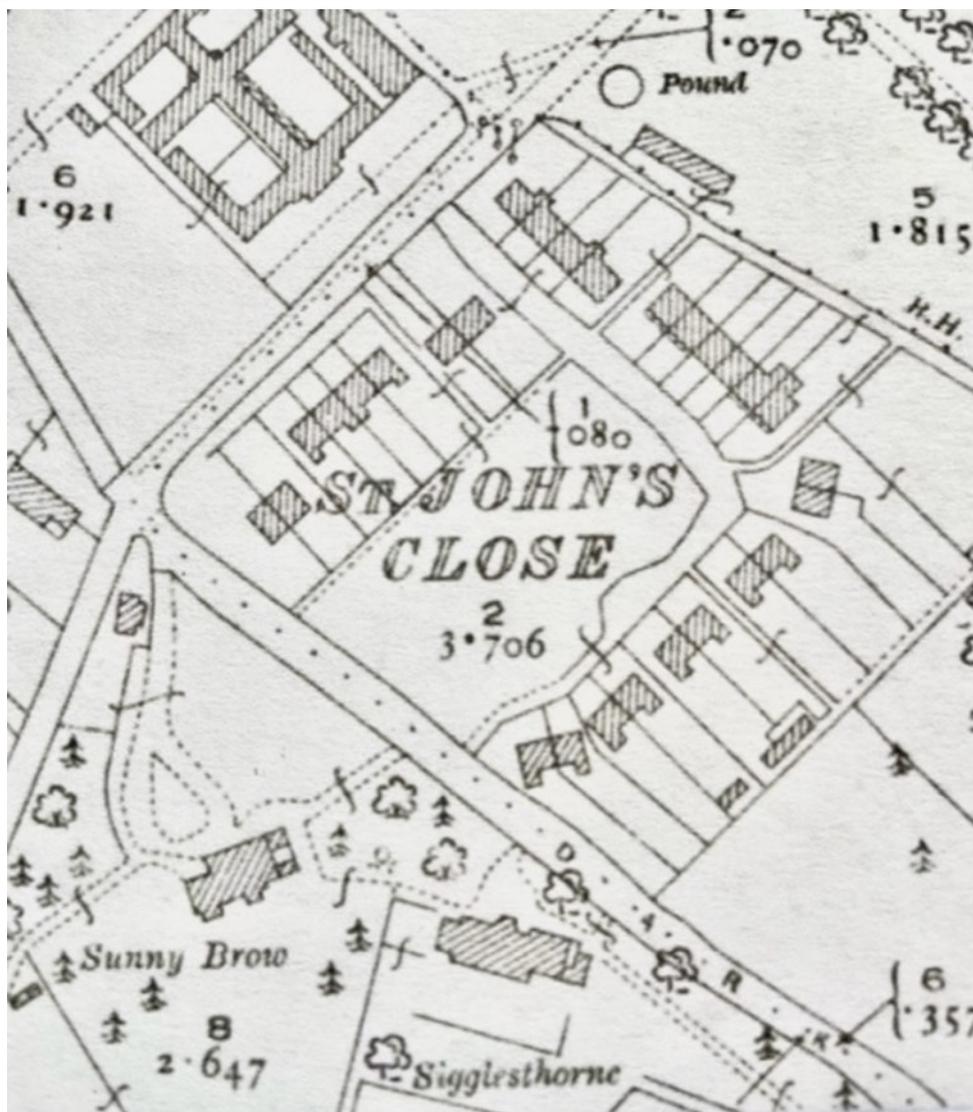

TOWER AND TOWN



St John's Close

June 2023

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TOWER^{AND}TOWN

THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES

NUMBER 737 June 2023



St John's Close

St John's Close is a development of 28 original terraced and semi-detached houses, located at the top of Cross Lane and Hyde Lane, adjacent to the Common. The first social housing project in Marlborough, it was created between 1908 and 1910, according to the principles of the Garden Cities, which were popular at the time. Designed to have access to green space, fresh air and light, the houses are set in a horseshoe each facing or adjacent to an open area of allotments, garages and a community garden, created after 2019 from an unused allotment, courtesy of Marlborough Town Council.

The Community Garden is now an integral part of life in the Close. It has won 'It's Your Neighbourhood' awards for three consecutive years, as part of Marlborough in Bloom and was particularly valuable during lockdown for outdoor, open air contact between neighbours who would otherwise have been isolated. This is also when we started an oral history group to record the memories of some of the current and past residents.

Having an edition of Tower and Town dedicated to St John's Close has provided an opportunity to pull together in one place our links with the College Masters who founded and funded the development, the underlying inspiration of the Garden City concept, mixed with information about longstanding residents and their memories over time. Many local families will still have connections with the Close, which has now been recognised in the Neighbourhood Plan as an area of special quality in the town, due to its history, architecture and community spirit.

St John's Close Community Garden is one of the stops on the popular Merchant's House Open Gardens' scheme, this year taking place in the afternoon of Sunday 25th June.

If you have a connection with the road, come up and chat to one of our local volunteers. We are always interested to learn more about our history and the people who have lived here.

