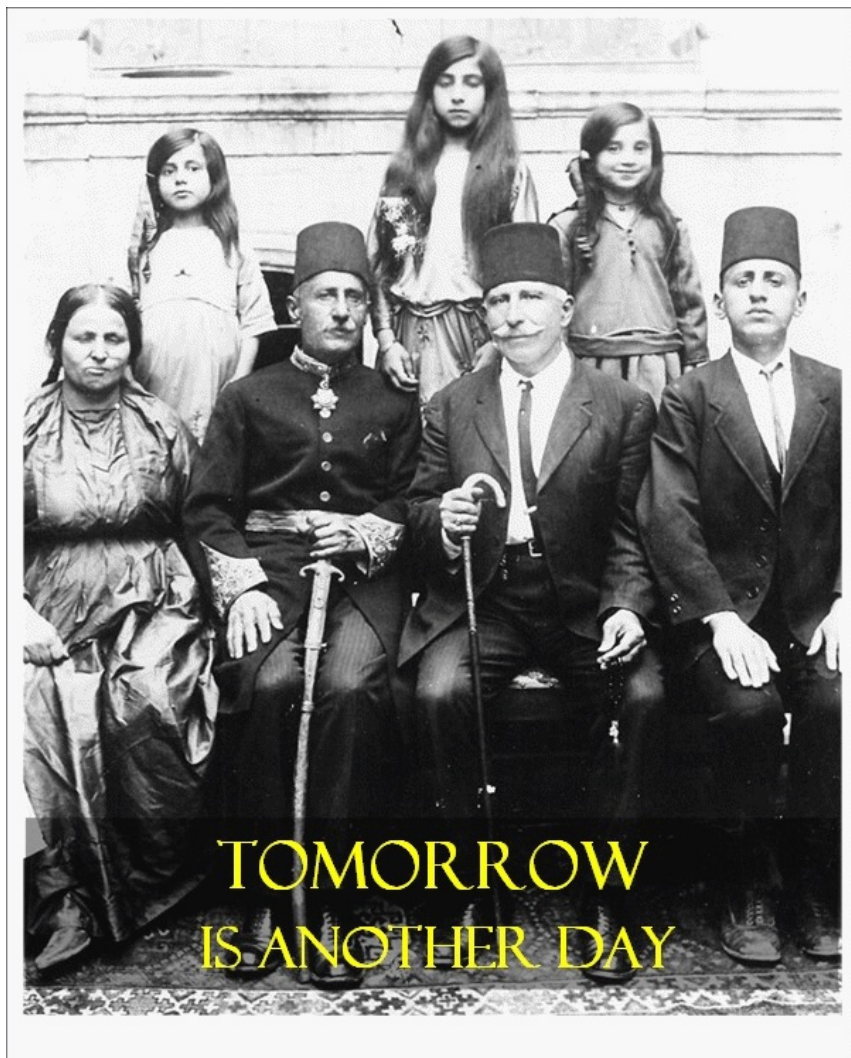

TOWER^{AND}TOWN

THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES



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Cover image: The Adamo Chaldean family, Mosul (Iraq). Credit the Adamo Family

TOWER AND TOWN

Tomorrow is Another Day

There is an element of contrast in “Tomorrow is Another Day”; tomorrow could be a much better day. This contrast lends itself to invigorating lines of thought.

Hence, it is a much healthier way of thinking of tomorrow when life’s junctures prove to be challenging indeed. I guess this is somewhat like what was on the mind of Charles Dickens when he penned his famous opening lines of “A Tale of Two Cities”, a contrasting duality view set against the backdrop of the French Revolution.

This edition contains articles exploring contrast within the set theme. In my utopia article, you will find the making and experiencing of utopian tomorrows. Tony Kieran, on the other hand, excellently brings forth contrasting interpretations from “Gone with Wind” and “Macbeth”. This is followed by an introduction to the Chaldean Christians with an emphasis on the “Tomorrow is Another Day” ethos of the Adamo family navigating through some historical discontinuities.

In addition, Catherine Byrne contemplates the unknown tomorrow and tells us that tomorrow will be a fresh chance to reaffirm our commitment to the things most important and necessary. You will then find some personal recollections from the Atomic Age at the Harwell laboratory and how the outcomes of making a better tomorrow are not always predictable, the article also offers glimpses into the life of scientists. Hugh de Saram, on the other hand, presents us with contrasting views of the meaning of Easter and the interpretation of sacrifice to God, a worthy topic for discussion. Moreover, Father John Blacker reminds us that reading the signs in human behaviour is more difficult than reading the signs of the weather. His message is that of mercy, compassion and forgiveness.

I am grateful to the authors, compiler, and readers of the draft of this edition.

Raik Jarjis: Editor

May Edition No 769.

Compiler: Hugh de Saram

Proof Readers: Julia Peel, Diana Foster-Kemp

Marlborough Churches
Together



A Short Overview of Utopia

Utopia

It is not unusual for humans to aspire for a better tomorrow. Indeed, progress is somewhat a manifestation of the desire for a utopian future. The Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) share belief in heaven (Jannah for the Muslims) and the existence of Eden, Adam and Eve's garden of paradise.

It is therefore not surprising that in his *Utopia* Sir Thomas More considered the Greek roots of two concepts. "Utopia" ("no place"), and "Eutopia" ("good place"). Whilst the first, "utopia", specifically refers to an achievable, good society, the second, "eutopia", is often used for the unattainable ideal. In Thomas More's search for idealism he envisioned a utopian tomorrow of religious toleration and equal learning for both men and women.

So: are we in the west living through a utopian era? After all, many of the past utopian dreams of liberal democracies have been realised, prompting the American political scientist, political economist and international relations scholar Yoshihiro Fukuyama to write his book, "The End of History and Last Man".

