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# TOWER AND TOWN

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The Coming of Spring

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MARCH 2023

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# TOWER AND TOWN

THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES

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## It's that time of year again!

Winter gives way to Spring and the real new year begins. It's March! We have offerings from across a broad spectrum, none of which would be possible without the generous efforts of my many contributors, to whom my ever grateful thanks.

We have March in many guises: astronomical, religious, classical, Bulgarian, pastoral and Ukrainian: Juliet Wood and Simon Brett writing about their forthcoming exhibition; Bob Holman writing about photographing Marlborough; Robin Nelson extolling the benefits of reading about Nature, and Reuben Mann reminding us that God is more interested in ministry than masonry. We have David Chandler encouraging us to take up bell-ringing, and Debby Guest telling us of some good reads, plus lots of news and information from our church communities.

We also feature some lovely contributions from our Ukrainian friends. In this context Alison Selby writes:

*"February 24th marked 12 months since the invasion in Ukraine. Since then over 100,000 Ukrainian guests are now safe in the UK having arrived under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. As the war continues, more refugees require ongoing accommodation and re-matching.*

*"Around forty homes in the Marlborough area have hosted Ukrainian refugees (or 'guests' as we have come to regard them) during 2022. Many hosts have found it a very worthwhile experience and have been happy to extend the hosting experience beyond the two or so months that they originally expected.*

*"Quite a lot of Ukrainian families have been able to transition to rented accommodation, but there remains a steady stream of one or two new Ukrainian small family units who are looking for another host in 2023. Some potential hosts who missed out in 2022 may now be in a position to try being a host. There is a good support network through Facebook and WhatsApp. Please contact Martin or Alison Selby on 01672 511128 to find out more or register your interest with Homes for Ukraine."*

**David Du Croz, Editor**

**Cover picture by John Osborne**

**Picho and Penda, Bulgarian token gifts at the beginning of spring. See page 5**

# Happy New Astronomical Year! Charles Barclay



The astronomical year begins on the Vernal (Spring) Equinox; this year the day falls on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> March. Just before 9.30pm the sun reaches the origin of the celestial coordinate system (equivalent to longitude and latitude, but on the sky). The sun crosses the celestial equator into the northern hemisphere of the sky and officially starts our northern hemisphere summer season. Arguably the most important day of the year and one of the quarter days (with the solstices) that have divided the year from ancient times (and may well account for the otherwise strange start of the tax year today) from which many astronomical measurements are taken.

Known as the first point of Aries (and fixing the zodiac constellation areas), due to the complex phenomenon of precession (wobble of the earth's rotation axis) over the last 2000 years since naming, it now falls (i.e. the sun is in front of) the constellation Pisces! Most know this day as one of equal day and equal night length but more importantly it is a day for navigation and alignments, as one of the only two days in the year that the sun rises due east and sets due west. Every day after the Spring Equinox, the sun rises further and further north on the eastern horizon, until it reaches its maximum 'standstill' position, some 40 degrees north of east on June 21<sup>st</sup>. On 20<sup>th</sup> March, the sun reaches 39 degrees altitude above the southern horizon here in Marlborough (90 degrees minus our latitude) at local noon.

The Spring Equinox is of course also significant in the Christian year (as in many world religions) as it fixes the day for Easter: Easter Day must fall on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Vernal Equinox. So, if the weather allows either sunrise or sunset to be visible, go out on 20<sup>th</sup> March and note the directions of true east and west from where you are, as we all look forward to longer summer evenings.

*Charles Barclay (FRAS) is a professional outreach astronomer and was director of the Blackett Observatory 1997-2022.*



# *Lent for Everyone* by Tom Wright

Chris Smith

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Lent is a sort of spiritual keep fit time for Christians. Moses spent 40 days up the mountain, Jesus spent 40 days being tested in the desert and we spend 40 days preparing for Easter. This can involve self-examination, reconsidering of priorities and good old fashioned repentance. Lent begins with ‘ashing’ as a reminder of our mortality. It ends with the joyful celebration of Easter as a reminder of our hope of eternal life.

To help us navigate this spiritual season Marlborough Churches Together are offering a Lent course. This year we are returning to our roots and having a look at the Scriptures, and Matthew’s biography of Jesus in particular. Bishop Tom Wright has written a book specifically for this purpose, which we are encouraging people to read. As well as being a mighty New Testament scholar Bishop Tom has also written an ‘everyman’ series.

