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# TOWER AND TOWN

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**Marlborough LitFest 2023**  
**It's a LitFeast!**

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SEPTEMBER 2023

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# TOWER<sup>AND</sup>TOWN

THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES

NUMBER 740 SEPTEMBER 2023



## Marlborough LitFest 2023

Regicides. A serpent fairy. Mayhem in Montego Bay. Fair Rosaline. The Caucasus mountains. I'm sure you've guessed the answer to the question of what links the above. Yes, they all feature in books at this year's LitFest, the 14th iteration of the best literary festival in the world. Probably.

A grand total of 40 events will unfold over the course of the four days of LitFest 2023, which this year is delighted to welcome a new lead sponsor, Fermoie, Marlborough-based maker of fine fabrics. As ever, there is something for everyone: literary heavyweight Sebastian Barry is our Golding Speaker; Luke Jennings, the creator of *Killing Eve*, will tell us about his latest novel; 'rock-star mythologist' Natalie Haynes will give a new take on old goddesses; Mike Brearley is here to reflect on a lifetime of cricket and more; comedian Andy Hamilton is one of a trio of top football writers; Amanda Craig takes us to Tuscany in the company of three fictional eighty-somethings... Meanwhile, storytellers will be popping up all over town to entertain younger festival goers, who will also be regaled by award-winning authors Mini Grey and Frank Cottrell-Boyce, not to mention theatre performances featuring dogs, ducklings and more. And in case you think that LitFest is limited to four days in autumn, check out the article by our chair, Genevieve Clarke, on page 13, in which she outlines our Love Books Competition, our children's story trail, our partnerships with local businesses.

So do please turn the page to find enticing reviews of some of our festival fare. Thanks for reading and, to all those who contributed to this edition of *Tower and Town*, thanks for writing.

*Marlborough LitFest runs from 28 September to 1 October. The programme is available at the White Horse Bookshop and on [marlboroughlitfest.org](http://marlboroughlitfest.org). The box office is now open: you can buy tickets in the White Horse Bookshop, phone TicketSource on 0333 666 3366 or visit [marlboroughlitfest.org/tickets](http://marlboroughlitfest.org/tickets).*

**Ben Tarring, editor**

**Cover picture:** Browsers at last year's LitFest  
Photograph by Ben Phillips

# Jacqueline Crooks and Ashleigh Nugent – Hiscox Debut Authors

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In Jacqueline Crooks’s *Fire Rush*, Yamaye, 24, spends her weekends in the late 1970s raving in an underground club on the outskirts of London where she meets Moose, the love of her life. But tragedy strikes, gangland life engulfs her and it takes a trip to Jamaica to find some kind of resolution.

In Ashleigh Nugent’s *Locks*, Aeon, just short of his 17th birthday in 1992, takes off to Jamaica with his older cousin Increase to ‘make something happen’. Mayhem ensues on the streets of Montego Bay, including time spent in a horrific detention centre, where he begins to work out who is on his side.

This year’s Hiscox debut authors have looked back to their own youth to produce extraordinarily powerful novels. Both give the reader a roller-coaster ride as we get drawn into the alarming but exciting world of their central characters. We fear for their vulnerability but end up inspired by their irrepressible hope, energy and, at times, humour.

It will be fascinating to hear how the authors react to each other’s books and their individual ways of defining an identity for themselves.

Genevieve Clarke

*See our debut authors in St Mary’s Church Hall at 5.30pm on Saturday 30 September.  
(See page 12 for pictures of book jackets)*



Jacqueline Crooks

©René Osubu



Ashleigh Nugent

# Sebastian Barry (Golding Speaker) – Old God’s Time

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Sebastian Barry is opening this year’s festival as our Golding Speaker, discussing his latest novel, *Old God’s Time*. It is the story of a recently retired policeman, Tom Kettle, who is settling into his new home, a flat annexed to a Victorian castle. He spends his days sitting in a wicker chair, smoking cigarillos and looking out at the Irish Sea. He is not unhappy, though his habits are ossifying and his life has lost its purpose. He is surprised one evening to find his tranquillity disturbed by two officers from his old force. It seems Tom may have information about a decades-old case involving two paedophile priests. It takes a while to reveal the full story as Barry masterfully takes us into Tom’s imagination and his memories of his deep past: his honeymoon when he thought he was going to die, but found himself so happy, his time as a sniper in Malaya and his years with the Garda and, more importantly, his overwhelming love for his deceased wife, June, and his children, Winnie and Joe.

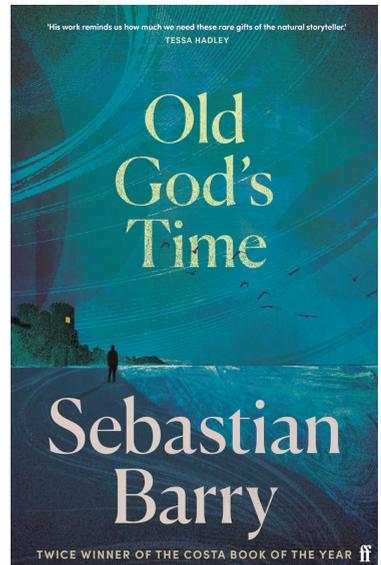
When the truth of the past is finally revealed, it is hard to believe Tom’s testimony. Is he in the early stage of dementia? Or an unreliable narrator? Such is Barry’s skill, we’re in the dark until the very end.

