuck
(Every Friday during term-

Every Wednesday and Saturday

By Appointment

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The Merchant's House: October)

Monday 1pm, Tues 1 and
3pm, Thurs 1pm. Fri and S
take one hour. Sunday clos
Children & Friends of MH

The Merchant's House.

11am-3pm. (Every Wed &

April Calendar

Marlborough Great British Cl

Thurs 2nd 10am-12pm Jubilee

Sun 5 Apr 10am-2pm Cooper

Tues 7 Apr 5-7pm Youth Cen

1st (Wednesday)

10am-12.30pm. The Merch
Christopher Rogers: 'Mon
Architecture in Britain aft
£15 (£12 for Friends) from
& cake.

7.30pm Wesley Hall. WI. S
in Marmalade'. New memb

2nd (Thursday)

2pm Mildenhall Village Ha
Club. Demonstration by C
Flowers'. Visitors £6. 5143

3rd (Friday)

7.30pm The Merchant's H
Ramsbury Brewery. £20 (£

ford St. Hangout &

Crush Hall. Food bank.

out Hut. Explorers' club for
& a short Bible talk. £0.50.
(time).

day

istrict Dyslexia Association.
07729 452143.

Guided Tours (March-

3pm, Wed 11am, 1 and
at 11am, 1pm, 3pm. Tours
ed. Admission £7.50,
l free.

Marlborough Museum

Sat) £3 (under 16s free).

ean Up:

Field, Manton.

's Corner.

tre.

nant's House. Lecture by
archy to Mansion –
er the Reformation'. Tickets
n the shop, including coffee

Speaker: Viv Lloyd: 'My Life
bers and guests welcome.

ill. Marlborough Floral
hristine Evans: 'My Love of
01.

ouse. A Tasting Event with
(17 members) from the

shop.

4th (Saturday)

7.30pm St Mary's Church. Marlborough Choral
Society Spring Concert. (see p.19)

5th (Sunday)

7.30pm St Peter's Church. Concert: Judith Choi
Castro (violin) and John Paul Ekins (piano). £10 (£8
members) u18 free.

1.15-5.00pm Barbury Race Course. Tedworth Point-
to-point

8th (Wednesday)

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

7.30pm Wesley Hall, Oxford Street. Gardening
Association. Speaker: 'Seasonal Work with Fruit and
Vegetables'.

10th (Friday)

From 8.30 Lambourn Open Day (See p.16)

20th (Monday)

11am Ellendune Community Centre, Wroughton SN4
9LW. Lecture by Joanna Mabbutt: 'The Field of Cloth
of Gold: 6,000 Englishmen in France for 18 Days –
How did they do it?' Guests welcome £7. 01793
840790.

St John's Academy: Start of Term 5.

Marlborough College: Start of Summer Term.

7.30pm Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. National
Trust Association. Speaker: Nick McCamley: 'Moving
National Art Treasures to Underground Storage
during WW2, for safe keeping'. £3, non members £4.

21st (Tuesday)

7.30pm Bouverie Hall, Pewsey. The Arts Society
Pewsey Vale. Lecture by Caroline Knight: 'English
Towns in the 18th Century'. Visitors welcome. £7.
Membership Secretary: 07775 683163.

22nd (Wednesday)

8pm Town Hall. Marlborough Folk-Roots. Concert:
Faustus. £15 from Sound Knowledge

continued over....

23rd Thursday)

7.30pm St Peter's Church. History Society. Lecture by Robin Buchanan-Dunlop: 'Ham from King Aethelstan to the Black Death'. Guests £5 (students half price).

25th (Saturday)

7.30pm The Merchant's House. Concert: Bath Spa String Quartet (Villa Lobos, Beethoven and Dvorak). £18 (15 members) from the shop.

26th (Sunday)

7.30pm Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. Film: 'The Good Liar'. £7, u16 £5.

