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THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES

NUMBER 689 JANUARY 2019



Editorial

Audrey Peck has compiled *Family News* for us since August 2012. The detailed knowledge of Marlborough families that has come her way and that she has shared with us has given every issue a feel of the town as a community. Huge thanks! She is followed by Jessy Pomfret, who will be assisted by Jenny Noble and no doubt other helpers, too.

Concern for the place and for the people in it inspires volunteers. In this issue, Andrew Ross shares the archive that he has created of the Marlborough men who fell in the last year of the First World War; Mary Spender's research into the war memorials erected in local villages is displayed on the Marlborough History Society's website; Bruce Hayllar and his colleagues do valuable work in Savernake Forest; Caro Stover gives young people in her project, Thriving Through Venture, a life-enhancing experience, by pairing them each with an adult working either here or in Gunjur. Debbie Guest contributes a book review and Karen Osborne a recipe. Barney Rosedale and Bill Yates write on the world-wide problem of illegal drugs, which has been recently pinpointed as a matter of local concern, too. Heather Cooper writes her last clergy letter for us and we wish her well when she moves on in the coming summer.

Above all, we salute the late Michael Gray, who set up the Civic Society and was the inspiration behind the creation of the Merchant's House. Knowledgeable, opinionated, challenging, irascible and charming, he insisted that Marlborough recognized its own architectural history and applied the best standards in conserving it. John Sykes makes clear the huge debt that we all owe Michael.

John Osborne, Editor

Front Cover:: Savernake War Memorial, by Mary Spender

Volunteering in Savernake Forest

Bruce Hayllar

Once a month, booted, weatherproofed and carrying a picnic lunch, I head for Eight Walks in Savernake forest to meet a small group of volunteers led by Nikki, our Forestry Commission Ranger.

Savernake is a very special place, a rich and varied habitat for plant and animal wildlife, designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Planted Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS). It was old in 934 AD and very old now, as many of its famous veteran trees testify.

The Forestry Commission (recently renamed Forestry England) runs this volunteer group aiming to engage the local community in the care of the ancient woodland, help conserve the wildlife and ancient trees and maintain the forest as a wonderful place to visit. But Savernake is not only a nature reserve; we also need to understand how the care of veteran trees and associated wildlife is balanced with extracting high quality timber and growing new trees to provide timber for future generations.

Our group heads off to wherever Nikki has planned the day's task: we select tools and begin work. The tasks depend on the season but include coppicing, haloing, clearing around ponds, tree planting, and litter picking. Short rotation coppicing, an ancient tradition, is the repeated cutting of hazel or other trees down to the stump or "stool". The regrowth, originally meant as a renewable source of timber, creates prime habitat for butterflies and other wildlife. Haloing is the clearing of encroaching trees and undergrowth beneath the canopies of veteran trees. This helps prolong their life by removing competition and giving them space and light. It is ironic that to preserve the forest, we spend much of our time cutting things down! Another traditional practice is grazing by park cattle, hopefully to be re-introduced this year.

There is only so much a small group can do in such a large forest but every little helps and we believe we make a difference. And what benefits do the volunteers enjoy? Once or twice during our day we stop for cake and hot drinks brewed on a Kelly kettle. There are occasional educational sessions on butterflies, lichens or fungi. Above all, working in the beautiful surroundings of Savernake is a positive and rewarding activity, promoting good physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.

If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Nikki at Nikki.morgans@Forestryengland.uk.

The Old Oaks of Savernake Forest

John Osborne

Now is the season of the year to admire the ancient oaks that we are so fortunate to have on our doorstep in Savernake Forest – not the Spring, not the Summer, despite the attraction of the trees when they are in full leaf. In the Winter, the leaves have fallen and the undergrowth has died back and through the more recent plantations of oak and beech you can see the thick, knobbly trunks of many old oaks with their heavy writhing branches, many of them collapsing under their own weight. They are a stunning sight. No wonder they are given names such as King of Limbs and Spider Oak.

These oaks are wonderfully aged. Big Bellied Oak, such a well-known feature by the side of the A346; Cathedral Oak, on the northern boundary quite near the picnic site; and the sad remains of Duke's Vaunt, almost hidden beyond the firs at the far end of the forest, each have girths of approximately 10 metres, which gives them an age of roughly 1,000 years. Two of these are hollowed with age: under Duke's Vaunt, according to tradition, Henry VIII courted Jane Seymour, and later there was enough room to shelter a choir of twenty boys. These trees are among the oldest oaks in the country; one of them may be the oldest.

Twenty-four of the ancient oaks of Savernake are named and nearly all have boards situated below to identify them. Peter Noble's excellent map, available for a small charge in St Peter's Church (the money goes to charity), will guide you to these trees - and on the way you will see scores of others that you will guess from the girth of their trunks and twisting of their boughs are old enough to be candidates for appropriate names. Hug an oak! One span of your arms equals roughly 100 years of growth!

