

The Little Gallery

1 The Parade, Marlborough SN8 1NE



Opened by Winsor Birch in 2024, The Little Gallery is a vibrant space showcasing both emerging and established artists.

It offers collectors, enthusiasts, and first-time visitors a diverse range of artworks, with free exhibitions throughout the year.

Recent shows include *Richard Pikesley*, *Anna Simmons* and *20th Century Works*.

BOB RUDD: A LIFE IN COLOUR

Friday 5 June - Friday 17 July

A highly anticipated exhibition by Wiltshire-based artist Bob Rudd will be opening this June. Rudd captures striking landscapes across Great Britain, France and Venice, evoking the drama of natural forces through strong colours and light.

Opening Reception

Thursday 4 June, 4pm - 7pm

RSVP to enquiries@thelittlegallery.co.uk.



Visit us Monday - Saturday, 10am - 4pm | thelittlegallery.co.uk | 01672 216472

TOWER AND TOWN

Minal - What's in a Name?

It is a lovely British quirk that I live on a road with no name and in a village with an adopted name. Officially named Mildenhall but commonly known as Minal, there is attitude about this village that has stood it apart from the time the Romans chose to stay almost 2,000 years ago.

So much has changed, especially in the last 50 years. Up to then, the way of life organically bonded the village together. Families lived in Minal for generations, schooled locally, then learned trades, worked and finally died within a few miles of where they were born. There was little leisure time, but villagers rubbed shoulders naturally in the workplace, domestically and at church on Sunday.

The technology revolution that we are living in has radically changed the way a village lives. Although we have more free time, we are mostly self-reliant and can communicate with the world in a flash.

Paradoxically we now must work hard at sustaining the village identity. The school and shop have gone but we still have the church and the pub. In addition to the Parish Council and the Parochial Church Council there are organisations and activities that create platforms through which we now socialise. These include the Village Hall, the Sports and Social Club, Garden Club and Minal Munch, all run by dedicated volunteers. We communicate village activities and events via “social platforms” such as the monthly Minal News, the Minal Community Facebook page and the parish website (<https://mildenhallwiltshireparishcouncil.gov.uk>). The website is packed with information and credit is due particularly to Norman Spires’ “A Minal Chronicle” completed in 1990, from which several stories are extracted in the following pages.

Clive Scholefield: Editor

June Edition No 770.

Compiler: Hugh de Saram

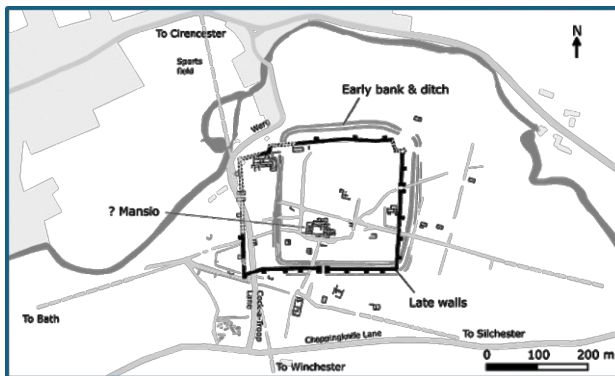
Proof Readers: Julia Peel, Diana Foster-Kemp

Marlborough Churches
Together



Roman Minal

It's hard to imagine that a field in Mildenhall was once a Roman town. Walking now along Chopping Knife Lane, the field looks much like any other, but aerial photographs have revealed outlines of buildings, roads and walls. Investigations on the ground, including excavations in the early 1960s and a Time Team dig in 2009, have added more. While we don't have a huge amount of detail, we have an idea of the town and can tell something of its story.



Cunetio Layout. Credit J.Foot

The town was called Cunetio. We know this from a Roman route planning document. It was probably founded soon after the Roman invasion of AD 43 and was in use to the late fourth century, probably longer. It was located at a junction of Roman roads, where the “Roman A4” towards Bath met roads running north to Cirencester and south to Winchester and Old Sarum.

The map shows the buildings, roads, and defences we know about. There were

probably more buildings but built of wood so little remains. The large building in the middle looks like a “mansio”: a lodging house for Roman officials travelling across the empire. The Time Team dig showed it was well constructed, with a stone tiled roof and rooms with painted walls.

Cunetio was probably a centre of local administration, a market, and home to craft and industrial activity. Several hoards of Roman coins have been found in the town. The best-known is a hoard of 54,951 silver coins discovered in 1978, the largest

ever found from Roman Britain.

In the fourth century a massive stone wall, with bastions and impressive gateways, was constructed. The scale of it suggests it was by imperial command. The town was clearly an important place, perhaps a collection point for taxes paid as grain, perhaps an army

base.

Britain was exporting grain to feed the Roman armies on the Rhine at this time, and Cunetio could have been part of the system. Maybe some of the wheat eaten by Roman soldiers on the Rhine frontier was grown in the fields of Mildenhall.