Family News from Jessy Pomfret

Pamela Horril (nee Stedman) passed away on Sunday 9th February in Nottingham City Hospital after a short illness. She was the fourth of five children in the Stedman family (her father was headmaster of the Grammar School during the war and up until the early 60s). At the end of the war the family gave lodging to Hugh de Saram's aunt and cousin, while they were waiting for her husband to be demobbed from the army. Pamela was a subscriber and occasional contributor to the Tower and Town magazine. See the October 2017 edition for her memoriam to her father.

We send our condolences to Pamela's children, Chris and Alison, and their families. Look out for a fuller account of her life in a future edition of T and T.

People may remember **Pamela Woods** and her husband, Gordon, who lived in the last house on the Bath Road opposite the entrance to Manton Hollow. Whilst in Marlborough, Pamela was very involved with the Mothers Union and Gordon taught Chemistry at Marlborough College. They left Marlborough in 1977 and moved to Monmouth. Twenty years later they retired to Rutland. Sadly, Pamela died suddenly on February 22nd of this year. We send our deepest sympathy to Gordon.

Peter O'Sullevan Stable Yards, Lambourn

OPEN DAY

Friday 10th April - Entry from 8.30am

£15 (£10 after 1.00pm) under 16s free

Free car parking

Cancelled

Polymathic pleasures for older residents

The March issue of Tower & Town was devoted to how to develop skills and train the body and mind. It described how mastering different skills and keeping learning keeps us interested in life.



U3A in Kennet is part of the national U3A movement which encourages lifelong learning and staying active for those who have finished full-time work and raising a family. It offers over 60 interest groups to over 600 members on subjects ranging from American History to Website Management and activities ranging from Backgammon to four different Walking Groups. Members come from Marlborough and the areas immediately around Marlborough. There are also U3As in Pewsey Vale and Devizes as well as Swindon and Hungerford.

Across the UK, the movement has grown since its inception in 1982 and there are now over 1000 U3As and over 420,000 members.

In Marlborough, new members are always welcome at the monthly Coffee Exchange held on the last Thursday of the month at the Wesley Hall. Members can enjoy a short talk on a local subject and an update on group activities as well as a cup of coffee (or tea!). The Kennet U3A Talks are held four times a year at the Kennet Valley Hall in Lockeridge.

In May U3A in Kennet is hosting a Special Interest Day on behalf of U3As from across Wiltshire on the subject of Climate Change and Sustainable Futures. This will feature four experienced and knowledgeable speakers and will be held at Marlborough College. Over 200 places have been taken up and the event is currently full.

On 3rd June, U3As across the country will run a series of events under the umbrella title of “U3A Day”. In Marlborough there will be a showcase event in the Town Hall demonstrating some of the activities on offer.

To find out more about U3A in Kennet, go to www.u3ainkennet.org.uk.

David Hammond
Chairman, U3A in Kennet
chairman@u3ainkennet.org.uk

It is reassuring that, despite concerns about Coronavirus and flooding, the seasons roll on and our spirits will be lifted by the succession of natural events which herald the arrival of Spring.

Thanks to climate change, some plants emerge from their winter senescence far earlier than they used to; snowdrops before the turn of the year and hazel catkins wagging on the wind in the early days of January. By the end of February, cherry plum blossom is abundant, goat willow buds are bursting and blackthorn flowers are on the cusp of throwing a white blanket over the hedgerows.



Chiffchaff

For birdwatchers, confirmation that winter is nearly over is the joyous sound, usually in mid to late March, of the first chiffchaffs to make landfall after their epic migration from Africa. “Chiff-chaff, chiff-chaff, chiff-chaff” - the onomatopoeic call, unlike the bird itself, is hard to miss. Luckily, their arrival precedes the leafing of the trees; if you are patient, you’ll eventually spot a tiny, nondescript little bird flitting around in the willows, birches or alders. A restless creature, keen to fuel up after a journey of thousands of miles, it

doesn’t settle for long and seems determined to make the most of the food available before the deluge of other migrants.

