
TOWER_{AND}TOWN



Marlborough

LitFest 2022

Read all about it!



SEPTEMBER 2022

Single copy £1; Annual subscription £5

A niche firm of Lawyers focusing on Private Wealth

Providing advice on:
Wills
Powers of Attorney
Estate Administration
Trusts/Succession Planning
Elderly Client Work
Court of Protection
Tax Planning

At **DUNCAN MORRIS SOLICITORS**, we combine up-to-the-minute knowledge of all the latest legal issues with a down-to-earth approach to advise private clients on a broad range of issues relating to estate and succession planning.

Our wide range of individual clients highly regard our service based on our legal expertise and the close relationships we have built up over a number of years. We pride ourselves on our ability to seek clear and simple solutions to complex challenges, guiding our clients using sound and practical advice.

Our clients include businessmen, entrepreneurs, professionals, landowners and farmers.



TELEPHONE: 01672 515193 or 07917 177647
EMAIL: info@duncanmorrissolicitors.co.uk
106 HIGH STREET, MARLBOROUGH, WILTSHIRE SN8 1LT
www.duncanmorrissolicitors.co.uk



TOWER^{AND}TOWN

THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES

NUMBER 729 SEPTEMBER 2022



LitFest 2022

Books. Don't you just love 'em. And, for all those non-authors among us, how fascinating it is to learn how those books came into being. What is the wondrous alchemy that turns the germ of an idea into the finished work? How do authors conduct their research? When do they write? How do they write? How do they edit? How do they cope with rejection? And with success? Are they already working on their next novel, history or travel book?

These are just some of the questions to which you can find answers at this, the 13th Marlborough LitFest. After last year's Covid-affected hybrid festival, 2022 sees a return to a full programme across four action-packed days, from the opening on Thursday, when 50 children from Marlborough St Mary's will congregate outside the Town Hall and treat us to a medley of songs from the Queen's reign, to the close on Sunday, with the Big Town Read (local bestselling author JS Monroe) and Cornwall-based giant of fiction, Patrick Gale. And there is so much to soak up in between: poet and national treasure Pam Ayres, a memoir-writing workshop, explorer Benedict Allen, award-winning novelist Kamila Shamsie, the translation duel, debut authors, Stonehenge (in the form of archaeologist-writer Mike Pitts), doyenne of children's fiction Jacqueline Wilson, veteran historian Max Hastings – there's even a fascinating glimpse from Louise Willder into the arcane art of 'blurb' writing. So don't delay - buy your tickets now for Wiltshire's premier cultural event.

Ben Tarring, Editor, and the LitFest committee

Marlborough LitFest runs from 29 September to 2 October. The programme is available at the White Horse Bookshop and on marlboroughlitfest.org. The box office is now open: you can buy tickets in the White Horse Bookshop, phone TicketSource on 0333 666 3366 and at marlboroughlitfest.org.

Many thanks to all who contributed to this edition of Tower and Town, with special mention to Virginia Reekie, former editor and now major contributor.

Cover photos, clockwise: JS Monroe, Pam Ayres, Patrick Gale, Anita Sethi



One afternoon in the summer of 1954, a curious-looking generator was towed for an hour through the leafy back lanes outside Frome in Somerset. Unbeknown to the public, the generator belonged to Porton Down, the government's secretive laboratory outside Salisbury, and was spewing out fluorescent particles of a nasty "marker" chemical called zinc cadmium sulphide.

It took almost 50 years for this clandestine operation to come to light. 1954 was the height of the Cold War and government scientists had been tasked with assessing southern Britain's vulnerability to a Russian biological or chemical attack. Nobody took much notice of the generator, but 30 miles away a ring of sampling machines had been set up between Salisbury and Marlborough to monitor the invisible cloud of particles as it drifted across the county. It was only later that the carcinogenic properties of cadmium were revealed, following claims that the particles had caused birth defects as far away as East Lulworth in Dorset.

I came across this and many other examples of Porton Down's sinister activities during the 1950s and 1960s when I was researching my latest thriller, *The Man on Hackpen Hill*. My lead male character, Jim, is a talented young scientist at Porton Down but turns whistle-blower when he thinks he has discovered a series of unethical experiments. Porton Down today is the model of propriety, of course, its staff working tirelessly and bravely in the hours and weeks after the Novichok attack in Salisbury in March 2018. But it's fair to say that the establishment has a fairly chequered past. In 1953, a 20-year-old RAF engineer called Ronald Maddison died in agony after volunteering to take part in a trial. When they dripped a liquid onto his arm, he thought he was helping government research into the common cold – he had no idea it was sarin, a lethal nerve agent.

Maddison is the only volunteer ever to have died at Porton Down, but the generator trundling through the lanes outside Frome was not the first time zinc cadmium sulphide had been dispersed across Wiltshire. In the preceding two months, Porton scientists had released the chemical from an RAF base near Yatesbury, and then again at RAF Hullavington, from where it had drifted eastwards and was detected by a line of sampling machines near Hungerford.

Who knows what sort of attacks Porton Down is simulating today, given the tensions between Russia and the West, but best keep those car windows up if you ever find yourself driving behind a generator.

The Man on Hackpen Hill is this year's Big Town Read. J.S. Monroe (aka Jon Stock) will be talking about the book in the Town Hall at 5.30pm on Sunday 2 October.

Ali Smith: the Litfest Golding Speaker

Ali Smith is LitFest's 10th Golding Speaker with her latest novel, *Companion Piece*. It springs from the same source as its predecessors *Autumn* (2016), *Winter* (2017), *Spring* (2019) and *Summer* (2020), each of which was written and published close to the present day, using events that are as current as possible.



Companion Piece has two stories. One is set in the early months of 2021, with the UK in the grip of the pandemic and its social and political reality. Sandy Grey, the narrator, is deep into the dark mood of the lockdown as she tries to shield herself so she can visit her father in hospital with a heart problem. The other story is set at the time of the Black Death, with an orphaned girl who becomes a skilled blacksmith.