Jeremy Foot

The Parish of Minal

In the Dark Ages, there were three centres. Bedwyn was the old cultural centre of the district as well as being at the heart of the Royal estates. Ramsbury was the ecclesiastical focus and has a bishopric dating to 909 AD. And the small town of Marleburg (Marlborough) was the commercial centre and main market. The parish of Mildenhall was roughly in the centre of these three, but when the Roman centre of Cunetio became deserted in about 450 AD, Mildenhall became less important as a geographical place and instead developed as a large prosperous farming and milling community.

Minal Parish now occupies approximately 4,180 acres. Within the parish there are two other large hamlets, Stichcombe and Poulton. Both were important enough to feature in the Domesday Survey of 1086. By the 16th century several large farm communities had been established. The Marlborough Downs rise to 700 feet in the north, while the plateau of Savernake Forest to the south is 600 feet. The River Kennet divides these two features, relentlessly cutting through the soft chalk to create the iconic valley below.

Although commonly called Minal, the proper name of the parish and the village is Mildenhall. The earliest record comes from Saxon times when it was Mildenhald, and the *Carlularium Saxonicum* gave this spelling. The Domesday Survey of 1086 gave the name as Mildenhalle but in 1282

the Charter Rolls called it Mildehale. Other versions followed. About 1760, a new form, that of Minal, was being used. It is very possible that the difficulty of dealing with the three syllables of Mil-den-hall was too much for the local folk who may never have seen the name written down. They slurred the three syllables together to sound something like “Minorl” which was easier to say, and this in turn, became known as Minal.

As with many ancient parishes, local names abound. Cock-a-Troop, possibly associated with a signal station or look-out, follows the Roman road south towards Winchester. Another piece of the Roman way is named Greenway. It is said that village people cut wood on Chopping Knife Lane. The strangely named hamlet of Werg was a community of nine dwellings on the River Kennet. Amity Oak is a tree in Savernake Forest which marks 3 parish borders: Minal, Little Bedwyn and Brimslayed-Cadley (now Savernake). At Whiteshard Bottom 4 parishes meet - Minal, Ogbourne St. George, Aldbourne, and Ramsbury, with Ogbourne St. Andrew joining nearby.

Mills: The Kennet powered three mills between 1773 and 1924 – Werg, Durnsford and Stichcombe with one on the Og at Poulton.

Adapted from “About Minal” on the parish website.

A Newcomer's Glimpse Into Village Life of the Past

Arriving in Minal a few years ago to begin my retirement, I found myself settling into village life on my own.

What I discovered was a warm, welcoming community that gradually drew me in. Having grown up in a town in the 1960s, I've been fascinated to learn what life was like here for those who grew up in Minal. Conversations with villagers who have lived here since birth have revealed a picture of a very different village, shaped by farming, open land, and a close connection to the countryside.

Minal was once a thriving farming community. At the heart of the village stood cottages, farmhouses, and barns belonging to the two main landowning families, the Gales and the Ainslies. One resident recalled that behind her cottage on the main street, tall fences enclosed stabled stud horses. To the south, near the River Kennet, fields were dotted with pigsties. She remembers piglets frequently escaping and the farmers' swift, rather matter-of-fact, castrations of the tiny males before they trotted back to their pens.

Villagers speak fondly of wandering across fields and byways, exploring woodlands, and playing on an island in the river and freedom to roam. There were no pavements along the main road, and cobblestones lined the fronts of cottages.

June Goddard (néé Fishlock), who has lived in Minal since the 1940s, describes a

childhood spent in a cottage by the river, attached to the village blacksmith. Life was simple: water was drawn from a pump, heated in a large copper basin for weekly washing and bathing, and the toilet stood outside. She attended the village school and vividly remembers walking with her teachers into Marlborough in 1948 to see King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, who appeared on the Town Hall balcony during the centenary celebrations of Marlborough College. Her memories paint a picture of a self-sufficient community. Bread, milk, and fish were delivered to homes, and almost every household grew vegetables. Children spent long days outdoors, watching wildlife along the river, observing the annual weed-cutting by the river men, and following farmers and nursery owners as they tended their animals and crops — sometimes helping, sometimes hindering, but always learning.

These stories have given me a deeper appreciation of the village I now call home. Minal has changed, as all places do, but the spirit of community and connection to the land remains woven through its history — and through the memories of those who have lived it.

Valerie Hammerton

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Clockwise from top:

- Mildenhall early 20thC. Credit Jim Clarke
- The Horseshoe
- Farming in the 50's. Credit A. Ainslie: George Chun working on the silage clamp.
- Below: Minal Church, by David Fishlock



Kennet in flood 01/24



Bends at the Bothy

Credit: Nigel Paige-Dickins

The River

The River Kennet quietly defines the character of Mildenhall. She has flowed through this landscape for millenia, since way before the Roman settlement of Cunetio gave her current name. As a globally rare and precious chalkstream, she has sprung from the aquifer, drawn from the rainwater that soaks through the chalk sponge of the surrounding downland, and nourished life in this valley for thousands of years.