Virginia Reekie

*This event is sponsored by the William Golding Trust and will be in the Town Hall at 7.30pm on Friday 29 September.*



Sebastian Barry  
©Hannah Cunningham



# Natasha Solomons – Fair Rosaline

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She never speaks in Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* and is described only as Capulet’s ‘fair niece’. To create her eponymous heroine, Natasha Solomons had to ransack other Rosalines: *As you Like It*’s strong-willed and quick-witted version and *Love’s Labours Lost*’s ‘beauty dark’.

But why the interest in this shadowy character? Why the need to rework the world’s most famous love story as a subversive thriller? Solomons says she detects Shakespeare’s unease about Romeo and Juliet’s relationship and takes that as her cue to reset the story.

“As a teenager, I believed it was the doomed love between Juliet and Romeo that made the story a tragedy,” she says. “Rereading the play as an adult – alongside my sister who works in child protection – I understand it very differently. The real tragedy is that none of the adults protects the children.”

Solomons vividly conjures a Verona, by turns lyrical and rotten to the core, where first the 16-year-old Rosaline and then her even younger cousin, 13-year-old Juliet, fall prey to no hapless teenage romantic but a manipulative, violent and, essentially, older Romeo.

There are twists galore as their story unfolds – will our heroines escape their familiar ends? No spoiler alert here other than to guarantee a gripping and immersive read.

Mary-Vere Parr

*Hear about Fair Rosaline at the White Horse Bookshop at 5.30pm on Sunday 1 October.*



**ST PETER'S  
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**7.30pm Saturday 9 September in  
St Peter's Church, Marlborough.**

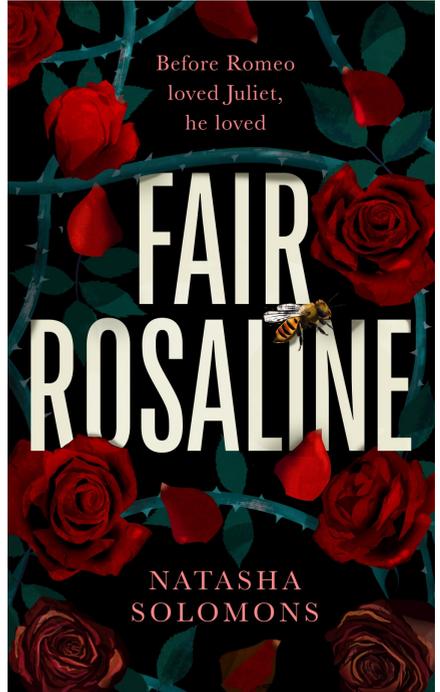
## **A concert given by the Choir of St Martin-in-the-Fields**



with readings by Simon Russell Beale.  
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the White Horse bookshop or at  
[www.stpetersmarlborough.org.uk](http://www.stpetersmarlborough.org.uk)  
Space is limited so book now to avoid  
disappointment!



Natasha Solomons



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# Natalie Haynes – Divine Might

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Natalie Haynes is the author of the bestselling books *Pandora's Jar* and *Stone Blind*, as well as the host for her comedic podcast *Natalie Haynes Stands Up for the Classics*. In *Divine Might*, she continues to open our minds and make us re-think all we know about traditional Greek myths. We are given an insight into the goddesses including Hera, Aphrodite, Athene and Artemis. Haynes challenges the stereotypes and how these feed into modern culture. Who are the muses to our most popular artists? Why is Hera always portrayed as the villain? And why is Aphrodite never portrayed as the villain?

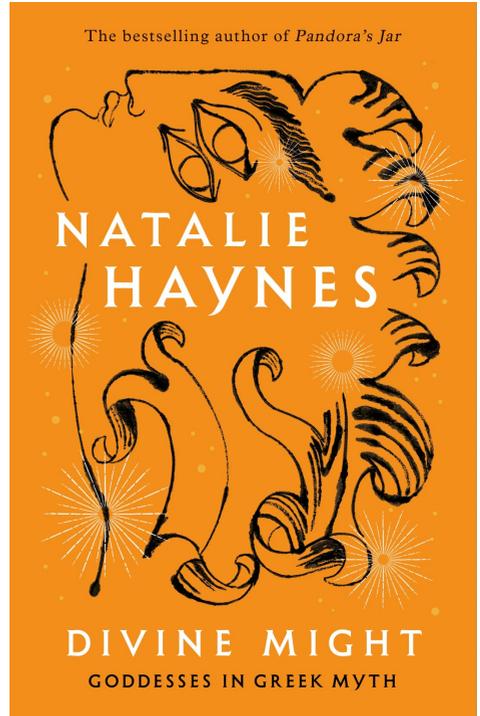
Whether you have read every story Haynes is re-telling or have never thought of picking up anything to do with the classics before now, Haynes's witty style and ability to link ancient culture to today's pop culture makes the book an entertaining read for all.

