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Thriving Through Venture

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THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES

NUMBER 696 SEPTEMBER 2019



Thriving Through Venture

Here in Marlborough, and more widely in Wiltshire, Thriving Through Venture is working with vulnerable young people with low self esteem and little sense of purpose in life. We engage them in purposeful projects in their communities here and then related projects in Marlborough's link community of Gunjur in The Gambia. The confidence of those young people involved in TTV last year was dramatically improved as you will read.

The current group of twelve students, both state and private, is engaged in studying the global issue of migration. They have interviewed migrants to the UK and spent a day with the Gambian community in Bristol. They have met with refugees attending the 'Harbour Project' in Swindon and they have learnt about the work of the UN High Commission for Refugees from Claire Roberts Lamont.

Whilst in the Gambia in August where they will be partnered up with a Gambian counterpart, they will meet with "failed migrants" who have crossed the Sahara in their attempts to get to Europe, arriving in Libya only to discover the ghastly conditions under which they are forced to live before the risky crossing of the Mediterranean in unseaworthy craft, and then have decided to return home.

Of the group, some will be studying the art and skills of photography to illustrate a report on migration and others will learn about performance in order to demonstrate what they have learnt through a public performance to be held in the **Ellis Theatre at Marlborough College on Sunday 15 September at 7.0 pm** – do come! No tickets required but (generous) retiring collection expected!

I am grateful to the contributors to this edition of Tower and Town for their wonderfully reflective articles on the impact of Thriving Through Venture. And thanks to Marlborough Brandt Group and the 37 year sustained partnership with Gunjur without which relationship of trust between the people of our two communities, none of this would have been possible. And, by the way, two of the young contributors to this edition were generously supported by the Kempson Rosedale Trust.

Nick Maurice: Editor

David Poole

In December of 2017 the TTV group had some preliminary meetings - letting all us teenagers get to know each other, as well as starting to map out exactly what everyone's role would be within their projects (writing life stories, learning the art and skills of photography and exploring the barriers to the export / import of mangoes from Gambia to UK). I was nervous to say the least. (TTV's mission is helping young people with teen anxieties).

The first few sessions we had were awkward, some people tended to stick with people they already knew. But after splitting up into our subsections (I was part of the writing group) we all just got closer and closer.

While the photography group were learning how to shoot portraits, all of us got to hear more about the Mango Project's ideas and progression. We regularly discussed difficulties and advantages in processing and providing the fruit to sellers (whether through import or export) - visiting Tesco's Tangmere Pepper Farm to try and gain knowledge of the production process.

My project was interviewing people at home and in Gunjur, finding out about their lives and how they interlink with each other or differentiate - all through the medium of writing. Again it was a very nerve-wracking experience as I'd never actively interviewed people before. Saying this I met some amazing elderly people. In England, Andrew and John (John particularly was an incredibly smart and inspiring man), and in the Gambia, Fa Karamo, the lovely old man who used to be a photographer... the only one for miles around at the time, and Nyamsimba - an interesting woman due to her active involvement in Female Genital Mutilation within the country. Talking to these elderly people and young people within the Gambian community of Gunjur, I got a sense of the importance that family and the elders held in their village. You live with your parents as well as your children and greatly respect those older than you. Such a contrast to the UK!

Something about the Gambian experience opened something up within my writing. While in England I'd struggled for weeks just over the opening lines of my work. In Gunjur I could power through my pieces in a matter of days, from first draft to the final piece. It's easier to 'capture lives' out there as well, when everybody you meet is so intensely alive. Strangers greet you and smile at every turn, whereas in England the depressed people of London's tubes and streets seem to blur into some dystopian isolated future. The difference in Gunjur was clear, the happiness that emanated from people was integral to their lives. To understand someone, you don't have to map out their entire life, from child to adult to elder, just choose the best bits, the parts that have real meaning within them.

Lucy Strover

Last year, in August 2018, I went to Gambia with the ‘Thriving through Venture’ programme.

One of my most important memories started on the first day, when we wended round the obstacle course of pot holes in the dust roads until we reached TARUD. Here we met our Gambian team. My partner was Arabiatou, a 17 year old girl interested in the sciences at school - similar to me. What was so magical was how quickly everyone accepted each other and had so much to talk about. The room was quickly buzzing with the vibrant noise of everyone chatting. At the end of the two weeks, I had made great friendships with everyone in the group. By working closely with them on the TTV projects, I got to explore a different perspective and way of life. This experience really made me reflect on my everyday life in UK where it often feels that people judge people too quickly and are scared of opening up. Here, in Gambia, this was definitely not an issue. Remembering this experience has helped me to feel much more confident about being myself when meeting new people.

I was in the photography group. We visited different people at their work places, such as the bee hives, the DIY store and the phone shop. As we took pictures of the workers and talked to them about their jobs, it was fascinating to hear and see the contrast between how similar jobs are done so differently. One of my favourite examples was at the shoe shop. Here, he was fixing



David Poole cont. My partner while in the Gambia was an amazing man called Binako. With many of his friends taking the 'back-way' to Europe, he had many life struggles - but he still maintained such a positive life view. We learnt more and more about each other over my two weeks, I even got to meet his family and friends in their shared "compound" and have a meal with them, and had great conversations about false (or sometimes true) opinions and stereotypes that both England and the Gambia would have about each other.