Oaks are a major element of our national history: it took 1,400 to provide the timber for Salisbury Cathedral and 3,000 or more to construct Nelson's HMS Victory. The demand for timber for shipbuilding in the 18th century was so severe that during his lifetime one worried landowner trod 900,000 acorns into the soil as he walked around his lands. No wonder that Hearts of Oak is the march of the Royal Navy and that the oak leaf is the symbol of the National Trust.

What is Prayer For?

Faith Leaders and Thinkers discuss

Last autumn the College hosted a discussion in the newly refurbished Memorial Hall in which four faith leaders and thinkers presented their thoughts on Prayer and answered questions. Your Editor recalls some of the points that struck him.

The Bishop of Salisbury, the Rt Rev Nicholas Holtam, began by saying that we all pray instinctively, but that we can be taught to pray, as the disciples request to Jesus shows – the request that produced ‘The Lord’s Prayer.’ The purpose of prayer is to ‘place ourselves in the presence of God’, not to be granted ‘things’, but to change ourselves and to strengthen the qualities that we need as members of the community.

Munawar Hussain, a Muslim Imam, told us that according to The Koran creation is in a state of perpetual prayer with God and that when Muslims pray they tune into the rest of creation. After ritual ablution, a washing away of sin and material distractions, prayer brings you near to God, to worship God as if you see him, to have an intimate conversation with him. This concentration brings emotional release and mental peace. Communal prayer and its movements are important as a social leveller.

Madeleine Bunting, a journalist, spoke about the practice and benefits of ‘mindfulness’, a word she preferred to ‘prayer’. Our minds are continuously exposed to stimulation and the ‘busy-ness’ of things around us, and we need ‘to turn the sound down’, to meditate, ‘to settle the mind’. With this ‘habit of the heart’ we can cultivate an openness, a ‘loving awareness’, to forgo the drive to ‘judge’ and to ‘achieve’.

Dr Tony Stoller, brought up a Jew and now a Quaker, pointed out that, whatever one’s religious allegiance, whatever liturgical differences there are between faiths, personal prayer is much the same; Jews and Quakers both believe that in prayer we encounter the divine. He quoted Rabbi Lionel Blue: “Prayer does not change the external world; it has changed me.” The purpose of prayer is not to prompt God to action, but to give us the resolve and strength to fulfil the obligations that are on us.

What happens in intercessory prayer, then? This was explored in discussion afterwards. Two replies from the panel shone out: “*(Prayer) holds people to the light*” and “*(Prayer) is the economy of love: someone puts something in and someone else draws out.*”

John Osborne

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For further enquiries, please contact Lorraine Wash on (020) 8569 8364 or email lorraine.wash@ospreymc.co.uk



Clergy Letter Heather Cooper

As I write this, 2019 is only a few days old and life is beginning to get back to normal after the festivities of Christmas and New Year. So *'A Happy New Year, Everyone!'*

This is the time when minds turn to New Year resolutions; to going to the gym or at least taking more exercise, to doing something positive like cutting back on alcohol or eating more healthy food, to.....

Some may already have bitten the dust, others may even last until February. We are not very good at keeping our resolutions.

This is also the time when many Methodists all over the world renew the Covenant we have with God in our annual Covenant service. We do this once a year because we know that we slip and fail to be good disciples of Christ throughout the year. It is an important service for us, reassuring in that it reminds us of God's faithful love and challenging because it reminds us of our commitment to God.

In a world where, especially for public figures, the past can never be forgotten or forgiven we are reminded that God does not hold our mistakes against us, be they youthful follies or more serious actions. Like a New Year, the Covenant Service reminds us that there is always a new beginning, a second chance.

As we look forward we know that 2019 will bring its share of changes and challenges. For Christchurch and the churches we are partnered with summer will bring a change of minister. I move to take up a new appointment in the Wirral and Rev Stephen Skinner moves here from Kent.

We pray that a new rector will be appointed for St Mary's and a new vicar for St George's soon.

There will be other changes and challenges too, for all of us. For those who begin a new year with the shadows of illness and death or anxiety about the future I pray you will know God's peace. For those who begin the year filled with joy and hope I pray that this will be the pattern of the year.

Let us all look forward to the new beginning of 2019. Every blessing!

In Memoriam 1918

March

Private **Albert Henry Choules**. 2nd Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment. Killed in action. 21st March 1918.

Private **Ernest John Hutchins**. 2nd Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment. Killed in action. 21st March 1918.

These two Marlborough soldiers were killed on the same day and the same action on the Western Front. Both were serving in the 2nd Battalion Wiltshire Regiment. The Battalion was manning a forward zone redoubt on 21st March when the British front line was hit by a massive and overwhelming assault by the enemy. The British in total disarray were driven back some fifty miles before they managed to steady the position. The 2nd Wilts redoubt held out for some hours before it was surrounded and overrun. Such was the confusion of the situation that a roll call was not taken until 2nd April when it was discovered that 597 soldiers were missing. Both Ernest's and Albert's bodies were never recovered.