Her waters emerge clear and sediment free and, because of their unique source, they maintain, year round, a near constant temperature and flow rate. From her sources at Swallowhead Spring, she has seen the ancient monuments of Silbury Hill, West Kennet Longbarrow and Avebury Circle come into being. Most of her flow, prior to her union with the Thames at Reading, traverses the National Landscape of the North Wessex Downs. Her rich habitat and ecological value is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Endangered species, like Water Vole, Reed Bunting, and Brook Lamprey find sanctuary here. Water Beetles, Caddisflies, Hawk Moths, Mayflies and myriad more insect

species forge the basis of her complex food webs.

River Kennet is a thread of ancient life that weaves through Minal, still bringing perpetual sustenance and steadying influence to village life; a watery thread through past and present days and on into the future via the local and global water cycles that take her waters out to sea and return to replenish the chalk downlands as rain.

Ghosts of her industrial and pre-industrial past; the mills and breweries and tanneries along her banks, still whisper of her history in shaping the working lives of generations of the people of this area. She has survived many pressures and assaults over time. Most recently a devastating chemical insecticide pollution event in 2013 from which John Hounslow, our respected River Keeper of 48 years, observes, she is still in recovery.

The river's future will likely see more extremes of flooding and drought. Our collective job as Minal villagers, is to support her to continue to thrive through the changes that will come.

Milly Carmichael

THE PARISH OF MINAL MAP

The Parish Map, as shown on the front cover, was initially researched by Richard Westall and meticulously calligraphed and illustrated by Helen Scholes in the late 90's. An original hangs in the Village Hall in memory of Richard. It is a colourful artistic record of names and points of interest within the parish, with many anecdotes and references. Helen owns the copyright and still has full size prints (B2) available for sale. Contact Helen at helen@penandinkcalligraphy.co.uk.

St John the Baptist Church

Why are churches so important to so many of us? Is it the worship, the people we meet there or the stories they tell by the building itself? The Church of St John the Baptist, at the bottom of Church Lane, is part of the Marlborough Team in the Diocese of Salisbury; and who better to talk about this than David Sherratt, our historian and Sacristan.

"Glastonbury Abbey, in a 9th Century summary of land held, includes a parcel of land held in Minal since 804A.D. This would have contributed to the income of the Abbey along with other land gained in Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire and other counties. The first visible evidence of a permanent building on the site is a two-storey stone Saxon tower, which, by the thickness of its walls may also have served as a refuge in those restless times.

"The first solid evidence of a church is the Norman nave with its typical Romanesque round arches. This has been dated to about 1100. Later, the arch into the tower and the arch into the chancel replaced their Norman originals about 1200 marking a new style, 'Early English'. Henry VIII's reign saw the upper storey of the tower built; and the clerestory may

have been added then, making the church much lighter. The chief glory of the church is the exquisite carved woodwork in the nave box pews installed in 1814-16 and the chancel 'Strawberry Hill Gothic' built in the late 1700s. D.S."

The three original bells dating from 1596 were removed and recast by James Wells of Aldbourne into a ring of five in 1801. A sixth was added and the bells were tuned and rehung by Whitechapel Foundry in 1958, in memory of the Rev. Edward Courtman, last Rector-Patron, who ministered for 43 years in this Parish. The challenging but fulfilling art of bell-ringing is alive and well at Minal. The present organ was built by Jones of Kensington and installed in 1894 as a memorial to Charles Soames, a former Rector of the Parish.

Alongside the building itself, our church continues to be the body of people who come together to support and encourage one another in our faith. It's also a place to share in the joys and sadnesses of life, with others, through baptisms, weddings and funerals. Everyone is welcome, and we hope that you'll drop in to see us, to find out more.

Sarah Musgrave

Children of Minal

How different life is for our children and families compared to 18thC Minal.

Life was hard for families and children; basic living conditions; candles, open fires; outhouses for toilet and washing clothes and a range to cook on. Children spent most of their childhood living within the village, helping parents with chores and playtime would be simple with home-made toys and games. Poverty was a real issue for many families as was illness; the Burials Register in 1810 note a family at Werg Mill lost all ten children to Consumption.

Children were expected to work from an early age. In 1879 Harry Watts aged 14 was employed by a farmer, Mr. Butler from Stitchcombe They were on their way back from Marlborough, when the horses took fright and bolted down the hill; Harry was drawn under the wheels of the wagon and died. On the roadside where he died still exists a memorial stone cross.

In 1808 “a poor woman in Minal had provided school and education to 14 village children”; this ended in 1818 when the only education for the poor was via two Sunday schools. The Rector Charles Francis seeing this plight gave land and £4,000 to build a school. In 1906 the

average attendance at the school was 70. It closed in 1969.

We moved here in the 1980’s. Every summer Lady Brooke and parents organised games on the sports field, followed by swimming in Shelagh Ainslie’s pool. Sunday school and a youth group were run by villagers. In 1990, the village playground, next to the old schoolhouse, was under threat of proposed housing. Village mothers fought to save it. Later Di Devonshire alongside the Parish Council raised funds and redeveloped the site to the wonderful playground we have today.