Utopian Living, Working and Not-Working

When in the 19th century the new states of the American west took over the Indians' land, they told the white settlers that it was utopia. However, many migrants remained poor wandering workers on other people's farms and

lumber camps – "hoboes", "bums" - and utopia was as far away as it was for the Navajo Indians. Sadly, both groups had songs about their utopian experiences. The song of the hoboes, "The Big Rock Candy Mountains", was immortalised in the 2000 film, "O Brother, Where Art Thou?"

In the Big Rock Candy mountains
The jails are made of tin.

And you can bust right out again
As soon as they put you in.

The farmer's trees are full of fruit,
The barns are full of hay,

I'm goin' to stay where you sleep all day,
Where they boiled in off the inventor of toil,
In the Big Rock Candy Mountains.

In Britain, some of the 19th/20th century workers enjoyed much better job security and living in utopian model villages. In the Bournville model village in southwest Birmingham, the Quaker brothers George and Richard Cadbury created utopian Arts and Crafts houses for their employees at the Cadbury Chocolate Factory. On the southernmost edge of Essex, rows of 222 white Bauhaus-style homes overlook the Thames Estuary. These blocky houses and rectangular factory buildings once formed the Bata-ville 1930s utopian living and working complex for the Czeck-owned Bata international footwear company. This utopia was devised by the Czeck architects František Lydie Gahura and Vladimír Karfík, who were themselves inspired by the pioneering urban planning of Le Corbusier.

Raik Jarjis

Tomorrow is Another Day

Is it the reader's task, akin to a juror's, to reach a verdict? Possibly, except when the evidence is ambiguous the reader has only the written pages, and no sitting Judge to turn to.

Take Margaret Mitchell's "Gone with the Wind," set in Georgia, a slave state, interweaving personal destinies caught up in the civil war. By the end, what verdict can be reached on the "heroine," Scarlett, her character and moral compromises?

After setting out Scarlett's limited school learning:

"Despite a succession of governesses and two years at the near-by Fayetteville Female Academy, her education was sketchy."

Mitchell will reference "school," or a derivative of it, over thirty times and later portray Scarlett buying the plays of Shakespeare, not for her own benefit, but as a gift for Melanie.

Weigh carefully the word, "Tomorrow," found over eighty times, memorably resorted to in Scarlett's closing words to herself:

"Tomorrow is another day"

while she stubbornly persuades herself she can:

"...get Rhett back"

despite his earlier stinging rejection:

"I wish I could care what you do or where you go, but I can't."

Was Scarlett procrastinating? Or simply indecisive? Or characteristically self-deceiving? Today's decisions should enable us to live purposefully; yesterday's choices probably shaped what we are today. We can recall our past choices, learn their lessons, but we cannot change them. They should teach us to assess future decision-making rather than assume we can shape the future. Scarlett's past choices seem calculated to bring short-lived gains that her tomorrow later denied. Still seeking comfort from "Tomorrow" suggests her life had not taught her well; that she remained driven by self-deceit or even bravado, fortified, admittedly, by having survived the Civil War.

Words are ambiguous, and a reader has no other evidence, nor a presiding Judge, to call on. The reader must construct the fictional character from the author's chosen words. By the last page, the judgement seems inevitable that the self-willed Scarlett has learnt the basics of self-survival but little else.

Mitchell depicted Scarlett as living life as if it were a game of chess; her constant strategy, to the end-game, being to feed her own selfish desires, her current infatuation, whether with Ashley or later, Brett, sacrificing others, as if pawns, caught-up in the fallout:

"But if Ashley didn't make the first move, she would simply have to do it herself."

Continued p.4

Continued from p.3

Can this be Mitchell's ironic view of Scarlett, a view that should temper the tendency to accord her the modern accolade of being an assertive female?

Consider also, was it by chance or design that Shakespeare's "Macbeth" gets a contrasting mention in "Gone with The Wind"? After the Civil War battle of Gettysburg, we read:

"...Dr. Meade, after a pleasant evening at her (Melanie's) house where he acquitted himself nobly in reading the part of Macbeth..."

Had Scarlett heard Banquo's words:

"If you can look into the seeds of time
And say which grain will grow, and which
will not..."?

If Scarlett was listening, what happens next indicates she learnt little; and the closing words Mitchell gave her appear only to confirm Scarlett's lack of self-understanding, fuelled by an obsessive infatuation with Brett.

"Macbeth" has its own strong-willed characters although the play's context is overtly more political. Both works are grounded on the protagonists' delusion that the future can be shaped by self-serving decisions: Macbeth's to seize

sovereign power, and Scarlett's to win back Brett.

Macbeth might be the main character, yet much that takes place, and much that Macbeth does, is triggered by Lady Macbeth's unrestrained ambition blinding both to foreseeable consequences and making inevitable the tragic consequences.

Possessing ruthless ambition, the Macbeths proved powerless to determine their futures or to change the past. Belatedly understanding this, Lady Macbeth kills herself; and Macbeth's anguished soliloquy, hearing of her suicide, gives voice to this dawning realisation shortly before his own violent death:

"She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a
word.
Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and
tomorrow..."

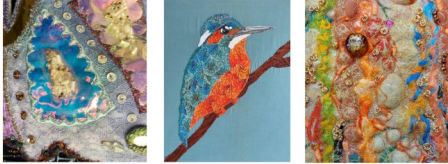
Here, "Tomorrow" conveys Macbeth's painful, belated recognition that Lady Macbeth's untimely death and his, imminent, followed from their own hubristic choices.

Verdicts: Scarlett: A "strong-willed" merely "romantic" heroine? "Macbeth": A classical tragedy?

Tony Kieran

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Reflections on the Future

Thinking about the future, which is always unknowable, unpredictable and often dependent on the actions of others which are often outside of our control, especially when there is an unequal balance of power in the relationship with those who impact on our lives, e.g. government/governed; teacher/learner; employer/worker and so on.