We will be engaging at this level through Lent. The book has daily readings, which include a fresh translation of the text and a short commentary on the theme. This book will guide us as we ask those big questions: ‘Who is Jesus?’, ‘What did he teach?’ and ‘Why did he die?’. There are small groups to join that will enable interesting discussion on one of the previous week’s readings.

The details of the groups are below and you can sign up at the back of St Mary’s Church or by calling Penny in the MAT Church Office on 07593 815609. All the groups begin the week commencing February 26<sup>th</sup> and run for five weeks. I’m delighted to say that the Mustard Seed Bookshop have fifty copies to buy at a discounted price of £8.50.

The groups with space available at the time of going to press are:

- Wednesdays 3:30-4:45pm hosted by Chris Smith at The Rectory, Rawlingswell Lane, 514357.
- Wednesdays 7:45-9:15pm hosted by Vincent and Helen Stokes at Chandos, Cold Harbour Lane, 516592.
- Thursdays 7:30-9pm hosted by Stephen Skinner at The Manse, 18 Priorsfield, 512457.

Mars has a fascinating history. Far more complex than Ares, the Greek god of war with whom he was later identified, he embodies all three of the functions found in the matrix culture of the Indo-European peoples: those of ruler-priest, of warrior and of citizen-farmer.

As ‘Marspater’, he seems to have been the main godhead of the early Italic peoples. The linguistic root of his name (‘mar’) probably suggests the generative brightness of the sun, and it was only after the foundation of Rome in 746 BC that Jupiter took a narrow precedence over him.

Mars was the son of Juno, not by Jupiter but after her mystic union with a flower (don’t ask!). He became the father of Romulus and Remus by raping a Vestal Virgin, and after their birth the twins were abandoned to die. They were found and suckled by a she wolf, an image which became an enduring symbol of the city of Rome.

His primary aspect in the early years of Rome was as a god of growth and fertility, when he was worshipped as Mars Gradivus (the Grower) and Mars Silvanus (the Woodlander). The horse, the woodpecker and (increasingly and notably) the wolf were sacred to him.

As the god of spring and new life he gave his name to March, the first month of the old Roman ten-month year, but as early as 710 BC the months of January and February were added, and January now became the ‘gateway’ to the new year. (September, October, November and December interestingly retained their names as seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth months.)

From around the fifth century, syncretism with Ares seems to have turned Mars primarily into a fearsome god of war, and his role as a god of growth was forgotten. The ‘wolf’, the constant companion of the nomadic Indo-European warrior, had taken over, and he now becomes the very embodiment of ‘furor’, that necessary element of imperial power - but one which can entail a city’s own destruction.

March was now important as the beginning of the campaigning year: the ground was hard, the legions could move .....



# 'Granny March'

John Osborne

On 1 March in Bulgaria everyone in the family or at work welcomes the beginning of spring by giving each other little red and white tokens. These are either threads of twisted wool which can be worn round one's wrist or a pair of little woollen figures, which can be pinned onto a lapel. The white, male figure is Picho and the red, female figure is Penda. This coloured thread is a 'martenitsa', a word obviously cognate with 'March'.

As you give one to a member of your family or to a friend or colleague, you say 'Chestita Baba Marta', which means 'Congratulations! Granny March!'. You wear the martenitsa until you see your first stork and then you take the thread off and hang it on the branch of a tree. When King Charles visited Bulgaria several years ago when he was Prince of Wales he was presented with a martenitsa and one wonders – as storks are rarely seen, if at all, in the British Isles – what he did with it after he returned home. Perhaps the first cuckoo or the first swallow would have counted as an acceptable substitute, as a sign of the arrival of spring.

*See cover picture (and note the stork)*

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# March, according to Ronald Blythe

David Du Croz

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A few weeks ago I was listening half awake to the Today programme and happened upon a man talking about someone who had just died at the age of 100. It wasn't the age that drew me out of my slumbers but the personality of the man being described, clearly in so many ways a truly remarkable person - and I wanted to know more.