Children have been at the centre of many village events. Fetes with maypole dancing, the annual Guy Fawkes competition; dressing floats for the Marlborough carnival and celebrations for Royal events. In 1990 we re-enacted what life might have been in the 18th century, held a Minal Merrymaking event and Mad Hatter’s Tea Party. Children made hobbyhorses, dressed up and we danced to 18th C music in our new village hall. It is true that the life of children now is different, but at the heart of each child is the yearning for exploration, play and creativity.



Watts Memorial



Minal playground with Old School House



Gilly Price family, 18c dress. Credit Gilly Price

Gilly Price

The Village Pub: The Horseshoe

We are very lucky to have one. A personal account of a community asset.

The Horseshoe was the Cook family home for many generations. In 1952, after a few years as an off-licence, it officially became a public house. There were two bars. The public bar, where most of the villagers would congregate, in what was quite a small space and the lounge bar, where you were likely to see only one or two people, quietly sipping on their beverage and talking about the world outside whilst casting a wary eye over any interlopers who dared to enter their space. It remained in the Cook family until (some time) in the 1990s when it was sold and then extended to become the building we know today. The paddock at the back was created from what was, essentially, a copse of trees and an allotment. A young Richard Baily was the Landlord and ran the pub until it had to close in early 2000.

In that time, I had moved to the village and

had become ‘one of the locals’.

After a short period with no pub (horror!!), it was bought by John and Pam Desmond, and they ran it until they retired in 2022. Many stories could be told about the time they were there, but we haven’t the word count!

Unlike the fate of so many villages, Minal is extremely fortunate that The Horseshoe found new owners who wanted to keep the pub going. Having purchased it from the Desmonds, James and Clare Richings implemented a substantial refurbishment before reopening to much acclaim in August 2022.

The Horseshoe remains at the heart of the community and, whilst it attracts people from far and wide for the excellent food, quiz, and music nights, you will find a host of regulars from the village having a quiet pint or two talking about... well, who knows!

Nick Beere

Minal Village Hall

The Hall’s Commemorative Plaque

Have you noticed the plaque above the main door of the Minal Village Hall?

It reads: “This hall was opened on 11th March 1989 by Jack Ainslie Esq. OBE. Built for the people of Minal and in memory of The Rt. Hon. Lord Brooke of Cumnor.”

How the Hall Was Built

The building of the hall was no mean feat. Jack Ainslie generously donated the land on which the hall stands, while Lady Brooke chaired the Fund-raising Committee and took the lead in raising money to build the hall in memory of her husband. Derek Moss, who was then Chairman of the committee, worked

Continued p.11



Minal Village Hall and Commemorative Plaque

of events, including the monthly Minal Munch—an opportunity for the community to drop in for a chat, a snack and a drink. The hall also provides the setting for the annual Produce Show, Barn Dance, Bingo, and the Christmas Nativity Play, among others.

Facilities and Activities

The hall features its own parking area for easy access. It accommodates a wide range of activities, organised by individuals or clubs, including pilates, yoga, upholstery, floral club, U3A photography club, art, music, NCT support groups and serves as a Polling Station. It is also a popular choice for private parties and

tirelessly alongside the team to raise more than £40,000 towards the project.

A Community Hub

Village halls and similar venues are central to community life, bringing people together for events, workshops, classes and more.

Minal is certainly fortunate to have such a venue, which hosts a variety



celebrations.

Contact Information

For those interested in using the hall please make contact using the following link:

<http://v2.hallmaster.co.uk/Scheduler/View/6651>

Or email us on:
minalbookings@gmail.com.

Lynn Scholefield

The Village Show



A Life in Colour: Paintings by Bob Rudd

An Exhibition of Paintings by Bob Rudd

Friday 5 June – Friday 17 July
2026

The Little Gallery
1 The Parade, SN8 1NE
Visit Mon – Sat, 10am – 4pm.

Opening Reception:

Thursday 4 June, 4pm – 7pm

A highly anticipated exhibition by Wiltshire-based artist Bob Rudd opens this month at The Little Gallery in Marlborough. Presenting a striking collection of landscapes from across Great Britain, the exhibition spans the Highlands of Scotland to the Cornish coast, while also venturing further afield to scenes from France and Venice.

A member and former Chairman of the Bath Society of Artists, and a longstanding member of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours, Rudd is widely recognised as one of the leading contemporary exponents of the medium.

Born in East Anglia, Rudd studied at Bath Academy of Art between 1969 and 1973 before settling in the West Country. His work reflects a deep engagement with landscape and architecture, shaped by direct experience and influenced by artists including Samuel Palmer, John Piper, and Graham Sutherland.

Drawing on a lifetime of travel and observation, Rudd captures mountains, rivers, and rugged coastlines through a

distinctive visual language defined by strong colour and dynamic composition.

