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Marlborough College Edition

APRIL 2024

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TOWER^{AND}TOWN

THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES

NUMBER 746 APRIL 2024



EDITORIAL

With daffodils brightly decorating Marlborough and its surrounds, it is easy to forget the floods that grimly greeted the new year. Their force is however still visible in fields, lanes and buildings – the College's own Memorial Hall joining the list of damaged properties. This devastation and the simultaneous scorching of my native Australia brought to mind some ancient counsel:

“Floods will rob us of one thing, fire of another. These are conditions of our existence which we cannot change. What we can do is adopt a noble spirit...that we may bear up bravely under all that fortune sends us and bring our wills into tune with nature's; reversals, after all, are the means by which nature regulates this visible realm of hers: clear skies follow cloudy; after the calm comes the storm...It is by means of opposites that eternity endures.” Seneca, *Letters from a Stoic*.

This edition contains examples of Marlburians' work that reflects the seasons, the power of nature, and the creation that follows destruction. The essays relate to Venice, no stranger to floods, and to the impact of fire on humankind. The short story and poems involve Yuletide joy at that bleak time of year. Finally, the prints are inspired by William Morris (OM), their interplay of leaves and fruits a reminder that spring has arrived: nature is indeed regulating her visible realm.

Richard Sandall, Editor

Cover picture:
An artwork by Dom C. (Lower Sixth – Year 12)
for the 'Inspired by William Morris' Project, 2023.

How did the geographical position of Venice influence art in the Renaissance?

Tilly G. (Lower Sixth – Year 12)

The Renaissance was arguably the most important movement in the history of art and philosophical thinking. It originated in Florence in the fifteenth century led by artists such as Donatello (1385/6-1466), Masaccio (1401-1428) and Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472), who proposed a return to classical principles.

The Renaissance disseminated from Florence to the other Italian city-states and across Europe. Venice was at the forefront of the movement, with the likes of the Bellinis, Giorgione, Titian and Tintoretto all leaving their own distinct mark.

Venice's unique geographical and topographical location meant that it was far apart from the rest of Renaissance Italy. The philosopher-poet Francesco Petrarch (1304-74) called it *mundus alter*, meaning 'another world', situated in north-eastern Italia on the Adriatic Sea, a collection of 118 little islands linked by a labyrinth of bridges and canals in the vast lagoon. Life in Venice differed from that in other city-states such as Florence, which led to its art developing distinct characteristics.

Venice's geography ensured it was ideally placed not only to learn the new ideas of the Renaissance, but quickly to establish itself as an important centre of learning. This allowed Venice to develop its own style called *venezianità*. This was known for its richness of colour, emphasis with light and space, interest in patterns and textures, love for detail and theme of traditional Venetian values. No matter what medium, that of paint, mosaic, stone, marble, wood, ceramic or glass, *venezianità* meant Venetian art stood out.

The Byzantine heritage of Venice introduced eastern traditions to Renaissance art, such as the brilliant colours, texture, and optical effect of light of mosaics. Coarsely woven canvas became the principal support of the Venetian school in the sixteenth century instead of smoothly sanded panels commonly used in Florence. Furthermore, the impasto brushwork on canvas reflected the texture of the mosaic medium.

Venice's thriving trade economy meant that its artists were inundated with a wide range of precious and exotic pigments, materials and ideas. They exploited the use of rich colour within their art, most noticeably in the works of Titian. Much-prized ultramarine made from the precious stone lapis lazuli was imported from Afghanistan, azurite or 'German Blue' was transported along ancient routes across the northern Alps and red lakes which are translucent pigments commonly used in the dyeing and textiles industry. These rich pigments resulted in the hues of

Venetian art being more sumptuous than those of Florence or Rome.

Unlike other cities, as Pero Tafur, a Spaniard who visited Venice in the 1430s, stated “the city has no walls, nor any fortress”. Yet Venice’s encirclement of the lagoon and domination at sea meant that “if the whole world came against the city, the Venetians could sink a ship between the two castles and canal and be safe”. Even mapmaker Benedetto Bordone (1450/55-1530) conveyed the safety of the protective lagoon in his perspective plan of Venice and the Lagoon, from the *Isolario di Benedetto Bordone* (Venice, 1528). This metaphorically conveys Venice’s reassuring safety and strength. The protective lagoon resulted in the political and religious stability that allowed rich artistic tradition to thrive.