Smith cleverly links both stories – illustrating that the problems we face today were also there years ago – drawing you in with humour, her love of wordplay and puns, her quirkiness and use of riddling rhymes. It is a book like life: messy, funny, sad, beautiful and mysterious. “A story is never an answer. A story is always a question,” says Sandy. *Companion Piece* bears her out.

Virginia Reekie

The Golding Event is sponsored by the William Golding Trust Limited and can be seen in the Town Hall on Friday 30 September at 7.30pm.

Patrick Gale – Mother's Boy



This novel reflects the early life of Cornish poet Charles Causley (1917-2003). His parents met when they were both in service in 1916; they married and settled in Launceston. His father soon joined up and was sent to France. Charles was born a year later. His father finally returned but was stricken with tuberculosis, could not work and died early.

The story focuses on Charles' mother, Laura, who raises Charles pretty much singlehandedly, working as a cleaner and laundress. She soon realises her son is highly talented. He starts to write poems and plays and becomes proficient at the piano, playing for local bands. After taking a very tedious job in the local electricity board shop, he joins the Navy in 1940 as a coder and escapes from the very closed society of Launceston to experience the violence of war, and

Patrick Gale—cont. form relationships at work. All the time he is writing in notebooks and composing poems in his head.

After the war, he trained as a teacher and went back to his old school in Launceston, once again living with his mother. The book demonstrates what a private person he was, yet friendly and approachable. He went on to become a full-time writer in the 1970s, dealing with issues of faith, his wartime experiences and later landscape, travel and friends. He forged friendships with other writers such as Siegfried Sassoon and Ted Hughes.

Patrick Gale is a prolific author of novels and short stories, perhaps best known for *The Place Called Winter*, *Take Nothing With You* and *Rough Music*. He has lived in Cornwall since 1988, a county described repeatedly in his books. He is Patron of the Charles Causley Trust.

Virginia Reekie

This event takes place in the Town Hall on Sunday 2 October at 7pm.

Eden Rock

Charles Causley

They are waiting for me somewhere beyond Eden Rock:
My father, twenty five, in the same suit
Of Genuine Irish Tweed, his terrier Jack
Still two years old and trembling at his feet
My mother, twenty-three, in a sprigged dress
Drawn at the waist, ribbon in her straw hat,
Has spread the stiff white cloth over the grass.
Her hair, the colour of wheat, takes on the light.
She pours tea from a Thermos, the milk straight
From an old H.P. sauce-bottle, a screw
Of paper for a cork, slowly sets out
The same three plates, the tin cups painted blue.

The sky whitens as if lit by three suns
My mother shades her eyes and looks my way
Over the drifted stream. My father spins
A stone along the water. Leisurely
They beckon to me from the other bank.
I hear them call, See where the stream path is!
Crossing is not as hard as you might think
I had not thought it would be like this.

CLARIDGE

Funeral Service

Local independent family funeral directors

Proudly supporting our local community



*Daniel, Mary & Richard Claridge and team welcome you.
Every funeral is individual and tailored entirely to your wishes,
within all budgets.*

Parade Mews | The Parade | Marlborough | Wiltshire SN8 1NE | T: 01672 511836

E: daniel@claridgefuneralservice.co.uk | [www: claridgefuneralservice.co.uk](http://www.claridgefuneralservice.co.uk)

Available 24 hours a day all year round, for information, help and advice

CHARLES S. WINCHCOMBE & SON LTD. Est. 1932

THOMAS FREE & SONS Est. 1875



FOURTH GENERATION INDEPENDENT FAMILY

FUNERAL DIRECTORS
& MEMORIAL CRAFTSMEN



www.wiltshirefunerals.co.uk
wiltshirefunerals@gmail.com



01672 512110

01380 722500

Albert House,
The Parade, Marlborough, SN8 1NE.

Registered Office: Winchcombe House,
37, New Park Street, Devizes, SN10 1DT.



KFR

BUY | DONATE | VOLUNTEER

The furniture & white goods charity

OPEN TO EVERYONE

BUY

We stock a wide range of items.

Refurbished and new furniture including tables, chairs, beds, chests of drawers, cupboards and sofas. We also stock white goods such as cookers, washing machines, dishwashers, fridges and freezers. Reconditioned white goods come with a 6 month warranty excluding refrigeration which comes with a 3 month warranty.



We are fully committed to supplying quality items to families with limited income and so our green price carries a 40% discount for those with means tested benefits including tax credits.

Visit our showroom today SN10 2EU

DONATE

We only thrive if you donate to us.

We will collect your unwanted furniture and white goods (washing machines, dishwashers, cookers, fridges & freezers only) from your doorstep, free of charge as long as they are in a suitable condition. We cover the whole of Wiltshire, reviving communities by removing unwanted items and reducing landfill.

kfr.org.uk



01380 72 0722 • info@kfr.org.uk

VOLUNTEER

Volunteers are a vital part of KFR.

We simply could not function without them. In return for their commitment, we are able to offer on the job training with a wide variety of personal development opportunities including Health & Safety, CV writing and interview skills. Get in touch if you would like more information about becoming part of the KFR family.

reuse
NETWORK

refurbishing furniture
reviving communities

Registered charity no. 1056649

Hannah Bourne-Taylor – Fledgling

Hannah Bourne-Taylor grew up loving birds. When she moved with her husband to Ghana she couldn't have anticipated how her life would change for ever through her unexpected encounters with nature, and the bonds she formed. Struggling with isolation from friends and family in the Ghanaian rural grasslands, she found a huge source of solace in her relationship with the animal life around her and in particular with two wild birds. She tells the extraordinary story of how she rescued a swift and a mannikin finch, hand-reared them and set them free in the wild, and in doing so found happiness and hope.

Virginia Reekie

Hannah Bourne-Taylor will be telling her story in St Mary's Church Hall on Saturday 1 October at 11.30am.

Collectable Book Roadshow

Our local rare book expert Chris Gange will be at Katharine House Gallery (at the bottom of the Parade) to value and discuss your rare and collectable books. Whether you have a first edition or just something out of the ordinary, bring it all to Chris and find out more.