Working in transparent watercolour, often on a large scale, Rudd explores the expressive potential of the medium. His paintings balance carefully controlled passages with spontaneous, gestural marks, where recognisable forms meet areas of abstraction.

Colour remains central to his practice. Rather than recording a fixed moment, his palette reflects an intuitive response to place, capturing the shifting drama of light, weather, and atmosphere.

Rudd's achievements include the Turner Watercolour Award (2010), and his work is held in major collections including the House of Commons, House of Lords, BBC Bristol, and Longleat.

This exhibition offers a compelling opportunity to experience the work of a distinctive and accomplished painter.

Works available to view and purchase at thelittlegallery.co.uk.



Bob Rudd: *Above Haystacks, Lake District*

Minal Clubs and Traditions

The Minal Garden Club

The Gardening Club brings together villagers with a shared interest in gardening and the natural environment. The club meets informally around once a month, providing a welcoming and supportive community.

During the spring and summer, members host informal visits to their gardens, sharing ideas, exchanging practical knowledge, and enjoying a variety of garden styles.

The club regularly organises talks at the Village Hall. Recent topics have included permaculture, wildflowers, vegetable growing, and rain-garden design. The club runs a plant stall at the village fete, and an annual highlight is the Village Show, where residents are invited to exhibit their produce, flowers, baking, preserves, and crafts. The event remains a popular fixture in the village calendar.

New members are always welcome, regardless of experience.

Valerie Hammerton

The Sports Field

Minal is indeed fortunate to have its own field, managed by the Sports and Social Club. We provide an increasingly scarce amenity for organised sport such as cricket and youth football, the latter being predominantly girls. The village has full

access to the field for informal activities and dog walking. The field provides a venue for popular annual village events including the fete, outdoor theatre and bonfire/fireworks night. These provide an opportunity for people to meet and socialise. The organisation of the events themselves brings the village together in a very therapeutic manner. Talking of outdoor theatre, the Mikron Theatre Company will return to Minal sports field on Friday 7th August 7 pm, for another hilarious and skilful show – this year titled “Wensleydale Whey” – The Grate Cheese Quest! See <https://mikron.org.uk>.

Beating the Bounds

In 1910 the ceremony of 'Beating the Bounds' (walking the boundary of the Parish) was carried out on Easter Monday. This was said to ensure that the younger members of the parish could remember the line of the boundary and, in turn, pass on this knowledge. But really it was an opportunity to bond the village through activity.

This tradition has been revived this century and every spring determined villagers walk part or all the 14-mile perimeter of the parish. On 2nd May this year over 20 villagers completed the walk, finishing up in the pub just as the rain started. We seem to have come “full circle”.

Clive Scholefield

What's On in June

Opening of Kennet and Avon Canal

Trust 75 Anniversary display

2nd Tuesday late morning Crofton Pumping Station. Full details of all the celebration events are on the website www.katrust.org.uk under KA75 Anniversary Celebrations.

The Arts Society – Pewsey Vale

2nd Tuesday 2.30pm Bouverie Hall, Pewsey. Shaunna Isaac will speak about 'The Art of The Steal – Nazi Looting During WW2. Over 20% of Western Art was looted during World War II. This lecture will provide an overview and several landmark cases will be discussed. Further details at taspp.org.uk. Doors open at 2.00pm, refreshments available. Visitors welcome. £7 on the door.

Marlborough Floral Club

4th Thursday 2.00pm Mildenhall Village Hall. 'Picture This' with Lucy Ellis. All welcome. £6 to attend. More details from Micky Graham on 01672 514301

Damian Lewis

7th Sunday 6.00pm St Peter's Church, Marlborough. Join Damian Lewis to celebrate the release of his new album 'Sweet Chaos'. Damian will perform a short, stripped-back set, showcasing the songs in their rawest form. The performance will be followed by a Q&A and signing event. Tickets and album and ticket bundles are available from Sound Knowledge in-store, over the phone on 01672 511106 or at stpetersmarlborough.org.uk

Marlborough Concert Orchestra 20th Anniversary Gala Concert.

20th Saturday 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

Wantage Silver Band In Concert

21st Sunday 3.00pm – 5.00pm St Peter's Church, Marlborough. A varied programme of brass band music will feature their winning programme from the 2026 Welsh Open Contest, States of Mind as well as featuring some of their soloists. Tickets £15 (children free) at <https://www.wantageband.or/events>

Aldbourn Heritage Centre

Open 11.00am – 4.00pm on weekends and 12.00noon – 4.30pm on Wednesdays, March through to October. The Heritage Centre is a small museum located next to the Crown Hotel (SN8 2DU) in the centre of the village. It houses artifacts relating to Aldbourn and its surrounds from pre-historic times to the present day. It covers the 3500 year old Aldbourn Cup (original now in the British Museum), Roman and Mediaeval ties to recent history such as the "Band of Brothers" during WW2, Dr Who filming and the famous Aldbourn Brass Band. It has an extensive collection of bells and has over 10,000 photographs of past Aldbourn. A recent acquisition is a carillon dating from 1870. It also has

What's On in June

monthly talks held in the Methodist Hall, Aldbourne. Visit www.aldbourneheritage.org.uk For more information.