The extensive marshland provided the city with distinct atmospheric qualities such as the misty and damp environment. The public murals called frescos were one of the central forms of Renaissance art. However, frescos did not survive in the damp climate of Venice. This led to the Venetian artists’ main medium being that of oil paint on canvas which could withstand the unique conditions. Furthermore, this everchanging quality in shape and colour by flickering light drove the Venetians’ fascination in light and air. The lagoon on the same day could be bright-skied with water clear and glimmering like jewels, to the water later not reflecting but absorbing light, a palette of greys, white, misty blues, and mottled greens. The play of light and air is repeated in their paintings.

Venice was built, ‘more divine than by human will’ commented the diarist Marin Sanudo (1466-1536), upon mud flats. Space was at a premium, as the city’s foundations were reliant on the deposition of silt from the flow of irregular tidal currents along the coastline. This meant that unlike other cities, Venice was unable to be evenly divided. Instead, there were six unequal sections called sestieri. Each island self-contained unit with parish church at the centre surrounded by a campo or piazza with houses and shops on the outside. These islands were connected with bridges crossing canals at odd angles. There was asymmetry within a labyrinth of canals and bridges as well as in the buildings such as Piazza San Marco which is trapezoid shaped. This characteristic was reflected in asymmetrical art and counterbalanced composition rooted in their physical surroundings, famously emphasised by Titian in his ‘Assuntia’ (1518).

The geography of Venice undoubtedly contributed to the overall body of Renaissance study through its own unique factors. Ironically these same factors which were so critical in the formation of these ideas now threaten their legacy through the unfortunate combinations of rising sea levels coupled with land subsidence leading to ever more common episodes of flooding.

Handsome and imposing, the golden-brick Georgian rectory stands at the end of a long, winding gravel drive. The gardens are the kind you can get lost in. There are willow trees weeping in the shadows, antique metal gazebos, a well, a Victorian greenhouse, and a walled vegetable garden that looks formal and wild simultaneously. In winter the oak trees that stand majestically in the field to the front of the house are bare of their leaves, but that winter what was most memorable was a light dusting of snow that decorated the branches, as well as every inch of English soil in sight.

As I closed the heavy front door, I left my winter wonderworld outside and entered an eclectic and eccentric Christmas scene. Warm aromas from the kitchen welcomed me – the scent of ripe satsumas, cinnamon-infused spicy mulled wine and homemade mince pies waiting patiently on top of the bottle green Aga.

Granny had been waving magic all afternoon. From quilted Italian placemats and glass vases of crazy red flowers to a dozen candles glowing; everything had its place. The walls were as busy as the table, covered in open wooden shelving family photos, flying duck ceramics pottery picked up from travels all over the world and an abundance of Christmas decorations. With her hair pinned back and her apron tied firmly around her waist, she was buzzing about the kitchen, opening and closing cupboard and fridge doors, rearranging pots and pans and seamlessly timing the creation of one of her famed feasts.

In the corner of the kitchen, the Christmas tree loomed over the chaotic scene with pride. It was bedecked in red ribbons and fairy lights with a mountain of presents beneath it. Tempted, I picked up a particularly enticing package. It was wrapped in silver paper with a thick ribbon holding a card – but not with my name on it. Reluctantly I placed it back on the pile. The air was heavy with the anticipation of Christmas Day. Thankfully, that very second Granny called out that supper was finally ready.

Everyone was chattering and laughing over the sound of familiar festive music. The gravy tasted like caramel. There were six different types of vegetables. Roast thyme and rosemary flavoured lamb took the stage. And there were at least four puddings. The pop of crackers filled the room. As the meal drew to an end, I cupped my hand around the last of the candles and blew out the flame of Christmas Eve.



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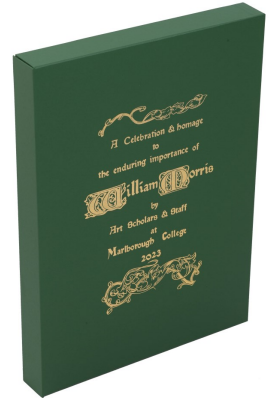
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'Inspired by William Morris'

Following on from the success of last academic year's Mound-themed project, our Art scholars have researched not only the multi-faceted domestic designs by William Morris (A House 1848-51), but his far-reaching thoughts about economics, politics, social well-being and the importance of nature and architecture across societies in order to acquire a more rounded and deeper understanding of this most remarkable, prophetic individual.