Lucy Strover cont. | pairs of very basic flipflops that I would probably have chucked away. It made me realise how I should make the most of everything that I am given in life - materialistic things and practical opportunities.

We also visited an eco-tourism hotel, decorated the TARUD building and visited the British High Commission. One of the most interesting visits was when we went to the fishing village at the beach. We learnt about the Chinese exploitation of the fishing industry in Gambia. I have heard about things like this before from my studies but seeing it in real life really made me think. Since then, I have avoided shopping in places like Primark where the workers are exploited, to make sure I am not feeding into these sorts of activities.

The most enjoyable activity was when the Gambians came to the swimming pool at Gunjur Project. I was so surprised to find that none of them knew how to swim. It soon became obvious as to why. They would never have had the opportunities like us to have swimming lessons. We all tried to teach them to float and to swim. I loved being able to give back teaching and receive their teachings too.

Back in England, I could not stop thinking about how much I had learnt and the special friendships I had made. This TTV experience gave me the motivation and initiative to raise funds to return last April to volunteer in the community and also to help fund a young Gambian to do his taxi driving training. TTV is definitely the most influential venture I have done so far in my life.

Jo Fortune

In the summer of 2018, the Kempson Rosedale Enterprise Trust helped me reach my goal: to experience a community unlike mine, and to offer teachings within.

On arrival at the small village of Gunjur in The Gambia, I was apprehensive; I soon discovered how unnecessary this feeling was. I was welcomed by so many smiling faces who were just as excited to learn about my life and I was about theirs.

Over the course of my stay, a genuine deep bond grew between myself and the people of the community, one that will never leave. Even now, months later I am still in daily contact with some of my new brothers in The Gambia.

The whole trip gave me a sense of real family and belonging and a confidence that could not simply be learnt. I will return to The Gambia one day, and I cannot wait!

Thank you so much to Thriving Through Venture for making this possible. You have helped me have a life changing experience that will remain in me forever.

A link to all of the project work we accomplished in The Gambia is here: ttventure.org

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Prayer is about connecting. Like plugging in an electrical appliance or logging on to the internet, it won't work unless we enable the connection to be made. Prayer is a way of connecting to God, enabling us to communicate - to listen and to speak. A good conversation is wonderful. In order for a good conversation to flow, the people in conversation need mutual respect, honesty, self-reflection, and humility to genuinely listen and hear what the other is saying.

We should not be afraid of engaging with God our creator in conversation and welcoming the presence of God's Holy Spirit into our lives. Jesus encourages us to speak freely with God and give voice to our longings. It's also good to make time for stillness and reflection each day, otherwise God cannot fit into our busy lives. Being connected to God, developing our relationship with God is a central part of what living as a person of faith is about. It is not an optional extra for particularly "prayerful" people or something that is only done in church. Prayer is for everybody, and can take place every day and everywhere.

Prayer can at times be difficult, but even at difficult times it helps if we try to make more of a habit of daily prayer and develop our spiritual dimension. Jesus teaches us to be persistent - until prayer becomes a daily ongoing conversation with God. We could converse with God when waking up in the morning, when considering our state of health and the well-being of family and friends. Thanking God for blessings is important too. Whenever we pray, we can know for sure that God, our Father, our creator and our friend, will be listening, and ready to talk with us.

St Thomas More

Invite you to our Welcome Day on

Saturday 28th September at 11am-13pm

at St Thomas More Church, George Lane, Marlborough.

You are welcome to visit our church, spend some quiet time and perhaps light a candle. If you would like to ask any questions or know more about the catholic faith Rev Father John and parishioners will be here to have a chat or answer your questions. Refreshments available.

Omar Darboe

Working with young people in my community my journey and the impact it has on my life.

My name is Omar N. Darboe. I was born and bred in Gunjur, The Gambia, West of Africa. I am a social worker, youth and environmental activist all rolled into one.

I started working with young people after my graduation from High School in 1999. Since then I have mobilized young people to engage them in community work and voluntary services.

Living in a small African village, human connections have become essential. The Gunjur-Marlborough link has, since 1983, created a massive opportunity for over 600 youths who have benefited through employment, traveling and economic opportunities. Among the beneficiaries of the link with Marlborough are Lamin Meko Janneh, a successful businessman in the Gambia, Mr. Madi Jatta Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Higher Education in the Gambia, Honorable Kebba K Barrow Member of Parliament and Majority Leader in the National Assembly.

The most sustainable projects established through Gunjur-Marlborough Link are the Marlborough Classroom Block at Gunjur Lower Basic School, Marlborough Mango Orchard, Marlborough Block at Gunjur Central Market and Trust Agency for Rural Development (TARUD) as an NGO in Gunjur among others.