22nd Monday 7.30pm Methodist Hall, Aldbourne. The Heritage Centre talk. Cassie Rust will speak on Doomsday Book.

Prospect Hospice Starlight Walk

27th Saturday 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

School Dates

Marlborough St Mary's Primary, Preshute Primary and St John's Term 6 begins Monday 1st.

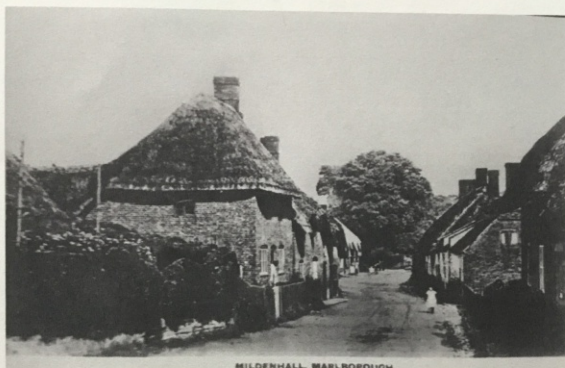
Marlborough College Summer Term ends Friday 26th at 12noon.

Coming Up In July

Brilliant International Musicians Series: Paddington Trio

Saturday 11th July 7.00pm – 9.00pm St Peter's Church, Marlborough. Seen as one of the most exciting chamber ensembles of their generation, the Paddington Trio has been recognised in international competitions and live performances for their fresh interpretations and exuberant energy. Finnish violinist Tuulia Hero, Irish cellist Patrick Moriarty and American pianist Stephanie Tang have made London their home and emerged as an ensemble of an entirely unique and lasting entity. The trio's grand mission is to bridge the gap between new listeners and serious classical music enthusiasts by welcoming everyone into their living room of musical discovery and shared love of chamber music. Tickets £20, members £15 from stpetersmarlborough.org.uk

Linda Illsley - What's On Editor



MILDENHALL, MARLBOROUGH

Farming Then and Now

Born in 1953, I have lived in Minal Parish for most of my life. I have very vivid and happy memories of growing up on the farm that my father and his partner, Alec Gale, followed by his son John, farmed in the 50s, 60s and 70s.

Farming was very different then. My recollection across the ten farms within the parish, comprising approximately 3500 acres, is that probably around 45-50 people would have been employed on the land, most of whom would have lived with their families in the parish. This would have represented a high proportion of its population.

Farms were very diverse then, with most having a dairy herd. Some also kept beef, sheep and pigs. They all grew cereals, some of which would be kept for feeding their livestock. There was a stud farm at Kennet Cottage Yard, and I recall as a child seeing the stallion being walked on a daily basis from there to his paddock, where the village hall now stands. Machinery was comparatively small and quite rudimentary, but none the less effective, although farming required a lot of manual labour.

Today there are probably just a handful of employees working on the same acreage of land. All the dairy units have disappeared, together with the pig units and sheep flocks. A couple of farms still

keep beef. Most of the farmers now rely on contractors to carry out their arable operations, using large and sophisticated machinery, which they can only justify because of the economies of scale.

Whilst the farmers in the parish oversee the management of their arable enterprises, many have focused their attention more on diversification out of agriculture. Now within it, there are buildings and land set-aside for livery and training three-day eventers. Many former livestock buildings have been converted into light industrial units and a couple into a children's daycare nursery. One farm now has a butchery/farm shop selling its own high quality organic beef and other produce. Cottages that were once lived in by farm employees are now let out to predominantly younger families at an affordable rent. Whilst the population working on the farms has dropped dramatically, numbers being employed in the Minal area have increased significantly through diversification.

Andrew Ainslie



L-R David Fishlock, Jack Ainslie, Jim Fishlock and Alec Gale

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OPEN GARDENS
Marlborough
Sunday June 28th



Sunday, 28th

June 1-5pm

Take a stroll through beautiful gardens on our Open Gardens trail - all within easywalking

distance of Marlborough High Street.

One of the most important fundraising events in The Merchant's House calendar, Marlborough Open Gardens helps support the ongoing care and restoration of this remarkable historic house.

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Contemporary Art Comes to Church

The small village of Ogbourne St Andrew has a remarkable history. Archaeology digs uncovered evidence of a Bronze Age burial mound in the church yard and a medieval farm in a nearby. This year the 12th century church will host an exhibition of contemporary art by four artists, all taking part in Marlborough Open Studios for the first time.

Two exhibitors, Amanda Gosse and Jane Skingley are painters. Amanda works in gouache and acrylic taking subjects as varied as birds that visit her garden or are native to Australia, jewellery and nostalgic objects. Landscape and still life paintings are brought to life by Jane whose work is widely exhibited in this country and abroad. A key characteristic of Jane's work in oils on canvas is her creation of a wonderful sense of calm in both her original paintings and prints.