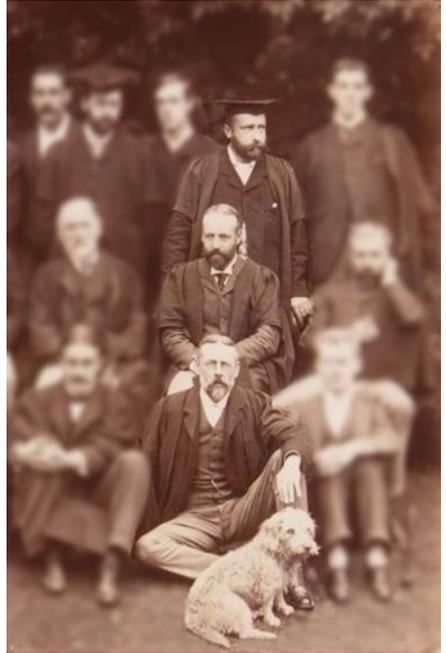
Jo Payne, June Editor & St John's Close Residents' Association member

The cover photo is an extract from an OS Map of Marlborough c 1914

The Benefactors

Gráinne Lenehan, Archivist, Marlborough College

In 1907 Herbert Leaf retired from Marlborough College. He and his wife, Rose, had lived at No 1 The Green since 1887. Two of his friends and colleagues, Henry Richardson and Granville Sharp, had already retired. All three were thoughtful men, with a strong sense of public duty, who recognised that the problem of rural housing had long been as urgent as that of urban housing. At this point, they were actively pooling their resources, ideas and energy to create a new housing development at St John's Close that would provide much-needed comfortable, light and spacious accommodation for a number of townspeople, many of whom were living in cramped conditions in the various lanes off the High Street. The development of 28 houses built around a central communal green area, close to amenities and employment, was clearly inspired by nineteenth-century model villages



Back to front: Granville Sharp, Herbert Leaf and Henry Richardson, with Bandy the dog

– such as those built at Swindon and Bournville – and the vision of social reformer Ebenezer Howard and the garden cities he inspired.

Henry Richardson and Granville Sharp had built fine houses for their retirement – Sigglesthorne and Sunny Brow – situated adjacent to the open land of the Close on Dark Lane (now Hyde Lane). With the Close in view before them, it's not difficult to imagine the seeds of an idea germinating in their minds and the formation of a plan to maximise its potential to change lives for the better. The Close was purchased and between 1908 and 1911. Each financed and oversaw the building of a certain number of houses to make 28 in total, which would be offered at affordable rents to local people.

Herbert Leaf (1854-1936) was born in Surrey to Isabella and Charles Leaf, a wealthy silk merchant. He won scholarships to Harrow and Trinity College, Cambridge. As a youth he excelled at sport, representing Cambridge in both

cricket and tennis. He taught at Marlborough College from 1877 to 1907. Herbert and Rose were renowned hosts. Lewis Upcott, a colleague, wrote that theirs was ‘a perfect union’, and that their generosity to neighbours may have been due in part to the loss of their only child. Leaf was exceptionally active in local government and other organisations, including Marlborough Town Council (1899-1912); Savernake Forest Cricket Club (Chairman 1905-29) and Marlborough Town Football Club (President 1905-36). He served as a County Councillor (1899-1930); Lord Mayor of Marlborough (1906-7); Treasurer of the East Wilts Liberal Association, and was appointed Justice of the Peace and Deputy Lieutenant for Wiltshire (both 1912).

Throughout his time at Marlborough, he was a generous benefactor to both College and town. As well as his part in the development at St John’s Close, other major contributions included a gift to the College of £30,000 in 1920 – which funded the construction of the first electricity plant in Marlborough for lighting to both town and College, as well as a rose garden in memory of his wife who died in 1922. In his will, he left £30,000 to the College which funded a block of classrooms, named after him, and a similarly generous gift of eleven cottages to the town – including those that he owned at St John’s Close – and £16,000 which funded the construction of eight dwellings at Leaf Close, Marlborough.

Henry Richardson (1845-1914), was born in Reigate, Surrey, and was the second son of Amelia and George Richardson, a hops merchant. Following graduation from Corpus Christi College, Oxford, he came to teach at Marlborough College in 1870, subsequently being appointed Master of the Lower School (1873-79), Housemaster of B2 (1872-73) and of Littlefield (1886-1905), and President of the Marlborough College Natural History Society (1880-86). Within the College he was universally liked and respected. He famously introduced the game of hockey in 1874 as an alternative to athletics during colder months, with practice taking place amongst the tufts and tussocks on the Common.

Granville Sharp (1849-1931) was the youngest son of Emma and William Sharp, a surgeon, and was educated at Rugby and Lincoln College, Oxford. He came to teach at Marlborough College 1873, and was later appointed Housemaster of C3 (1875-83), Librarian (1886-93), and President of Common Room. He was the author of *Exercises in French Syntax, with Rules* (1884) and *Birds in the Garden: Studies with a Camera* (1902), which was illustrated with photographs taken in his garden at Sunny Brow (now Hyde Cross). He is remembered as a quiet, thoughtful and kind-hearted man who was reserved and somewhat reclusive. As College Librarian, he earned repute as ‘the daring innovator who introduced the Novel’. He retired early to care for his mother.

The Garden City Concept

Dick Whitfield

(abridged from a previously published article)

In the last two decades of the 19th century several major industrialists, in particular George Cadbury with the creation of Bournville Village, the Lever Brothers at Port Sunlight, and Joseph Rowntree with his garden village at New Earswick outside York, had set out to establish a better quality of housing for their workers.