Amelia Turton

*Natalie Haynes will be standing up for Divine Might in Marlborough College Memorial Hall at 7.15pm on Saturday 30 September. The event is sponsored by Savernake Dental.*



Natalie Haynes ©James Betts



# Charlotte Mendelson – The Exhibitionist

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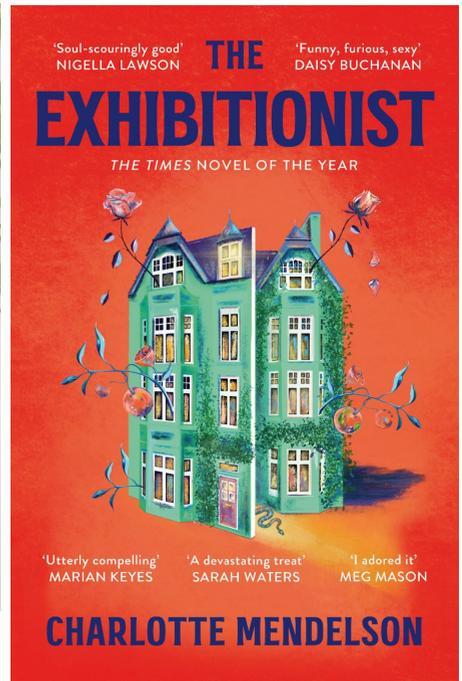
This gripping novel centres on the Hanrahan family, dominated by patriarch Ray, an artist who has spent decades controlling and manipulating his wife Lucia and their three children, forcing them to sacrifice their independence of thought and deed, their dreams and their wellbeing. As the family, along with friends, colleagues and art-world figures, gather for the launch of Ray's first exhibition in years, tensions rise, as it becomes clear that Ray's vice-like grip is weakening.

Charlotte Mendelson has created a devastatingly accurate and nuanced portrait of the realities and complexities of coercive control and the damage, suffering and limitations it inflicts on its victims. She keeps the reader in suspense right to the end of the novel as to who, if anyone, will gain the insight and determination required to liberate themselves from Ray.

This family drama is as riveting as any thriller and will have you rooting for Lucia, Leah, Patrick and Jess in their quests to establish their own lives on their own terms.

Louise Spencely

*See Charlotte Mendelson in the Town Hall at 11.30am on Saturday 30 September.*



# Christina Hardyment – The Serpent of Division

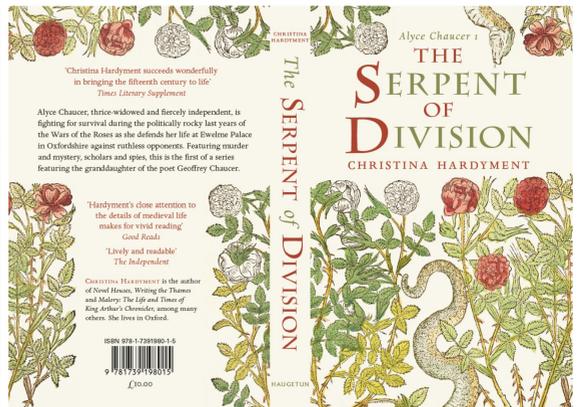
Christina Hardyment was known to many of us as Tina Griffiths when she lived in Marlborough with her husband Tom and their four daughters from 1973 to 1983. She has written more than a dozen books – a cornucopia of histories, ‘literary geographies’ and biographies – but never a novel. Until now.

*The Serpent of Division* is the first of a trilogy set in the village of Ewelme, near Oxford, once the home of Alyce Chaucer, the granddaughter of Geoffrey Chaucer. She married William de la Pole, who became the Duke of Suffolk and together they built a palace (now disappeared), rebuilt the church and added a courtyard of almshouses and a school. Christina says most startling of all is Alyce’s elaborate tomb and the macabre alabaster cadaver underneath it, which in all likelihood she commissioned.

Alyce Chaucer lived from 1404 to 1475, married profitably three times but lost each of her noble husbands to a violent death. Christina’s desire to imagine possible adventures whilst basing her writing on the little that is known of Alyce’s life has given us a story featuring murder, mystery, royals, peasants, heroes and villains, a charming pirate, a bumptious bookseller and a Persian physician. All have a part to play as Alyce fights for survival against a ruthless neighbour, Sir Robert Harcourt, and the wily Elizabeth Wydeville, descendant of the serpent fairy Melusine and Edward IV’s Queen. It is set in the politically rocky years of the War of the Roses.

Virginia Reekie

*See Christina Hardyment in the Town Hall at 4pm on Saturday 30 September.*



# Robert Harris (The Big Town Read) – Act of Oblivion

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For me, this is one of Robert Harris's best books. *The 1660 Act of Oblivion* pardoned all who took up arms against King Charles I except those directly involved in signing his death warrant. Colonel Edward Whalley, a cousin and childhood friend of Cromwell and his son-in-law, Colonel William Goffe, were among the group of regicides who, under the threat of execution, were forced to flee the country.

Many escaped to Europe but Goffe and Whalley sought refuge in New England among the Puritans there, where their austere lives are vividly described.