As our lives run their course, we can find ourselves in a quandary regarding what our dreams, hopes and ambitions will lead to if we pursue them. We question what our priorities should be and what should be the focus of our attention and efforts to improve or develop the talents we have been given, thereby enhancing our own lives but also those of others within our sphere of influence, those in need of help to go forward each day with renewed energy and strength to be the best they can be whatever circumstances life throws our way.

Particularly in this season of Easter when we have received the promises made by Our Lord while on earth that He will send His Spirit to accompany us through each day and all the vicissitudes of our earthly journey, leaving with the essential hope and trust(faith) and unselfish ways to carry out the loving plan He has for us day-to-day. This will enable us to look to the future with hope and confidence to face our tomorrows, whatever befalls.

Some have given their lives so that we could have the 'tomorrow' they never saw,

by their sacrifice bringing peace and tranquillity to our hearts to enable us to treat each day going forward as an opportunity to do good by following the right path towards harmony and care and compassion for others.

Thus tomorrow will be a fresh chance to reaffirm our commitment to the things most important and necessary to make the world a better place for everyone, to show our love and concern for our own family, our wider family - the society in which we live, and even our global family, by a humanitarian approach to the current problems which beset us today: conflicts, wars, oppressive regimes and every other man-made disaster which tomorrow may bring. This would mean no-one is left aside helpless and we could welcome each day as it comes with courage and confidence. We could do worse than follow the words of the hymn which begins: Lord for tomorrow and its needs I do not pray. Keep me, my God. from stain of sin just for today...

Catherine Byrne



Credit Raik Jarjis

Harwell: A Fading View from Building 418

Tomorrow is Bright

On 8 May 1945 joyous crowds at Piccadilly Circus, London, were celebrating the ending of WWII and dreaming of the brighter tomorrow ahead.

Rising from the ashes of war with many years of rationing still lying ahead there was enough air of optimism at Piccadilly and elsewhere on that VE Day. It, therefore, followed that by the era of the ascending young minds of the 1950s-60s generation the Piccadilly air of optimism and western perseverance had already aided in realising both the Space Age and the Atomic Age. You can imagine, dear reader, that I was fortunate enough to grow up anticipating a better tomorrow. And it is in the spirit of that era that in the early 1970s I joined the cadre of aspiring young scientists at the cusp of the Atomic Age, aiming to harness the power of the atom for the good of humanity. The chasing of this dream eventually brought me on a full-time basis during the 1980s to the Atomic Energy Research Establishment, Harwell, Oxfordshire. Sadly, I soon realised that brighter tomorrows sometimes never come or they merely fade away. This I learnt from witnessing the eclipsing of the atomic dream.

My Years at Harwell

Just over 12 miles north of Newbury, Berkshire, 1950s-80s travellers along the A34 road towards Oxford would have climbed Gore Hill, whose summit intersects the ancient Ridgeway, Britain's

oldest road. On descending they would have been struck by the view ahead left - the Jewel of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, UKAEA, the sprawling site of the Atomic Energy Research Establishment, AERE, Harwell. Created after the Second World War on the site of RAF Harwell, the research establishment became a beacon for what was thought to be at that time a brighter tomorrow of endless energy supply facilitated by the "Atom for Peace" programme.

My association with Harwell started when, as a physics postgraduate student, I gained in 1970 security clearance to enrol in the UKAEA Advanced Nuclear Reactor Technology training that included spending some time at Harwell. By the mid 1970s I became indebted to a known Harwell leader, Dr. Geoffrey Dearnally, FRS, who noted some pioneering research I was conducting at academia and gained for me American financial support to produce the international handbook of the subject.

Our story, below, begins when in 1982 I was awarded by the UKAEA a special Harwell/academic research position to work at the Nuclear Physics Division in Harwell, then under the headship of the fission theoretical physicist Dr Eric Lynne. This required joining the linear accelerator and nuclear fission group, led by Dr Michel Coates, at Building 418, (B418). One of the bonuses was outings with my fellow physicists and included ramblings along the Ridgeway which overlooked our research establishment.

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Tomorrow Never Comes

By the early 1980s the wind of political and environmental change had already shifted public interests away from nuclear energy, and soon Britain was to lose its edge as developer and builder of nuclear power stations, compounded by abandoning our lead in fast breeder reactor technology that facilitated re-using spent fuel from nuclear power stations. This specifically was, in due course, to have a devastating effect on the elite nuclear physics group based at B418.

On Monday 28 April 1986 the nuclear linear accelerator neutron source group at the Atomic Energy Research Establishment, Harwell, Oxfordshire gathered for the morning tea/coffee break at the conference room of B418. It was certainly a defining time for the group as the group leader and cheerful gentleman, Dr Mike Coates, walked in wearing his blue V-neck jumper and red tie, holding as usual his mug in one hand and clasping his teaspoon between tips of the index finger and thumb of the other hand. He sat as usual

on a blue upholstered chair backing against the southern window. He somehow didn't seem himself on this occasion as the group grappled with last Saturday's news – explosion at the no. 4 reactor of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, located near Pripyat, Ukrainian SSR, Soviet Union (now Ukraine). And as I sat opposite Mike Coates it dawned on me that we were witnessing the ending of the atomic age, and my sight began drifting slowly towards the window behind him, gazing at the soon to fade away view of our beloved Ridgeway from B418.

Not long after, my dear senior colleagues at B418 accepted retirement, severing our leadership in the physics of nuclear fission; and for some of the younger ones their future was elsewhere. A few members of the group took up directorship positions at other government laboratories; and for me it was firstly a stint in the high-technology industry followed by an encore at the dreamy spires of academia (Oxford).

Raik Jarjis

A lost rollator

I went to the Spring Concert of Marlborough Concert Orchestra in St Mary's Church, Marlborough on Saturday 14th March. Did anyone who had a Rollator Rehasense take my smaller rollator and leave their large rollator by mistake. Maybe they have not realised it yet. Mine is black and cost me £275 from the Mobility Store in Marlborough.