Saturday 1 October from 11am to 1pm.



Louise Willder
author of *Blurb Your Enthusiasm*



Morag Hood
author of *Teapot Trouble* (page 11)

Anita Sethi and Simon Parker – The consolation of travel



This is a must for anyone with a love of Britain – two writers seeking solace in the beauty of our varied landscape. In both cases the decision to travel came from a need to expend energy as a way of tackling depression. For Anita Sethi, it was the lingering aftermath of a racist attack while on a train in northern England and the realisation that revisiting her long-held love of nature could help to restore her equilibrium. Simon Parker was dealing with the sudden death of his oldest friend, the terminal illness of another, all while financial uncertainty was hitting him and his girlfriend hard with the onset of Covid lockdowns. The instincts of Sethi and Parker, journalists and writers both, were similar: to challenge themselves with a journey and write about it.

Born in Manchester, Sethi loved nature as a child, so knew that it had the power to revive her sense of identity. Her first book, *I Belong Here*, interweaves the impact of being abused verbally with pushing herself mentally and physically as she walks further into the north Pennines, the ‘backbone of Britain’, exulting in the freedom and splendour of high places, waterfalls and wildlife. Often exploring the nature of language as well as the scenery around her, Sethi’s writing is at its best when describing the ever-changing landscape and its effect on her spirits.

Parker had spent several years writing stories from around the world to hide from his recurring anxiety disorder. Knowing that travel and exercise had previously brought distraction, he took his bike to Shetland with the aim of cycling round the coast of Britain to find out how everyone else was coping with Covid. *Riding Out* tells the story of his 3,500-mile adventure with disarming honesty, humour and insight into the characters he encounters along the way.

As readers, we travel with both writers as they battle their demons and the terrain they have chosen to cover. I certainly felt better for having shared their experiences. And I look forward to hearing what parallels they draw themselves at this joint session, having read each other’s books before coming to LitFest.

Genevieve Clarke

See Anita Sethi and Simon Parker in St Mary’s Church Hall at 11.30am on Sunday 2 October

Sam Knight – The Premonitions Bureau



After the Aberfan disaster in 1966, toys, brandy, rubber gloves and other ‘useful’ objects were delivered to the town from all over the UK and abroad as newspapers, TV and radio spread the story of the tragedy. The publicity also led to the sharing of personal fateful stories: people who had just missed being in the path of the landslide; those who had changed their morning routine and had been killed; and, stranger still, those who had dreamed of the overwhelming blackness the night before, or knew that a catastrophe was coming. These premonitions caught the eye of John Barker, a middle-aged psychiatrist who was interested in the paranormal, and he decided he should investigate further – for if the next disaster could be predicted, perhaps it could be averted.

Barker sought the help of John Fairley, a journalist who had made his name reporting on the space race and who had a science column with the Evening Standard. Together they came up with the idea of asking the public whether they had experienced any premonitions about Aberfan, and after advertising in the paper they received 76 replies from people convinced they’d had a foretelling, 60 of whom Barker felt were reliable and which convinced him that precognition was a reality. A few weeks later, Barker and Fairley persuaded the paper’s editor to set up the Premonitions Bureau, asking people to send in their dreams and visions so they could be investigated.

Sam Knight tells the history of the Premonitions Bureau in a series of pen portraits of the people and events involved. These fascinating descriptions range from the biography of one of the best Premonitions Bureau ‘percipients’ – 52-year-old ballet teacher Kathleen Middleton, who had a forewarning of Aberfan and other disasters – to the conditions at the rundown Shelton Hospital, where Barker worked his day job and where a fire killed 24 patients in 1968. It is told in a more journalistic way than a conventional non-fiction book, but the story flows brilliantly while instilling an eerie uncertainty about the paranormal and the weird predictions sent to the bureau.

Do premonitions exist? Could we prevent tragedy if we paid attention to seers? The Premonitions Bureau found people who seemed to have an astounding hit rate in foretelling disasters – so perhaps we could...

Kate Fry

Can you predict when and where Sam Knight will be talking about his book? An eerie gold star to anyone who came up with 2.30pm, Sunday 2 October, Town Hall.

LitFest children's programme: teapots, fairies and a daredevil mouse

Reading for enjoyment is the single biggest indicator that children will succeed at school and later in life, which makes the children's programme a vital part of LitFest. We aim to promote a love of reading and books to young audiences and contribute to creating lifelong readers, who we hope will also become our festival audience of the future.

This year we have on offer three children's author talks and a sixth form discussion panel on love and jealousy in literature. Plus, new for 2022, free pop-up storytelling around town.

Laura Briscall

Jacqueline Wilson – Project Fairy



This promises to be a real treat for all Wilson fans and those still to discover her. Find out how she started her writing career, how she created some of her best-loved characters and delve into her new book, *Project Fairy*, a magical, captivating story about fairies, families and friendship, with illustrations by Rachael Dean.

Dame Jacqueline is one of Britain's bestselling children's authors, with over 100 books published, more than 40 million copies sold and legions of fans worldwide. She wanted to be a writer from the age of six and has been

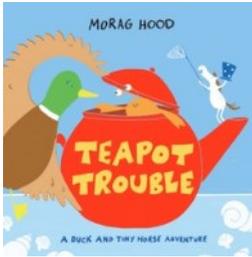
writing ever since.

Wilson's modern take on Enid Blyton's *The Magic Faraway Tree* was published earlier this year, featuring the popular characters from the original, as well as fantastical new lands and a new group of modern-day children. But it is through characters such as Tracy Beaker and Hetty Feather and bravely addressing serious topics and real-life issues for which she is best known.

As well as winning many awards for her books, including the Children's Book of the Year, Dame Jacqueline is a former Children's Laureate, and in 2008 was awarded a DBE.

*Friday 30 September, 6pm, Memorial Hall, Marlborough College,
age 7+*

Morag Hood – Teapot Trouble



Something or someone is living inside Duck's teapot! Who are they? What do they want? How will we get them out? Never fear, for Tiny Horse is here!