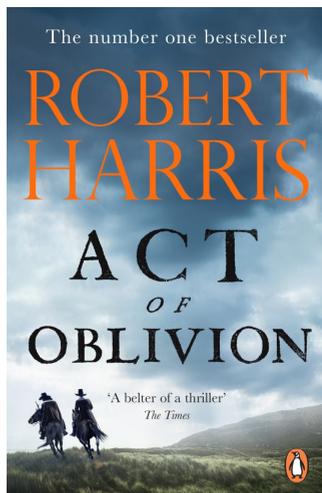
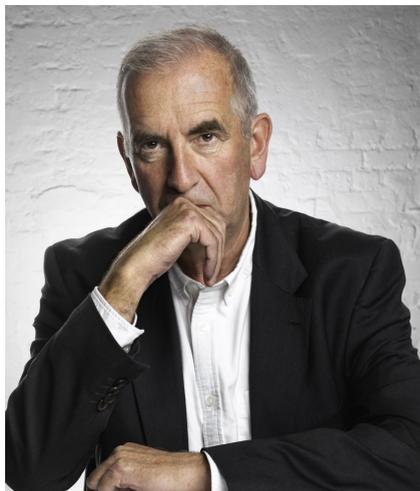
The novel is almost entirely constructed from factual material. The only invented figure is the warped and vengeful Richard Naylor, who, as secretary of the regicide committee of the Privy Council, is driven to track them down. The story follows the momentum of this struggle, moving between the New Englanders and the families they have left behind in London, who endure the plague in 1665 and the great fire a year later.

Having been chosen as this year's Big Town Read, we are looking forward to welcoming book groups with the opportunity to ask the author more informed questions.

Please come even if you are not a member of a book group – it should be a lively event and is LitFest's finale!

Virginia Reekie

*The event will be in the Town Hall at 7pm on Sunday 1 October and is sponsored by Deacons Jewellers, who are celebrating their 175th anniversary.*



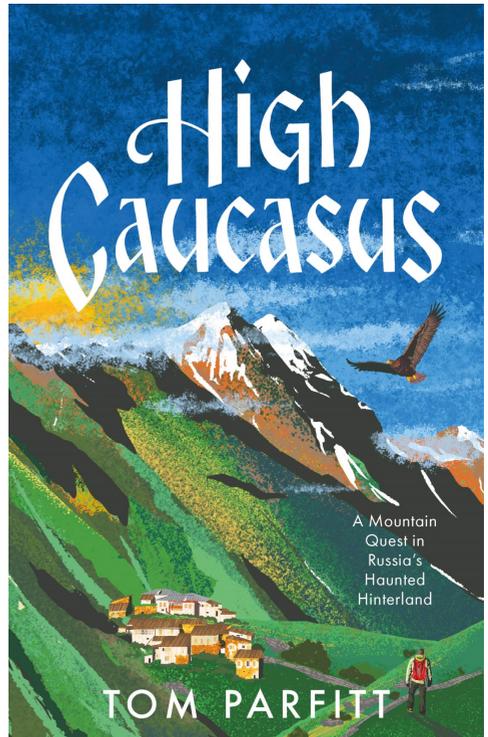
# Tom Parfitt – High Caucasus

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*High Caucasus* is a beautifully written and absorbing account of Tom Parfitt's walk from Sochi on the Black Sea to Derbent on the Caspian Sea, a journey he undertook to try to process his experiences reporting on the Beslan school massacre in southern Russia in 2004. It's a journey not just through the landscape of the region, but also through its turbulent and traumatic history, told in recollections of his work as a journalist in the region and through the stories of the people he encounters along the way and their forebears. It's a fascinating book, humanely told in exceptionally good prose, and paints a vivid picture of the resilience of the human spirit in the face of extreme adversity. This is a tale of landscape, history, loss, courage and survival that I highly recommend.

Louise Spencely

*Be transported to the Caucasus with Tom Parfitt in the White Horse Bookshop at 4pm on Sunday 1 October.*



# Mini Grey – The Greatest Show on Earth

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Mini Grey is one of my favourite children’s picture book authors. Her silly sense of humour is right at my level and her brilliant cartoon-style illustrations add to the fun. She is the winner of the Nestlé Children’s Gold Book Prize for *Biscuit Bear*, but my children and I loved *Traction Man is Here* – the day-to-day adventures of a toy hero and his pet Scrubbing Brush.

*The Greatest Show on Earth* is Mini’s first non-fiction book, a fascinating gallop through the major stages of life on Earth. Theatrically told by a troupe of talented insects, the story starts 4.6 billion years ago with instructions on how to cook up an Earth-like planet, and moves through stages such as The World of Microbes and The Stage of Massive Insects, until we reach The Moment of Humans (blink and you’ll miss it). Each page has the facts simply but cleverly presented, with lots of detail for children to explore whilst keeping the story moving along – a fantastic introduction to evolution for all ages.

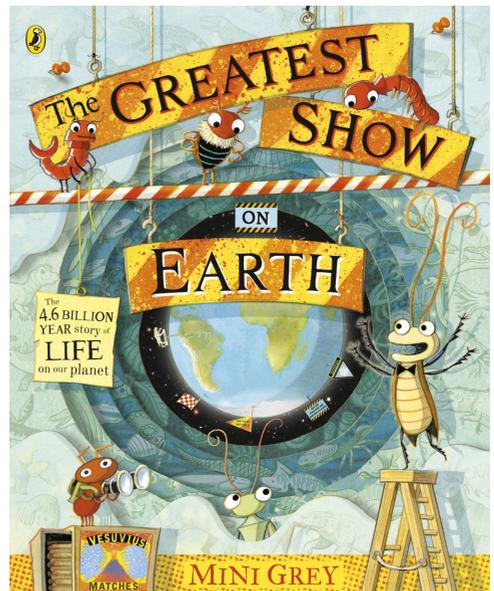
Mini will be showing festival goers how to draw the characters, demonstrating a Tape Measure of Time where each centimetre represents one million years on the Earth, and looking at some of the amazing creatures that have lived on our planet.