It was an age that also produced the great social reformer and urban planner Ebenezer Howard who became highly active in promoting his views during the 1880s. In the 1890s he began to develop his ideas on the creation of the Garden City, a phrase that he was the first to adopt in his highly significant publication “Tomorrow – a Peaceful Path to Real Reform”. The concept gathered momentum; in 1899 the Garden City Association was formed, and by 1902 Howard had secured sufficient interest and backing to proceed with the development of his first garden city, for which he chose land at Letchworth in Hertfordshire.

Howard’s vision covered the overall financial, social and structural planning, but with his lead architect Barry Parker, who has been described as “an undiscovered genius of the Arts & Crafts movement”, he also established more detailed criteria for the actual housing. These guidelines included a lower density of housing than the norm at that time:

- Every house to have a front and rear garden, which should be proportionate to the size of that house,
- So far as possible the aspect of all houses should maximise sunshine whilst not overlooking each other,
- An area of communal land within the development that could be used either for leisure, or as allotments, or both, and where people could meet and socialise with their neighbours.

Get these elements right, argued Howard, and a contented, healthy and harmonious community should ensue.

The Marlborough College masters Richardson, Sharp and Leaf were clearly aware of this movement, and laid out plans for St John’s Close which embodied Parker and Howard’s criteria, including the incorporation of a significant area of open land both to provide space between the houses and to be used as allotments for the benefit of the inhabitants. They also copied the design of some of the Letchworth houses. For example, the central terrace in St John’s Close is an exact replica of the terrace at Letchworth that won first prize in the Urban Cottages Competition of 1907.

Building commenced in 1907/8 on what was dubbed locally “The White

City". There is a stone plaque on the front wall of No 15, [Please see page 17 for a photo], which states that it was laid by Caroline Tosswill in May 1908, and presumably commemorated the completion of this terrace. A similar plaque on the adjoining terrace, also dated 1908, was laid by Herbert Leaf, and the other houses followed over the next few years. Initially all the dwellings were let to tenants from the town and to staff connected to the College, and by the time of the 1911 Census virtually all were complete and occupied.

Progressively, as the decades of the 20th century passed, some of the houses were sold into private ownership by the descendants of the benefactors. Herbert Leaf, the last survivor of the three, died in 1936. In his will he left substantial financial legacies both to the town and to Marlborough College. He also, in a major act of philanthropy, bequeathed eleven cottages including 7 of his properties in St John's Close to the Town Council. These cottages became public housing, although a few have now passed into private ownership under the Right to Buy provisions.

Improvements have been carried out to most of the houses; bathrooms were added to many of the dwellings only as recently as the 1960s. Several have had extensions, and most new building work has adhered to the style of the original Arts & Crafts design, so the character remains. The result is a mix of owner-occupied and tenanted housing, a mix of dwellings suitable for families, for single people and couples, leading to a harmonious community such as envisaged by Ebenezer Howard over a century earlier.



Drone photo of St John's Close by Richard Sheppard



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Letchworth Cheap Cottages Competitions

Hilary Degnan

About 15 years ago I was at work reading a rather dry technical report on Arts and Crafts housing in Hertfordshire. I turned the page and saw a photograph of what I thought was our house in St John's Close, Marlborough. Once I got over the shock, I saw that the terrace of houses was actually in Pixmore Way, Letchworth, Hertfordshire. The text of the report referred to the terrace as "*an award-winning entry*" from a housing design competition held in Letchworth Garden City in 1907. I was intrigued and started researching the background to the competition and the houses. I visited Letchworth to look at "our" house in Pixmore Way. I was convinced that our 1908 Marlborough terrace was a copy of 1907 Letchworth

Terrace. I was lucky enough to find estate agent's particulars for one of the houses in Pixmore Way. Its layout and original features are replicated in our house and others in the terrace. Neighbours became similarly interested in the links between St John's Close and Pixmore Way, carrying out additional research, both in Marlborough and Letchworth.



13 to 18 St John's Close

continued overleaf

Below is an overview of the housing design competitions held at Letchworth in 1905 and 1907. The competitions aimed to improve access to affordable housing in both urban and rural environments.

The 1905 Cheap Cottages Exhibition

The first Letchworth housing competition was held in 1905, in response to a shortage of housing for agricultural labourers. Many farm workers had moved to towns, which resulted in rural labour shortages. Part of the problem was that there were bye-laws and other restrictions on the materials that could be used to build new cottages.

In 1904, the editor/owner of the *Spectator* and *The Country Gentleman* magazines campaigned for a "£150 Cottage". He proposed a competition to demonstrate that a sound house could be built for £150 (excluding the land cost). He proposed that cottages could be built of cheaper materials, using alternative forms of construction and then let to rural farm workers for £8 per year.

The owners of the newly created Letchworth Garden City offered land for a competition site. As it was privately owned, it was not subject to restrictive bye-laws.

Approximately 131 individual houses were constructed for the 1905 exhibition; 120 of which still stand today. The competition caught the imagination of the public, attracting 60,000 visitors between July and September 1905.

The 1907 Urban Cottages Competition

Following the success of the 1905 competition for individual houses, a second competition for groups of houses was proposed. The intention of the 1907 competition was to demonstrate designs that could be easily replicated and built as groups on estates in urban areas.

There were four classes in the Urban Cottages competition. First Prize in each class was £30 and a medal. Fifty two cottages were built, with cost of construction ranging from £144 to £275 per dwelling.