Since the downfall of Gambia's dictator, Yahya Jammeh in 2017, I have been engaged in human rights activism and a campaign against corruption in Gambian government institutions. My involvement with young people is centered amongst other programmes on:

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION CAMPAIGNS

As mainly subsistent farmers and fishermen in this part of West Africa, our environment and how it is managed is very important to us because our livelihoods depend on it. Recently, our beautiful community has been at the receiving end of environmental degradation, climate change and drought. This has affected food production in The Gambia. Agriculture contributes the highest percentage in The Gambia's gross domestic product.

I have also been involved in the protests against Golden Lead Import and Export Company factory established in 2015 at Centre of Gunjur beach-side less than 150 meters away from the sea. The Chinese owned factory dumps its toxic waste in the sea and river nearby, killing aquatic life and emitting a very foul odor into the community. In one of my protests against the exploitation of my environment, I was arrested by the police and charged. A competent and fair judge,

however, threw out the case and I was set free with other activists.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST IRREGULAR MIGRATION TO EUROPE

Gambian migrants are in the top 5 arriving on the shores of Europe via the Mediterranean. The factors contributing to this terrifying journey are lack of opportunities, unemployment, family and peer pressure. I work with the young people and organize workshops to dissuade them from undertaking this deadly journey for opportunities and what they see as 'streets paved with gold' which are, of course, nonexistent in Europe.

To say, my work with the youths has had a positive impact on my life would be an understatement. I have also learned from the youth as much as they have learned from me. It has really helped shape my perspective about life, listening, networking and community organizing skills.



Kennet & Avon
MEDICAL PARTNERSHIP

Kennet and Avon Medical Partnership Patient Participation Group (PPG) Update

Introducing Kelly Osadolor, Clinical Pharmacist

We are delighted to announce that Mr Kelly Osadolor, Clinical Pharmacist has recently joined the practice team.

Kelly brings with him not only a vast knowledge of medication, but he is also a trained prescriber and so is able to issue medication as well as make changes to dosage, strength, etc of current medication. In addition, Kelly has a special interest in respiratory health and is continuing to develop his skills in acute medication, cardiovascular and endocrinology.

Any patient requiring a medication review will now routinely be booked in with Kelly and not a GP. Appointments will be available across both our sites each weekday.

All patients on repeat medication are required to have an annual review appointment, during which all their medications will be discussed to ensure they are being taken correctly, that they are having the desired impact and that they are still required. The PPG would encourage all patients to ensure they are aware of their medication review date.

Last year, I had the honour to teach photography to a group of TTV volunteers. I am a working photographer but my background is in anthropology and making Radio 4 programmes. I have travelled widely and lived abroad while bringing up my three children, now young adults.

Photography seems the perfect medium for those feeling challenged by the world. It gives an opportunity to think about different “ways of seeing” and looking at things, and to decode the imagery of the social media age we live in. Taking the right sort of picture in the right sort of way involves a range of life skills – showing respect, communicating, understanding – that go far beyond the camera.

For the TTV programme, we each started with a good digital SLR camera, and learnt all of its functions. Once we had honed our skills, we began on our photography projects. The first we called “Humans of Marlborough and Gunjur”. It focused on people with the same profession here and in Africa – midwives, cycle repairers, vegetable stallholders, beekeepers – as a way of exploring the similarities and differences between our two cultures. We also took portraits for the TTV ‘Storytellers’. These were photography projects, but they gave us the chance to engage with a whole range of people whom we interviewed and found out about long before we picked up the camera. An important part of our experience was sharing the photos we’d taken with the sitters afterwards. Giving the gift of a photograph can be surprisingly moving and rewarding.

Eight months later, buoyed up by our experience and knowledge, we set off with our cameras to Africa to do the same projects there. Thanks to digital technology and to the portable printer we took with us, we were able to share photos in Gunjur. Many of our sitters there had never seen or owned a photograph of themselves. Once again, the response was deeply moving.

I hope my photography group will forgive me for saying that when we set off on this journey, everyone was a little daunted, and maybe not feeling very confident about what lay ahead. But my team did amazing work and made extraordinary strides in mastering photography.

By exploring the way images are taken and used, the volunteers were given a chance to read the visual world around them and to develop a resilience through their greater understanding. I feel that in looking through a lens – seeking beauty and inspiration in every situation – you cannot help but end up with a more positive outlook. Equipped with this perspective, I hope that my TTV photographers have gone out into the world happier, stronger people. I am extremely proud of all that they achieved.

Toby Leslie

TTV is an amazing experience which transforms you into a well-rounded individual involving many aspects that have been developed by four specialised mentors over a year.

Throughout the year we met for multiple sessions, each with a different purpose. These ranged from being taught how to speak publicly to a large group of people, to being able to catch a story through the shutter on a camera. Being lucky enough to be chosen to do the Photography course, I was mentored by a fantastic Photography Mentor, Hilary Stock, a renowned professional known for her storytelling capabilities through a lens. Throughout the year I learnt numerous manual skills and it soon became a very big hobby of mine. Alongside this was a storytelling group whose job it was to record stories from locals and recreate through various different media. Furthermore, a business group was to set up a business plan for Gunjur to increase trade, the economy, and employment in the village. All of these groups had incredible training from industry professionals throughout the year.