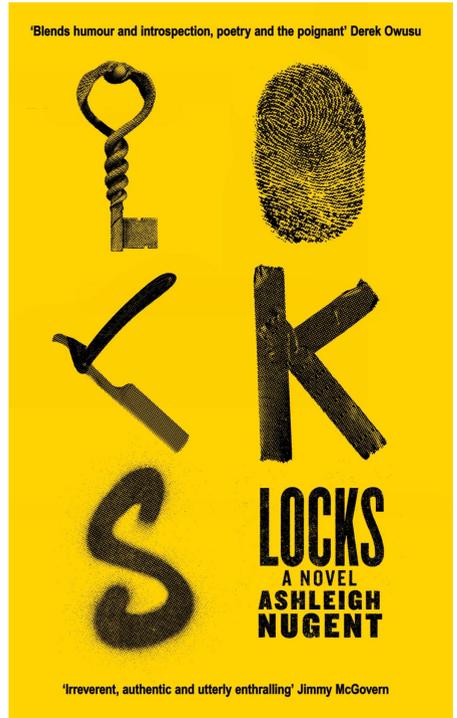
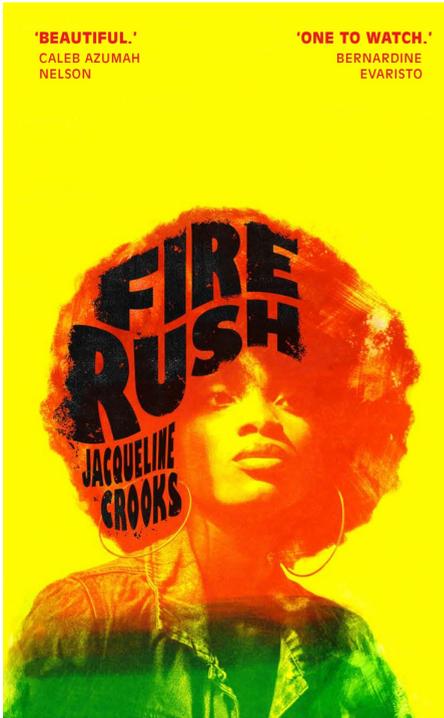
Kate Fry

*Go back in time with Mini Grey in the White Horse Bookshop at 2.30pm on Saturday 30 September.*



Mini Grey





Hiscox Debut Authors – Book Jackets. See page 2



LitFest chair Genevieve Clarke, left, with partners at The Parade Cinema

# LitFest – involving the town and beyond

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LitFest has always been about promoting reading and writing to people of all ages in Marlborough and further afield, whether or not they are festival goers. As part of this, we run an annual competition to encourage young people and adults to share their passion for a book they love in a piece of text of up to 750 words. This is open to anyone nationally, or indeed internationally, in three age groups – 13 to 15, 16 to 19 and 20 and above – but we are especially grateful to teachers at local schools for encouraging their classes to take part.

Now in its fourth year, our Love Books Competition attracted a record total of 160 entries in 2023. A shortlist selected by our committee was passed to three judges in August: Jan Williamson, former chair of LitFest; Judy Carver, writer and CEO of William Golding Ltd; and Nicola Presley, senior lecturer in English Literature at Bath Spa University.

We will be announcing a winner and runner-up for each age category at LitFest. They will receive prizes of £300 and £100 respectively and their entries will be published on the LitFest website.

We're also keen to work with local businesses and other organisations to share a love of books. Earlier in the year we held our first partnership event with The Parade Cinema featuring *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry*. Our invited audience was treated to insights into the film's development from the book's author Rachel Joyce, who wrote the screenplay.

We also collaborated with one of our sponsors Wansbroughs on an author event for their staff in Devizes featuring local author Kate Webb talking about her Wiltshire-based crime novel, *Stay Buried*, to Jon Stock, aka JS Monroe, LitFest committee member and author of last year's Big Town Read, *The Man on Hackpen Hill*.

We're thrilled that several local businesses have become event sponsors this year alongside our new lead sponsor Fermoie, which creates fine fabrics in-house at its studio and factory in Marlborough. Even more have signed up to support our inaugural children's story trail along the High Street, which will run from 16 September to 1 October. Leaflets for this and other children's events will be in The White Horse Bookshop and Marlborough Library from 11 September.

Genevieve Clarke, LitFest chair

*Please contact us at [general@marlboroughlitfest.org](mailto:general@marlboroughlitfest.org) if you would like to get involved for our 15th year in 2024. Now is the time to join in!*

# What's On in September

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## **7th (Thursday)**

2pm Mildenhall Village Hall. Marlborough Floral Club. Demonstration by Carole Norman: *Betwixt and Between*. Treat yourselves to an enjoyable afternoon out on the first Thursday of every month. Visitors welcome! Micky Graham on 01672 514301.

## **9th (Saturday)**

12 noon to 4pm Hospice Gardens, Wroughton. Prospect Hospice Garden Fete. Family-friendly activities, summer raffle, live entertainment and delicious food options and a classic car display. There is a free park and ride service throughout the day to and from Nationwide on Pipers Way as visitors will not be able to park at the Hospice on the day. See [www.prospect-hospice.net/fete](http://www.prospect-hospice.net/fete)

7.30pm St Peter's Church, Marlborough. A concert given by the Choir of St Martin-in-the-Fields with readings by Simon Russell Beale. Tickets (£20 to include a glass of wine; £15 for St Peter's members) from the White Horse bookshop or at [www.stpetersmarlborough.org.uk](http://www.stpetersmarlborough.org.uk) Space is limited so book now to avoid disappointment! (See page 4)

## **10th (Sunday)**

4.30pm St Peter's Church, Marlborough. The Trust's Annual Service of Choral Evensong sung by the Choir of St Martin-in-the-Fields, at which the preacher will be the Revd Dr Colin Heber-Percy. This is not a ticketed event and all are welcome.