The large one that I have also came from this store. It is heavy and too large for my small car.

Ros Shepherd, Churchill Court.

If anyone has Ros' small rollator or knows who may have it, please contact chairman@towerandtown.org.uk and the message will be passed on to Ros.

Adamo: Chaldeans at the Fault Lines of History

I grew up in a household in northern Iraq that was sympathetic to striving for a better future, and thanks to my Chaldean mother, Zakia Adamo, the “Tomorrow is Another Day” ethos was an integral part of my upbringing.

This ethos was an inheritance from the Adamo family and its Chaldean heritage. The Chaldeans are a significant group of Iraqi Christians. They were historically associated with Abraham’s origins, “Ur of the Chaldeans”, and they became Christians during the early centuries of the Christian faith.

The Chaldean Catholic Church emerged following the Schism of 1552 when a faction of the church of the East sought to restore communion with the Roman Catholic Church.

During the later era of the Ottoman Empire the Adamo family gained significant roles within the church. My grandfather, Mansour Adamo, was appointed Director of Finance for Northern Mesopotamia by the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II, who presented him with a ceremonial sword and a medal. The accompanying photograph was taken around 1918 at the home of the Adamos in Mosul, Iraq, when the cousin of Mansour Adamo (seated next to Mansour) was visiting from the United States of America.

My mother is shown standing at the centre of the back row.

The Ottoman Empire proved to be strikingly resilient, beating off major attacks at Gallipoli and in Mesopotamia before finally being brought down in the general ruin of the Central Powers in 1918.

However, this didn’t hamper the family of Mansour Adamo, whose children and then grandchildren moved on to take medicine, law, and education positions within the newly founded Kingdom of Iraq, and then the Republic of Iraq (1958).

Sadly, the recent convoluted conflicts in the region and rising existential threats have driven the descendants of Mansour Adamo and many other Iraqi Christians abroad. They are now part of significant diaspora communities in North America, Europe, and Australia.

Raik Jarjis



The Easter Message: Was Jesus a Substitute for Us?

One of the most common themes to hear around Easter time is that Jesus gave himself as a sacrifice to God to appease God's anger at our sins. Does such a scenario bear serious scrutiny?

What are the basic elements of this theme? Perhaps these:

- We are sinners
- We make God angry with our sinning
- His anger needs appeasing
- The sacrificial death of Jesus appeased that anger.

Let's do a little musing around these headings.

No doubt but we are definitely sinners. We are told very clearly that God designed and made us, so our ability to sin is clearly baked into the pie as part of the design. That's where free will comes in: having free will means that we are free to sin. God made us that way and cannot be the least bit surprised that we sin.

So do we 'make God angry' with our sinning? Well, if and when you have your own children, are you pleased with yourself when you get angry with them? Is that a godly thing to do? Would you accept that you actually have a choice whether to get angry or not? Surely there's no way that God HAS to be angry; it must be God's choice and He could equally well decide not to be angry. There are moments in the Bible where He clearly does not get angry

at His children's erring ways, the story of the Prodigal Son being the prime example.

The idea of having to appease an angry person is, we might think, not a very attractive one and tends not to say much about the angry person. But let's accept for a moment that God's anger needs appeasing.

The interpretation of Easter that we are looking at entails a human sacrifice that appeases that anger. We are told that God is satisfied with Jesus's sacrifice of his life.

The idea that God required a human sacrifice to slake his wrath is not attractive. In the Old Testament, human sacrifice was rejected from Abraham onwards.

Nor is it necessary when trying to understand the message of Easter.

The message of Easter is simple. If Jesus was in some sense God himself, then surely what was happening was God allowing men to do their worst by murdering him in order to show that nothing in heaven or on earth can alienate us from Him. If that's what God is like, that's something I can understand and bow before in humility and gratitude. If God needs a human sacrifice to get Him onside, then I'm afraid you'll have to count me out.

Hugh de Saram

Owen & Jones, Hungerford

Owen & Jones has been owned by goldsmiths Stephen Jones and Gary Colbert-Owen in Hungerford, Berkshire, since December 2020.



Stephen and Gary have developed and expanded the company, creating a business that is known and respected throughout the wider area. They are recognised for their attention to detail and their commitment to customer service; as their business grows, so does their reputation.

They both studied at the John Cass Faculty of Arts, London, learning all aspects of traditional handmade jewellery. As well as Owen & Jones, Gary and Stephen have been running their first shop, Kaanaanmaa in Wokingham for more than twenty-five years.

Owen & Jones have their own onsite workshop and offer a wide range of services, such as designing and creating bespoke jewellery, remodelling, carrying out repairs and restoration work. Of course, your jewellery has been increasing in value over the years, and your insurance should always reflect these increases. Owen & Jones are more than happy to

provide professional valuations for the current replacement value.

Both Stephen and Gary are passionate about their work and take pride in offering a personalised service for their customers. They understand that every customer is different and strive to ensure that each one receives the highest level of service. Whether you're looking for a timeless classic or something unique and modern, Gary and Stephen are ready to help.

The store is renowned for offering a curated selection of prestigious international brands such as Isabelle Langlois, Fope, and Georg Jensen, as well as their own Owen and Jones pieces. We welcome you to visit our store or get in touch with us for any jewellery needs. You can find them in Hungerford and ready to assist you with questions, appointments, or custom designs.



Owen & Jones 7 Bridge St, Hungerford
Tel. 01488 686226

Email: info@owenandjones.co.uk

Canal Trust 75th Anniversary



75 years ago, the Kennet & Avon Canal was officially closed to navigation and its future looked bleak. Fortunately for us, a small group of enthusiasts formed what was to become the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust. They spent subsequent decades campaigning, fundraising and volunteering until the day in 1990 when the whole canal was reopened by Queen Elizabeth II.