The brief was to respond to any aspect of William Morris, create an original visual composition and edition these themselves 55 times. This project gathered momentum last October and was completed in April. The Art School was a hive of activity on 'Morris Thursday Afternoons'. Not only were the lino relief-printing presses put to maximum use, but

pupils embraced digital technologies with gusto.

One of the portfolio boxes has already been gifted to the Royal Academy of Printmaking, the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers, in London. Another portfolio box will be sent to the William Morris Museum.

Edward Twohig RE, Head of Art

Top: Ines J. (Lower Sixth – Year 12).

The cover of the portfolio box was designed by:

Clemmie C. (Lower Sixth – Year 12)

Bottom-left: Freddie L. (Upper Sixth – Year 13)

Bottom-right: Summer V. (Shell – Year 9)

The Last Sherbet

Ina Q.

I have eaten
the last sherbet
that was in
the sweet box.

And which you
were probably
saving for
after school.

Forgive me
but it was
like fresh summer fruits
on a sunny day;
it was
as purple as a plum
during harvest season.

It tickled my tongue
like fireworks in my mouth
and gave off sparks
when I gave it a crunch

but I left the wrapper
for you.

Forging civilization: How fire has shaped humanity

William F. (Remove—Year 10)

Humanity's unique ability to manipulate fire is arguably the quality that has separated us most from all other lifeforms. Although we still don't know the exact origins of our control over it, it has been scientifically proven that our brain structure has evolved to best utilize the benefits of fire and therefore left us dependent on its properties. However, this comes at a devastating cost of mass destruction: forest fires have eradicated vast areas of the globe whilst taking hundreds of lives each year. Yet fire is not only a tool for destruction; both fire and its uses in combustion have fueled the world's innovation and industry for the past two hundred years.

The period of time in which humans began manipulating fire remains a mystery. Of the few ancient human relatives to have been discovered only a small handful have shown any traces of controlling fire, however across some archeological sites charred animal bones have been found near to the archaic human remnants. Although unlikely due to the time distortion of fossils, these could potentially reveal signs of cooking and be the start of a complex human evolution towards not only manipulating fire but our whole environment as we do now. Some anthropologists and biologists believe that fire was one of the main factors to have kickstarted our route to becoming the planet's apex species through the revolutionary advantages it has if used properly. Cooking food immensely benefits humans as it partially breaks down both meat and vegetables as it breaks down cell walls and denaturing proteins, therefore making meals easier to digest. Furthermore, cooking also increases nutrients' availability whilst simultaneously destroying harmful microbes; hence meaning that human digestion required less energy whilst extracting more nutrients for each meal. These extra calorie benefits were primarily used for development and usage of the brain. This mental and physical boost therefore gave humans more time and energy for inventing or making tools, socializing and other productive activities.

The mystical properties of the complex natural phenomenon were bound to attract religions and mythical tales in order to explain the vastly incomprehensible science behind combustion. Fire was perceived by many religions as a unique gift from the gods. Fire's abilities to be manipulated in countless ways made it a super tool for people as it massively increased the efficiency of so many tasks, therefore it is easy to understand why fire was seen as a supernatural gift. Faiths such as Zoroastrianism from Iran believe that fire is the holy link between the heavens and

the earth. Within these various religions fire plays a key role within ceremonies, funerals, celebration and worship, this also links to the huge psychological benefits brought by a hearth. Ceremonial fires would have been used as they give security, calming and a sense of empowerment to many, whilst also create strong smells such as incense which fill the room with warmth and a sense of holiness. Within survival lighting a fire is one of the most important steps to staying alive as it is such a useful tool for cooking, disinfecting and defending yourself whilst giving a mental boost of confidence and strength.

The innovation brought by fire from the Bronze Age to the present allowed us to become the dominant species we are. This however has led to a dependency on combustion, almost every single manufacturing industry is powered through combustion, everything artificial can be directly linked to the fire. Although our greatest tool for efficiency and innovation, we have begun to overuse and abuse our privilege and therefore we will soon have to pay the price for our success. With fire having given humanity access to so many resources, it is equally able to destroy. Forest fires have become an increasing problem in many countries, such as America, Australia and Canada, where millions of acres are being scorched each year. Last year alone the size of Thailand was left barren by raging forest fires, the figure of 23 million acres last year is only set to rise by 4% annually, that is an increase of 568,000 acres each year. It seems as if the phenomenon that built human civilization might also lead to our downfall as the destruction of global warming grows evermore present.