## **13th (Wednesday)**

7.00pm for 7.30pm. Marlborough Town Hall. Marlborough Gardening Association. Landscapes of Vietnam and Cambodia will be the subject for this month's talk with Nathalie Mignotte, and there will also be a Display Table of colourful cut flowers. Further information from website: <http://www.marlbga.org.uk> New members welcome.

## **16th (Saturday)**

8pm St Mary's Church Hall, Marlborough. Marlborough Folk/Roots. Phil Beer's solo appearances eclectic mix of traditional tunes, covers of Springsteen or The Hollies, together with his own compositions and songs from his contemporaries. Subtle and melodic, interjected with musings and amusings, he is one of the most popular musicians on the acoustic circuit. Booking information: <https://www.marlboroughfolk-roots.co.uk>

## **17th (Sunday)**

7.30pm. Memorial Hall. Marlborough College Concert Series. Classical pianist Peter Donohoe will perform Bach Toccata and Fugue in D minor BWV565, Busoni Variations on a theme of Chopin Op22, Chopin Sonata No. 2 in Bb minor, Albeniz Iberia Volumes 1 & 2 and Granados Two Movements from Goyescas. Booking and details: <https://marlboroughconcertseries.org/concert-peter-donohoe/>

## **18th (Monday) to 1st October (Sunday)**

Marlborough LitFest – 'Around Town' events for children. As part of the LitFest, families can follow an exciting 'Once Upon a Trail' around Marlborough to spot hidden

stories in shop windows from 18th September. Over the LitFest weekend, storytellers will be around town to entertain children with free events, including two slots at The Parade Cinema.

For all children's events see: <https://www.marlboroughlitfest.org/2023-childrens-litfest/>

### **20th (Wednesday)**

7.15pm. The Parade Cinema presents 'Event Cinema' Das Rheingold. Antonio Pappano conducts Barrie Kosky's bold new imagining of Wagner's Das Rheingold with The Royal Opera. An outstanding cast includes Christopher Maltman (Wotan) and Christopher Purves (Alberich). Details and booking: <https://www.theparadecinema.com/movie/the-royal-opera-das-rheingold>

### **28th (Thursday)**

7pm The Parade Cinema. 'Event Cinema' – 'A Little Life' -. James Norton (Happy Valley, Grantchester) stars in the 'utterly compelling' (5 stars Daily Express) theatrical event of 2023, as visionary director Ivo Van Hove (A View from the Bridge) stages the English language premiere of 'A Little Life'. Filmed live at the Savoy Theatre, London, during its West End run. Details and booking: <https://www.theparadecinema.com/movie/a-little-life>

### **28th (Thursday) to 1st October (Sunday)**

Marlborough Literature Festival, various venues in Marlborough. Joining the 2023 Golding Speaker, Sebastian Barry, will be award-winning novelist, screenwriter and children's author, Frank Cottrell-Boyce, Charlotte Mendelson longlisted for the 2022 Women's Prize for Fiction, and ex-England cricket captain, author and psychoanalyst Mike Brearley. A wealth of wonderful interesting speakers and an opportunity to buy the books featured, including signed copies! For full Festival programme and tickets please visit <https://www.marlboroughlitfest.org>

### **September School Dates.** See school websites for updated information.

St John's School: Term 1 begins. Friday 1st/Monday 4th SDD (no students in school). Tuesday 5th just Year 7 & 12 in school. Wednesday 6th – all students.

Marlborough St Mary's: Term 1: Friday 1st/Monday 4th TD. Tuesday 5th all pupils in school.

Preshute Primary: Term 1: Friday 1st TD. Monday 4th all pupils in school.

Marlborough College: Michaelmas Term begins Monday 4th (Shell, new Lower Sixth Pupils, Prefects and Heads of House). Tuesday 5th (all other pupils between 6pm and 9pm).

### **Erratum**

Mary Allsop was misnamed (as Patricia) in the Registers last month.  
We apologise for this mistake.

# Clergy Letter – God’s own field

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Harvest, in the agricultural sense, is already past. All is safely (or soggily) gathered in and the appealing blocks of barley and hay baling our landscape into a pop-up sculpture park have all but disappeared. The Church’s Harvest celebrations – now extended as a ‘Creationtide’ season into October – are in one sense, then, a delayed thanksgiving for the yield of former months. That needn’t trouble us, however, for they are just as much focused on a rather less specific future point: the anticipated end of the world believers know as the Last Judgement. For many, this is merely one of the vestiges of a Christian worldview with little bearing on present times, a sickle blade blunted by unbelief.

Nevertheless, the idea of a harvest that separates the righteous from the unrighteous often crops up in Jesus’ teaching and has gained a new edge as we witness the ecological ends of our actions, more fearfully evident with each passing, and slightly warmer, year. The once-familiar Parable of the Wheat and the Tares tells us that good and evil inevitably grow together in this life: one is easy to mistake for the other and this fact should caution us away from prejudice or self-righteousness. But it is also a warning that the real myth is the one that imagines our actions have no lasting or eternal consequences. They do, of course - and to ignore this is simply to hasten the day.