The renowned Garden City architect, Courtney Melville Crickmer, designed several entries for the 1907 competition. His terrace of six houses at 110-120 Pixmore Way, Letchworth, won the First Prize for Class II. This competition class was for *"3 bedrooms with parlour, kitchen with sink and outside wash house with copper. Cost not to exceed £200."*

The award-winning Pixmore Way terrace is almost identical to the terrace at 13-18 St John's Close, Marlborough. The most noticeable difference being the hanging tile arrangement on the Marlborough houses - presumably a nod to the local building style found throughout the town. The terrace at St John's Close was officially declared open in May 1908 by Caroline E Tosswill, a niece of Henry Richardson.

Memories of 11 St John's Close

Michael Thorpe



Bern & Flossie Wilson 1924



Billie Thorpe 1944

My grandparents Alice & Bernard Wilson, always known as Flossie and Bern, moved into No. 11 St Johns Close in 1924, having relocated from Freshwater on the Isle of Wight, with their two little girls Joan & Eileen 'Billie'. Joan and Billie went to the primary school on Herd Street and then to the Grammar School, where St Peter's School stands.

Both sisters went on to qualify as nurses during the war, while the residents of St John's Close took in refugees from the cities, if they had spare bedrooms. Bern was in the Home Guard. The girls married, Joan (then training to be a doctor) to a Canadian air force man from Montreal and Billie to William Thorpe, who she met when posted to India during the war. My sister Sally and I lived with our grandparents at no.11, with mum, during postings, until 1953. None of the houses had a bathroom or running hot water then, so on bath nights, water would be heated in a 'large copper'. In the summer, baths were taken in the kitchen; in the winter, in front of the coal fire – such luxury.

Grandad worked for Stratton Sons & Mead, a local grocery and provisions retail business, based on the High Street (where Cromwell Court is now) from 1924 until his retirement in 1961 at the age of 68. He used to travel to the local villages to collect orders for the shop and then they would be sent, with other items, later in the week on delivery lorries. He drove an A30 van in the 1950s and during the school holidays he would take me on his rounds, where there was always cake and a cup of tea waiting at all the houses he visited. On Saturday afternoons, around 5pm, silence was the order of the day so that Grandad could listen to the football results on his crystal radio. The batteries were taken to be recharged at James's

Electricians in the High Street at the entrance to Chandler's Yard.

Like most of the men in the Close, Grandad had an allotment. A local farmer, Mr Shewry, would graze his herd of cows on the Common during the day, and when they were moved off in the evenings the men would go out with buckets and wheelbarrows to collect the cowpats for manure; organic gardening was the norm. There was also a large chicken run opposite Hyde Cross.

Later on, when the fairs came to Marlborough in October, they would run cables over to different houses in the Close and plug into the electric to run the electric in their caravans. No Health and Safety then! The hurdle shed, the Pound and the tall trees behind the terraces have all gone. Two detached houses now stand on former allotments between No 19 and the Common and the chicken run is now garages, so there have been a few changes since I first lived there.

Bern died in 1971, and Flossie, or Gran, moved to The Priory in 1979. Helen and Harold Caswell moved in with their three children, so another family grew up at No 11. Harold died last September and there have only been two sets of tenants in almost 100 years, but a lot of children and grandchildren have special memories of the house and the road.

Drone Video

To see a drone video of St John's Close, use your mobile phone camera to hover over the QR code. A yellow link will come up below the code. Tap on the link and it will take you to YouTube. Accept the Terms and conditions and the video will start.

Alternatively, type this code into your browser:
<https://youtu.be/VA1-p55mxKc>

This drone video was created by Richard Sheppard for St John's Close and purchased by the Residents' Association. It centres on the allotments and the Community Garden and dates from 2020.



Dot Cleverley of No. 28

Jo Payne

Dot was born at Savernake Hospital in 1939 to Norman and Olive Parker. Norman came from Lancashire, and got a job at the Post Office locally, Olive was originally from Avebury, then Ogbourne St George. Dot was one of four children who lived at 5 Coldharbour Lane in a newly built house within walking distance of the infants' school on Herd Street where she recalls the two Miss Slades. At the Secondary Modern on the Common, where one of the teachers, Mr Taylor, used to tease her saying 'Dotty P. – I saw you walking out with your bean pole'. When she was 14 or 15, she had met Ron Cleverley while visiting a receptionist friend at Burt's Builders. He lived at 18 London Road then and Dot got a job at Garrods factory on Elcot Lane from 1954 until their marriage in 1957. Living in a damp thatched cottage in Mildenhall paying 5/- a week, Dot took her daughter Tina to see Dr Maurice about Tina's bronchitis and told him they wanted to move to better accommodation. She had tried the council, but no luck.



Dick Whitfield with Dot 2019

Through an aunt, the Maurice Family had inherited 10 houses in St John's Close which they rented out privately: the terrace of 13 to 18 and the semi-detached houses 25/26 and 27/28. Alec and Edith Lawrence had lived at no 28 for decades and everyone in the road was 'old', except for Pam and Taffy Green. Mr Lawrence had worked for the College, so all the doors were painted with College paint. When No 28 became available, Dot thought it was wonderful, even if it did cost 15/- a week.

Dr Maurice had said to her 'I hope you're going to have a family for this three bedroom house', but he was a bit surprised after they had been there a month that she was back for a pregnancy test and commented 'I didn't expect you to work that fast!'. Paul was born in the house with Nurse Jones from Manton in attendance and Ian followed in 1965, when Dot's oldest sister Nurse Nightingale (Jean) delivered him.