During our visit to The Gambia, we embarked on multiple challenges, first of which was meeting Gambian partners. At first I was quite apprehensive, however after being taught how to talk and approach people I didn't know, I was much more at ease. My partner's name was Baba, he was a 22 year old poultry farmer/businessman. As soon as I told him about photography his facial expression was unforgettable and his passion for it grew daily. Following on from this, we bonded rapidly. Throughout the two weeks all 12 English students became lifelong friends with the group from Gunjur. Our friendship evolved from visiting the local primary school to teaching them (the Gambian partners) to swim. Mixing in with other local occupations also gave me an insight into how we live diverse lives and how they are the same if not even happier than us despite having less. If there was only one thing I could take away from meeting these people it would be to think about what you have, appreciate it, treasure it, and be happy all day every day no matter the circumstances.

Looking back at the trip I realise how much I have changed as a person. I have experienced huge boosts in many characteristics from confidence to communication to well-being. This trip for me couldn't have been any better both physically and mentally and I now feel more prepared for later life including meeting new people, University, and talking to larger audiences.

The journey with the TTV initiative facilitated a truly life changing experience. After finishing the program, I am truly taken aback at how much my perspective of the world has shifted. It was during my time out in The Gambia where I could see the invaluable nature of my very fortunate education and how it could help me to tackle real life problems in a constructive and collaborative manner.

The collaborative exchange of cultures was an important aspect of the trip. The idea of immersing yourself in another's culture to see its strengths and its weaknesses and also being able to reflect on where you come from and what you are fortunate for but what you would also like to see to change in your culture. This common respect of these two communities coming together highlighted to me that no matter who you are or your background there is always something to be learned from someone else's experience. The ability to see from a fresh perspective is one of the improved skills I value most from the trip.

The Gambians we were partnered with were amazing. The seamless ease into friendly conversation when we first met them indicated how much fun the trip was going to be. Sharing meals, playing card games, dancing, swimming and having a good laugh were just some of the brilliant things we enjoyed doing with them. What was striking was how all the Gambians were so optimistic for the future of The Gambia and how they all valued the principle of education and hard work. This encouraged us all to appreciate the education we had received.

The TTV group at Tarud meeting the Gambian partners for the first time



The immense notion of community in the Gunjur was striking. The warm embracement of the entire group with the locals helped to set at ease the nerves of the group as we were slightly nervous in being in such a novel environment. One particularly moment was when each member of our group went with our correspond-

ing Gambian partners to their compounds where we ate and shared experiences with their entire family. The embracing nature of the families filled all of us with the sense of belonging to Gunjur and encouraged us to feel if we had just adopted a second home. Another aspect was the immersion into a primarily Muslim based community, which gave us great insight into how Islam operates and its peaceful foundations. The breath-taking experience of being invited to attend the significant religious event of Tabaski or Eid al-Adha on our final day in the Gambia was a sight I will never forget.



The TTV group witnessing the religious festival of Tabaski

Upon reflection, after arriving back in the UK it would be fair to say that my perspective of the world has evolved. I now see the globe as a far broader, far more diverse place than I had before, and it excites me. I have a passion not only to discover more of the world, but also to return to the embracing and loving community of the Gunjur that I now seem tethered to for ever.

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What's On in September:

Regular events:

Every Monday

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

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

10-30-12noon Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge.
Singing for the Brain. Alzheimer's Support. 01225
776481. (*Every Thursday during term-time*).
7-8.30pm Wesley Hall, Oxford St. Hangout &
Devotion. Youth Club.

Every Friday

10-12 noon Christchurch Crush Hall. Food bank.

Every Friday and Saturday (1st April-22 December)

10am-4pm 132 High Street SN8 1HN. Marlborough

Museum. £3 (u 16s free).

Every 2nd Saturday

10-12 noon Library. Marlborough
Association. Drop-in advice.

September calendar

30th August (Friday) – 9th September

Various Times. The Common.
Tickets on sale now: 01247

1st (Sunday)

Avebury. National Trust event.
Family booklet available (£2)
avebury 538036

2nd (Monday)

St John's Academy: Start of
2.00pm Kennet Valley Hall.
Embroiderers'. Talk by Jer
Heads and Bound Feet: Cl

3rd (Tuesday)

Marlborough College. Start

4th (Wednesday)

2-3pm Avebury Manor. D
with entry.
7.30pm Wesley Hall, Oxford
Harper? Kakunyu School,
and guests welcome.

5th (Thursday)

1pm Mildenhall Village Ha
Demonstrator: Carol Benn
£6. 861279

8th (Sunday)

8am The Common. Car B
(vans). In aid of Wiltshire

Marlborough & District Dyslexia
Society. Help line: 07729 452143

September (Monday)

11am. Gifford's Circus:
01753 2572573.

Event: 'A Summer of Play'.
(1). nationaltrust.org.uk/

of Term 1.

1. Marlborough

Jennifer Hughes: 'Protected
Chinese Hats and Shoes'.

t of Michaelmas Term.