The importance of fire has not only been overlooked but also misunderstood. Our modern civilization was forged by flame as it has been the ultimate tool for our success, we have manipulated it for ourselves whilst it has also molded us and enabled the regular species of homo sapiens to become a global hyperpower. Fire controls our world and will change the earth long after we are gone, for such a simple chemical equation it has forged some of the most complex innovations on our planet. To conclude, our first ancestor who rubbed two sticks together to create the world's first flame was not only a world-changing genius but the father of all mankind.



Open Gardens in April near Marlborough

Wednesday 24 April Blackland House

Quemerford, Calne, SN11 8UQ.

Sunday 28 April Oare House

Rudge Lane, Oare, SN8 4JQ.

Details on ngs.org.uk/wiltshire-gardens-in-april

Frosty snow littered on rooftops, remnants
of last night's storm. Not leaving without making a mark.
Soft patters on parquet floors, hushed
giggles and far-away shrieks. Echoes
of the children's delight at the common
sight of snow. The quiet dawn disrupted by easy joy.

They run, jump, stumbling in the joy
of the biting cold. They look for treasures, remnants
of the past, to decorate the snow. In the Common,
the parents slowly rise, ambling to stoves, a mark
of dirt on the kitchen floor. Too distracted for the echoes
of the children to raise a brow. Their voices hushed
as the clock ticks onwards, nature no longer hushed
by the dark night. Birds chirp out, the contagious joy
of the children too powerful to ignore. The echoes
blend together in a cacophony of music, chasing away the remnants
of the night before. The hazy sun hangs low, a pale mark
on the cloudless milky sky. The wild shouts not common
to most, but on this snowy morning it wakes this Common.
Simple pleasures inspire unbridled fun. For when the world is hushed,
the children laugh because they do not care. Footprints mark
the crunching snow, the children too enraptured to lose the joy
of this snowy morning. When the bells toll, remnants
of snow still obscure the path, but the ringing echoes
as it thunders through the brisk morning until the echoes
fade away. The sun shines weakly over the Common,
the daily commute across the sky has begun. The remnants
of the children's fun in trails of muddy snow and the hushed
silence that deafens after the peaceful shouts of joy.
The children are all inside, with rosy cheeks – a red mark
of a well-spent morning. Breakfast time. Mark
of mud on damp socks, contented children eating as the echoes
of morning snow taper away, chasing the joy
of snow away. But the day approaches and for the second time, the Common
is home to children, bundled up, speaking in hushed
whispers that carry over the snowman standing proud amongst the remnants.

“

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”



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In April, with Spring truly sprung, the natural world is preoccupied with mating and nesting. Otters are busy in their holts, badger cubs emerging from their setts, and fox cubs growing stronger by the minute in their earths. Above ground the birds are more obvious: some of our common species are nesting a week earlier than they did in the 1960's.

The nest of the long-tailed tit is constructed from four materials- lichens, feathers, spider egg cocoons and moss- with over 6,000 pieces used for a typical nest. The nest is a flexible sac with a small, round entrance at the top, suspended either low in a gorse or bramble bush or high up in the forks of tree branches. The tit lines the outside with hundreds of flakes of pale lichens to provide camouflage while the inside is lined with more than 2,000 downy feathers to provide insulation. A lot of work for a nest that suffers a high rate of predation, with only a 17% success rate.

Another small bird that works hard at nest production is the wren, Latin name *trogodytes trogodytes*. *Trogodytes* means cave-dweller in reference to its delicately constructed nest, which has only a small opening. Males will construct many nests- often six to twelve, which the females will choose and then line with moss, leaves or feathers.

Great tits are opportunists when it comes to nesting: a crevice in a wall, an air duct, even an old traffic cone. It says something about our love of birds that notices are often taped onto post boxes in rural areas with the message:

GREAT TITS NESTING - PLEASE USE NEXT AVAILABLE POST BOX

I am not a good nest-finder, lacking the patience to stay still and observe as our blackbirds pay repeated visits to the same spot in our garden. The male is glossy and glamorous in April, rather less so in the summer months after the second or third broods have been and gone. And then, quite by accident, I look down from my garden ladder and spot a nest inside the *Photinia*—a goldfinch's clutch of four beautiful pale blue eggs.

The cuckoo arrives in April and so does one of its favourite host species, the reed warbler.

The female's strange bubbling call is a signal that it is on the look-out for foster parents to do the hard work. I love the male's soft, beguiling call, but when I think about that fat young cuckoo pushing all the other birds out of the nest I go off the species altogether.