Today, the Trust is busier than ever. It runs six trip boats, a fleet of wheelchair-accessible holiday boats (known as the Bruce Boats) at nearby Great Bedwyn, a youth narrowboat, a museum, cafes, visitor centres, and Crofton Beam Engines housing the oldest steam pump in the world still doing its original job in situ!

The Trust is powered by over 400 volunteers spread over 87 miles of waterway from Bristol to Reading. This year there will be some very special celebrations for its 75th birthday: one of

the Bruce Boats, Hannah, will travel the length of the canal in June, with celebrations at every stop, culminating in a triumphal entry to Reading Waterfest on 27th June. The full itinerary is here: <https://katrust.org.uk/ka75/>

Locally, the big weekend is 20th/21st June: there will be a special steaming weekend at Crofton and a Midsummer Fete at Great Bedwyn on the Sunday afternoon. The boat Hannah will welcome visitors interested in finding out more about the Trust – not just what it has achieved in the past, but what our

hopes for the future are, too. There are plans afoot for a new reception building at Great Bedwyn, development of the Wharf Building at Devizes, and improvements to our fleet of passenger boats, along with supporting the Canal and River Trust in keeping the canal open and navigable, and enabling as wide a range of people as possible to enjoy everything the canal has to offer.

We invite you to be part of this in our special 75th year: you could consider becoming a member, suggesting corporate sponsors, making a donation, volunteering your time, or visiting and supporting our attractions. Have a look at our website to find out more <https://katrust.org.uk/>

Ali Cannon

Chair of Bruce Boats
Kennet and Avon Canal Trust

My Footprints to Marlborough

Jean Upton - owner of the leathercraft shop in Hughenden Yard since 1964

1. Where were you born, and where did you grow up?

I was born in Old Sarum, Salisbury, but my father was called up to the army in 1940 and I then returned to live in Gloucester near Badminton with my mother.

2. What was your early life like — family, school, community?

I had a good early life living in the countryside looking after animals and after the war when my father returned the family moved to Ogbourne Maisey, where he worked as a jockey and trained horses.

I went to Marlborough Grammar School, which was a very happy time for me because there was a wide cross-section of people there. I worked for my father after school, and later took a secretarial course although I used to go to the races a lot when I wasn't working!

3. What kind of work or passion have you followed in life?

My passion is the countryside and gardening. I met my husband when I was 18 and I got married at 21. Between us we were interested in horses and hawks!

We started this shop in 1964. We have been here ever since - over 60 years!

4 Why did you decide to stay and make it home?

My husband and I loved the countryside. Roger was a falconer and he also made falconry equipment which is called falcon furniture - things like hoods to put over the birds heads. He was also very involved in the British falconers club which used to meet in Avebury. Years ago Marlborough was a close knit community with people like Michael Gray, who was an antique dealer and involved with The Merchant House.

5. What do you appreciate most about the Marlborough community?

I have lots of returning customers who think it is worth travelling long distances to visit my shop again! I love the town and the stunning countryside, the Downs and the forest. What more could you ask for?

6. What would you say to someone considering moving here?

It is still a great place for the community feel and for the shops.

Matt Gow



What's On in May

From Cloister to Court *Music by women of earlier times; from Hildegard to Strozzi*

2nd Saturday 7.00pm – 9.00pm St John the Baptist, Minal, Church Lane, Mildenhall SN8 2LU. Musicke in the Ayre (Jane Hunt, Alice Simmons and Carmel Edwards – voices and Din Ghani- lutes and baroque guitar. Tickets £12 at the door or online at bit.ly/mitaC2C . Refreshments available.

The Arts Society- Pewsey Vale

5th Tuesday 2.30pm Bouverie Hall, Pewsey. Sarah Burles will speak about 'Les Trois Grandes Dames of Impressionism: Marie Bracquemond , Mary Cassatt and Bertha Morisot. These three all exhibited regularly at the Impressionist exhibitions alongside artists such as Monet, Renoir and Degas. Doors open at 2.00pm, refreshments available. Visitors welcome. £7 on the door.

William Wegman Photographic Works

5th May – 3rd June Rabley Art Centre, Mildenhall, SN8 2LW. Entry is free. For more information contact press@huxleyparlour.com

Marlborough Gardening Association

13th Wednesday 6.45pm for 7.30pm Town Hall, Marlborough. A Kitchen Garden with Sally Morgan. Visitors £3.

16th Saturday 9.30am – 12.00noon Town Hall, Marlborough. Plant Sale
For more information contact marlbgainfo@gmail.com

Marlborough Floral Club

14th Thursday 2.00pm Mildenhall Village Hall. An Arrangement in a Basket with
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Pippa Lovering. This is a workshop and booking is strongly advised. For more information contact Mickey Graham on 01672 514301.

Marlborough LitFest and St Peter's Church

15th Friday 6.30pm for 7.00pm St Peter's Church, Marlborough. Literary-Themed Quiz with a twist. Bring your own picnic and buy drinks on the night. Prizes to be won. Tickets £5 PP/Teams of up to eight from marlboroughlitfest.org

Events at St Peter's Church, Marlborough

- for full information and to book see stpetersmarlborough.org.uk for all four events.

16th Saturday 11.30am Lollihop Puppet Show: Nutcracker in Spring Ballet-dancing puppets, a sinister Mouse King, an abundance of flowers and plenty more surprises. 'Meet the Puppets' after performance. Workshop – limited numbers.

16th Saturday 7.00pm – 9.00pm Brilliant International Musicians Series: Jamie Cochran (piano) and Basil Alter (violin)
Tickets £20, members £15.

23rd Saturday 7.30pm – 9.30pm Let's Raise The Roof: The Magnificent AKs together with the Bebington Bittermen.

An evening of stunning a cappella harmonies and laugh-out-loud fun. Sing, laugh and maybe shed a tear. Definitely not your ordinary male voice choirs.
Tickets £15. Proceeds to the roof appeal.