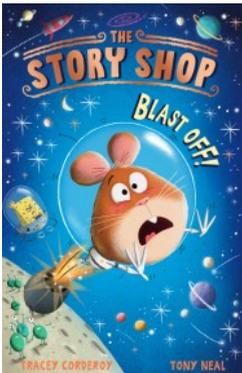
Bring your little ones along for an hour of fun with this award-winning author and illustrator. Featuring interactive storytelling and live drawing, under-fives will love hearing of the antics of Duck and Tiny Horse, who star in *Spaghetti Hunters* and Hood's latest picture book, *Teapot Trouble*.

Everyone can take part in a draw-along, creating a teapot and a mysterious creature to live inside it!

Hood was the winner of the UKLA book awards in the 3–6 category in 2018 for *Colin and Lee*, *Carrot and Pea*, and in 2019 for *I Am Bat*. Her books have been nominated for several other awards, including the Kate Greenaway Medal.

Saturday 1 October, 10am and 11.30am, White Horse Bookshop.

Tracey Corderoy – The Story Shop: Blastoff!



Looking for adventure? Want to be a hero? Step inside the Story Shop! Join award-winning children's author Tracey Corderoy, who will be chatting about *The Story Shop: Blast Off!*, where the perfect adventure awaits every customer. There'll be a space game and some interactive drawing too.

The Story Shop: Blast Off! is the first in Corderoy's fresh and funny new series of chapter books, illustrated by Tony Neal. Packed full of plots, costumes and characters galore, shopkeepers Wilbur and Fred are waiting to find every customer their perfect adventure. When a daredevil mouse visits the shop, Wilbur and Fred have just the thing: an out-

of-this-world space mission!

Tracey Corderoy lives in the Cotswolds with her family and a host of lively pets. Once a primary school teacher, she now writes full time and has published over 70 books since 2010, including the *Shifty McGifty* and *Hubble Bubble* series.

Sunday 2 October, 2.30pm, St Mary's Church Hall,

age 5–8

Katherine MacInnes – Snow Widows



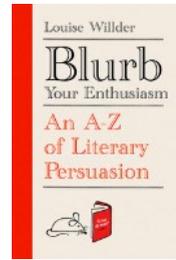
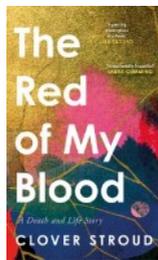
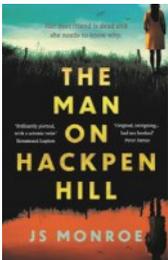
The story is seared into the British consciousness: how Captain Scott and his intrepid companions made their final, fatal trip to the Antarctic in 1911/12. Beaten to the South Pole by Amundsen, they struggled – injured, malnourished, pulling their own sledges – back towards base camp, only to die just a few miles short.

But what of those who waved off their menfolk and were waiting anxiously for their return? In *Snow Widows: Scott's Fatal Antarctic Expedition Through the Eyes of the Women They Left Behind*, Katherine MacInnes thrillingly recreates the stories of five female relatives of the polar party in the months before and after the men's tragic deaths: Kathleen Scott, a sculptor of national renown and the free-spirited, free-thinking wife of the expedition leader; Oriana Wilson, scientist and much-loved wife of the team doctor; Emily Bowers, patriotic mother of Birdie; Caroline Oates, whose son famously sacrificed himself; and Lois Evans, wife of Taff, a working-class woman struggling to feed her three children.

Written in the form of diary entries, MacInnes reconstructs the actions, thoughts and emotions of the five women as the polar drama plays out, thousands of miles away, in agonisingly slow motion, all against a backdrop of a vanishing Edwardian Britain marching inexorably to war.

Ben Tarring

Katherine MacInnes appears in St Mary's Church Hall at 10am on Sunday 2 October



Children's competition

Local primary schoolchildren are also invited every year to take part in a LitFest competition. This year's theme is 'The Day the Queen Came to Stay', a story in words and/or pictures. We have had hundreds of wonderfully creative entries and six winners will be announced during the LitFest weekend, with each receiving £25 (courtesy of Haine & Smith Opticians) to spend in The White Horse Bookshop.

Why I love reading Jacqueline Wilson

I still remember the first Jacqueline Wilson book I read, *The Cat Mummy*. The story follows a young girl called Verity who, after learning about the ancient Egyptians in school, decides to mummify her dead cat. While the story confused me a little, it also drew me in. Verity, like many of Jacqueline Wilson's characters, seemed very real and seven-year-old me found her very relatable. It was this book that got me into reading. I remember asking for Jacqueline Wilson books for my birthday and Christmas every year since then.

Another reason that I enjoyed Jacqueline's books so much is that the families were so real. Their families cared for each other and fought with each other in a way that endeared me to the characters. As I got older and started to gain a deeper understanding of what was going on in the world, Jacqueline's books helped me. The diversity of the characters also drew me in. Each book has a unique story line, and every protagonist is different. From hot-headed Tracy Beaker in *The Story of Tracy Beaker* to quiet, introverted Tina Maynard in *The Butterfly Club*, I always grew to love them and tried to empathise with their different situations and dramas.

Books such as *Hetty Feather* and *Clover Moon*, set in Victorian London, sparked my interest in history. One of my favourite pastimes in primary school was to pretend to be a Victorian street urchin with my friends (also huge Jacqueline Wilson fans). The child-like writing style of Jacqueline Wilson, mixed with the harsh realities of working-class Victorians, gave me a strong feeling of empathy for the character but also a deep fascination with all things Victorian.

Jacqueline Wilson's books played a key role in my primary school years, not just because I enjoyed her books but because they gave me a thirst for reading that I think I will have for the rest of my life, and I hope that her books will continue to do that for thousands of other children across the world.