Pressing Mrs Dunch. Free

rd Street. WI. Speaker: Pat
Uganda'. New members

all. Floral Club: Guest
net: 'KaleidoScope'. Visitors

oot Sale. £8 (cars), £10
Air Ambulance.

11th (Wednesday)

11am-3pm Merchant's House Garden. Cake Stall.
7.45pm Wesley Hall, Oxford Street. Gardening
Association. Talk by Nick Wray: 'Darwin and the
Beagle'.

15th (Sunday)

Kempson Rosedale Enterprise Trust celebrate 30
years with a sponsored walk over the Marlborough
Downs. Details & entry form from www.kretrust.com
7.30pm Marlborough College, Memorial Hall.
Concert: Lesley Garrett (soprano). £20 (£10 students)
892566.

16th (Monday)

11am Ellendune Community Centre, Wroughton. The
Arts Society: Kennet and Swindon. Lecture by Eileen
Goulding: Ancient Egyptian Art: 3000 Years of
Treasures. Guests welcome £7. 01793 840790.
7.30pm Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. National
Trust Association. Talk by Graham Bathe: 'The Real
Wolf Hall: The history and archaeology'. £4 non
members.

19th (Thursday)

7.30pm St Peter's Church. Marlborough History
Society. Talk by Michael Hart: 'The Political Scene in
Europe in the last quarter of the 18th century – The
French Revolution, and Napoleon – Harbingers of
Modern European History'. Guests welcome £5.

21st (Saturday)

6.30-8pm Merchant's House. The Baker's Dozen:
Evening of traditional choral folk music. Includes
interval for drinks & canapés. £18 (friends £15).

22nd (Sunday)

9am Coach House Café, Avebury. Trust10: 10k trail
run. 538036.

cont. next page

24th (Tuesday)

7.30pm Bouverie Hall, Pewsey. The Arts Society Pewsey Vale. Lecture by Dr Bella Image: 'Diocletian's Palace, Split'. Visitors welcome. £7. Membership Secretary: 07775 683163.

26th (Thursday) – 29th (Sunday).

Various venues. Marlborough LitFest www.marlboroughlitfest.org 03336663366

27th (Friday)

2-3pm Monk's Garden, Avebury Manor. Ask the Gardener. Free with entry. 538036.

Family News

compiled by Jessy Pomfret

Hannah Carter is undertaking 12 challenges to raise money in memory of her father Kevin who died 10 years ago. Kevin was churchwarden at St George's in the 1990s. This is a challenge a month and she has now raised nearly £1500. Challenges for the rest of the year include climbing Snowden and running in the Great South Run. Money raised is going to www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Further details can be found at Just Giving Hanna Carter or contact Laurien Carter.



**marlborough
literature festival**

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Wroughton Choral Society are hosting a **Come and Sing Vivaldi's Gloria** on **Saturday 28th September** in Wroughton Parish Church from **11am culminating in an informal performance at 4.30pm** to which audience are welcome and for whom admission is free. Cost is **£10** for singers to cover expenses and refreshments but lunch is not provided. For more details or to book email denisebloomer@gmail.com or call 521891.

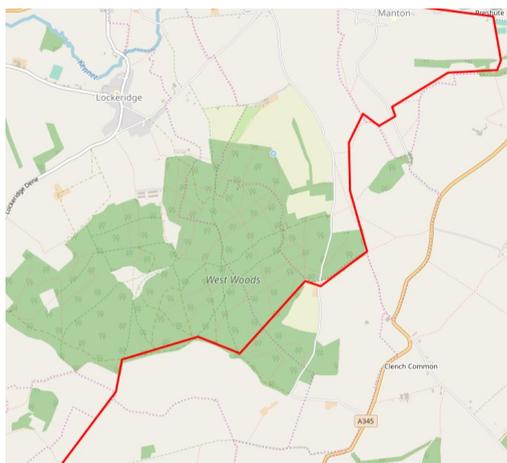
Every summer, I spend four weeks working for Marlborough College Summer School, leading morning walks through the Wiltshire countryside. No matter where in the world they come from, my fellow rambles are always impressed by the spectacular scenery of the Marlborough Downs, the crystal-clear waters of the Kennet and the ancient oaks and beeches of the Savernake Forest.

The amazement expressed by the group as we leave Gopher Wood, high above Huish, and the panoramic views of the Pewsey Vale unfold below us, always reminds me how lucky I am to live in such a beautiful part of the country.

It is easy to take for granted the spectacles which Wiltshire walkers pass on a regular basis; the massive trees of Savernake; the high, wildflower-strewn escarpment between Martinsell and Tan Hill or the sparkling stream which flows through the middle of Marlborough.

After a week in which we cover a total of 25 miles, I seek feedback about which of the five walks were most popular. Invariably, people find it hard to rank them – how can you judge the majesty of the mighty oaks against the gentle meandering of the Kennet, and the windswept expanses of the rolling downland?