Second Lieutenant **Sydney Napier Hillier**. 6th Battalion, South Wales Borderers. Killed in action. 25th March 1918.

April

Private **Henry Hutchins**. 2nd /4th Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment. Killed in action. 6th April 1918 in Palestine.

Private **Augustus William Bell**. 18th Battalion, Durham Light Infantry. Killed in action. 12th April 1918.

Company Quartermaster Sergeant **Charles Monro Devis**. 2nd Regiment, South African Infantry. Killed in action. 20th April 1918.

Lieutenant **Christopher Lancelot Usher**. 2nd Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment. Killed in action. 23rd April 1918. Christopher was another casualty of the massive assault on 21st March. He only joined the battalion on 10th January 1918. He was noted on the roll call on 2nd April as wounded. It is believed he died whilst a prisoner of war. He was the son of the Rector of St Peters.

May

Private **Frederick Dunford**. 2nd Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment. Killed in action. 8th May 1918. Following the disaster of 21st March the 2nd Wilts was withdrawn to the Ypres sector to rest and reform. The battalion was linked to the 2nd Bedfords as a composite battalion. In this state the battalion was again in action as the enemy

shifted its point of attack. Thirty seven men were listed as missing in action. Frederick was amongst them and his body was never recovered.

Sapper **Cyril Victor Jiggle**. 17th Division Signal, Company Royal Engineers. Killed in action. 31st May 1918 in Iraq.

June

Private **William Harly Eden**. 1st Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment. Killed in action. 6th June 1918.

Sapper **William Thomas Dobson**. 490th Field Company, Royal Engineers. Died of wounds. 9th June 1918.

August

Corporal **David William Jennings**. 20th (TF) Depot, Royal Engineers. Kent Fortress Battalion. Died at home from shell shock and mustard gas poisoning. David is buried in Marlborough Old Cemetery. David played first class cricket for Kent before the War. He played at Lords in 1917 against the Australian and South African Imperial Forces.

Private **Frederick Evans Hulbert**. 6th Battalion, Dorsetshire Regiment. Killed in action. 23rd August 1918.

September

Private **Geoffrey Lionel Brooke**. 1st Battalion, Worcestershire Regiment. Died as a prisoner of war in Germany on 3rd September 1918. Geoffrey was reported missing in action on 27th May. Postcards were received from him as a prisoner, informing the family he was in hospital.

Able Seaman **Ernest Gough**. Drake Battalion, Royal Naval Division. Killed in action. 3rd September 1918.

Private **Sydney Beard**. 6th Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry. Sidney was accidentally shot and killed by a comrade on 12th September 1918.

Corporal **David Charles Rogers**. 6th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery. Killed in action. 27th September 1918.

Private **Richard Henry Wyatt**. Machine Gun Corps (Infantry). Killed in action. 27th September 1918.

October

Private **William George Dance**. 1st /4th Battalion, Wiltshire Regiment. Died of Malaria in Egypt on 9th October. William was among a large group of Marlborough men who enlisted at the outbreak of war and were immediately sent out to India.

Gunner **Gerald Granville Glass**. 134th Battery, Royal Field Artillery. Killed in action. 11th October 1918. His older brother was killed in 1917.

Continued on the next page

In Memoriam 1918 *continued*

Engineer Commander **PCA Hillier**. HMS Colombo, Royal Navy. Died at home on 30th October. He is buried in Marlborough Old Cemetery.

Private **William Mundy**. 6th Battalion, Dorsetshire Regiment. Killed in action. 31st October.

November

Private **Albert Victor Robbins**. 1st Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment. Killed in action. 4th November 1918. With the Armistice only one week away the British fought the last large-scale action of the Great War, the Battle of Sambre, the objective being finally to break the German resistance. Three Marlborough soldiers were lost in this battle.

Guardsman **Sidney George Salter**. 3rd Battalion, Grenadier Guards. Killed in action. 4th November. Sidney was the son of a College butler, and a Marlborough Grammar School boy. His battalion was part of the elite Guards Division. He was mortally wounded early in the morning.

Second Lieutenant **Charles John Norman Adams**. 2nd Battalion, Grenadier Guards. Killed in action. 4th November. He was an assistant master at the College. Like Sidney, Charles also fell early in the morning when his company was caught in the open by devastating machine gun fire. Charles was evacuated to a base hospital at Rouen where he died from his wounds several days later.

Research and text kindly supplied by Andrew Ross



Village War Memorials: Fyfield Lychgate © Mary Spender

Village War Memorials Mary Spender

Marlborough History Society's project to gather all local research available on World War 1 Village War Memorials is now complete.