Ian Collins was speaking about his great friend Ronald Blythe, the author of *Akenfield*, and well known to readers of *The Church Times* for his weekly column *Word From Wormingford*. These gems have recently been collected together in *Next To Nature*, and I can think of no better way of giving you a taste of the month of March than introducing you to snippets of Ronnie's meditations inspired by that time of year.

"The March sun, once the March winds have stopped blowing it about, is enchanting. I feel it on the back of my neck as I clear the nut-walk, a surprising caress."

He describes the first touches of spring: "They begin with steaming dawn fields and exhaling woodlands, with teeming birdsong and blissful atmospheric curtain-raisers before the hot sun is kicked into full view, and they end in glory." And then as the month advances: "Birds de-moss the lawns and daffodils totter about in the new grass...The air is strong and sweet... Ditch water pours away. Easter is coming."

Birds feature frequently in his writing: "a wild goose is tacking against the wind, flying sideways in wide swerves"; "a woodpecker hammering away overhead"; "a pair of jays, dressed to the nines, swing warily from the holly bush." By his own admission he is a chronic cloud-watcher: "This morning the white cat and I cloud-watched together as the sun came up."

He is up early to write a new Introduction to something by George Herbert: "A crisp white world. Field edges have been trimmed-off by frost. The oaks are creaking." He talks about the healing effect of nature: "I took some big doses an hour ago as I wrenched up nettle stalks and bird-cherry suckers from the edges of the top lawn and listened to linnets."

It is Lent, and he reflects on Jesus' forty days in the desert: "My Stour-side land is not conducive to harsh religious behaviour at this moment being flooded with flowers and softened by low skies. I read of Christ's illness from that extreme self-testing in the Palestinian wastes with wonderment, as should we all."

# Deruny, or Potatoes that dreamed of becoming Pancakes.

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If you dive a little deeper into the culture, history and geographical location of any people, you can feel their wisdom and centuries-old experience, even when flipping through the pages of a cookbook.

Traditional Ukrainian dishes are simple and nutritious. They give energy for the whole working day. Deruny (potato pancakes) are a tasty and filling dish. The main ingredient is grated potatoes, which gave the dish its name. Call the children, invite friends, because in 15-20 minutes you will have a real delicacy on your table!

Ingredients: 700g potatoes      1 medium onion      2 or 3 tbsp wheat flour  
1 medium egg      Salt, black pepper, vegetable oil for frying.

1. Grate potatoes and the onion. Remove excess liquid.
2. Add the egg.
3. Add the flour and mix thoroughly.
4. Pour vegetable oil for frying in the pan. It is important that the pan is hot and that the deruny do not absorb excess oil during frying.
5. Add salt, pepper, your favourite spices or dried garlic to the mixture.
6. Put the mixture in a hot pan with a spoon and fry on both sides.

We spread the finished deruny on a paper towel to remove excess fat. Serve with sour cream or mushroom sauce, fried onions or vegetable salad.

Bon appetit! Смачного! Smachnoho!!!!

Yuliya Martynova

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## Makivnyk (Poppy Seed Roulade)      Maria Nelidovamatia

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Ingredients:

*For the dough:*

500g strong white flour  
10g active dry yeast  
220ml warm milk  
1 large egg  
80g sugar  
A pinch of salt  
60g butter  
2 tsp vanilla extract

*For the filling:*

250g poppy seeds  
200-250g sugar  
350ml milk  
50g butter  
2 tsp vanilla extract  
A pinch of salt



### *How to prepare the poppy seed filling:*

The poppy seeds need to be washed beforehand. Put the clean poppy seeds and milk into a pot, bring to the boil and simmer on a low heat for at least an hour, stirring occasionally. When the seeds are ready, drain through a fine sieve and crush with a blender. Add butter, vanilla extract and sugar, mixing well. The filling is ready to use or can be stored in a freezer. Or there is another method to simplify the process of making the filling – you can find a ready-to-use poppy seeds filling in the Polish shop!

### *The dough*

In a bowl, mix warm (35-40°C) milk with 1 tsp of sugar and the yeast. Put in a warm place for about 15-20 min or until strong foam appears on the surface.