After 50 years of work in commercial photography, retirement sparked Rob Mills interest to take his camera on walks to capture the essence of a place using both black and white and colour film and his previous skill set to create striking images of landscape features. For his latest collection, 'Unearthed', potter Stuart Anderson has approached stoneware clay as though he is revealing rather than creating, coaxing out surfaces that look and feel eroded, mineral and timeless.

Exhibiting in a church presents a challenge given restrictions on the use of surfaces and the activity of services. The MOS artists interest was sparked by the success of an art sale held to raise money for the church last year. Over four weekends in July their work will be displayed in nooks and crannies and from walls in the church while Stuart's pots will be placed on windowsills and plinths. These interesting spaces are lit from windows that are mostly clear glass creating wonderful patterns of light and shade across the exhibition spaces.

Including this unusual setting in your planning for MOS offers lots of interest. Moreover, it's a short distance from the Silks a community pub offering good food and drink!

For further details see www.marlboroughopenstudios.co.uk



*Amanda Gosse and Jane Skingley
Rob Mills and Stuart Anderson*



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Methodist Office Coordinator

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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 June 7th, 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 June is on Sunday 7th June and our theme will be 'Sing for joy'. All are welcome.

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

St George's, Preshute Family Fête

Saturday 13 June 2026, 12.30pm – 4pm

To be opened by the Mayor of Marlborough. Games and activities for children, duck race, local craft stall, book stall, plant stall, silent auction and more! Lots of tasty treats available with a lunchtime BBQ, tea and cake and an ice cream van. A chance to see the church in action with bellringing, Messy Church, Open the Book, Eco Church and organ music. All welcome!

Free entry! Free parking!

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- 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.

Running on 3rd and 17th June, 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 5th June, 7.30pm at the Castle & Ball. Please contact David Chandler if you would like to join.

News from the Churches

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

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

fridaynights@emmanuelmarlborough.org

Sparklers, Monday, 15 June, 3.45-4.45 pm (Doors open at 3.30 pm) at the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough. A monthly kids club for school years Reception to Year 2. Games, Snacks and Bible Stories! For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact: sparklers@emmanuelmarlborough.org

Rooted, a discipleship group for Y7-9 and Y10-13: Friday (5 June), 6-7.15 pm at the Prest's home. Through Bible study, training and discussion, we want to grow in love for each other and for Jesus. Held fortnightly with food, before Friday Nights youth group. We'd love to see you there! For more details and the location address, please email ruth@emmanuelmarlborough.org

Clergy Letter

At the end of July, my wife, Jane, retires from being a special needs teacher and, recently, TA, and I retire from the Methodist Ministry.

Rather, being one of Mr Wesley's itinerant ministers, I won't retire, but "sit down". The Methodist Conference will not send me to other churches but let me sit down and put my horse out to grass!

We will be moving from a five bedroom manse to a three bedroom bungalow. So, we have started turning out and know that there will be many things which we will not be able to take with us. We have books in nearly every room and the culling has begun! It is hard going through old friends, thinking "will I read you again? Probably not: you must go!" Thrillers, whodunnits, spy stories and family dramas are all up for scrutiny. Classics such as "Bleak House", ("A" Level text), I've been meaning to reread for years – that's safe, as is Paul Gallico's "The Snow Goose: A Story of Dunkirk", illustrated by Peter Scott, a present to my Mother in the 1950's from her sister. The theology books will also have to be pruned – some haven't been opened since leaving college, thirty-six years ago! They looked good, but there will be no room in the bungalow! Bible Commentaries will be packed and travel with us, but the half read books...?

The process is making me think about what is important, not only in print, but life in general. I may be sitting down, but faith will still be a central part of life and Jane and I will be taking time to work out how

we will live that out in our new home and community. Reflecting on the ministerial role, I will not miss the emails, the constant information from the Church's head office or the evening meetings. What I have enjoyed is the worship; the studying of the Bible and praying with others; the privilege of sharing the Christian faith journey with people at the different stages of their faith, learning and growing together; being part of people's rites of passage whether they have faith or not; going into schools and nursing homes; sharing and working ecumenically; eating meals together round a table; meeting people and being part of a community; and so much more. Jane and I look forward to continuing many of these things in our new setting.

What have I learnt over thirty-six years in ministry? Too many to mention, but three main things: the love and faithfulness of God, which is new every morning and always with us; the love and care of God's people, which has forgiven me my mistakes and encouraged me through good and difficult times; the love and comfort of Jane and family, who have put up with late meals and "always talking"!

Wherever we are in our life journey, it is helpful to stop occasionally and reflect on what is important in our lives; what to keep and what to let go; and to know that God is with us in all that life brings along.

Stephen Skinner

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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

Baptisms - We welcome:

19/04/26 Ottilie Kirkham (Emma & Thomas) St John the Baptist, Minal

19/04/26 Archie Gibson (Alicia & Robert) St John the Baptist, Minal

Departed - We pray for the families of:

16/04/26 William John Barnett (86), Barrow Close, Marlborough
St John the Baptist, Minal

01/05/26 Dr Robert Andrew Reekie (86), Hyde Lane, Marlborough
St George's, Preshute

Naming of Plants

Are you bamboozled by the Latin names of plants? Are you fed-up with the know-alls who spout the Latin names of plants every time they are on a garden visit?