Please go to www.marlboroughhistorysociety.co.uk and follow the link to 'histories'. All 18 villages in our area plus Marlborough College have replied, and current photos of all war memorials in the area are included. Some villages went to a lot of trouble to find and send detailed research on the names on their memorials, and even contributed a few fascinating contemporary photographs of the scenes at the dedication services. We have located memorial halls, church plaques, stone crosses, two lychgates and a clock!

The project can now provide a wonderful opportunity for WW1 research and analysis in the future, both genealogical and straight historical, of the whole of our area. Further relevant data can always be incorporated.

It has given us great pleasure to make contact with other keen local historians, representing the local villages surrounding Marlborough, to enable this to happen. We should be very happy for our website to be used to publish other village history projects in the future.

Further information: Mary Spender, MHS Projects, mary@spender.org

ANXIETIES ABOUT WAR MEMORIALS

FROM THE TIMES JANUARY 9, 1919

... We are glad to give prominence this morning to a letter from Mr Herbert Baker, the distinguished architect of South Africa and Delhi. As he points out, a war memorial should express not only the idea of honour to the dead, but also the ideals for which they fought. We all desire that their sacrifice may not be vain, and in our memorials to them we may make a first attempt to realize it. The article of commerce, clock, fountain or statue, can give happiness to no one; and it is happiness that they died for - the future happiness of their country. Mr Baker bids us make our lovely villages yet more lovely, our ugly towns less ugly. And let

the work, whatever it is, be done, if possible, by the workmen, and in the materials, of the neighbourhood. Even if some failures come of this attempt at native expression, they cannot be greater failures than our characterless memorials of the past. And we agree with Mr Baker that memorials should be distinct. There is a natural inclination among the clergy to think of memorials as a means of beautifying their churches, but war memorials in churches can be lost among other memorials or, if striking enough to draw attention to themselves, will draw attention away from the church: while, if the memorial is merely ornamenting the church, it is hardly a war memorial. Finally, we agree that war museums, however interesting, are not war memorials. They are not expressive, and a memorial ought above all things to be a touching and inspiring music to the eye and to the mind.

With permission from The Times

Drugs: Doing Less Harm

Barney Rosedale and Bill Yates

Of late there have been signs of a public interest in reviewing how we think about and address the issue of addictive drugs in our society. This is the first of two T&T articles. It covers the history and international consequences of ‘The War on Drugs’. The second, in March, will look at the impact of current UK drugs policy, and possible ways of ‘Doing less Harm’.

World-wide production

The drugs we are talking about are mind-altering substances, some legal like alcohol and tobacco, and some illegal, used by humans for thousands of years to meet a variety of needs; to reduce physical, mental or social pain, to unwind, to stimulate or to inspire. And some are taken because of addiction. Where do they originate? Opium drugs are produced in the Golden Crescent of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, and in the Golden Triangle of Thailand, Burma and Laos. Cocaine and most of the cannabis comes mainly from Latin America. Synthetic and designer drugs are produced in secret laboratories everywhere.

All these drugs in most countries are covered by a policy of ‘prohibition’.

Prohibition in the USA

This is a historical case study of a policy that lasted and failed for thirteen years. By making the supply of alcohol illegal, the production and/or smuggling was put into the control of criminal gangs. For years warfare raged in Chicago and other U.S. cities. Corruption pervaded all levels of justice. Intimidation made it impossible to get witnesses into court. When the most famous gangster, Al Capone, was finally convicted it was on charges not of murder and illegally supplying liquor, but of tax evasion! Thousands of Americans died from drinking industrial alcohol, deliberately poisoned by the federal authorities attempting to deter its consumption. The political system was brought into disrepute by the continued drinking of politicians. Loss of tax revenues from alcohol sales was huge. In 1920 Democrats and Republicans both had majorities favouring Prohibition, but in 1933 FDR was elected President on a vow to end Prohibition.

Forty years later, ‘The War on Drugs’ was declared by President Nixon, and half a century later it has claimed countless thousands of lives. Nixon himself resigned over the Watergate Scandal, but afterwards his chief White House aide, Ehrlichman, said about the ‘War on Drugs’ :

“You want to know what this was really all about. The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: *the antimar left*

and *black people*. You understand what I'm saying?

We knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news.

Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did."