Georgie Fry

What's On in September

September calendar:

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

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

1st (Thursday)

2pm Mildenhall Village Hall. Marlborough Floral Club. Melanie Smith - Postcards from France. Treat yourselves to an enjoyable afternoon out on the first Thursday of each month. There is a Guest Demonstrator and the arrangements are raffled at the end of the demonstration. For more information, please call Micky Graham on 01672 514301

1st (Thursday) - 5th (Monday)

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

5th (Monday)

Marlborough College: Michaelmas Term starts (to Wednesday 14th December)
St John's and St Mary's: Term 1 starts (to Wednesday 19th October)

7th (Wednesday)

7.30pm Marlborough Rugby Clubhouse, Frees Avenue. Marlborough WI. 'My Quilting Journey' talk by Sara Bottomley. Guests welcome, voluntary donation £4

11th (Sunday)

7pm - 9pm St Peter's Church. 11th Series of Brilliant Young International Musicians: Ashok Gupta (piano) and Louise Kemeny (soprano). Tickets (£13/£9) on the door on the night or from www.stpetersmarlborough.org in advance

15th (Thursday)

7pm - 9pm The Merchant's House, Panelled Room. Capture the Castle, an illustrated talk by Tim Craven. The story of castles through artists' eyes. Tickets (£12/£9) and further details on the website www.themerchantshouse.co.uk/events

17th (Saturday)

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

18th (Sunday)

3pm - 5pm The Merchant's House, Panelled Room. Jazz at the Merchant's House. Tickets (£15/£12) and further details on the website www.themerchantshouse.co.uk/events

22nd (Thursday)

7pm - 9pm The Merchant's House, Panelled Room. How Does Your Garden Grow? Ask the Expert. Anya Medlin, local award winning garden designer will talk about the changing face of autumn and winter garden care and take questions on all things related to garden design and maintenance. Tickets (£12/£9) and further details on the website www.themerchantshouse.co.uk/events

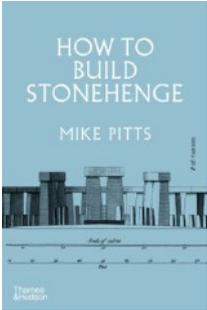
29th (Thursday)

7pm - 9pm The Merchant's House. Concrete Castles, Britain's War Defences of 1940. Illustrated lecture by Tim Craven. Tickets (£12/£9) and further details on the website www.themerchantshouse.co.uk/events

Tower and Town Changes Chairman

Tower and Town will be changing its personnel as of September 1st. Hugh de Saram will be standing down as Chairman after an eight-year stint and Sarah Bumphrey will be taking over. Sarah taught Classics for many years at St John's, and has edited an edition of *Tower and Town* every year for the last six years. Hugh will remain as a compiler and in charge of the website and other IT matters.

Mike Pitts – How to Build Stonehenge



A rhetorical question for all you Marlborough readers: who among you did not experience a frisson of warmth, pride and excitement when it was decisively revealed two years ago that the vast sarsens that make up most of the stone circle of Stonehenge came from West Woods, a couple of miles outside Marlborough?

But knowing where the stones originate (it has long been established that the smaller bluestones were transported all the way from the Preseli hills in south-west Wales) is just one small piece in the jigsaw when it comes to working out how our ancestors created one of the nation's best known and loved ancient monuments.

Indeed, the first word of the book's title is key in this enthralling 'howdunnit', as archaeologist, journalist and all-round sleuth Mike Pitts (author of *Digging Up Britain* and *Digging for Richard III*, among others) draws on his lifelong expertise: how did our Neolithic forebears get the stones, many of which weigh 20 tonnes or more, to the site? How were the stones cut, shaped and raised? How has Stonehenge been restored after centuries of vandalism? Pitts, the Poirot of prehistory, will reveal all...

Ben Tarring

Hear Mike Pitts in the Town Hall at 4pm on Saturday 1 October.

Schools programme

In addition to the children's festival programme, every year LitFest is proud to offer free events with popular authors for invited local schoolchildren. This year over 700 primary pupils and almost 300 secondary students are booked in to an author event and will have the opportunity to ask questions and meet the author afterwards.

This year's Big School Read, for St John's students, is Simon James Green, one of the UK's leading writers of LGBTQ+ teen fiction. Green's books include *Gay Club!*, *Alex in Wonderland* and *Noah Can't Even*. Simon will be sharing his talk 'Own The Awkward' with Year 9.

Maz Evans, author of the *Vi Spy* and *Who Let the Gods Out* series, will be entertaining primary pupils from Pewsey and surrounding villages. Catherine Johnson, author of historical novel *Freedom* and true story *Race to the Frozen North*, will be inspiring pupils from the Marlborough area.



Tuttle
architectural
services

- Planning applications
- Building Control approvals
- Extensions & alterations
- Loft & garage conversions
- Listed applications
- New dwellings

01672 518 278

info@tuttlearchserv.co.uk

www.tuttlearchserv.co.uk

29 SEPT - 2 OCT 2022

**marlborough
literature
festival**



A kind of belonging

With the Marlborough Literature Festival coming up soon, I am preparing for my slot in the programme, in conversation with my colleague, Colin Heber-Percy. We shall be speaking about our recently published books, both of which draw on personal experience of parish life, and its deep roots in place.

‘Parish’ is a bond-word: a covenant with place. Deep roots within Western culture over a remarkably long tenure have meant such absorption of meaning that it serves to express, like no other word in English, our need for a footing in the world, for local attachment.

Consequently, the parish idea is not only highly potent – binding secular to sacred, human community to natural landscape - but also problematic and politicised, encapsulating many of the tensions contained in our longing to belong. Evoking an idyll of (usually rural) settlement, the extended form ‘parochial’ is almost always employed in the derogatory sense of blinkered insularity: the social drawbridge slammed shut. For those watching in dismay at the growth of popular national movements across Europe, the new parochialism is a doubly bad thing, denoting both fear of the outsider and the retrogressive urge to regain some Edenic past.

And yet, according to the Irish poet Patrick Kavanagh, ‘All great civilisations are based on parochialism ‘Greek, Israelite, English...’ Continuing that ‘it requires a great deal of courage to be parochial’, Kavanagh’s point is that parochialism involves confidence and pride in the authenticity of local experience, which requires no constant comparison with, or recourse to neighbouring forms of expression. Parish is, after all, the nearby community, and this ‘nearness’ is the key to most of the perceived blights and benefits of parochial life - its equal suggestion of settled support and suffocating pettiness.