Mix 2/3 of the flour with the sugar, salt, vanilla extract and egg. The egg should be at room temperature. To this mixture add activated yeast and mix the dough. When the dough starts to hold together, turn the soft dough out onto a well-floured surface, add melted butter, the rest of the flour and knead it well. This dough should be slightly sticky. So after adding melted butter it is better to knead it more but if needed you can add a bit more flour. Lightly flour the bottom of a large bowl, place dough in the bowl and cover with plastic wrap; let it stand in a warm place until doubled in size.

After the dough has doubled in size, take it from the bowl, slightly knead it, divide it in half, roll each half into a rectangular shape, cover with the filling, roll into a big roulade, and place them on the baking tray with the edges underneath. Let it rise for at least 2 hours.

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Mix 1 egg yolk with 15ml of milk and using a brush cover the top of the roulade. Then put it into the oven for 30 minutes. When it starts to become golden, remove from the oven, cover with the mixture of yolk and milk with 1 teasp of sugar added, and put into the oven until it becomes a nice brown colour. Adding sugar for the second covering makes the top very shiny.

## Ukrainian Easter Bread

Yuliya Martynova

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In the spring everyone waits for the brightness of the Easter holiday. Each Christian country has its own special customs associated with this holiday. So, Ukrainians also have a special thing to do on the eve of Easter - baking an Easter bread (a kulich).

A kulich is a sweet, buttery, tall white bread of a cylindrical shape, which according to Orthodox custom is baked before Easter. This dessert is a symbol of Christ's resurrection. Even as she starts to knead the dough, the hostess does it

with bright, happy thoughts, trying to drive away anger and negative thoughts. Every housewife has her own special secret for baking Easter bread. The variety of recipes, the individual approach to ingredients and the preservation of the experience of generations allow you to create unique recipes.

After the kulich is baked, its top is covered with white glaze, which is usually made from egg whites beaten with sugar. The Easter bread is decorated with various symbols, patterns, floral ornaments, gingerbread, marshmallows or dried fruits. Here is space for your imagination!

The process of preparing and baking Easter bread takes almost a whole day, so it often involves several generations of women from the same family.

Cheerful thoughts and the support of friends have always been a guarantee of delicious cakes! Try it yourself. Perhaps cooking with the whole family will also become one of your new family traditions!

## The Pysanka Museum

Yuliya Martynova

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For many years, the Museum of Easter egg decoration has been a visiting card of the town of Kolomyia, in the region of Ivano-Frankivsk.

But let's start from the beginning. What is a decorated Easter egg - a 'pysanka'?

A pysanka is an egg painted with wax and natural dyes, and is one of the ancient forms of Ukrainian folk art. It is a raw egg with a decorative pattern which symbolises life, the revival of nature in springtime, procreation, the sun, warmth and fertility.

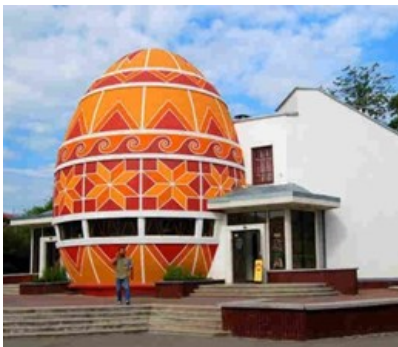
Ancient Ukrainians believed that the painted Easter egg would be beautiful if the woman who painted it did so when there was no one else around. Therefore, Easter eggs were most often made by a woman who was working on her own. No, you are not mistaken: in ancient times only women could paint Easter eggs. As with the pysanka, in the Ukrainian culture a woman is the personification of procreation and the beginning of a new life. Our ancestors gave such Easter eggs as a sign of peace and to wish each other beauty, strength and health.

Currently, Ukraine has the only museum of Easter egg decoration in the world. The museum itself is in the shape of an enormous egg, and its collection includes more than 1,200 specimens. And the oldest pysanka is more than 500 years old. There you can see painted chicken, goose, ostrich, and even quail eggs. Ancient and modern, traditional and fantastical, these specimens were collected thanks to the efforts of Ukrainians from all over the world.

And why? Because the Easter egg is a symbol of the sun's victory over darkness, of life over death.



Ukrainian Easter Bread



The Pysanka Museum

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*Juliet and Simon write about their forthcoming exhibition at the White Horse gallery March 3rd to April 2nd*

Preparing our first joint exhibition is highlighting our differences, despite nearly fifty years together. What we do share is a commitment to drawing as the foundation of our work. However, for Simon, drawing is an in-depth study for an engraving, while for Juliet it is a rapid response to a human, changing situation, so usually incomplete.