So those venal objectives of President Nixon saddled the world with this Drugs War policy that still engages dozens of countries in criminal violence. In Mexico in just one decade drugs violence killed over 100,000 people. Although the outright Civil War in Colombia has ended, armed violence continues between cartels and the corrupted police and paramilitaries. Mexico, Colombia and Afghanistan are also big producers of illegal cannabis, as are Nigeria, Jamaica and Paraguay. Wholesale intimidation and corruption of provincial and national governments by criminals is reducing transit countries in Central America, the Caribbean, and West and North Africa to the condition of failed states. Profits from drugs fund armed groups in many conflicts, for instance during 'the Troubles' in Ireland and today in Afghanistan. The violent death count includes extrajudicial killings in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, and probably more than ten thousand in the Philippines, and perhaps even higher numbers in Brazil. We don't have figures for drug-related deaths in China and India. But perhaps the main slaughter of the War on Drugs is the toll resulting from the absence of regulatory protection for drug users. These are the deaths from overdoses, from the exacerbation of psychiatric illness, from use of infected needles, from the poisonous additives used to cut plant-based drugs and in the processing of synthetic drugs.

The gains all go to the criminals. Drugs are a very profitable business. In 2005 production value of illegal drugs was estimated at \$13 billion. Final retail value (tax free) was \$320 billion.

The cost of this war is too high. There must be a better way?

To be continued in the March issue of Tower and Town

What's On

Regular events

Every Monday

7.30pm: Christchurch. Marlborough Choral Society.

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

Every Tuesday

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

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

Every Wednesday

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

12.30: St George's, Preshute (*1st Wednesday*) Teddy Prayers & Picnic. A special service for U5s & carers, followed by a picnic lunch.

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. Marl. Community Choir.

Every Thursday (or some Thursdays)

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

10:30-12 noon: Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. Singing for the Brain.

Alzheimer's Support. 01225 776481. (*Every Thursday during term-time.*)

2pm: Mildenhall Village Hall. Marlborough Floral Club. £30 a year membership. £5 guest. 520129. (*1st Thursday*).

7-8.30pm: Wesley Hall, Oxford St. Hangout & Devotion. Youth Club.

Every Friday

10-12 noon: Christchurch Crush Hall. Food bank.

Every 2nd Saturday

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

February calendar

6th (Wednesday)

7.30pm Wesley Hall, Oxford Street. WI. Talk by Beryl Pendry: 'Genealogy can be Spooky'. New members and guests welcome.

7th (Thursday)

7.15pm St Peter's Church. David Harris talks on 'The World of Brooke Bond: 150 years 1869-2019' on behalf of the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust Crofton Beam Engine. Tickets (£5 incl. a cup of tea) on the door.

10th (Sunday)

11.30am Barbury Racecourse. Point-to-Point.

11th (Monday)

7.30pm Bouverie Hall, Pewsey. The Arts Society Pewsey Vale. Lecture by Matthew Williams: 'William de Morgan: Victorian Art Potter'. Visitors welcome. £7 Membership Secretary: 07775 683163.

13th (Wednesday)

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

7.45pm Wesley Hall, Oxford Street. Gardening Association. AGM & Talk by Sue Carter: 'History of Lacock Abbey Gardens'.

15th (Friday)

Marlborough College. Start of Half Term; St John's Academy. End of Term 3.

18th (Monday)

11am. Ellendune Community Centre, Wroughton. The Arts Society. Lecture by Gill White: 'Embroidered with Woodbine and Eglantine, Elizabethan Textile Furnishings'. Guests welcome £7. Membership Secretary: 01793 840790.

7.30pm Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. National Trust Association meeting. Talk by Nick McComley: 'The Underground World of Corsham'. £3, non members £4.

21st (Thursday)

7.30pm St Peter's Church. Marlborough History Society. Talk by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger: 'Recent archaeological discoveries in Wiltshire'. Non-members £4.

24th (Sunday)

Marlborough College. End of Half Term.

7.30pm St Peter's Church. Concert: An evening of classical music from the chamber music group, Tee Trio: Weng Soon Tee (piano), Clarissa Lim (violin) and Laura Jane Armstrong (cello). Tickets £8 (non members £10) on door.

7.30pm Kennet Valley Hall. Film: 'King of Thieves'. £6.

25th (Monday)

St John's Academy. Start of Term 4.

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

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
12.30 pm (1st Wednesday): Teddy Prayers & Picnic,
a special service for U5s & carers followed by a picnic lunch

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FROM THE REGISTERS

Wedding - we congratulate

14 December Martyn Meade and Amy Austin at St George's

Departed - we pray for the families of

18 November Margaret 'Maggie' Lowry (76) of Cold Ash, Berks formerly of Minal
St John the Baptist, Minal and Sheepdrove Woodland Burial Ground

23 November Margaret Rosemary Church (88) of Manton Close, Manton
West Wiltshire Crematorium, Semington

24 November Michael Edwin Gray (76) of Northgate Street, Devizes
St Mary's and Marlborough Cemetery

10 December Sheila Barbara Johnston (94) of Five Stiles Road, Marlborough
St Mary's and Marlborough Cemetery

18 December Rosemary 'Joan' Victoria Crammond (95) of Aldbourne Nursing Home
North Wiltshire Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett

19 December Geraldine 'Gerry' Gay Rowlands (71) of Elcot Lane, Marlborough
Kingsdown Crematorium and St Mary's

19 December William Thompson Allen (89) of Queensway, Marlborough
Kingsdown Crematorium

Michael Gray, 1942 - 2018 - a Tribute

John Sykes

Michael Gray died on 24th November after a short illness.