What's On in May

30th Saturday 6.00pm onwards Ceilidh

Dance to live music from Black Velvet Band and their caller. A barbecue and bar will be available and all proceeds will go to the St Peter's Trust for the upkeep of the building. Tickets £15. Available from The White Horse Book Shop, Cardinal Coffee Shop or online.

26th Tuesday Art History Lectures

Quaker Meeting House, The Parade, Marlborough. Speaker Nick Nelson.

10:30am *William Morris.*

2:30pm *Charles Rennie Mackintosh*

May is the perfect time to get in touch with The Ridgeway Cribbage League if you would like to establish a team to play next season. The league plays on Wednesday nights from 8.30pm and the season runs from October to April. There are 4 team competitions during the season, with optional knock-out competitions for Pairs, Singles and the Team Captains. Visit www.ridgewaycrib.co.uk for further details and to get in touch.

School Dates

Marlborough St Mary's, Preshute Primary and St John's Term 5 ends Friday 22nd. Marlborough College Exeat 12noon Saturday 2nd – 9.00pm Monday 4th . Half Term 4.00pm Saturday 23rd – 9.00pm Sunday 31st.

Coming Up In June

Marlborough Concert Orchestra 20th Anniversary Gala Concert.

Saturday 20th June 7.30pm St Mary's Church, Marlborough. Programme: Johann

Strauss II - Kaiser Waltz, Philip Singleton - New Composition, Beethoven - Symphony No. 5. Tickets Adults £15, Students £5, under 18s free available from Sound Knowledge, on the door or online at mco.org.uk

Kennet & Avon Canal Trust 75th Anniversary Celebrations

There are many special events taking place locally along the canal beginning on Tuesday 2nd June late morning at Crofton Pumping Station. One of the Trust's accessible boats will travel from Bristol to Reading commemorating the journey of Prunella Scales and Timothy West, who were the first to travel the length of the canal when it reopened in 1990. Full details of all the planned events are on the website www.katrust.org.uk under KA75: Anniversary Celebrations (see p.12).

Prospect Hospice Starlight Walk Saturday

27th June The community is invited to come together for a special evening of reflection, connection and celebration, all while raising vital funds for hospice care. With the choice of a 10km or 15km route, participants will be guided by twinkling lights and glowing lanterns. Tickets can be purchased online at prospect-hospice.net/starlight

Linda Illsley - What's On Editor

Clergy Letter

"How is it you do not know how to interpret these times?"

"If you can see the hills then rain is coming, and if you cannot see the hills it is because it is already raining". So goes an old joke in parts of the British Isles and sometimes Marlborough.

We live in a temperate climate, often wet, generally mild and without extremes of weather. But "Climate Change" can alter it to bring hot seasons, icy cold ones, and of course the weather is always changing as it comes mostly from the Atlantic, occasionally warm weather from the south, and then from the north and east when it is cold. The weather is a constant topic of conversation.

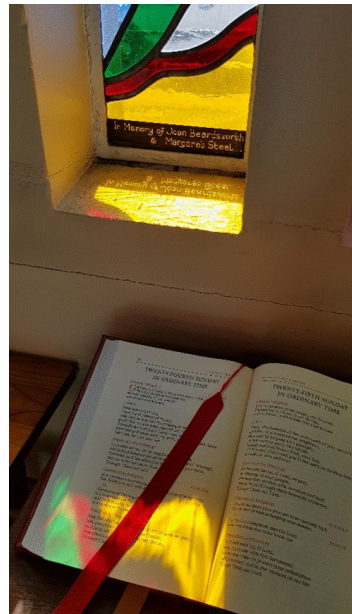
Reading the signs of the weather, and the "Shipping Forecast" is not too difficult, but we are very slow when it comes to reading the signs in human behaviour. We are content to be blind to our own faults and to forgive ourselves too easily. We can let bias and favouritism blind us to the faults of our friends while we castigate our enemies. We stubbornly refuse to see the good in others while turning a blind eye to the sins we commit.

The signs that Jesus gave, His healing work, and His teaching were never enough for people who did not want their entrenched attitude or their settled prejudices to be challenged. The rigidly righteous know nothing of mercy, compassion and forgiveness. Saint Paul knew himself to be a prisoner of sin and that self-knowledge

paved the way for the goodness of God to work in him.

Heavenly Father, open our eyes to see clearly the beauty and goodness of Christ Jesus, Your Son. Help us to see and know our own faults and so seek Your forgiveness. Teach us the ways of mercy and generosity of heart that Easter gives us. May we interpret these times and not waste them. Every new day is a gift.

Father John Blacker



Credit Raik Jarjis

Dianne Mackinder Funeral Service



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Nature notes

In mid-May, a very rare and delicate jewel of the chalk grassland begins to emerge. Although it has declined dramatically in recent years and is now a Red List species, it seems to be thriving on a small north-facing patch of chalk grassland on the edge of Marlborough.

There is always a moment of unease when none appear. Further south in Wiltshire, the Duke of Burgundy is often already on the wing, and I find myself arriving too early, scanning empty grassland and beginning to wonder. Here, they often emerge up to a week later, sometimes more and so I wait, returning again and again in quiet anticipation.

Even when they are present, they do not give themselves up easily. They fly low and fast, close to the ground, their movements sudden and fleeting. Though bright orange at a glance, they vanish against the mosaic of vegetation and shadow, their small size making them strangely elusive. A flicker, a hesitation, and then they are gone – leaving you questioning whether you saw them at all.

The Duke of Burgundy butterfly host plant is cowslip, and it lays its eggs on the underside of the leaves. The species favours areas where grassland meets scrub, creating a balance of sun and shelter. These slightly cooler, moisture-retaining conditions support cowslips, while nearby scrub provides the right microclimate. The males emerge a few

days before the females and they only live for 1 to 2 weeks.