Opposite: Reed warblers tending fledgling cuckoo. © David White

To 28th (Sunday)

Submissions wanted for The White Horse Bookshop Annual Open Art Exhibition 2024. This lovely exhibition will be open to everyone, and all work submitted will be exhibited! Please see guidelines for submissions on: <https://www.whitehorsebooks.co.uk/blog/annual-open-art-exhibition-2024>
The exhibition will be open from Friday 3rd May to Sunday 2nd June.

To 8th June (Saturday)

Spring Workshops at The White Horse Bookshop. 136 High Street. The White Horse Spring Workshop Programme continues for 2024. A superb range of one-day classes explores a variety of mediums and interests, with opportunities for all abilities. Workshop examples for April include Watercolours for Beginners; Ink & Wash in a Loose Style; Silver Bangle Workshop (all materials supplied); Crochet Squares and Acrylics "Light in the Landscape". Full list on The White Horse Bookshop website. To book, please call the Bookshop on 01672 512071, or pop in.

For more details see website: <https://www.whitehorsebooks.co.uk/art-workshops?sort=created>

4th (Thursday)

Marlborough Floral Club, Mildenhall Village Hall, 2pm. Treat yourselves to an enjoyable afternoon out on the first Thursday of each month! This month features a demonstration by Kathryn Delve, entitled 'A touch of Spry', inspired by Constance Spry OBE, who was responsible for the flowers at Queen Elizabeth II's coronation. *For information, call Micky Graham on 01672 514301.*

9th and 16th (Tuesdays)

Spring Study series at The Merchant's House. 132 High Street,

9th April 'Visual Arts in the 14th/15th Centuries' - David Evans.

16th April 'The Middle Ages; not all Castles & Crude Living' - Christopher Rogers. Tickets £18/£15 for Friends.

Details from: www.themerchantshouse.co.uk

10th (Wednesday)

Marlborough Gardening Association. Marlborough Town Hall. 6.45pm for 7.30pm. This month's talk will be entitled 'Growing Fruit in Limited Spaces' with Jan Lambourne. The Marlborough Gardening Association is one of the town's most active voluntary organisations with over 150 members; a friendly group of gardeners and horticultural enthusiasts. Members can also benefit from a 'Garden Link' scheme, which matches the expertise of the MGA members with those wanting hands-on practical help and advice. Come and join us! For active and armchair gardeners alike. *Further details: <http://www.marlbga.org.uk/index.htm>*

12th (Friday)

Marlborough Folk-Roots: Show of Hands, Full Circle Tour. The Memorial Hall, Marlborough College, 8pm. For music enthusiasts and folk fans across the nation, Steve Knightley and Phil Beer return to their roots, and embark on a musical journey to ‘where it all began’. With a rich history spanning three decades, the duo is renowned for their unique hands-on, cottage-industry approach, with an opportunity for the two well-loved musicians to reconnect with their loyal supporters, and also to inspire a whole new generation of folk musicians. Guitar, mandolin, violin, rich vocal harmonies, an inspiring, feel-good evening! *Booking Information see website: <https://www.marlboroughfolk-roots.co.uk>*

18th (Thursday)

The Parade Cinema, ‘Event Cinema’. 7pm. ‘An American in Paris – The Musical’.

Inspired by the Oscar-winning MGM film, this breathtakingly beautiful Tony Award-winning Broadway musical tells the impassioned story of discovering love in the City of Light. A sensuous, modern romance of art, friendship and love in the aftermath of war. “Pure Joy” – The New York Times.

Full details: <https://www.theparadecinema.com/movie/an-american-in-paris---the-musical>

18th (Thursday)

The Marlborough History Society. St Peter’s Church, Marlborough, 7.30pm. “Discovering Avebury – Landscape and People” with Dr. Nick Snashall.

Avebury’s ancient stones and burial mounds have been the subject of speculation and exploration for centuries. In this talk Dr Nick Snashall will reveal the story of a truly fascinating landscape. £5 entry. Free for Students! Guests are very welcome. www.marlboroughhistorysociety.co.uk

20th (Saturday)

The New English Art Club Education Programme. NEAC Drawing School: Shalbourne Village Hall, Kingston Road, Shalbourne SN8 3QF – 10.30am-4pm. Painter and tutor Victoria Jinivizian will host a 1-day drawing workshop entitled “Drawing Space”. This engaging workshop will help you with the fundamentals of drawing from observation within the limits of a room. Please see website for a list of materials to bring. Bookings via <https://www.newenglishartclub.co.uk/events/134/> - £80.