As Christ’s parables demonstrated, compelling stories not only reflect life as it is, but re-shape the world as it might be. People naturally ‘storify’ their lives and interpret even the most random experiences with narrative meaning. We cannot help it: we are made that way and have minds which automatically give to things a beginning, a middle and an end. As an annual celebration of that truth, the forthcoming Literature Festival is a great blessing to our town. May its harvest of words offer many seeds for our renewal.

Andrew Rumsey, Bishop of Ramsbury.

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# Marlborough Church Contacts

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## Prospect Hospice Fundraising Events

Sign up to Prospect Hospice's upcoming fundraising events and have fun while raising vital funds to provide care to local people.

The Prospect Paddle takes place on Sunday 1 October 2023. The event is open to all from beginners to experienced paddle boarders and everyone will be accompanied along the route by a qualified instructor. Participants will paddle 11 kilometres down the River Thames, starting at the Red Lion at Castle Easton and finishing at the riverside in Lechlade.



Prospect Hospice's Fire Walk is being held on Friday 13 October at Royal Wootton Bassett Football Club. The event is suitable for people of all physical abilities over the age of 15. Before taking on this challenge, participants will undergo an hour's tuition on how to safely fire walk. When the fire has burned to red-hot embers, the surface will be raked level ready for fundraisers to walk over the coals.



Registration for the Prospect Paddle costs £20 and for the Fire Walk costs £25. Participants are asked to set a fundraising target and to ask friends, family, and colleagues to sponsor their efforts. Every penny raised goes towards helping the hospice to provide care to people living with terminal illnesses.

For more information and to register for these events, visit [www.prospect-hospice.net/fundraising-support-us/events/](http://www.prospect-hospice.net/fundraising-support-us/events/)

**Mary Allsop** died peacefully in June this year. She was a very loyal member of Christchurch in Marlborough for the last thirty-plus years attending every week when she was living independently. She had been living in Merlin Court for the last twelve months and was a valued resident who still enjoyed a quiz or two. Mary was a special friend to many and this spanned all generations. She was formally a teacher at St Mary's infant school and her past pupils remember her with affection as do her friends from the staff room.

Mary leaves two daughters, Avril and Alison, as well as their partners Richard and Bob, along with her brother Paul and his wife Mary. A celebration was held at the golf club on the common which was the venue for Mary's numerous parties. Mary loved life and we loved her. She is now with her Lord and reunited with some of her many friends who went before her.

## FROM THE REGISTERS

### Baptisms

16 July	Brooklyn Elizabeth Josephine Brennan	St Mary's Church
16 July	Oscar Joseph James Sexton	St George's Church
23 July	Gracie June Deery	St Mary's Church

### Weddings - we congratulate

22 July	Charlotte Brampton and Dan Bond at St George's, Preshute	
5 August	Isabel Nixon and Liam Dempster at St George's, Preshute	

### Departed - we pray for the families of

9 July	Pamela Green (87)	Hyde Lane, Marlborough	St Mary's
13 July	David Padfield (54)	Hawkins Meadow, Marlborough	St Mary's

It is not unusual in the autumn for hibernating butterflies to suddenly come to life.

One warm September evening in Marlborough College's Memorial Hall legendary French cellist Paul Tortelier prepared to begin his solo recital. Attracted by the bright lights a Small Tortoiseshell floated down from a high perch and settled on his left hand just as he was about to begin. He looked at the butterfly, then at the audience, smiled and waited. After a short while the butterfly opened its wings and flew off and Tortelier began to play. People remember that as a magical moment, when a beautiful insect delayed for a moment the beginning of a beautiful musical statement.

At the end of its metamorphosis from egg to caterpillar and from pupa to adult a butterfly is on the wing for a very short time—two weeks on average. Our butterflies have weathered a tough year: grey skies, rain, blustery winds, yet amazingly there they are on warm, sunny days, emerging from their hiding places and fluttering about ceaselessly in search of food or a mate. As we watch and admire them we may be unaware of some surprising facts about these extraordinary insects:

They are cold-blooded creatures and cannot fly at temperatures below 13 deg. C.

They have a purely liquid diet and get essential nutrients by drinking from mud puddles.

They have taste receptors on their feet to help find their host plant and locate food.

They can see a range of ultraviolet colours invisible to the human eye.

What charming, descriptive names some of them have: Wall, Brimstone, Orange Tips, Gatekeeper, Comma, Speckled Wood. Some are migrants, including the Painted Lady and the glamorous Red Admiral, clustering on garden buddleias in high summer.

In August and September, when fields and byways are full of ragwort, brown sorrel, and stinging nettles our native blue butterflies are on the wing, bringing a bit of glamour and magic to their favoured haunts. The Common Blue feeds at flat-headed flowers, such as hawksbeard and bird's-foot trefoil, while the Holly Blue, whose host-plant in spring is holly, lays its midsummer eggs on the flowers of ivy. The Chalkhill Blue is characteristic of steep, sheltered downland tracks where there is horseshoe vetch, while most glamorous of all is the Adonis Blue, its second emergence in late summer providing a magnificent end to the butterfly season. The male is separated from the common blue by the fine black lines that cross the outer wing fringes, but more obviously by its brilliant sky-blue wings.