By April, the woods resonate with bird-song as courtship calls attract mates or defend territories. Everyone will have their favourite; possibly the languid notes of the blackbird or the bold, bell-like clarity of the song thrush, always repeating several units of its beautiful song. Listen too for the blackcap, common in scrubby areas along the Kennet valley. The rich, liquid warbling is unrivalled and a fleeting glimpse of the sooty-black skullcap of the male, or chocolate-brown equivalent in the female, is really rewarding.



Male Blackcap

The Christian faith is rooted in real and actual events that occurred in history. Jesus, God made man, was born a baby in the town of Bethlehem. He ministered in Galilee and Jerusalem. He died on a cross at Calvary and rose again on the third day.

All of these events are historically verified by reliable witnesses: the birth and the ministry of Jesus by the historians Josephus and Pliny the Younger, and the Resurrection by the disciples. In about AD56 Paul wrote "I delivered to you as of first importance what I received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve" (1Corinthians 15:3-5). Paul is referring to what we can call the living tradition today.

However, the primary evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead is a sign and a confusing one at that: the sign of the empty tomb. None of the Evangelists witnessed the actual event, they described only the aftermath, if you like. Why is this? Of course like many things in relation to faith, in order to understand we need first to believe, faith comes before understanding. In accepting and believing that Jesus of Nazareth rose from the dead, we then enter into the mystery.

We open wide our eyes of faith and let that light of Easter radiate and illuminate our lives.

"Alleluia, Jesus Christ is risen!"



Marlborough Choral Society

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www.marlboroughchoralsociety.org.uk.

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Marlborough Churches Together

Usual Sunday Service times

Christchurch, New Road (Methodist)

- 9.00am Service with Communion (1st Sunday)
- 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

Also Emmanuel Church, Marlborough (FIEC)

- 4.00pm Main Sunday Service with Sunday School, at St John's Academy, Marlborough

Weekday Services

St Mary's Holy Communion: 10.30am Wednesday

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

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

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FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals - *we pray for the families of:*

5 February – Cyril George Rawlings (85)
of Savernake View Care Home, Marlborough
North Wilts Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett

14 February – Deborah Mary Reynolds (68)
of Poulton Hill, Marlborough
*North Wilts Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett
and St Mary's, Marlborough*

19 February – Brenda Lilian Child (97)
of Lawrence Acre, Marlborough
North Wilts Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett

A Different sort of Easter

Due to the Coronavirus precautions it will not be possible to hold Easter services this year. In effect all church services and activities are suspended until further notice.

Weddings and funerals with a small number of attendees are currently permitted. This is a very sad situation as many people were looking forward to church, especially our Easter celebrations.

However, please note the following:

There will be church services online;

Thank you to those who have volunteered to help the isolated;

Clergy and other members of the church can still be contacted for prayer;

For more details of online church, how to contact your clergy or how to volunteer please see Marlborough Town Council or Church websites.

Even if we cannot meet together, the good news of Jesus' resurrection can still be celebrated. We will just need to be more creative than usual in how we approach it.

God bless you all. Rev Chris Smith, Team Rector of Marlborough.



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OBITUARY

Brian Ashley

Brian Ashley, who has died at the age of 84 after a serious fall at home and a long spell in hospital, was one of the most active contributors to the life of Marlborough College and to the life of the town.

A native of Mansfield, he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he read history, and then to Carnegie College in Leeds to train as a PE teacher. After posts in Chipping Norton and St Paul's School in London, he came to Marlborough College as Head of the PE Department and also taught History. He wrote a well-produced history textbook, *Law and Order*, for secondary school students, and also ran a popular keep fit group for local businessmen.

In the mid 1970's, with a vision and determination that wasn't always appreciated and shared by the powers-that-be, he established the College's Summer School, and then looked beyond to set up similar courses at Taunton, Millfield and even in France. The construction of the fishponds at the College was another of his initiatives, too.

As if one career was not enough for him, he left the College in the 1980's and with his wife took over the running of the Henge Shop at Avebury. The attractions of the local landscape and its history led him to offer courses locally, and he could overcome even sceptics with his enthusiasm for water divining.