Marlborough Choral Society. St Mary’s Church, 7.30pm. Spring Concert: Fauré - Requiem plus Choral Classics. Tickets £12 adults, £4 students, under 16s free from Sound Knowledge or on the door or marlboroughchoralsociety.org.uk See page 12.

School Dates – please see school websites for any updated information.

St John’s School, Marlborough St Mary’s and Preshute Primary: Term 5 begins Monday 15th April to Friday 24th May.

Marlborough College: Summer Term begins 6 to 9pm Monday 15th April.

(Marlborough Area Poverty Action Group)

It is over 10 years since the first meeting of MAPAG, when a group of us met to try to find out poverty levels in the area and to discuss ways in which to alleviate this deprivation. We discovered that Devizes Foodbank had recently set up a weekly coffee morning in the former Christchurch building for distribution of food boxes, offering advice on organisations that may be able to help individuals and families.

We continue to network with others who share our aims, namely Love Marlborough Kids Meals, the Community Fridge and Marlborough Area Board. We also attend meetings of the recently established Marlborough Community Support Forum. We are now reverting to 'in person' meetings with partner agencies and other supporters. These are planned for 3 a year; agencies involved consider them valuable for informal networking.

We are less involved in holiday activity programmes as Wiltshire Council are now running a programme called FUEL at the Youth and Community centre, providing fun activities and a hot meal during the school holidays. This is free to children where the family is in receipt of benefits.

MAPAG continues to support individual children where there is an identified need. This also includes some who are not eligible for free provision. The summer outings have been a great success. This year we spent a day in Weston- Super -Mare and another in the Cotswold Wildlife Park. The feedback was very positive and we hope to arrange three next summer.

At Christmas we were able to provide Tesco vouchers for 40 families, distributed through Marlborough St. Mary's Primary School, Preshute School and Kids Meals. For the first time The Parade cinema addition donated vouchers to MAPAG which were given to families so they could experience a Christmas outing together.

The Trustees continue to respond to one off applications for funding for particular needs of vulnerable families.

Thank you to all who have so generously made donations and made the above possible.

We make good use of our Facebook page, ably managed by Claire Humphries. Caroline Thomas, our valued treasurer has worked hard to secure funding through the Marlborough Youth Forum to get a Youth worker in place at the Youth Centre. Sadly our former treasurer, Juliette Plank died at the end of 2023. She was very committed to MAPAG and will be sorely missed.



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W: www.homestartnorthwiltshire.org.uk

Home Start North Wiltshire is committed to equality, diversity, and safe recruitment. This volunteering post is subject to an enhanced DBS check. Charity number: 1106736

My childhood memory is of crimson flowers with dark furry stamens, usually in serried rows in public gardens and I dismissed them as rather dull. In later years I came to love tulips as providing a wonderful blast of spring colour in such a variety of colours and form.



The Mogul emperors loved their gardens and tulips can be seen in stone carving on the Taj Mahal. They were popular across

Asia Minor, arriving in Europe in the 16th century when the Dutch trading of tulips was established.

The flowering season for tulips ranges from late March to mid-May depending on the variety. There is a wide range of tulip cultivar shapes, including lily, fringed, parrot and peony and height varies too. I garden on a windy site so opt for shorter stems and at present am especially fond of the peony type with their multi sepaled heads which come in both late and early varieties. Another favourite is Princess Irene, a bright orange with burgundy/purple stripe.

Tulips prefer to grow in full sun whether in a pot or in the ground. They enjoy a neutral or alkaline soil, good drainage, but also some rich organic matter too and are best planted in October/November time. If you want to naturalise pot grown tulips, deadhead after flowering and continue to feed with high potassium (tomato) feed to help build up the bulb. Once the leaves start to wither and brown, remove and dry off the bulbs and store in a dark airy place. Keep an eye on them over the summer and discard any showing signs of mould. Come the autumn plant deeper outside than you would in a pot and wait and see what happens. Some varieties work better than others, but I'm all for recycling. For my pots I tend to splash out and buy new bulbs as it presents an opportunity to try something different.

If you are visiting gardens this spring, take photos of shape and colour combinations you like. That way you have an *aide memoire* when it comes to deciding upon new bulbs in the autumn.

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Postal entries must reach Prospect Hospice by Friday 19 April. Online entries close on Wednesday 24 April. The draw will take place on Friday 26 April; the winner will be contacted by the Prospect Hospice team. The money raised goes directly to fund free end-of-life care for local people and support for their families.