But do they really know the meaning and derivations of these names which can give wonderful insight into the characteristics and mythology of these plants?

Centuries ago each plant was known by a long descriptive sentence. Then Caspar Bauhin (1560-1624) devised a plan of adopting two names only for each plant. But it was not until the great Swedish naturalist, Linnaeus (1707-1778) undertook the task of methodically naming and classifying the whole living world 'from buffaloes to buttercup' that the dual name system became permanently established.

Many of our common garden plants have fascinating derivations and stories behind their Latin or Greek names.

Some examples are:

Aquilegia vulgaris – English name Columbine. *Aquilegia* is from the Latin *aquila* meaning eagle as the flower spurs are supposed to resemble an eagle's claw. The English name is derived also from Latin *columba* meaning a dove as the flowers resemble a gathering of doves.

Lavandula vera – English name Lavender. Derived from the Latin 'lavo' to wash as Romans and Greeks were said to use lavender in their baths.

Pulmonaria officinalis – English Lungwort.

From the Latin 'pulmo' meaning lungs. This plant was regarded as a remedy for diseases of the lungs.

Passiflora caerulea – English name Passion Flower. From the Latin 'passus' meaning suffering or loss, and 'flos' meaning flower. Roman Catholic priests in South America found features of the Crucifixion story in the flowers to illustrate the bible stories to the native Indians. The five stamens were the five wounds; the three stigmas, the three nails; the style of the pistil, the flogging column; the corona, the crown of thorns; the fringed leaves, the hands of the crowd; the coiled tendrils, the flogging cords; the five sepals and five petals, the ten disciples (Peter and Judas were omitted in the count).

This information has come from a fascinating little book called *Plant Names Simplified* by A.T. Johnson and H.A. Smith which I obtained many years ago. It was first published in 1931 by Landsmans Bookshop Ltd, and has been reprinted many times. I believe the last edition was published in 2019. A secondhand edition can be obtained online from Better World Books or a new edition from Amazon.

It is well worth getting hold of a copy, and I am sure you will find it really interesting. You will certainly be able to 'top trump' any of your show-off friends with your amazing knowledge about the names of plants.

Stella Maxwell

Marlborough Gardening Association

A Good Read

Yes, all right, I know I said recently that there are really too many books set during the Second World War even for me, but what can I do?

Sadly for you, dear readers, who may be hoping for my opinion about the latest Must Read novel, I'm just not that interested in cutting-edge contemporary, bold, experimental fiction. I'd rather read about the Home Front than a dystopian tale in which a non-binary protagonist defies an oppressive regime to form a tentative romantic relationship with an AI ChatBot. Printed in lower case. *

So I settled down happily with Judith Eagle's *Blitz Sisters*. It's a children's book, but I reckon I'm old enough to read whatever I want. I would have loved this when I was 12, and I enjoyed it now. It's a family story, set – you guessed it – during the war. Divided into three sections, giving us the point of view of each of the three sisters, the narrative spans the years between 1939 and 1948 covering family dynamics, love, loss and drama. It's not unlike Noel Streatfeild, or Hilary McKay, or Nina Bawden – good for reasonably mature young readers who will, we hope, grow up to read and love Elizabeth Jane Howard.

Also for (small) children (and me) are two

picture books *Is this a Plum?*** by Dan and Finn Ojari has lovely illustrations glimpsed through holes in the pages which turn out to be sections of something completely different. Shape, colour, rhyme and silliness, just the thing for entertaining little ones. And though *Absolutely Fine* by the brilliant and funny Emma Chichester Clark is described as a 'gentle and comforting.... beautiful and moving' (yuk!) book which teaches children how having – or being – good friends can help you through bad days, I forgive it because it's lively and funny with excellent illustrations. (I'm all for affirming the positive you understand, I just don't like it clunkingly intruding on a good story.)

Finally, someone has reminded me that Father's Day is in June. Let's not give Dad a book about WW2, or cars, or sport, or anything obvious like that. *The Dog's Gaze* by Thomas W Laqueur is a history of how the relationship between humans and dogs has been captured in art. Beautifully produced, lavishly illustrated with engrossing text, it's a lovely gift book.

*I don't know if such a novel actually exists. Yet. It can only be a matter of time.

** Spoiler. It's a bum.

Debby Guest

"**The Easter Message: Was Jesus a Substitute for Us?**" We have received a letter from Jonathan Hinks in response to Hugh de Saram's article on page 10 in the May edition. We welcome readers' responses and would like to publish it in full. Unfortunately, we do not have room this month but if you would like to read it please go to towerandtown.org.uk, Archived Articles.

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other notices or announcements to the compiler.

All items for the July issue by Tuesday 9th June please.

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