At least No. 28 had a downstairs loo – the cottage in Mildenhall had only had an out-house. Ron was earning £6 a week as a bricklayer and usually gave it to Dot for the household expenses. They put down lino on the draughty wooden floors and there were original gas mantles on the walls, though the house did have electricity for lights and gas for the oven. Sometime in the 1960s, Bert's Builders in-

stalled bathrooms in all the Maurice houses and a back boiler was installed behind the fire. The bathroom was luxury, as prior to that it would be a tin bath (the copper) with whatever water could be heated on the stove.

The coal for the fireplace in the sitting room was delivered by Free's on the Salisbury Road and stored in the coal house, next to the loo, but with every house in the town with multiple fireplaces the air was thick in the winter. Smog was common. Dot can remember being in a car on the Swindon Road and being unable to see anything around. The Clean Air Acts of 1956 and 1968 meant that only smokeless fuel could be used and the air quality locally improved. Eventually radiators would be added in the house and the fire would be a luxury, not a necessity.

Many people will know Dot from her long career at Savernake Hospital as an Auxiliary. She started in 1975, at the age of 36 and left 45 years later at the age of 80. Mrs Bunce the Matron gave her the original job.

With more trucks and cars in the road a layby next to the allotments was created for parking and eventually some garages built. Monty Miller at No. 24 even had a tractor. After the first five garages had been erected, Dot asked Dr Maurice for three more for Taffy Green (No. 14), Mr Shewry (No. 15) and Ron and herself. Nowadays most of the front gardens have been converted for parking, but back then Dot had been using the drive at Clement's Meadow on Cross Lane to park.

Ron left Burt's Builders at the age of 50 and worked for the Borough Council after that. He retired with ill health from asthma and unfortunately died aged 66.

Dot turned 80 in 2019, and alongside Dick Whitfield from No 15, they both had birthday roses planted in the Community Garden. Dot's is appropriately a 'Dorothy Perkins' and is thriving, climbing up the arch, much like the energetic and chatty neighbour she continues to be a mere 62.5 years after she moved in.

2023 St John's Close, Area of Special Quality

The houses and allotments at St John's Close are much loved by the residents, with several residents having lived here for more than 50 years, and many others 20 years plus.

In the recent Marlborough Area Neighbourhood Plan, St John's Close has been identified an 'Area of Special Quality' within the town due to its Historical, Aesthetic and Social Values. It describes St John's Close as:

"A set piece in Arts and Crafts architectural style, built as a project by three masters of Marlborough College who purchased the land to develop it as a housing estate of good quality housing to help replace the many sub-standard cottages in the town. The close has allotment gardens in the middle which were an integral part of the design. ... The group is a strong architectural ensemble underpinned with a social resonance associated with the College."

I went “Aaaargh!” when the “It’s T&T Time” reminder email pinged into my inbox this month, because I’m rather struggling to think of anything to write about. I’ve been busy with the shortlist for the Richard Jefferies prize, so I’m learning (though I don’t expect to remember) lots about wildflowers, and fishing, and trees and bog plants. They’re all very good, very readable, and I’m enjoying them, but it’s getting in the way of reading new things that I can recommend to you. And when I’m not concerned with feather footing my way through the plashy fen* figuratively speaking, I’ve been engrossed in a massive volume (published ten years ago, and it might take me another ten years to finish it) about George III and the Hanoverians. I knew very little about him, just the usual stuff about Farmer George, pink-faced and pop-eyed, losing the Colonies, and running madly round Windsor in his nightie, and Nancy Mitford’s Linda describing him as “The son of poor Fred and the father of Beau Brummell’s fat friend”. I’m having to concentrate, it’s three or four generations of vast families, all called George or Frederick, or Sophia or Augusta, with the odd major or minor Caroline or Charlotte thrown in. Family get-togethers would have been a nightmare, but as they hardly spoke to each other I don’t suppose it was an issue.

So I wailed to Angus that I needed help, and he said “Tell them about *Damascus Station*”, which he’s just read and enjoyed. Some of you will have read it already, but I think it’s worth a heads up in case you’ve missed it. The author, David McCloskey is an ex-CIA officer, so it reads convincingly and we can probably assume a certain level of veracity, which may or may not be a good thing; Angus says it’s absolutely terrifying. Initially a bit ‘bitty’ as the scene is set and the characters established, it quickly becomes a ‘viciously tense’ espionage tale. The reader rapidly becomes fully engaged with the characters, and the context in which they have to make their choices, or to accept there are in fact *no* choices, making it (I’m reliably informed) a nerve-wracking read.

Oh wait, I’ve just remembered – *Pineapple Street* by Jenny Jackson is about the morality of inherited wealth, and an eye-wateringly, rash-inducingly rich New York family living their privileged life. But *are they happy?* Well, obviously not entirely or there’d be no story. It’s clever and lively, I thoroughly enjoyed it.

**Scoop*. But you knew that of course.

Note from the Editor: The White Horse Bookshop has ‘Place Names of Marlborough’ by David Chandler in stock in the local history section £9.99.

To 4th (*Sunday*)

Avebury Manor, 10am-5pm.

Half term activities around the gardens, with sensory activities.

£2 per trail, £2 per craft pack.

To 11th (*Sunday*)

National Trust, Avebury, 10am-5pm.

‘Sentinels of Stone’ exhibition by Tony Galuidi. Paintings, and smaller prints, of standing stones painted in acrylic on canvas are available to purchase and the artist will donate proceeds to charity.

To 17th (*Saturday*)

Katharine House Gallery, The Parade, Marlborough, 10am-5.30pm Wednesday to Saturday.