He was educated at the old Grammar School (meeting Jenny, his future wife and mother of his three sons, Matthew, Tom and Sam) and sang in St Mary's Church choir. Initially he trained as a solicitor but the law was not for him. His great interest was history, a passion he indulged by becoming a noted antique dealer. For some years he had shops in the town including one in Kingsbury Street and at Cavendish House in the High Street although latterly he traded at an antiques emporium in Lechlade and at his recently opened shop in Devizes.

The 1960s was an era of terrible destruction of historic townscapes. Michael mounted a vigorous defence of the old buildings of Marlborough and initiated several campaigns to save them. In the 1970s he chaired the Civic Society, acquiring something of a reputation as an *enfant terrible* so far as council planners and developers were concerned.

Michael's greatest success was in getting people, planners and councillors to look at things in a different way – that historic buildings could be given a new lease of life to give pleasure to a new generation. Realising that the Merchant's House was a rare survival, a working building from the Cromwellian era that was virtually intact, he persuaded a much-changed Town Council to buy it in 1991.

Ever since then the Merchant's House has benefited from Michael's commitment, expertise and knowledge of Marlborough and of the 17th century. As Historic Adviser he guided the Trustees on matters such as presentation of the house and its contents, advised on acquisition of appropriate furniture and other items, and saw to the establishment of its comprehensive library and local historical archives. He trained many guides and was involved in setting up the recently opened museum in the house. He gave talks about the house. He edited all 63 issues (to date) of the Trust's banner publication, the *Marlborough Journal*, to a very high standard both of presentation and of content, a mine of information for generations to come. Today the Merchant's House is Marlborough's gem.

The Merchant's House Trust

Memorial Appeal

The Merchant's House Trust would like to buy a significant piece of furniture in memory of Michael Gray. Michael's family are generously donating the sums collected at his funeral to the Trust. If you would like to make a contribution in his memory please contact Katie Fairfax-Ross 511491 katief@merchantshousetrust.co.uk.



Michael Gray, 1942 - 2018

Family News compiled by Audrey Peck

Congratulations to **John and Karen Osborne** on another granddaughter, Zoe, born 5th Jan in San Francisco to their daughter, Juliet, and her partner Peter Kavic.

When **Michael Gray** died we became very aware of what a wealth of knowledge about the history of the town was lost. His mother's family, Ducks, came to Marlborough from Speen in the 1800's. They were coach builders and blacksmiths. His great grandfather was a veterinary shoemaker. Michael was born above Duck's bicycle and toy shop in the High St. His early interest was in old cars. He ran an antique shop in 138, High St. for many years and was the leading proponent of setting up the Merchant's House 27 years ago. (See page 18). His sons Tom, Sam and Matthew were comforted to see St Marys Church full for the thanksgiving for his life. We send all the family our sincere sympathy

Gerry Rowlands lived most of her life in Marlborough. She brought up her three children, Vicki, Nel and Duncan here, and enjoyed the contacts with a large extended family locally. She was a lifelong member of St Marys, a bellringer; led Ladies' Evening Group; co-led a Home Group for very many years; More recently she loved being part of the Open the Book team, and being able to be involved in services again. Gerry worked as a physio at Savernake hospital, and then in the community in various roles. She had to retire early due to serious heart problems, and was an invalid for many years, during which time her faith, and the prayers of the church and many friends upheld her. Finally, surgery enabled her to get a life back! She was very involved with the recent major refurbishment at the Con Club in the High St, and served as chairman. Gerry had 5 good years but sadly died suddenly just before Christmas. She will be greatly missed. Our sympathy to Vicki, Nel and Duncan and her close friends.

Joan Stevens died 6 months after her devoted husband Bill. They lived in Rockley for many years enjoying travelling, theatre and flat green bowls. She was an English teacher in West London for her whole career, passing on her love of theatre and literature to many pupils, some of whom have always kept in touch with her. She had met Bill on a linguistics course. They continued being secretaries to the Theatre Club after moving to Castle Court retirement flats where they had been very happy. Our thoughts are with her family, and the friends who gave her so much support.

Daniel Claridge and his mother, **Mary**, have not only started a new business in 2017 but with friends have kept the seven Car Boot Sales on the Common bringing in funds for Wiltshire Air Ambulance. Last year they raised over £4,000 again. Congratulations to the Claridge family. The first Car Boot this year will be on Sunday, March 17th.