*Juliet:* I love to draw a chance discovery or, in contrast, return to a well loved theme such as Cromer pier or the Brilliant Young Musicians recitals in St Peter's. The Underground theme in the show grew from secret London sketches, 'stealing' the movement of passengers, stilling them into traditional compositions. Teaching led to sketching in Swindon, towards a series of pictures about the townspeople. An exhibition, launched by a public drawing event in central Swindon to raise interest in visual art, then toured for about a year.

I painted the children of Marlborough College Master, Roger Ellis, in the 1980's and the later Master, Edward Gould. From local portrait commissions I developed a nation-wide portrait career - intimate heads and large public commissions were equally interesting to me. Currently I work from drawings closer to home.

*Simon:* My wood engravings are black and white, mainly illustration for literature and poetry: Norse mythology, the Bible and Shakespeare, 19th century novels, the Romantic poets and modern poetry. The work which has meant most to me was *The Play of Pericles*, a fascinatingly close artist/printer/publisher collaboration with Barbarian Press in Canada, involving one hundred and forty blocks. So I have played a part in the modern revival of wood engraving, have written widely on it, including *Wood Engraving: How to do it* and *The Life and Art of Clifford Webb*.

Recently I discovered the whereabouts in New Mexico of a portrait painting I had thought lost. Making a print version of it led to the engraved portraits in the show.



Ever since the pandemic struck I seem to have built up a nice little pile of Natural History books, and last Christmas the pile got bigger. March weather is usually wet, windy and cold so perhaps this will be the month for catching up with them all.

The most recent addition is a reprinted gem, *The Peregrine*, J. A. Baker's classic of nature writing first published in 1967. It had impressed me when I first read it, as much for the dedicated and obsessive observation involved as the brilliance of his writing. It's always an exciting and unexpected thrill to see a Peregrine in Wiltshire-over the Ridgeway locally, or in the skies above Wilton Water. Baker brings to life the drama of such encounters on the flat fenlands of eastern England.

From the first year of the pandemic came *The Consolation of Nature*, a diary three writers kept during the spring of 2020. One of them, who lives in Ramsbury, recorded natural delights that I have also enjoyed along his local territory: dingy skipper and Duke of Burgundy butterflies, celandine and wood anemone, cuckoo and grasshopper warbler. I found it reassuring sharing his enthusiasm for and knowledge of these iconic species.

There was a period many years ago, when, inspired by Vesey-Fitzgerald's *Town Fox, Country Fox*, I ventured out in the small hours looking for foxes and badgers, with little success it must be admitted! I was recently given a copy of *Nightwalking*, four journeys into Britain after dark. The author describes nocturnal encounters with snuffling badgers, playful fox cubs, skittering bats and hares boxing in the moonlight.

It seems that you need to be a dedicated loner to get the best out of the natural world. In *The Last Wilderness* author Neil Ansell sets out to explore the Rough Bounds of the northwest Highlands over the course of a year in five solitary walks, relying on tracks and trails rather than roads, of which there are hardly any. His reward is a series of special encounters with nature in a challenging but largely unspoilt terrain.

*Birds in a Cage* tells the remarkable story of four men, all keen birdwatchers, who shared incarceration in a P.O.W. camp in Warburg, Germany in 1941. Despite the humiliation, monotony and deprivation they suffered their methodical observations and detailed records of the local birds (including nesting wrynecks and redstarts) kept up their spirits, and they went on to become founding fathers of the conservation movement in Britain, one to start the Fair Isle Bird Observatory, another to chair the R.S.P.B. A remarkable and moving read.