An exhibition of Ed Lewis’s (1936-2018) paintings from 1950s onwards, together with his own collection of Modern British Art and other works.

1st (*Thursday*)

Marlborough Floral Club, Mildenhall Village Hall, 2pm.

Demonstration by Sally Hardy - ‘The Three Fs’. Treat yourselves to an enjoyable afternoon out on the first Thursday of each month.

For more information, please call Micky Graham on 01672 514301

1st (*Thursday*), 7th (*Wednesday*), 21st (*Wednesday*)

The Merchant’s House Guided Tour, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm

With a volunteer guide, discover the history of this fascinating building and what life was like for a 17th century merchant.

http://:themerchantshouse.co.uk/event. Tickets: £10.00.

3rd (*Saturday*)

Nature Trail Event, starting at 10am from Tourist Information Point in George Lane Car Park - Distance & approximate duration: 2.7 miles (4.3 km) – 2 hours.

A led wildlife walk enjoying and exploring the River Kennet at Cooper's Meadow and Stonebridge Wild River Reserve, as well as taking in the flora and fauna at some of the town’s other green spaces, including Wye House Gardens and the Waterfront Garden. Wear your wellies for a spot of river dipping.

This event is a partnership event with ARK and Marlborough Town Council and is part of the North Wessex Downs AONB Walking Festival 2023.

Tickets: £5 per adult, £3 per child (under 16), booking essential (20 places) from *http://www.riverkennet.org/events.*

4th (*Sunday*)

Marlborough College: return from half term.

5th (*Monday*)

St John’s: Term 6 starts.

St Mary’s: Term 6 starts.

8th (Thursday) – 10th (Saturday)

7.30pm (doors open at 6.45): The Marlborough Players present “A Bunch of Amateurs” by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman, at the Town Hall.

Tickets from the website (marlboroughplayers.co.uk) or the White Horse Bookshop, £10.

11th (Sunday)

LEAF Open Farm Sunday, 11am-4pm

Jilly Carter hosts this year at Maisey Farm which sits 700ft high at Rockley. Attractions include tractor tours, pets’ corner, stalls, demos, refreshments, plus an idyllic nature reserve with mini zip wire, swing and play hut.

Tickets: £10 per car per two hour slot from www.spacefornature.net

25th (Sunday)

Marlborough Open Gardens, 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Approximately 12 gardens are participating, all within walking distance of the High Street - large show gardens, small hidden gems and community gardens showing off their late June blooms.

Tickets are £8.00 in advance from the Merchants House website (themerchants.house.co.uk). Those buying tickets in advance will need to collect a map on the day from midday onwards at the front of the Merchant’s House. The map will double up as your ticket giving you entry to the gardens.

Tickets are £10 on the day and can be bought at the front of the Merchant’s House from midday onwards.

Present your ticket/map to receive a discount on teas, coffee and cakes at The Food Gallery (<http://thefoodgallery.co.uk/>) who continue their support of Open Gardens.

Children under 16 free. No dogs please.

28th (Wednesday)

Marlborough Gardening Association outing to Iford Manor and Downside Nurseries. *For more information see the website (marlbga.org.uk)*

30th (Friday)

Marlborough College: Summer Term ends at 12 noon

Project Update



The Youth Drop-In at Church Cottage on Silverless Street is up and running on Monday afternoons, between 3.30 and 5.30pm, slightly interrupted by the series of May Bank Holidays! We are making contacts with young people and have received lots of encouragement from people in the community. One of the great benefits of this drop-in is that we can signpost young people to other provision in the town.

Our great need is for volunteers to help, even if only on an occasional basis – please do call in on Monday afternoons to talk to Steve, or email him: steve@wiltshireyfc.org.uk. Our thanks to Devotion for financial support and to St Mary’s Church for use of these great facilities.

England's green and pleasant land is at its most bountiful and beautiful in the month of June, when our wild birds and animals are tending their young, butterflies are fluttering over downland rides, spotted orchids are in profusion and trees in full leaf.

Composers have always sought inspiration from the natural world: some, like Beethoven and Benjamin Britten, found that regular walks in the Vienna Woods or along the shingle beach in Aldeburgh unlocked ideas, themes, sometimes whole musical passages, ready to be scribbled down later.

Antonio Vivaldi, despite his urban existence in the heart of 18th C Venice, created a pastoral idyll in his celebrated set of Concertos "The Four Seasons," prefaced by a set of four charming sonnets. In between the orchestral refrains there are interludes illustrating phrases from the text, marked above the music with letters .

In "Spring" three violins approximate the calls of Blackbird, Goldfinch and Nightingale, briefly interrupted by string pyrotechnics representing thunder and lightning. The violas imitate the sleeping shepherd's faithful dog barking at his feet, then nymphs and shepherds dance under a glorious spring sky.

Haydn wrote his oratorio "The Creation" in his late 60s, a tribute to the natural world, highly inventive and sometimes humorous. There is a Representation of Chaos, both the Sun and the Moon have their moments and in one Bass aria there are musical tributes to a stag and a horse, cattle and sheep, insects and, "in long dimensions, with sinuous trace, the worm!"

His pupil Beethoven produced a "Pastoral" Symphony in the slow movement of which a gentle cadenza, played twice, mimics the sounds of Nightingale (flute) Quail (oboe) and Cuckoo (clarinet) one by one.