Gillian Watson wants to thank the many friends who sent cards and letters when she was in Amblecroft North, Salisbury. The medical staff there and here were wonderful. She says we should never underestimate the power of kind thoughts and prayers. Get completely well soon, Gillian

Thanks and good luck to **Jessy Pomfret** for taking over Family News.

A Good Read for Mid Winter **Debbie Guest**

I'm writing this about a month before you're likely to read it, but whatever the weather might be doing, I'm fairly confident that we'll still all be deep in that mid-winter wanting-to-hunker-down-and-hibernate mode. Just the right frame of mind in fact for a long, slow-flowing novel like *Once Upon A River* by Diane Setterfield.

The story begins one winter night, at some unspecified time in the early to mid nineteenth century, in an inn on the Thames. Out of the wet darkness staggers an injured man, carrying a dead – drowned - child. The man collapses, and is tended to, the girl's body is laid out in a store room. And then the child comes back to life, fragile but uninjured, and mute. Who is the man, what has happened? Who is the child, and to which, if any, of the people who claim her, does she belong?

A return from the dead can never be straightforward. The lines between the supernatural, local superstitions, and science are untangled as assorted mysteries, heartbreaks and family secrets gradually unwind and the child's identity is revealed.

In reading, as in life, it's good to be open to something different. I say this, because in many ways this is absolutely not a novel I thought I'd enjoy. It's a meandering book, with a large cast of characters; it's not quite historical fiction and not just a mystery. There's a faint suggestion of magical realism (if that's not your thing - and I'm with you - don't be afraid, it's just a hint).

The dense narrative and range of characters is almost Dickensian, but again, if you share my aversion to Our Greatest Novelist, don't worry. It's more like what Dickens could be if he just stopped banging his readers on the head to make his point. The writing is stylish without being overblown, evocative without becoming a pastiche of the Victorian novel, and as much as anything, this is a story about storytelling. If you fancy immersing yourself (see what I did there?) in something engrossing, then I recommend that you allow yourself to slip gently into the narrative and go with the flow.

Just enough room to highlight two books I thoroughly enjoyed last year, now out in paperback – *Old Baggage* by Lissa Evans, a novel about what happens when you've achieved your goals; and Sarah Langford, a practising barrister, takes us through a series of (anonymised) cases, demonstrating the workings, successes and failings of the legal system in *In Your Defence*.

Thriving Through Venture Caro Stover

What does Thriving Through Venture do and why do we need it? It offers purposeful learning experiences to young people within our community in Wiltshire, and then in Marlborough's partner community, Gunjur, in The Gambia.

2018 was our first year, and we had ten students from different independent and state schools in the area, working together in both communities on a writing project, a photography project and a business project. When in Gunjur each young person thrived being partnered with a young Gambian, working together on the projects, such as the beekeeping project illustrated opposite. .

I have worked with children and young people since 1989, Over the last 15 years I have become increasingly aware of the significant contribution that mental wellbeing has on learning and living. We now understand that specific brain changes during adolescence can contribute to a predisposition to poor mental health particularly with this period of life being very focussed on working out, "Who am I, Who do I want to be?"

What in our environment makes our young people so anxious and so vulnerable to low mood and poor confidence these days? Two core factors are a weak sense of belonging and connecting within relationships and community and having little sense of purpose. Another is the pressure caused by the current levels of competition for gaining desired employment, professional status, looks and/or material wealth.

What can we do about it? In part, we need to move from a suffocating focus on exams and league tables, and, as an example, include in our curriculum relevant, practical and purposeful learning opportunities within our communities working and connecting with all ages and professions, and then to do similarly in a very different community.

These young people in Thriving Through Venture were not the normal candidates who would put their hand up for an adventure like this. However, with the carefully constructed programme and support, they all took deep breaths and took on the challenge. As one of them reflected: *"TTV taught me that if you go out of your comfort zone, exciting things happen."*

Our evaluations showed that these young people's individual resilience increased because of this experience, enriching them and the communities involved.

We are now planning the 2019 programme. For further information on this year's specific projects, please contact me on Caro@ttventure.org

Caro Stover is an Educational Psychologist and Director of 'Thriving Through Venture', Charity Registration No: 1177643



GUNJUR

“Many people are frightened of the bee sting in The Gambia. I protect the bees and make them as your friend. I have studied beekeeping in many countries. I make and sell lots of bee products but making honey is my favourite thing.”

Sulayman Manjang, Gunjur

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Cooking with a Broken Arm - an occasional series by Karen Osborne

Four years after my last accident, I have again broken my right arm. This time it was a few days after Christmas and so fortunately we were well stocked up with seasonal left-overs and the contents of a hamper. Kind friends have kept appearing on the doorstep with offerings of home cooked dishes, and so we have lived well.

But there came a time when tired-looking vegetables stared at me from the fridge, for which the only solution seemed to be either to throw them away or to capture my husband once more. I went for the latter.