He was a driving force behind Marlborough's much appreciated and successful International Jazz Festival and became a local district councillor. Full of forthright opinions, anecdotes and good humour, he began conversations with "Have you heard ...?" Characteristically, he expected people he bumped into to agree with his idea or point of view, and the irony of his departure from this life only a few hours after his country's departure from the European Union was not lost on many of us.

We remember Brian as a man who thought big and achieved much, and we offer our sympathies to Kathe and his family.

John Osborne



Repatriation, by Mike Matthews
from the *Art at War* exhibition at the White Horse gallery

News from the Churches

The St Non's Retreat

The St Non's Retreat this year on the calmly beautiful Pembrokeshire coast will be from Tuesday September 15th to Friday 18th. It will be led by **Lynn Busfield** who many will remember warmly as a former member of the Anglican clergy team in Marlborough, now working as hospital chaplain in Birmingham. Her interests include Celtic spirituality - especially as expressed through the Iona community & Wild Goose prayer & worship resources; cooking meals for friends, reading and writing poetry and being in, on or beside the sea. Her initial plan for the theme, tied in with Celtic (& Ignatian) spirituality, is **'Sensing God through the senses'**. Places on this retreat are limited : More information and booking to Barney Rosedale (512205), barney.rsdl@gmail.com.

Women's Fellowship, Christchurch

7th March 2.45pm
28th March 2.45pm

Rev. Stephen Skinner
Trevor Durston, Leprosy Mission.



MAPAG



meets at the Friends Meeting House, the Parade, at 7.30pm on Monday April 20. All are welcome.

Messy Church

Our next Messy Church for Easter takes place at St Mary's starting at 4.00pm on Sunday 5th April. All welcome to come along and join the fun but under 8s to be accompanied by parent or carer please. For more details contact Caroline: cphilps2@gmail.com



Alpha Course

The Rev Chris Smith will be leading an Alpha Course at The Rectory on Wednesday mornings, starting 22nd April (11 sessions). Each session includes refreshments, a short talk and a discussion at the end. This is a great opportunity to explore life and the Christian faith in a friendly, open and informal environment.

If you would like to book a place for yourself or a friend, or would like more information, please contact Chris (514357), Sheila or Simon Mills (861632).



Sunday Lunch Club



Meets on April 26th in the Wesley hall. To book a place please ring the office (513701 by 15th. Cost £7.50).

Easter Sunrise Service

People will be gathering at the Martinsell car park at 5.30am before walking up to the brow of the hill for the Sunrise Service, which will start at 6.00am on Easter Sunday 12th April.

Greet the Dawn, hear the Good News.



Open the Book



This project offers primary school children an opportunity to hear key Bible stories from a team of Christians from local churches who present the stories during assemblies/acts of Collective Worship. Two teams of volunteers from Christchurch, St Mary's and St George's churches go into Marlborough St Mary's and Preshute school assemblies.

Rehearsing and acting out the stories is good fun for the volunteers and enjoyed by the pupils and staff. Both teams are happy for more people to be involved - we can always do with more people on the team either through volunteering their acting skills (you would be surprised what little skill is needed!) or by praying for this initiative. More information from Alison Selby (alison@crossmead.net) or Charles Graham (ctg100@hotmail.com).

Annual World day of Prayer

The gathering took place at the Church of the Holy Family, Pewsey, on 6th March – this year prepared by the Women of Zimbabwe, and attended by 60 or so members of Pewsey/Marlborough churches. The theme was 'Rise! Take your Mat and Walk' from John 5v2-9a – the story of the man by the Pool of Bethesda. The meditation was given by Father John Blacker, followed by light refreshments.

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<i>News from the Churches</i>	Alison Selby	church.news@towerandtown.org.uk Crossmead, Kingsbury St, SN8 1HU	511128
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<i>Family News</i>	Jessy Pomfret	family.news@towerandtown.org.uk	
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Website, online edition www.towerandtown.org.uk; info@towerandtown.org.uk

Contributions and comments from readers are welcome. Please send articles and letters to the Monthly Editor or the Editorial Coordinator, other notices or announcements to the compiler. All items for the May issue by Tuesday 14th April please.

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