It was in 2018, while completing a butterfly transect, that I spotted my first ever Duke of Burgundy on this patch. That spring had been particularly warm, and it seemed some butterflies were dispersing more widely. I also saw a Small Blue in the same area – a brief sighting, as it was very active in the heat and didn't linger. I haven't recorded one there since.

The following year, I counted just four individuals, suggesting that the butterfly I had previously seen was likely a female. She was quite worn and tatty, making it difficult to determine her sex with certainty. The year after brought another warm spring and a dramatic increase to over 30 individuals. Last year, despite a cold spring, I recorded 45. While this may not seem like a large number, for a species that has struggled in recent years, it represents a strong and encouraging colony. So far this year, the weather hasn't been too wet or cold, and I'm hopeful it will be another successful year.

Helen Llewelyn



Credit Helen Llewelyn



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ENERGIZE SATURDAY SING

We are delighted to invite you to join us at St Mary's Church for music, Bible story and snacks for children. Coffee and cake for grown-ups.

Sessions take place in St Mary's Church on Saturday 16th May, 18th July
10am to midday
£2 per child, Yr R and up

Booking essential:
please email penny.families@gmail.com

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News from the Churches

Marlborough Anglican Team with Christchurch Methodist Fellowship:

St Mary's 5pm Informal Worship

If you're new to the area or thinking about the faith, please consider joining us at 5pm on Sunday at St Mary's. We are friendly, informal and open to God's Spirit. Our All age service will be on May 3rd, with a family tea at 4:30pm followed by a service for all ages at 5pm. On the third Sunday of the month, we break bread together.

All age worship for April is on Sunday 3rd May. All are welcome. (Poster p.19)

Thy Kingdom Come – May 14th to 24th

This year we will be joining in this global prayer initiative in a big way. From Ascension Day to Pentecost there will be 7 prayer stations in the church helping us pray through the Lord's prayer. And from 8am on Wednesday 20th May to 8am on Thursday 21st May we will intensify this with 24 hours of prayer. If you would like to be involved in the creation of a prayer station please let Rachel Maurice, Louise Seddon, Penny Reader or Chris Smith know.

Children/Family Activities:

The Ark Parent/ Carer and Toddler Group

Mondays in term time, 9:30am to 11am in the Church Hall, Silverless Street. Please contact Caroline Philips for more information cphilps2@gmail.com

Saturday 9th May, 2pm - St George's, Preshute

Children and their families are warmly welcome to Messy Church on Saturday 9 May at 2pm in St George's, Preshute. An opportunity for families to come and enjoy informal worship, craft activities and refreshments together as we explore the theme of Pentecost. All welcome! For further information, please contact Amanda Brown: 07900 198386 or amandabrown46@hotmail.co.uk

Energize Saturday Sing! (Poster p.19)

St Mary's are delighted to be launching something new this term – our Energize Saturday Sing mornings! These are relaxed, joy-filled sessions designed especially for children (Reception age and up), with plenty of music, a short Bible story, and tasty snacks along the way.

And it's not just for the children. Grown-ups are warmly invited to stay too. We'll have coffee, cake, and space to chat, making it a lovely opportunity to connect as well as join in the fun.

Dates: Saturday 16th May

Time: 10am – 12pm

Location: St Mary's Church

Cost: £2 per child

Booking is essential, so do get in touch to reserve your place. We'd love to see you there

Do contact Penny Reader with any questions or to book a place penny.families@gmail.com

News from the Churches

Midweek Activities

Welcome Wednesdays

A reflection, coffee and doughnuts every Wednesday, 10.30 am in St Mary's.

St Mary's Women's Group

Thursdays 10 am to 11 am. Join for coffee, chat, Lectio and prayer. All welcome - for more details and dates, email marlb.anglicanteam@tiscali.co.uk

New- The Evening Service Men's Fellowship Group

You're warmly invited to join a friendly and relaxed gathering for Bible study, prayer, refreshments, and genuine conversation.

This group is especially for gentlemen who attend St Mary's Informal 5pm Worship and would enjoy connecting more deeply with others.

Starting on Wednesday 6th May, at 12noon-1pm at Church Cottage, Silverless Street.

The group will run on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month. If you'd like to know more, feel free to get in touch with Tim Gauntlett at tim.gauntlett27@gmail.com.

Social Events

Men's Supper Club

Feel like having a good dinner with the guys down at the pub? Why not try the Men's Supper club on Friday 1st May, 7.30pm at the Castle & Ball. Please contact David Chandler if you would like to join.

Emmanuel Church New Road, Marlborough, SN8 1AH:

Sunday 10 am weekly. Includes children's group, age 3 to school Year 4, followed by refreshments.

Sunday 4 pm weekly. Includes crèche and Sunday School groups, followed by refreshments (for adults) and a sandwich tea for the children.

Weekly activities: home groups in Marlborough, Pewsey and Ogbourne St George, as well as community groups. Please visit our website at emmanuelmarlborough.org.

Weekly/one-off Events:

Women's Bible Study, every other Friday during term time, 10 am- 11.30 am. All women welcome - onsite crèche available. women@emmanuelmarlborough.org

Homegroups, Thursdays during term time, Pewsey – 7.30 pm, Marlborough – 7.45 pm, Ogbourne St George – 7.45 pm. office@emmanuelmarlborough.org

Little Friends Toddler Group, Thursdays during term time, 10-11.30 am at the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough, SN8 1AP. Free play, singing and story time, snacks for children and refreshments for carers. littlefriends@emmanuelmarlborough.org

Explorers, Fridays during term time, 6-7.15 pm at the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough. School years 3-6. Fun, games, tuck and a short Bible talk (bring 50p for tuck). explorers@emmanuelmarlborough.org

Annual Plant Sale: Saturday 16 May

9.30am – 12.00pm in the Town Hall

Probably the best things about Marlborough Gardening Association's sale are that plants are grown by our members so are likely to thrive in the local soil and are very reasonably priced.