That the word has such a painful double edge is due to its unusual blend of associations. In ancient Graeco-Roman society, its original form *paroikia* described the community of people either living physically beyond city boundaries (literally ‘those beside the house’) or as non-citizens within the walls. They were those who lived nearby, but didn’t quite belong. Not a little ironic, then, that ‘parochial’ has come to epitomise insularity and self-containment when its original meaning is far closer to our contemporary definitions of stranger or refugee.

Its effective transition in meaning, from ‘outsiders’ to ‘insider’, came about when the early Christian church adopted ‘parish’ as a description of their own local

organisation. The Christian *paroikia* were those who didn't belong in a worldly sense, but had found a new kind of ideal home, a heavenly destination. When, in the late sixth century, Roman Christianity returned to Britain with the arrival of Augustine on the Kent coast, this parochial idea came ashore too. Very gradually (only becoming a national 'system' by about 1200) the parish grew into an essential building block of neighbourhood.

The power of parish as a concept has long been recognised by environmentalists. In a fascinating introduction to Reverend Gilbert White's *Natural History of Selbourne*, Richard Mabey considers that White's parochial focus – a single window into the world – lies behind the enduring influence and appeal of his work. As Mabey puts it:

'Parish' is a very laden concept. It has to do not just with geography and ecclesiastical administration, but with history and a system of loyalties. For most of us, it is the indefinable territory to which we feel we belong, of which we have the measure. Its boundaries are more the limits of our intimate allegiances than lines on a map. These allegiances have always embraced wild life as well as human...

Mabey coins the term 'parochial ecology' to capture White's settled attention to Selborne, which, in turn, became a guiding theme for his own trailblazing environmental work. The rejuvenation of 'parish' as a potent concept in recent years thus makes a clear, if contentious, case for the desirability of settlement over dispersion and mobility. Against the dislocating tendencies of global capitalism, time, tradition, and terrain are valued as key ingredients in the formation of community and in the accompanying charitable commitment to one's neighbour.

In unsettled times, we urgently require hopeful models of society that can be resilient without being defensive - 'little' without being narrow. As the original community for outsiders, the parish could be just the place.

Wiltshire Artist Exhibition

27th-29th August at St Peter's Church, Marlborough, 10am-4pm .

Local artworks for sale, including painting, drawing and sculpture.

Refreshments are provided by Macmillan and

entry is free so come along and enjoy!

Clover Stroud – The Red of My Blood



© Paul Clarke

“Write a book about this,” was one of the last things Nell Gifford said to her sister Clover Stroud as she lay dying of breast cancer in December 2019.

Stroud has done so. *The Red of My Blood* is a visceral account of her struggle to survive the first year of mourning her sister, described with characteristic emotional honesty and intensity.

Gifford’s death opened up the hairline fracture in Stroud’s life. As with the riding accident in 1991, which left her mother profoundly brain damaged and Stroud effectively homeless at the age of 16, the death of her sister “shattered the globe of my life... Blood was everywhere, all over the floor.”

In the first days of bereavement colours flash before Stroud “as signs of messages to watch for when words were inadequate and... emotions overwhelmed me”.

Red was the colour of the undertaker’s velvet chair, the ruby-coloured stones studding the silver box where Stroud wanted to hoard memories of precious times with her sister, the wine “soft like velvet to hide within”, and the burgundy dress Gifford wore to perform at her travelling circus.

In contrast, petrol-blue was the colour of a bird’s underwing, the colour of death that engulfed Stroud. But as the year progresses, Stroud reassembles her world, facing down her fear of “what the darkness would reveal”. She comes to realise the small miracle that she “couldn’t lose something that was inside me, and actually was me, since I knew she [Gifford] was there, as bright as the red of my blood”.

Death remains incomprehensible but also “the invisible thing at the centre of all our lives”.

Visiting her sister’s grave on the first anniversary of her death, she writes: “Walking through a year to the day since I had last kissed my living, breathing sister had been... the most difficult thing I had ever done.” But as she leaves the grave, the feeling of living close to petrol-blue death disappears. “I am living and walking close to life – closer, I now see than I have ever walked before.”

Stroud cannot answer the question “Why is my blood so red?” but she can comprehend that: “To see pain, to feel pain, to be present to pain and then to alchemize pain into beautiful life seems to me to be something deeply important for a human being to learn to do. Maybe it’s the most important thing any of us can learn.”

Mary-Vere Parr

Clover Stroud is appearing in the Town Hall at 11.30am on Sunday 2 October.

Marlborough Church Contacts

Fr John Blacker

513267; marlborough@catholicweb.org.uk
Parish Priest, St Thomas More RC Church

Reuben Mann

07894 048146
office@emmanuelmarlborough.org
Minister, Emmanuel Marlborough Church

The Revd Tim Novis

892209; twgn@marlboroughcollege.org
Senior Chaplain, Marlborough College

The Revd Pete Sainsbury

512364; revpetesainsbury@gmail.com
Team Vicar and Worship Director,
St George's Preshute & The Marlborough
Anglican Team

The Revd Stephen Skinner

512457; rev.stephen.skinner3@gmail.com
Minister, Christchurch Methodist

The Revd Chris Smith

514357; revcjsmith@outlook.com
Rector; Marlborough Anglican Team

Rachel Rosedale

512205; rachelrosed1@gmail.com
Member, The Religious Society of Friends

Penny Reader

marlb.anglicanteam@tiscali.co.uk
Church Cottage, Silverless Street, SN8 1JH
01672 512357; 07593 815609
(Weekdays, 0900 to 1300)

David Wylie

513701;
office@christchurchmarlborough.org.uk
Christchurch Office, New Road, SN8 1AH
(Fridays, 14:30 to 16:30)

Nature Notes:

Robin Nelson

Chalk streams:

A precious water runs through Marlborough- the Kennet, a chalk stream. There are only 210 in the world, 160 in Southern and Eastern England. In Wiltshire we have a stretch of the Avon, and its tributaries the Ebbles, Nadder and Wylde, as well as the River Kennet and its tributary the Dun.