# What's On in March

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## **2nd (Thursday)**

2pm Mildenhall Village Hall. Marlborough Floral Club. Demonstration by Cathryn Brown - 'Fifty Things That Make You Happy'. Treat yourselves to an enjoyable afternoon out on the first Thursday of each month. For more information, please call Micky Graham on 01672 514301

## **10th (Friday)**

Marlborough College: Exeat starts (to Sunday 12th)

## **11th (Saturday)**

10am-4pm St Peter's Church. St Peter's Spring Fair. Join us and our vendors for our Spring Fair where you will find plenty of gift ideas for Mother's Day

## **16th (Thursday)**

7.30pm-9.30pm St Peter's Church. Marlborough History Society talk: 'Hitler's British Traitors – The Secret History of Spies, Saboteurs and Fifth Columnists' by Tim Tate, award winning film-maker, author and investigative journalist. Guests welcome. Tickets on the door £5, free for members. *See page opposite*

## **20th (Monday)**

3.45pm-4.45pm (doors open at 3.30pm) Wesley Hall, Oxford Street. A monthly kids' club for school years Reception to Year 2, run by Emmanuel Marlborough. Games, Snacks and Bible stories

## **24th (Friday)**

Marlborough College term ends (to Tuesday 18th April)

## **25th (Saturday)**

7.30pm St Mary's Church. Marlborough Concert Orchestra Spring Concert. Strauss, Reinecke (flute soloist Sally Stocks), Brahms Symphony No4. *See page 24*

## **31st (Friday)**

St John's: Term 4 ends (to Monday 17th April)  
St Mary's: Term 4 ends (to Monday 17th April)

## **April calendar**

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### **2nd April (Sunday)**

7.30pm St Peter's Church. 11th Series of Brilliant International Musicians: Michael Ronan (Baritone) and Benjamin Mead (Piano). Details on the St Peter's website: [stpetersmarlborough.org.uk/event](http://stpetersmarlborough.org.uk/event). Tickets £10 for members of St Peter's Trust, £15 for non-members, students free. *See page 25*



**3rd April (Monday)**

7.30pm-9.30pm St Peter's. AGM for the College Fields and Barton Park Residents Association

## Clergy Letter

Reuben Mann

Can you act out this nursery rhyme? *Here is the church and here is the steeple; Open the doors and here are the people!*

At Emmanuel Church, we are thrilled to have bid for and purchased the building of Christchurch. What great shoulders we stand on! We thank God for over 200 years of thriving Methodist ministry at or near this site. We are so grateful for the kind hospitality the Methodists have shown Emmanuel since the pandemic left us homeless. We pray for the Methodist fellowship which continues to worship, now alongside the Anglican community within St Mary's church.

But, while we're pleased to be able to serve from our own building, I've a niggling feeling that the nursery rhyme isn't quite right! In the Bible, Paul writes to Christians in Ephesus: 'In [Christ], you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.'

Paul is telling his readers that it's them, and not the building, who are God's dwelling – the church! How amazing that God should stoop by his Spirit to live among people like us! That, as we depend not on our performance but on Jesus as risen Saviour and Lord, we find such forgiveness and undeserved welcome! That God should even make ordinary people his dwelling – the church. It's like a really old Halifax advert, in which people jumped on each other's shoulders to make a human house. The church is the people, not the building.

My children have taught me a revised rhyme, but with the same actions: *Here is the building and here is the steeple; Open the doors and here is the church!* It doesn't rhyme, but I think the theology is better.

It's a great reminder that God is interested in our ministry more than our masonry and in our repentance more than our religion. As Jesus says in the book of Revelation: 'I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice, and opens the door, I will come in and eat with them, and they with me.'



**St Peter's Church.**  
**7:30 pm Thursday 16 March**

**Hitler's British Traitors**  
**The Secret History of Spies, Saboteurs and Fifth Columnists**  
**By Tim Tate**    Guests welcome, £5 entry

# Family News

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*Paul Cowan writes:*

**John Robins** was born in 1943, was brought up in St John's Close, and his school years were spent in Marlborough. One of his interests was electricity, and on leaving school in 1957 he entered a 5-year apprenticeship with the SEB, on completion of which he joined Marlborough College's estate department as an electrician. This is where he met John Head.

In 1965 the two Johns started their own company 'Head and Robins', initially from a shed in St John's Close, before moving to Pewsey, and later opening a second shop in Marlborough High Street. They were the go-to electrical company for some 35 years, their activities included domestic and industrial installation, re-wiring, repairs and maintenance of all things electrical, and of course managing the two shops in Pewsey and Marlborough. The Pewsey workshop repaired anything from a bedside lamp to a corn drier control system. John retired from the company in 2002 when he was 60.