Which is my favourite walk? Probably the one which takes in a bit of everything – river valley, dense woodland and open Downs, and is particularly spectacular in Spring when the beech woods are carpeted with bluebells. Starting from the roundabout near the Pewsey Road Bridge, follow the Treacle Bolly footpath as far as Preshute House and then ascend Granham Hill. At the top of the hill, bear right following the Wansdyke Path or White Horse Trail all the way through West Woods and then on to Gopher Wood. As mentioned before, there is no better viewpoint in Wiltshire than that from the top of Draycott Hill, looking down over



White Horse Trail

Huish and Oare. From here, accompanied by kestrels, red kites, buzzards and ravens riding the thermals, it is plain sailing to the car park above Alton Barnes.

Three history books – or at least ‘books about history’ – this month, so I can only apologise if that’s not your thing. Lara Maiklem with *Mudlarking*, and Gillian Tindall in *The Pulse Glass* both examine how we decode the past through objects. Maiklem has spent fifteen years fossicking about on the exposed mud of the tidal Thames, which she calls ‘the longest archaeological site in England’. Moving west to east round the curves of the river she unearths an almost limitless range of objects - Roman gaming pieces, printer’s type, buckles – and the shoes they once fastened – combs, beads, pins and needles. Hundreds of clay pipes, pieces of Elizabethan lace, toys and utensils are anaerobically preserved in the Thames mud, many of these items looking as though they were lost only yesterday. As P Larkin didn’t actually say – what will survive of us is rubbish.

Gillian Tindall also looks at small domestic items, the flotsam of history, preserved by chance or sentiment as witnesses of past lives. The Pulse Glass of the title is a thirty-second sandglass (like an egg-timer), used to measure heartbeats, which belonged to the author’s great-great-grandfather. Like Lara Maiklem, Tindall uses this and other objects to recover narratives and recreate lives and locations, reflecting on the nature of memory, history and permanence. A thoughtful and discursive read.

Thirdly a ‘proper’ history book (by which I mean looking at documentary records rather than randomly surviving domestic items). *Gentlemen of Uncertain Fortune: how younger sons made their way in Jane Austen’s England* by Rory Muir looks at – well, exactly that, how the young men who didn’t stand to inherit money and position had to make their own fortunes (in order to become eligible to marry a Bennet sister?) I blame Colin Firth*. Ever since he emerged, sopping wet *and* smouldering from that lake, publishers have slapped ‘Jane Austen’ on book jackets, cheerfully confident that it will help sales. In this case it’s justified, Miss Austen having had a large family of brothers and cousins whose lives can help illustrate the potential and merits of careers in the Army or Navy, the Church or the law, commerce, or India.

*Not really. He can do no wrong.

Finally, if you want a good novel please read *A Modern Family* by Helga Flatland. It’s such a perceptive study of the love, the jokes, the resentments, and the seething exasperation between adult siblings.

On a recent visit to the V&A to see *Dior, Designer of Dreams*, I learnt that in 1950, on a trip from Paris hosting a charity fashion gala in London, Dior's fashion show was raising funds to open a new costume museum in Britain. That museum is now the prestigious Fashion Museum in Bath, housing a collection of over 100,000 objects. Originally named as the Museum of Costume in 1963, its collection grew out of a large donation (approximately 5,000 items) from the writer and collector Doris Langley Moore. A lavish assortment, the museum's collection and archive has grown expansively from other generosities including donations, and as a result, it has become one of the world's leading museums of historical and contemporary dress.

A History of Fashion in 100 Objects is a timeline showcasing items from the Tudor and Jacobean period, right up to the present day. New to this headline exhibition are *Glove Stories* and *Collection Stories*, a specially selected gallery of 19th century garments chosen by the curator, exposing the 'hidden narratives' lying deep within the personal stories of these garments and accessories. It includes everything from a wedding dress made in New York, to silk satin shoes made for and worn by Mary Chamberlain.

One of the most astonishing items I studied was a glove worn by Elizabeth I at her coronation. It is remarkable that such an item has survived so long, and surreal to see history in the flesh! The beautiful, ornate, highly skilled embroidery on so many of the garments and accessories, particularly those from the Regency period, was truly astonishing. And to think, furthermore, that it was all done by hand and by candlelight!

Other standout pieces for me were Ferragamo high heels worn by Alicia Markova in the 1950s, a black woollen 'New Look' suit worn by Margot Fonteyn, and a 1930s synthetic evening gown with a red velvet feature back.

The entire museum collection is clearly displayed, the collection on show carefully chosen, and above all, it is fascinating seeing in close detail such beautiful objects with fascinating personal stories attached to each of them.

A History of 100 Objects and Collection Stories are ongoing displays. *Glove Stories* runs until 1st March 2020, and *Dress of the Year 2018* runs until December 2019.