***Opposite:*** Adonis blue male and female butterflies

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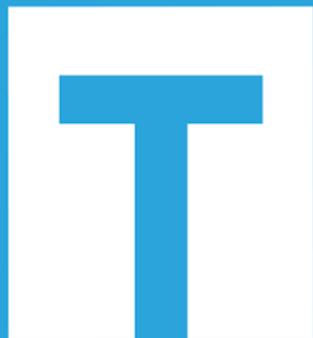
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# News from the Churches

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## **Marlborough Anglican Team**



**St George's Pet Service** Sunday 3 September, 10:30am. Pets (and people!) of all ages welcome to our annual pet service, which will be held outdoors, weather permitting. Special activity table for children too.

**St George's Messy Church** Saturday 9 September, 2pm. Please join us for this informal afternoon service with worship songs, lots of Bible-based craft activities and afternoon tea too!



**St George's Choral Evensong** Sunday 10 September 7:30pm  
A restful and refreshing service of Choral Evensong with The Georgians Choir in the beautiful setting of St George's, Preshute. All are welcome.

**Friendship Café** meets on Saturdays 2 and 16 September from 10.30am to 1pm in the Church Hall in Silverless Street. A welcoming space for anyone looking for friendship and a chat, with coffee and refreshments. (Poster page 27)

## **Welcome Wednesdays**

Wednesday mornings, 'Thought for the Day' followed by coffee and doughnuts, continues through the autumn at 10:30am in St Mary's Church. All are welcome. (Poster page 27)

**St Mary's Energize Children's Church** 5:30pm, Sunday 10 September

We're delighted to start our new term of Energize Children's church to accompany our Informal Worship service at 5:30pm on a Sunday evening. Children stay with us for the start of our family-friendly service, then go out to their friendly groups for Bible teaching, crafts, games, music and prayer. After the service do join us for tea and cakes. Everyone is welcome.

**The Ark** Parent/Carer and toddler group restarts on Monday 11 September.

## **Marlborough Churches Together**

The next Fraternal is 12.30pm Wednesday 6 September at 18 Priorsfield.



## **Emmanuel**

New activities starting in September:-

**Monday Lunch** 11 September, 12.30pm meeting in the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough. Light lunch plus short Bible talk. Pop in briefly if you're busy, stay and chat if you can.

**Sunday Morning Service** 17 September, 10 to 11 am in Church, New Road, SN8 1AH



Restarting :-

**Coffee Central** 7 September 7.45 – 9pm. Monthly church members meeting for planning and prayer – all are welcome (non-members are welcome too!) Meeting in the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough.

**CY** (Christian Youth), Sundays 10th & 24th September, 5-5.30 pm, Our Youth group for school years 7-11. We're a friendly group and enjoy meeting for a short Bible study on themes relevant to young people. Meeting in the Müller Room (Youth Room) at Emmanuel Marlborough after the main service.

**Sparklers** Monday, 18 September, 2.30-3.45 pm. A kids' club for School Years Reception to Year 2 Games, snacks and Bible stories. Meeting in the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough.

**Men's Meal** Monday, 18 September, 7.45-8.45 pm. A short Bible talk, sharing good food and fellowship. Please e-mail [office@emmanuelmarlborough.org](mailto:office@emmanuelmarlborough.org) for details.

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

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

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

**Hope Explored** A 3-session short introduction to Christianity, from Luke's Gospel. All are welcome to come and ask any questions or just listen! For more details, email [office@emmanuelmarlborough.org](mailto:office@emmanuelmarlborough.org)

**Our Weekly Church Service** is on Sundays at 4pm. located on New Road in Marlborough, SN8 1AH. Our service includes crèche and Sunday School groups, followed by refreshments (for adults) and a sandwich tea for the children. All are welcome to join us!

We also offer various activities throughout the week including home groups in Marlborough, Pewsey and Ogbourne St George, as well as community groups. For more information and updates on our events, please visit our website at [emmanuelmarlborough.org](http://emmanuelmarlborough.org).

## **Youth Work Update**

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We have been keen to respond to local needs and exploring several opportunities that opened up. The pilot 'Drop In' engagement project ran until the end of the school summer term, with small but regular numbers of young people coming to the drop-in at Church Cottage. Wiltshire YFC staff have reviewed the project with our trustees and in collaboration with Devotion and are delighted to say that we intend to continue to work with partners in Marlborough into the new school year.

## Ride + Stride Saturday 9 September

For more local information please contact Charles Graham [ctg100@hotmail.com](mailto:ctg100@hotmail.com).



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# Welcome Wednesdays

**Wednesdays at 10:30am**  
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*Please join us for a Thought for the day followed by coffee and doughnuts*



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### **Contributions and comments** from readers are welcome.

Please send articles and letters to the monthly editor or the chairman, other notices or announcements to the compiler.

All items for the October issue by Tuesday 12 September 2023 please.

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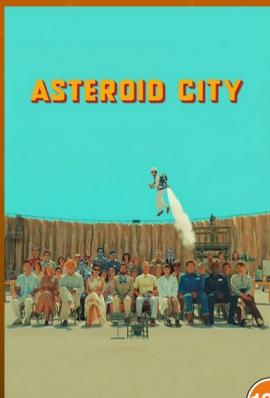
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