At the same time as starting the business John met Anne and in 1968 they married. Sally was born in 1969 and Debbie in 1972. They lived in a new bungalow which was built by Dewey's and wired by John to save money, and this was their home for 45 years.

John had many interests, and as the children progressed through school he became a Governor at both Rushall and then St John's School. He was Chairman of the Pewsey Chamber of Commerce, and was then persuaded to become a Magistrate, an office he held for 17 years sitting on the bench in Marlborough, Pewsey, Devizes. In this role John and Anne attended the state opening of Parliament twice and a Palace Garden party, John hiring his suit in London and changing into it in a car park.

In the early 1980s John got an interest in militaria, renovating a Landrover and later converting an Austin K2 into a motor home. He and Richard Bedall spent many hours and great fun maintaining and driving Richard's extensive fleet of old military vehicles, many of them used in film sets seen by us all. Often the family would go to Normandy for D Day landing events. At John's suggestion 'Head and Robins' vans were used for many years as mobile change vans for Pewsey Carnival.

John joined Rotary in 1980 and brought so much to the organisation. Following a family trip to Canada he introduced us to the Car Boot Sale which we ran in Waitrose car park on bank holidays when the store was closed, and he helped organise the old folks' Christmas Parties. John was a driving force in Rotary. In the years he

was involved he helped Rotary International raise millions of pounds in aid of good causes including the eradication of polio, mercy ships, schools in Zambia, cows for Africa, many hurricane appeals, as well as helping local schools with mock interviews, photography, science, young chef competitions, in addition to assisting all the vulnerable in our community. John was club President twice, and his contribution to Rotary was recognised by Rotary International when he was awarded a Paul Harris Fellowship Award.

My abiding memory will be that John was a devoted and loyal husband, father, grandfather, and friend to so many. He was always polite, disliked conflict, never raised his voice or used bad language, and was always fair. Then when all was said and done, and the final toast drunk, he would light that damn pipe!!

### FROM THE REGISTERS

**Departed** - we pray for the families of

4 January      Jocelyn Young (93)      Savernake Care Home, Marlborough



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The bells are calling the people of Marlborough to prayer and are marking important national occasions like Jubilees and Coronations, but St Mary's is short of bell-ringers for its eight bells.

Bell ringing is an interesting and rewarding activity which offers mild physical and mental activity. It takes a few months to acquire sufficient bell handling skills for a beginner to be able to ring for Sunday services. I would describe the skill as being like learning to ride a bike or swim: once learned, never forgotten!



Come along to a Tuesday practice at 7:30pm and see what it involves.

'Change ringing' and 'method ringing' are English inventions. While church bells in continental Europe and the Middle East make small swings like a clock pendulum, the English style is for the bell to swing through 360 degrees which allows for accurate timing of the striking of the bell.

Our bell ringing is described as 'full circle ringing'. The bells are 'set' with the mouth of the bell facing up. They are held in this position by a wooden stay. The ringer pulls the bell over the balance and the bell strikes after rotating 360 degrees.

'Rounds' are when the lightest bell (the treble) strikes first, followed by the bells in order of weight and lower notes with the heaviest bell (the tenor) striking last. St Mary's tenor weighs  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a ton and the bells are in the major scale of E flat. The bells cannot ring tunes or melodies but do sound musical.

'Method' ringing allows for each bell to change one position (the only thing that is mechanically possible) on successive rings and achieve all the possible combinations. With five bells there are 120 combinations ( $5!$ ) which take a few minutes to ring. With seven bells there are 5040 combinations ( $7!$ ) which takes about three hours and is a 'peal'.

There are many different methods such as Plain Bob, Grandsire and Stedman which achieve the objective of ringing all the different combinations.

A ringer can be happy with just ringing rounds and call changes or can go on to learn some of the methods.

Come and have a look at us!

# Marlborough Church Contacts

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Anglican Team

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## **Rachel Rosedale**

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512357; 07593 815609  
*(Weekdays, 0900 to 1300)*

## **David Wylie**

07564 082092  
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*Local photographer, Bob Holman, talks about his passion for his work and his views of Marlborough*

How did my Alleyway series start? Well, a while back, when conducting a ‘teaching photography safari’ in my fabulous hometown of Marlborough, a student asked me about one of our quaint alleyways. So, I carried out some investigation to answer the question. What I discovered was a deep history of the naming of these routes radiating from our high street. I was introduced to several other alleyways. Hence, the Marlborough Alleyways project was born.