Chalk streams are rivers that rise from springs in landscapes with chalk bedrock. Since chalk is permeable, water percolates easily through the ground to the water table and the streams therefore receive little surface run-off. The water in the streams contains little organic matter and sediment and is generally crystal-clear, the beds generally composed of clean, compacted gravel and flints, which are good spawning areas for game fish. Since they are fed primarily by aquifers, the flow rate, mineral content and temperature range of chalk streams exhibit less seasonal variation than other rivers. All have been modified in some way, usually for milling, fishing, irrigation or watercress beds, but despite weirs, impoundments and abstraction, the best chalk rivers still support a fine aquatic flora and a diversity of invertebrates and fish, including bullhead, brook lamprey and crayfish. They are

mildly alkaline and contain high levels of minerals: in addition to algae the streams provide a suitable habitat for white-flowered water-crowfoot, water-starwort and watercress.

John Hounslow has been river-keeper on a stretch of the Kennet flowing from Elcot to Stichcombe for over 40 years, one of five keepers covering the waters as far as Newbury. He undertakes many tasks to keep the 34 members of the Savernake fly-fishing syndicate happy: bank stabilisation, coping with poachers, trespassers, canoeists and swimmers, brown trout restocking, weed-cutting with a hand-scythe and discouraging invasive species such as Himalayan balsam, American crayfish, mink and cormorant.

ARK (Action for the River Kennet) has done much to protect the river from the export of water to Swindon and improve water quality: volunteers have taken on some of John's onerous tasks. In this mostly dry year water levels are worryingly low and the lack of invertebrates and variable water quality makes hard work for the fisherman, who pay a high price for their sport. If the numbers of nymphs and olives are low, trout are less inclined to go for imitations on a fly-line. The anglers pay the highest prices in the mayfly season, when fish lose their inhibitions and go crazy when the insects hatch: suddenly fly-fishing is easy, giving rise to the term "duffers fortnight."

A dipper spent most of the winter on the Kennet at Town Mill, Marlborough: its presence there is an indication of the quality of the aquatic environment. I was sorry to see a Waitrose trolley half-submerged nearby, making me wonder if people know how special a chalk stream is.

THE MERRIMAN PARTNERSHIP SOLICITORS EST. 1738

- Property
- Wills
- Probate
- Family
- Employment
- Litigation
- Mediation

HUGHENDEN HOUSE, 107 HIGH STREET
MARLBOROUGH, WILTSHIRE SN8 1LN

Tel: +44 (0) 1672 512244
Fax: +44 (0) 1672 515871

www.merriman-partnership.co.uk

Leathercraft of Marlborough

JEAN UPTON

*FINE QUALITY LEATHER GOODS
& PRESENTS LARGE AND SMALL*

OLD HUGHENDEN YARD, HIGH STREET
MARLBOROUGH SN8 1LT
TEL (01672) 512 065



**AD DRAUGHTING
ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES**

Extensions | Conversions | New Builds
Planning Permission | Building Regulations

01672 511412 | 07791 341698
www.addraughting.co.uk

CHRIS WHEELER CONSTRUCTION

For fencing and associated work
Contact the specialists

All types of fencing supplied and erected
Driveways and road construction
Quality assured to ISO 9001:2000

Tel: 01672 810315
Email: cw.cw@btinternet.com

MARLBOROUGH PODIATRY CLINIC

10 The Parade, Marlborough, SN8 1NE

Niki Thompson

BSc (Hons) PodMed, MRCoP, HCPC Reg.

Treatment of all foot
problems
for
Children and Adults

Professional Advice
Routine & Specialist Care
Nail Surgery Advice - Orthotics

01672 514581
07910 525376

marlboroughpodiatryclinic.com
podiatrycare1@mail.com

Dianne Mackinder Funeral Service



On Call Day & Night
01672 512444 or 512516

Wagon Yard, London Road,
Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 1 LH



The Hair and Trichology Clinic
Lynda Hutton MIT

for medical & cosmetic hair & scalp conditions
NHS & private wig design; affordable hair salon

7 High Street, Chiseldon, 7 miles from Marlborough
01793 740147 - www.hairandtrichology.co.uk

TO ADVERTISE HERE

Please contact Chris Rogers

at

advertising@towerandtown.org.uk



**Furniture Restorer, Upholsterer
& Cabinet Maker**

Andrew Brennan

Harepath Farm, Burbage, Marlborough SN8 3BT

M: 07769 833 939

brennanrestorations@gmail.com

Established 1992

MARLBOROUGH TAXIS

We pride ourselves on providing
a warm and friendly service to get you
to your destination safely, on time
and at a reasonable cost.

Booking ahead is advisable.

We have an on board card payment facility.
Local or long distance for up to 4 passengers.
Licensed Hackney Carriage.
We have a DBS certificate and are fully insured.

01672 512786

Volunteering
is fun and
rewarding!

LINK

Marlborough & District

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED



Could you be a LINK driver taking people for medical
appointments, shopping or social activities?

If you could spare time please contact us

Call **01672 288007**

Visit marlboroughlink.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1069752

“Sail forth – steer for deep waters only”. Walt Whitman could have written these words specifically to epitomise **Vicky Sullivan**, who died peacefully on Monday August 1st at Savernake View care home. She had no fear of “launch[ing] out on trackless seas”, not least when it came to facing her own death, for which her strong Christian faith gave her great serenity.

Vicky hailed from Nottingham but spent much of her adult life here in Marlborough. She was well-known as an influential member of the community, running her own insurance business in Swindon and being a prominent member of Marlborough Golf Club. She was married to John, one-time captain of the club, and later nursed him through long years of illness. When she finally lost him, she threw herself into voluntary work in the community. She is perhaps best known in these latter years for her bold and outspoken leadership of the Marlborough and District LINK Scheme and for resurrecting the Marlborough WI.