We are lucky to have good numbers of Skylarks locally, despite its drastic decline in many parts of the U.K. Its continuous liquid song, which I hear above Windmill Hill near Avebury, inspired Meredith's "The Lark Ascending" and Vaughan Williams's beautiful composition of that name.

Written at the start of the Great War, its opening orchestral chords seem to evoke an aura of sadness and impending loss before the solo violin takes wing, its music circling, ascending and gradually disappearing into the heavens. At the heart of the piece the orchestra takes a more active, conversational role: the players are warmed and inspired by the soloist's rhapsodising and begin to join the melodic line as both volume and intensity increase.

Such music has the power to express the inexpressible when we consider the beauty and magic of the natural world.



Eurasian Skylark

From the Registers

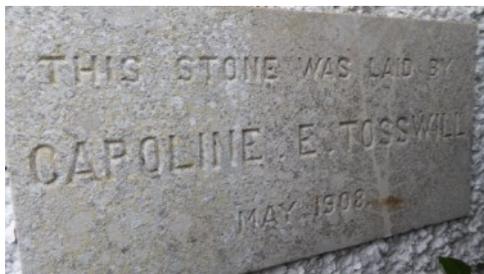
Penny Reader

Weddings

<i>Names</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Venue</i>
Alison Edwards & Thomas Mercer,	29/04/2023,	St George's Church, Preshute

Funerals

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Date of Death</i>	<i>Venue</i>
Malcolm Hall,	85,	Silver Street, Nailsea,	26/03/23,	St George's Church, Preshute
Cherry Francis,	82,	Thomson Way, Marlborough,	10/04/23,	North Wiltshire Crematorium
Trevor Sawyer,	56,	South Street, Aldbourne,	08/04/23,	St George's Church, Preshute
Anna Harrison,	81,	Stonebridge Close, Marlborough,	12/04/23,	St Mary's, Marlborough
Michael Gilroy,	74,	West View Crescent, Devizes,	24/04/23,	St John the Baptist, Minal



Stone plaque as mentioned page 5

Erratum

Many thanks to Mrs M Dobie who pointed out that the dates we gave (1964-1971) in Family News for Rev. Donald Woffenden's time here as minister of the Congregational Church are incorrect. Having checked with the Eastern Synod of the United Reformed Church, we now know that he was a minister in Marlborough from 1967-1971.

We apologise for our mistake.



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I went to an excellent talk given by Judy Hindley with Jane Renwick on the work being done by Citizens Climate Lobby UK* to promote Climate Income – a policy that prices fossil fuels at source. A steadily rising price is imposed on all fossil fuels (coal, oil, gas) as they are produced or imported, and the proceeds distributed to citizens in equal shares. Such a scheme has been adopted by the Liberal government in Canada and also in Austria and Switzerland.

This policy offers a very positive solution to the Climate crisis facing our planet today.

It is evident that our current policies are inadequate and we have now missed the targets set to reduce emissions by the bi-partisan Climate Act 2008. We are living at a time of Climate Crisis and CO2 emissions are at the core of the problem.

Climate income addresses our dependence on fossil fuels, in every area of life.

It is the fairest, most effective way of meeting our targets whilst protecting the most vulnerable in our communities. It would be good for the economy and is highly redistributive.

If enacted immediately, it would cut emissions by 50% by 2030, grow jobs, protect the poorest, promote every kind of green behaviour and green alternative, and cut the health costs of pollution.

Our MP, Danny Kruger, has mentioned this policy in the Houses of Parliament. We need to get more MPs cognisant of it and publicising it. It is supported by the largest number of economists in history, including all living Nobel prize-winners, as well as environmentalists such as Jonathan Porritt, founder of Friends of the Earth.

Judy and her team at CCL Devizes are very willing to discuss this with interested parties and can be contacted at judy@citizensclimatelobby.uk. We need to spread the word at this time of doom and gloom.

You can come and hear more at the third of 3 meetings being held in The Friends Meeting House on June 14th at 7.30pm.

**Citizens' Climate Lobby, an international organization that generates the political will to end climate change through a network of relationships.*

As a chaplain and teacher at Marlborough College these words from the musical, ‘The King and I,’ are to me often proven the case: “It’s a very ancient saying, but a true and honest thought, that if you become a teacher, by your pupils you’ll be taught.’ With galloping advances in Artificial Intelligence, I hate to think that I might someday soon be learning from my students by virtue of what they have learned from Chat GPT rather than from their experiences of our world. But it may sadly be the case that AI is about to radically change the nature and experience of education forever with negative ramifications for us all.

For those who have tried it, it’s stunning to type a question into Chat GPT and have it turn out, in virtually seconds, an essay with most of the necessary components and key terms to score a decent mark on a GCSE paper. Information Technology experts tell us that over the last twenty years, we have all willingly and naively ‘fed the beast’ by virtue of our texts, emails, blogs, social media sharing and a host of the other things we ‘put online’, such that AI has an enormous electronic brain-full of information upon which it can stunningly quickly draw to find the content for virtually any question we might ask it. Will the teaching profession be replaced by something automated? What would be lost? Losing human connectivity on an emotional and even spiritual level in the classroom, as elsewhere, would enhance the temptation already so strong within us to view others as a means to an end, rather than as an end unto themselves.