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

Baptisms - *we welcome:*

- 26 May Logan Mark Jasper Speake at St George's
4 August Amelie Belle Sadler, Archie James Sadler and Aurora May Sadler at St George's

Weddings - *we congratulate:*

- 17 May Sean Crombie and Isabella Lawrence at St George's
18 May Philip Barber and Charlotte Lampard at St George's

Funerals - *we pray for the families of:*

- 15 July Alma Marguerite Hope Butterworth (95) of Coldharbour Lane, Marlborough *St Mary's, Marlborough and Marlborough Cemetery*
21 July David Jones (76) of Laineys Close, Marlborough *North Wilts Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett*
25 July Barbara Burns (87) of River Park, Marlborough *North Wilts Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett*
25 July Gladys Smith (93) of Mildenhall, Marlborough *St John the Baptist, Minal and churchyard*
25 July Robert Patrick Fox (74) of Alma Place, Marlborough *North Wilts Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett*
28 July Audrey Pamela Halsey (83) of St Margaret's Mead, Marlborough *Kingsdown Crematorium*
30 July Peter 'Pete' Offer (75) of Savernake Crescent, Marlborough *St Mary's and Cemetery*
4 August Wendy Ann Rainbow (86) of Barnfield, Marlborough *North Wilts Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett*

It's the middle of a busy working day. Lunch is over, but the local Gambians with whom we've shared the meal show no sign of returning to their tasks. Instead, one by one they retire to a private place, wash their hands and feet, and kneel in prayer -to the bafflement of the British teenagers.

One of the most rewarding aspects of taking a group of young people from the UK to The Gambia last summer was watching how they responded to living in a deeply devout society, watching how bafflement turns to curiosity turns to respect and understanding. By the end of their time in Gunjur the British recognised that faith and prayer lay at the ground of what they'd come to love most about The Gambia: the sense of community, of welcome, of sharing, and openness.

A turning point came when I took a group of British teenagers to visit the Imam. Squeezed into a small, dark room, they listened respectfully, a little nervously, while the elderly religious leader began to speak to several Gambians who accompanied us. Nothing was translated and the words flowed, they had a pace, a rhythm. And it slowly dawned on the young people that they were listening to people at prayer. "Ameen... Ameen... Ameen." A profound peace descended on the room, and although they didn't understand the words, they knew they were included, embraced, loved. Several teenagers found themselves in tears. Ellie Beale, one of the talented young writers on the TTV programme, said, "It was an overwhelming thing to witness." After the prayers, one of the British teenagers asked, "Do the Christians and Moslems in The Gambia get on with one another?" The Imam responded immediately: "Of course. Why wouldn't they? Christians and Moslems are one. We are all brothers and sisters under God."

The young people from the UK had grown accustomed to the idea in the UK that religions and religious faith divide people and communities. Here they found the opposite was the case. Here was religious faith drawing everyone into community. As Ellie later wrote, "When we sat with the Imam it made me realise how I wish our lives could be slightly more Gambian. I wish for the same peace and equality they all have."

As I write, the words of the parable of the Good Samaritan are fresh in my mind (yesterday's gospel reading), and it strikes me that this is part of what the British teenagers learned sitting with the Imam of Gunjur: that loving God and loving your neighbour is a radically beautiful way to live. "Do this, and you will live." (Luke 10:28)

Communal prayers at the prayer ground during the Festival of Eid in Gunjur



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For me, Thriving Through Venture was an amazing opportunity that I will never forget. I made unbelievable memories with the best friends.

I remember the day I was chosen to be on the programme. Not completely sure what was ahead of me, I was apprehensive but excitement was definitely the overwhelming feeling. The first meeting was interesting – I knew no one on the programme really, so I was undeniably nervous about what would happen, but I couldn't have asked for a better group of people to be introduced to. We got to know each other so fast and instantly became friends.

Every meeting seemed better than the last as we got closer and made more memories, as well as getting better at our tasks. I always had an enjoyment of writing but my group leader, Colin, allowed me to love it and feel a new passion for it.

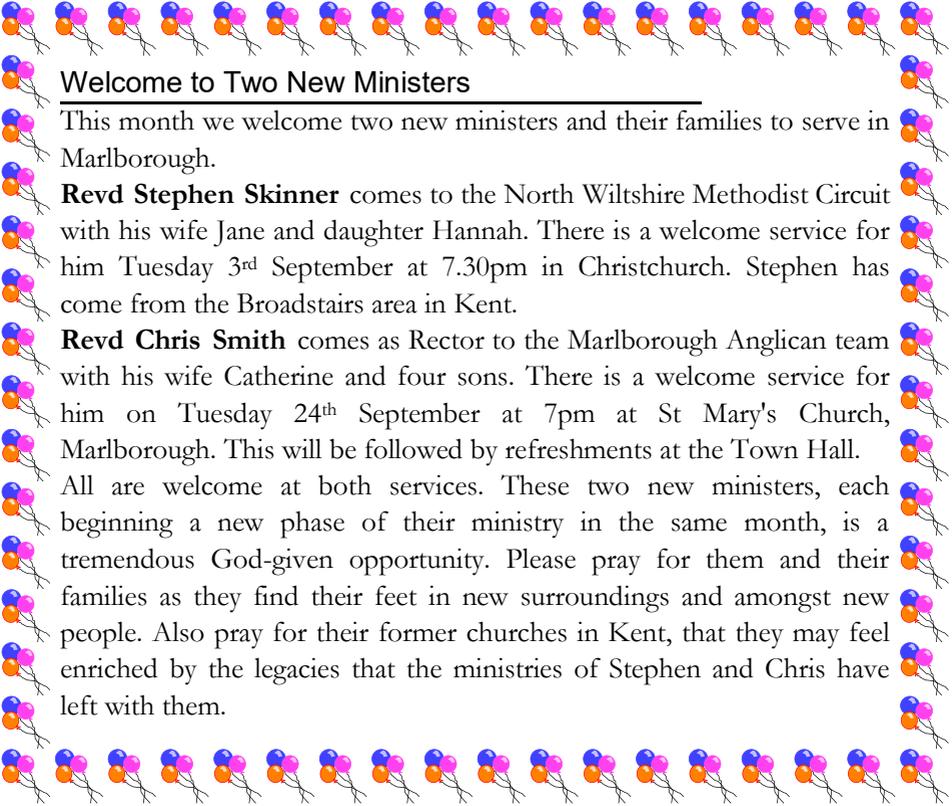
The people I interviewed – both in the UK and the Gambia – changed my perception about a lot of things. Hearing their stories allowed me to imagine a different life, whether it was 50 years ago or in another country, but every story touched me in some way. Not only was I taken in by how they spoke, I was so humbled by the fact they chose to share their stories with me.