Jane, my wife, and I enjoy a good murder mystery, whether read as a novel or watched on television, at the cinema or theatre. One of our favourites at the moment is “Death in Paradise”. Set on the Caribbean island of Saint Marie, DI Neville Parker and team solve complicated murders against cloudless skies and sparkling blue seas. Each week, we try to work out whodunnit. There is a sense of satisfaction on the rare occasion when we get it right. However, it is great when, during the denouement, we are taken by surprise and did not see the outcome until it was revealed. The killer is then handcuffed and led away. DI Parker and friends retire to Catherine’s beach-front bar in Honoré for a cold beer and we are treated to more scenes of sea, sand and boats before the credits roll.

Thinking of “Death in Paradise” led me to thinking about Jesus’ death on the cross on Good Friday. Jesus, who had been proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God for the past three years or so, was nailed to the wooden crossbar to stop him. In the Bible, the Gospels of Mark, Matthew, Luke and John, tell us how Jesus shared the good news through teaching, preaching, healing, befriending, sharing meals and responding to all those whom he met. Declaring that the kingdom of God was at hand, he challenged the status quo, threatening the traditional religious leaders. So, they trumped up charges against Jesus and persuaded the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, to condemn Jesus to death on a cross.

Jesus was crucified under an inscription which read, “This is the King of the Jews”. His cross stood between two criminals. Whilst they were hanging there and dying in agony, one of the criminals taunted Jesus by saying, “Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!” The other criminal asked, “Don’t you fear God, since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.” (Luke 23:39-43).

“Paradise” was originally a Persian word, meaning a “park”, or “wood” or “enclosure”. When the Hebrew Bible, (what we call the Old Testament), was translated into Greek, paradise was used to describe the Garden of Eden when everything was perfect, just as God created it, before Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit and were driven from the garden. So, the loss of this paradise came to represent the loss of the presence of God. When people asked for forgiveness and came into a right relationship with God, then they returned to paradise, whether that was on earth or in heaven. At the end of time, at the end of the world, the righteous would return to paradise. After Jesus, the Son of God, came to earth and lived

amongst us, the early Christian writers believed that paradise was restored and fulfilled in Jesus and his ministry.

Jesus died on the cross so that our sins may be forgiven. When we believe in Jesus and are sorry for all that we have done wrong, which separates us from the love of God, he does forgive us. We can then know the peace and joy of knowing this and God's love for us, as his individual children. We are again in paradise. The choice is ours, yours and mine.

Jesus' dead body was laid in a tomb. I imagine the religious leaders celebrating that Sabbath evening as they shared in the Passover Supper with extra joy as they had got rid of the troublemaker. However, they celebrated what they thought was the denouement too soon. God raised Jesus from the dead and on Easter morning, the women and disciples found Jesus' tomb empty. He was alive! Jesus has conquered not only sin, but death itself. Just as God raised Jesus from the dead, so he also raises those who believe in Him. We now no longer fear death, as Jesus has overcome it. Although this earthly life ends, we now have the hope and knowledge of eternal life with God in heaven. There is now "Life in Paradise"! May you know the power of the resurrection and the love of God this Eastertide and always.

Happy Easter!

Stephen Skinner (Christchurch Methodist Fellowship)

Family News

Naomi Painter

Where are they now, we ask? Well, recently I have been catching up with people. Anne Hancock the former manager of the Jubilee rooms is still in Marlborough although she spends time with her grandchildren in Scotland and England.

Margaret Smith who lived in Forest Dale Road with her husband David, then at 10 The Green is in Savernake View Nursing Home. I went to visit her recently and caught up with her daughter also Margaret while I was there. Margaret and David have a son Simon who lives in Cambridge and she has three grandchildren. Margaret is very happy and being looked after well, visitors would be very welcome.

If you have news of any other local families and friends who should be mentioned here, please get in touch. It is always good to keep in touch and rekindle old friendships, it is surprising how things haven't changed all that much and our paths meet more often than we think.

It's natural, if unattractive, to enjoy feeling superior. I used to work in a university library, where I could observe some of the world's leading minds demonstrate both massive academic muscle and astonishing day-to-day ineptness. "Clever is as clever does" I'd mutter, smugly, while Professor McIntellect put his notes in the photocopier upside down and back to front for the third time in a week. So imagine how much I enjoyed *The Limits of Genius* by Kate Spalding, all about the spectacular dimness of some well-known geniuses. Deeply weird and frankly astonishingly idiotic, some of history's best known scientific achievers have done some really, really silly things. Spalding is a mathematician and science journalist, and a sharp and entertaining writer. Irreverent and slightly swear-y, if you're still determined to buy a book for a reading-refusenik teenage boy this might be just the thing.