After a decade or two of experiencing our world from behind a computer or mobile phone screen, paying only ‘continuous partial attention’ to the human beings around us, it’s time we close the laptops, put down the phones and meet each other eye to eye once again. We need to be conscious, courageous and committed about making this happen, because addiction to our technology is rampant. It will mean unstopping our ears and ending the ‘dialogue of the deaf’, re-engaging our auditory nerves and ending the failure of a simple greeting on the street: ‘Good morning how are you?’ No response, because the person whom we enthusiastically greet has the most recent podcast playing in their ears alone, as they pass.

As educators, ‘Pupil Voice’ is something we are always keen to hear. The younger generations have so much to teach us. It’s as true as when ‘The King and I’ was popular as it is today. It’s my prayer that we can work together with the technology and scientific community to ensure that we are served by it and not severed from each other. Since having eaten from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, when it comes to advances in technology being put to human advantage, our track record has been frighteningly spotty.

Thank you!

Lara Hill, Community Engagement Officer

Prospect Hospice would like to thank the team at Tower and Town, and their readers, for their generous donation to the hospice.

Our local community are the foundation of everything we do, and it is because of you that we can provide outstanding care for local people affected by a life-limiting illness. We only receive 25% of our funding from statutory sources – that means £7 million every year comes from our community.



Peter Astel, Treasurer

Thank you for your kindness in donating to us. Whether you are an editor, contributor, or reader of Tower and Town – your support allows us to continue caring for local people at the end of their lives.

You're Welcome!

Sarah Bumphrey

“Tower and Town” is delighted to be able to make this donation of £500 to Prospect Hospice which offers outstanding end-of-life care services for the people of Swindon, Marlborough and north east Wiltshire.

The magazine is a non-profitmaking organization, produced for and by the communities of Marlborough, and run entirely by volunteers. Any surplus income goes back into the magazine and, whenever possible, donations are made to charity, as above.

If you are not already a subscriber, please consider becoming one. It costs £7 per year for 11 copies delivered to your door. To subscribe please contact Sue Tulloh (288912 or distribution@towerandtown.org.uk) or use www.towerandtown.org.uk




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coffee and doughnuts. All
are welcome

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Family News

Naomi Painter

Best wishes to Alison Edwards and Tom Mercer who were married at St George's Preshute on Saturday 29th April.

Alison is the daughter of Barbara and David Edwards, who are members of Christ-church Methodist Fellowship.

A History of Marlborough

J. Chandler 1977

St John's Close

Land situated at the south-west of the Common. It was part of the endowment of St John's Hospital, later, in 1550 being part of the endowment of the Grammar School. Early in this century (20th) it was sold to three College masters who developed it as a housing estate, as a first attempt at replacing the many sub-standard cottages in the town.

News from the Churches

St Mary's with Christchurch Methodist Fellowship **Friendship café**

Meets on Saturday 3rd June from 10.30am to 1pm in the Church Hall in Silverless Street.

Welcome Wednesdays: Thought for the day

We are delighted to be continuing with our Wednesday morning 'Thought for the Day', followed by coffee and doughnuts, at 10:30am in St Mary's Church.

All are welcome.

St George's

10.30am Morning Worship - activities for children – 4th & 18th June.

Children are always warmly welcome at any of our services at St George's, but of special interest may be the All-Age service on the first Sunday of the month and a children's activity table at our Morning Worship on the third Sunday of each month. Looking forward to seeing children and their families at these services!

MAPAG

The next open meeting is at 5pm on Tuesday, 27th June on zoom. All are welcome. Zoom link details from Rachel (Rachelrosed1@gmail.com).

Marlborough Churches Together

The next Fraternal is on Wednesday 14th June at 12.30 at 21 St. Margaret's Mead.



Emmanuel

We are grateful to meet for a weekly 4 pm Sunday service at our church on New Road, Marlborough, SN8 1AH with crèche and Sunday School groups. All are welcome to stay afterwards for refreshments and a sandwich tea for the children.



Mid-week we are also delighted to offer a variety of activities including home groups and community groups as below - for more details and the latest updates, please check our Events Calendar on our website at emmanuelmarlborough.org.

EMMANUEL
MARLBOROUGH



Weekly/one-off Events:

CY (Christian Youth)

Sunday 4th June and 18th June, 5-5.30 pm. Our Youth group for school years 7-11. We're a friendly group and enjoy meeting for a short Bible study on themes relevant to young people. Meeting in the Youth Room at Christchurch (Emmanuel Marlborough) after the main service.



Sparklers

Monday 19th 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!

Little Friends Toddler Group

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

Explorers

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

Friday Nights

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

Men's Meal

Monday, 12 June 7.45 pm. A short Bible talk, sharing good food and fellowship - Details TBC. For more information, please check our website events calendar at emmanuelmarlborough.org

Homegroups

Thursdays during term time, Pewsey – 7.30 pm, Marlborough – 8 pm, Ogbourne St George – 8 pm. Bible study, prayer and fellowship. For more details, email office@emmanuelmarlborough.org

Hope Explored

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

Holiday Bible Club

29th – 31st August 2023, 9-12.30 pm at Emmanuel Church on New Road, Marlborough, SN8 1AH.

Emmanuel Marlborough is becoming the Heroes Academy! There'll be games, crafts, songs, snacks and Bible stories as we learn to become superheroes, and learn about Jesus, the greatest superhero of all!

Open to all finishing school years, Reception to year 6.

The cost is £10 per family.

Email office@emmanuelmarlborough.org to book your place!



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Contributions and comments from readers are welcome.

Please send articles and letters to the Monthly Editor or the Chairman, other notices or announcements to the compiler.

All items for the July issue by Tuesday 13 June 2023 please.

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