The secret of Vicky’s greatness was that she believed in people and was committed to encouraging them to fly when most are pretty contented just to walk. She was a particular champion of women and as President of the Marlborough WI she set herself to make everyone a speaker. If that took using a roving microphone, then she got in a roving microphone and made certain the quieter voices were properly heard. Such was her commitment to the Marlborough community that her name was put forward for a national honour; sadly, she died before that could happen.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Weddings - *we congratulate:*

30 July Lara Faber Johnson & John Paul Brennan; St Mary’s, Marlborough

Departed - *we pray for the families of:*

13 July David Fishlock (79), The Old Forge, Mildenhall
St John the Baptist, Minal

1 August Frances (Vicky) Sullivan, Kingsbury, Marlborough
St Mary’s, Marlborough

News from the Churches

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

Christchurch continue to worship as a congregation until the end of January although the building is now up for sale. All are warmly invited to our services at 10:30 on Sunday mornings.



This month we look forward to welcoming Rev Stephen Skinner back from his sabbatical and look forward to hearing about his spiritual journey over the past three months.

Christchurch will celebrate their Harvest Festival on 16th October.

Women's Fellowship

Meet on Tuesdays 6th and 20th September in the Crush Hall at Christchurch, New Road at 2.45pm for tea, coffee and chat.

Marlborough Quakers

We are still hoping to have our Meeting with Danny Kruger to find out more about government policy on Climate Change, and to discuss the actions we feel should be taken on renewables and saving energy. This is planned for **Friday 16th September** in St. Peter's Church at 7pm. Please put this date in your diary but it may be worth checking nearer the time that it is going ahead as the political situation is not settled. The church newsletters will hopefully confirm this nearer the time, alternatively contact rachelrosed1@gmail.com. All are welcome.



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

We are grateful to meet for a weekly Sunday service at 4pm with crèche and Sunday School groups. All are welcome to stay afterwards for refreshments and a sandwich tea for children. Mid-week we are also delighted to offer a variety of activities including homegroups meeting in Marlborough, Pewsey and Ogbourne St George and community groups as below. For more details and the latest updates, please check our website at emmanuelmarlborough.org:



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

Sparklers: Monday 19th September 3:45-4:45pm (Doors open at 3:30pm) A monthly kids club for school years Reception to Year 2. Games, Snacks and Bible Stories!

Explorers: Fridays, 6-7.15pm. Our kids club for school years 3-6. Fun, games, tuck and a short Bible talk (bring 50p for tuck)

Friday Nights: Fridays, 7:30-9pm. Our youth club for school years 7-11. Friends, fun & faith – everyone welcome!

Hope Explored: A 3 session short introduction to Christianity, from Luke's Gospel. All welcome to come and ask any question or just listen! For more details, email office@emmanuelmarlborough.org



To Eternity and Beyond : Summer Holiday Bible Club

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

Registration is necessary. Sign up on our website:

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

Marlborough Anglican Team marlboroughanglicanteam.org.uk/

All are welcome to the all age service at St Mary's on **11th September** at 10.30am.



Wednesday prayer meetings:

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

MAPAG

During the summer holidays we had a very successful family trip to the Cotswold Wildlife Park with 54 signed up and we have supported 20 children for one session a week, to attend Fun Active Creative Events programme at St. Mary's Primary School. Thank you to those who have given financial support for these events.



Our next Open Meeting will be held on **Monday 3rd October** at 5 pm. Please contact Rachel Rosedale if you would like to join us: rachelrosed1@gmail.com

Tower and Town staff

Chairman	Sarah Bumphrey	chairman@towerandtown.org.uk 16 George Lane, SN8 4BX	516862
Advertising	Chris Rogers	advertising@towerandtown.org.uk	
Distribution	Sue Tulloh	distribution@towerandtown.org.uk	288912
Subscriptions	Peter Astle	4 Laurel Drive, SN8 2SH	515395
Treasurer	Peter Astle	treasurer@towerandtown.org.uk	515395

Production Teams

October

Editor	Anna Forbes	oct.editor@towerandtown.org.uk	512700
Compiler	Hugh de Saram	oct.compiler@towerandtown.org.uk	516830

November

Editor	St John's	nov.editor@towerandtown.org.uk	
Compiler	Peter Noble	nov.compiler@towerandtown.org.uk	519034

Every Month

<i>What's On</i>	Ali Pick	whats.on@towerandtown.org.uk	512250
<i>News from the Churches</i>	Alison Selby	church.news@towerandtown.org.uk Crossmead, Kingsbury St, SN8 1HU	511128
<i>Family News</i>	Jessy Pomfret	family.news@towerandtown.org.uk	519134
<i>Arts</i>	Gabriella Venus	arts.correspondent@towerandtown.org.uk	
<i>Books</i>	Debby Guest	books.correspondent@towerandtown.org.uk	
<i>Nature</i>	Robin Nelson	nature.correspondent@towerandtown.org.uk	

Website, searchable article archive <https://www.towerandtown.org.uk>

Webmaster, IT hugh@towerandtown.org.uk

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 13th September 2022 please.

Our Advertisers support us. Contact Chris Rogers if you would like to join them.

Tower and Town is available at St Mary's, Christchurch, St Peter's, Mustard Seed, Kennet Pharmacy and St George's, Preshute.

Annual subscription £5 for 11 copies a year delivered to your address.

Please ring Sue Tulloh (288912) or use www.towerandtown.org.uk

originzone



Websites shaped around you

We create bespoke websites with your business in mind.

Our solutions are suitable for any business, whether you're looking for a new website or you simply want to refresh.

Make your website work for you.

originzone.co.uk | 01793 430006

FILM ★ FRIENDS ★ FOOD



THE PARADE CINEMA

MARLBOROUGH'S NEW INDEPENDENT CINEMA ★

Showing the latest releases, live events, classics, foreign
★ language films, kids' club, subtitled and lots more...

Book in person or online at www.theparadecinema.com
or scan the QR code

★ 1 screen, 104 seats, full bar, cafe & large garden ★

★ Open 7 days a week from 9.30am until late ★

★ Follow us @theparadecinema The Parade, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 1NE ★