I'm only half-way through, but happy to recommend *The Night in Question* by Susan Fletcher (who won the Whitbread First Novel award twenty years ago, and seems to keep getting better and better). Florrie, aged and disabled but positive and maintaining as much independence as she can in residential care, believes that she's had her share of life's surprises. Then the death of another resident – and friend – strikes her as strange and unexpected enough to arouse suspicion. Setting out to discover the truth she finds herself reflecting on her own adventurous life and its secrets. So it's a who (and why) dunnit and a reflection on life and love and inspiration, well constructed and expressively written, warm and wise and amusing. If, like me, you have a *Whalebone Theatre* shaped gap in your reading life, this might go some way to filling it.

What else? I'm ploughing on with Trollope ('ploughing' makes it sound like a chore, which it isn't, but there is a lot of him to get through). *Can You Forgive Her?* he asks. Well, I'm sure I will once I've read enough to work out why forgiveness is required. She seems like a nice enough girl... and it's Richard Jefferies Prize Shortlist reading time, so I'm vicariously walking across hill-tops and through forests and listening to birdsong and crashing waves. Honestly, with all this reading it's a miracle I find time to come to work every day. I'm a wonder, me.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Departed - we pray for the family of

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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

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

10.30am Worship

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

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)

10.00am Worship (every 3rd Sunday)

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 Churches

Children/Family Activities

Informal All-age Worship. Sunday 7 April, 5 pm

Everyone is welcome to join us at St Mary's Church. If you have any questions, or dietary requirements please contact Penny in the Church office on marlb.anglicanteam@tiscali.co.uk 01672 512357 (Poster page 27)

Sparklers, Monday 15 April, 2.30-3.45 pm

A kids club for School Years Reception to Year 2 Games, snacks and Bible stories. Meeting in the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough.

Messy Church – 'The Goodness of Creation'. Saturday 20 April

2pm at St George's, Preshute. Please do join us for this informal afternoon service with worship songs, lots of Bible-based craft activities and afternoon tea too!

The Ark Parent/Carer and Toddler Group

Mondays during term-time, 9:30am to 11am in the Church Hall, Silverless Street. Please contact Caroline Philips (cphilps2@gmail.com)

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!

Midweek Activities

B.L.T (Bible Lunch Time) Monday, 15 April, 12.30 pm

Pop in briefly if you're busy – Stay & chat if you can. Light lunch + short Bible talk, meeting in the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough.

Welcome Wednesdays 10.30 am every Wednesday in St Mary's.

Ladies Bible Study Friday 12 April

Every second Friday during the school term. Friends discovering God's truth in the Bible (All ladies welcome - onsite crèche available).

For more details, email ladies@emmanuelmarlborough.org or refer to emmanuelmarlborough.org/home/events/events-calendar/

Homegroups, Thursdays during term time, Pewsey – 7.30 pm, Marlborough – 7.45 pm, Ogbourne St George – 7.45 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

Wiltshire Youth for Christ

Currently we are supporting students and St John's School with weekly 1-2-1 Mentoring support, using our Pop Up Youth Work Van in the area when we can in partnership with the local Neighbourhood Police team and looking to support and compliment the great stuff taking place at the Community Youth Centre. We are supporting several other local events coming up, so keep an eye out and come have a chat. Wiltshire YFC are actively advocating a positive and more united approach

with the Town Council and other organisations or groups that have a heart to engage, inspire and equip teenagers in our local community. We are investing in our team and resources to help ensure Marlborough has the time and focus so its younger generation can have better support and opportunities available.

Kids@StMary's
invites you to our
All-age family worship

Join us for fun and informal
activities, worship and prayer

5pm - 6pm Sunday 7th April
at St Mary's Church, Marlborough
and at 4:30pm for a children's
tea beforehand.

*All are welcome at our
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The Marlborough Oxfam shop is looking for volunteers to join the team. There are many opportunities to get involved.

If you're interested in doing a taster session, please come and chat to us at 29b High St, Marlborough, or call 01672 515932, or online at volunteering.oxfam.org.uk. We look forward to welcoming you to the shop.

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All items for the May issue by Tuesday 9 April please.

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