The trip to the Gambia was completely surreal, something so outside of my comfort zone, but something so special and hard to put into words; no one can truly know what it is like until they visit. Although people have much less over there, they don't just survive: they live, and they live to the fullest. It was an incredible thing to see and I'm honoured I got to experience a part of the world in that way.

Although it has almost been a year since I visited, I can remember everything so clearly – the ups and the downs – both making it such an incredible experience. I wish that everyone had the chance to experience what I did, but I know they can't, so I am so grateful for the opportunity and am so passionate about talking about it for others to even get a glimpse into what I got from the programme.

Hopefully Thriving Through Venture can help so many more people my age gain a new outlook on life and I can't thank all the people involved enough for – as cliché as it sounds – a life-changing experience.

News from the Churches



Welcome to Two New Ministers

This month we welcome two new ministers and their families to serve in Marlborough.

Revd Stephen Skinner comes to the North Wiltshire Methodist Circuit with his wife Jane and daughter Hannah. There is a welcome service for him Tuesday 3rd September at 7.30pm in Christchurch. Stephen has come from the Broadstairs area in Kent.

Revd Chris Smith comes as Rector to the Marlborough Anglican team with his wife Catherine and four sons. There is a welcome service for him on Tuesday 24th September at 7pm at St Mary's Church, Marlborough. This will be followed by refreshments at the Town Hall.

All are welcome at both services. These two new ministers, each beginning a new phase of their ministry in the same month, is a tremendous God-given opportunity. Please pray for them and their families as they find their feet in new surroundings and amongst new people. Also pray for their former churches in Kent, that they may feel enriched by the legacies that the ministries of Stephen and Chris have left with them.

Sunday Lunch Club

meets on 8th September at 12.15pm. Cost £7.50. Please contact David or Sandra Wylie at the Christchurch office (513701) by Friday 6th September to reserve a place.

St Mary's Informal Service

restarts on Sunday 8th September at 5.30pm (Tea and cake at 5.15.)

Christchurch Women's Fellowship

on Tuesday afternoons is having a trial period of meeting on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month until the end of the year. The time and place is unchanged – 2.45 to 4 pm at the Parlour, Christchurch Methodist Church, New Road, Marlborough SN8 1AH. New members are always



welcome. The new programme starts on 10th September.

September 10th Tea and Chat

September 24th Rev Stephen Skinner

October 8th Tea and Chat

The Ark

Mums and Toddler group restarts on Monday 9th September at 9.15am in St Mary's Church Hall.

Ride & Stride on Saturday 14th September

The annual Historic Churches Ride + Stride takes place on 14th September between 10am and 5pm. Be sponsored to walk, ride or cycle around Wiltshire visiting as many churches as you can to help raise funds – half of the money goes to your nominated church and the other half to Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust. Sponsorship forms will be in the churches.

Ruskin and the Pre-Raphaelites: Sacre Conversazioni

at Marlborough College on Saturday 21st and Sunday 22nd September 2019.

There will be an early morning service at the College's Chapel on Sunday 22nd which anyone can attend; tickets are on sale for the whole event and members of the public are welcome. Hosts are needed for the speakers who will be travelling from Britain, Europe and the States. For more information please contact Madeleine or Sheona: conference@visualtheology.org.uk or www.visualtheology.org.uk

Harvest Festival is celebrated

on Sunday Sept 29th at Christchurch with Mrs Sandra Wylie

on Sunday 6th October

at St Mary's church, 10.00am an informal family service with the Brownies,

at St George's church at 10.00am with All Age Worship and

at St John the Baptist church at 3.00pm followed by a Harvest tea.



The MCT Fraternal

meets on October 7th at 12.30pm at the Friends Meeting House.



MAPAG

Will be meeting on Monday 7th October at 7.30pm in the Quaker Meeting House.



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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 October issue by Tuesday 10th September please.

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