We concocted an emergency broth from:

1 onion, 2 potatoes, 4 carrots, and 1 leek.

I checked first that there were no rugby matches or quiz programmes on TV that would distract my husband, and stood over him while he peeled and chopped the veggies, suggesting, for example, that it is easier to peel the onion if he cuts it in half first, and that it is a good idea to cut off the ends of the carrots and the leek.

We then heated some oil in a large saucepan and added the onion, followed by the veg. We found some cumin in my spice rack and added a teaspoonful, before pouring on a generous pint of chicken stock. When boiling we put in some salt, a generous handful of dried marmalade orange peel (brought back from Iran), chopped parsley from the freezer and some dried thyme (from Bulgaria). We then simmered this for 30 minutes, allowing husband a well-earned rest. You can see that I was feeling creative, but that husband was getting restive.

Once the broth was cooked, I introduced husband to my portable liquidiser and set him to work. He liked this bit and did a good job. We added some pepper and a bit of milk as it was rather thick, and, with a topping of crème fraiche, served it with nice bread and a glass of wine in front of University Challenge for a perfect evening.

The marmalade oranges should be in the shops now. I wonder.....



Marlborough Theatre Club

Do you enjoy visiting the theatre?

We organize up to 9 trips a year by coach to various theatres.

If you are interested in joining please contact the Membership Secretary, Mike Williams: 511928 or mike.williams45@btinternet.com

News from the Churches

Marlborough Churches Together Fraternal

meets at 12.45 on Monday 4th February. The meeting is open to all.



Marlborough Area Poverty Action Group

meets at the Friends Meeting House, The Parade at 7.30pm on Monday 4th February. All are welcome.

Women's Fellowship

5 th February	Tea and chat
12 th February	Members Meeting
19 th February	Father John Blacker
26 th February	Maggie Gibbs
5 th March	Tea and Chat



All meetings start at 2.45pm and are in Christchurch.

Book Club

Meets on: Thursday 7th February, 7:30pm at The Mustard Seed to discuss : The Man who Broke into St Peter's by Chick Yuill.



Sunday Lunch Club

meets on 17th February. To book a place, please ring Christchurch office on Friday 15th February by 10.00am (513701). Cost £7.50.



Empathy and Faith

Tuesday February 26th 7:30pm, St Mary's Church, Marlborough.
Free entry : voluntary donation towards the wine.

Ultimately, Christians are commanded not to know, or to obey, but to love. What does it mean to love our neighbour? Perhaps it means not reaching out *to* them, but being *with* them. This evening offers an opportunity to explore the idea that empathy – the recognition of our *shared* woundedness – lies at the heart of human experience and Christian faith.

The evening will be led by Revd. Dr. Colin Heber-Percy, a priest and a screenwriter whose work has won many awards and been shown all over the world. In 2012 he wrote the BBC's Easter drama, *The Preston Passion*. He lectures and publishes on spirituality, mission, and the relationship between faith and culture.

Colin will also be leading our Lent talks – see opposite.

Filling Station

will meet on Thursday 28th Feb. A team from Highworth Community Church are coming to lead a time of worship from 7.30pm. For further information, please contact Vincent or Helen Stokes vincentstokes52@gmail.com or: hcstokes@gmail.com; or ring: 516592.



Devotion

The Youth Club for 11 – 17 year olds continues to meet on Thursdays from 7 – 8.30pm in the Wesley Hall. Volunteers to help the leaders run this group are needed. Please contact Janneke: jblokland@gmail.com or Keith: skylarkhome@btinternet.com for more information.

Women's World Day of Prayer

takes place on Friday 1st March. Prepared by the women of Slovenia, the theme is “Come – everything is ready.” There will be a service at 2pm in Pewsey.

Ash Wednesday – 6th March

Services, offering the imposition of ash, take place at 10.30am in St Mary's, Marlborough and at 7.30pm in St George's, Preshute.

Lent 2019

'God of the Gaps'

a Lenten journey with Mark's gospel led by Revd Dr Colin Heber-Percy

The phrase “God of the gaps” is used dismissively by some secularists to describe a God “in retreat.” According to these thinkers, we only resort to God in a scientific age when we can't explain the increasingly rare gaps in our knowledge. But God is not thought of by believers in this way. God is not a failed scientific theory. God is that in virtue of which we are able to do science in the first place.

In these talks Colin will explore the idea of a God who inhabits and shares the gaps, the in-between spaces of our lives and communities, the Lent times, the waiting. Colin writes: "as a guide for our exploring, we'll take St Mark with us, whose own gospel is full of gaps and interruptions and questions – and is all the richer for it. In many ways, Mark's is a gospel of the gaps."

The talks will take place at Christchurch, Marlborough, at 7.30pm on Wednesdays 13, 20, 27 March and 3, 10 April. Free entry, donations for refreshments.

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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 March issue by 5th February please.

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