There will be a great variety of plants, mostly perennials, which are a bargain as once established should come back year after year. There will be house plants, a few shrubs, a good range of young vegetable and fruit plants and herbs too.

Some perennials will not flower until later in the summer, but do not be put off, as flower colour, height, aspect and spread should be on the label and our members are very happy to advise you.

If you are looking for bedding plants and pelargoniums (ideal for pots and borders), these will be supplied by Andy's Plants (who has the stall on the Saturday market).

So set your alarm and arrive early. Entrance is free, but please bring bags to take your plants home and do not forget this is a cash only

sale.

If you are excited by what you see, then why not join the Association. We meet on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm in Marlborough Town Hall. We are a friendly crowd and have speakers, trips plus a weekend away, making annual membership of £15 a bargain.

We look forward to seeing you on 16th May.

Miranda Gilmour

Marlborough Gardening Association



Finishing touches before the doors open (Copyright MGA)

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Marlborough Churches Together

Usual Sunday Services Times:

Society of Friends, Friends Meeting House, The Parade

10.30am Meeting for worship

St George's Preshute (Anglican)

8.00am Holy Communion (1st & 3rd Sundays)

10.30am Worship

St Mary's with Christchurch Methodist Fellowship (behind the Town Hall)

8.00am Holy Communion (2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays)

10.30am Worship

5.00pm Informal Worship (with Energize Children's Church)

(1st Sunday of the month is All-age worship with Children's tea at 4.30)

St John the Baptist, Minal (Anglican)

9.00 am Worship

St Thomas More, George Lane (Roman Catholic)

11.00 am Mass

Emmanuel, New Road (Free Evangelical)

10.00 am Morning service

4.00pm Worship (every Sunday)

Marlborough College Services are shown at the College chapel

For more information and updates please check the individual church websites.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Departed - We pray for the families of:

12/03/26 William 'Charlie' Amor (96), Savill Crescent, Wroughton

St George's, Preshute

19/03/26 Shirley Elizabeth Innes Chisholm-Batten (90), George Lane, Marlborough

St George's, Preshute

01/04/26 Cynithia 'Joan' Duke (90), Hyde Lane, Marlborough

St George's, Preshute

08/04/26 Martin Charles William Evans (83), Bassett House Care Home, RWB

North Wilts Crematorium

A Good Read

It's a lovely positive feeling, opening a new book by a writer you like. Sometimes it's like relaxing into a warm bath, sometimes it's more like the feeling of being solicitously strapped into the (leather, heated) seats of a glossy high-performance car, then taken on a turbo-charged journey through glorious countryside by a skilled and confident driver.

Francis Spufford is the 'driver' of ***Nonesuch***, a 'daft mixture' (the author's own words) of the Blitz, the early days of television, the WW2 stock market, magic, arcane secret societies, and time travel. It's ingenious and energetic, with a marvellously chippy and exasperated heroine, and unexpected and enjoyably stropy archangels in the mix. I know, it sounds preposterous and mad, but I loved it and was left mildly distraught at the ending. The final page says 'To Be Continued' but who knows if we can believe that? Fingers crossed.

Time travel seems to be a bit of a thing at the moment (something to do with not enjoying the times we live in, perhaps?) Be careful what you wish for. In ***Yester Year***, by Caro Claire Burke, Natalie, the protagonist is a 'tradwife' influencer, posting videos of an idyllic, wholesome country life. Adorable moppet children and handsome and rugged husband are the supporting cast in her life of baking, laundry, soap-making (!) and all-round Instagrammable domestic wonderfulness.

Of course, there's a whole team behind the scenes creating the perfection which generates envy and trolling. And then one day she wakes up and it really is 1850 something, not at all pretty, grubby, painful and frightening. Gradually we learn Natalie's story, her anger, the way her life has always been about 'performance' and how money and politics drive it. Lies, social media toxicity, narcissism, marriage, motherhood, it's all there, it's all complicated and it's very nasty. The whole book reads slightly deliriously, I'm still making my mind up about it, but it's definitely compelling.

I wrote last month about Elly Griffiths' time-travelling detective, and how I was being pressed to read her ***Dr Ruth Galloway*** series. Which I am now doing, and frankly, you're lucky I took time to write this piece. These days I am huffing and glaring at anyone or anything that drags me away from Dr Ruth and DCI Nelson as they wander round North Norfolk, constantly uncovering skeletons. I've nearly finished the series, and I will be bereft. Fortunately I have a couple of new books waiting to be read and they should help me deal with the loss.

Debby Guest

Family News - Naomi Painter

An unfillable hole has been left in the lives of many in Marlborough not least for Mike Pearce as his beloved wife **Sue Pearce** of nearly 40 years died unexpectedly and suddenly on January 9th this year.

Sue was a people person quietly helping people where they were in many situations, a friend to many, as was seen in the number who attended her memorial service in February. Sue was a distributor for *Tower and Town* for many years; assisted with bringing the Victorian Cemetery back to life; she was a talented needlewoman enjoying the social aspect of group work as well as individual projects. Sue travelled widely with Mike and had a real passion for Art which spurred her on to explore different places and cultures.

Mike penned the following poem the night she died and it sums her up beautifully:

The House of Us

It wasn't "ME"

It wasn't "YOU"

It was always "US"

Now "US" has gone, and "WE" are no more.

"You're Joined at the Hip" they used to say

But that was all that showed.

We were joined at the heart

Joined at the soul

We lived in the world of "US"

And now the house is closing down

The lights are dimmed

The blinds are down

The laughter and the joy of life

Are now prized memories of "US"

But "US" will never die.

Mike Pearce

Erratum

Two of the wonderful paintings by Marlborough College students in the April edition were incorrectly titled and for this we apologise. The title of the cover picture by Mathilde C-A should be 'Portrait of my Grandmother' and that of Rosie L's artwork on page 6 'Child'.

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

All items for the June issue by Tuesday 12th May please.

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