My intention for this ‘hidden in plain sight’ idea was to show parts of my

town in ways that few would have thought. This project has extended to Marlborough Rooftops, Marlborough at Night, Marlborough Unseen and Marlborough Surrounds. Others will follow, I’m sure!

All the images in this project are captured on my iPhone - my preferred camera of choice. And although I do have a ‘proper’ camera, I find that it’s never with me! Whereas my phone is always in my pocket. And the best camera is ..... the one that’s with you. It’s so much easier to quietly and unobtrusively point my iPhone to capture an angle that wouldn’t normally be expected of such places. I firmly believe that there are many compelling photographs to be made right outside our front doors. I find very little need to travel far to shoot absorbing and interesting images.

I’m a self-taught, retired, hobby and enthusiastic photographer. When Apple started making outstanding cameras, which made phone calls, I began to get much more interested in photography. The iPhone 6 was the start of this, I think in about





2017. My holiday photos started to get a great deal better. ‘Snaps’ no longer became 'good enough'. And after thousands of photographs (with a massive number of shockingly poor ones still) I slowly learned a few tricks and my photography knowledge increased in leaps and bounds.

My photos started to look better. People started to ask me how I achieved a certain look, or how I edited a part of the image, or why I took it from a certain angle. And this ridiculously compelling hobby became something so much more. As some readers may know, my preference is to edit my shots to black and white. I often get asked why. The answer is very simple – it pleases me. I now print, frame, and sell my favourite shots – some displayed in The Food Gallery on Marlborough’s High Street.



I publish a twice-yearly 'zine featuring my favourite shots in and around Marlborough – available at The White Horse Bookshop and The Food Gallery. And if you would like to improve your photography and meet with like-minded photographers, why not come along to one of our monthly meetings at The Town Hall? Details can be found at <https://www.marlborough.photography> This is a photography club I founded in 2020, which doesn't have any competitions. It was launched purely to help others to take better photographs. We have regular outings to local venues and have professional speakers come to us and enthuse us in their area of speciality in photography. And there's coffee/tea and biscuits too!

I don't know why, but when I have anxiety dreams it's always the night before my History A Level, and I haven't studied anything at all and am completely clueless. (For the record, I did scrape a pass, all those years ago.) Whether or not reading *What is History Now* edited by Helen Carr and Suzannah Lipscomb would have bumped me up a grade it's too late to say, but I have enjoyed it. It's a collection of essays, by a diverse range of authors, considering approaches to historical study and writing, and how we interpret history today. Can we ever know the past, and anyway isn't 'knowing' fairly subjective? History as a genre is always popular in one form or another - just look at television dramas, films and novels - but we need more than a straightforward progressive narrative, or 'pub quiz' knowledge to try to understand the past. Calling Kipling's honest serving men into play is a beginning, asking 'What happened, when and where, to whom?'. But then we need to move on to 'Why did it happen?', and perhaps most importantly 'How do we know about it, and is that really all there is to know?' There are people who object to what they view as 'revisionist' history, but by looking for the gaps in the records which are, as we know, kept by the winners, we can see there are many more stories and other, wider perspectives. Each chapter has a list of further reading if you want to pursue any of the topics – history of faith, of disability, imperialism for example – in more detail. Please don't blame me if you start having undone-prep-anxiety dreams of your own though...

There is no-one alive today who can remember how it felt to fight in trenches during WW1, and of course – see above – experiences are/were different and diverse. But people will continue to try to imagine and describe the past, and some are more successful than others. Alice Winn's first novel *In Memoriam* convincingly depicts the trenches, public-school life and friendships (loosely based on Marlborough College) and gay love. Absorbing and moving, the author seamlessly alludes to WW1 literature and memoir, reminding readers how terrifyingly young the combatants were. It's so confidently and economically written, largely in dialogue. Descriptions of the physical and emotional mutilation of bodies and personalities are uncompromising, but not over-done. A really impressive debut.

***Place Names of Marlborough and Some Walks around the Town***  
by David Chandler in association with Mike Pooley, first published in  
2012, has now been reprinted  
and is available from The White Horse Bookshop

  
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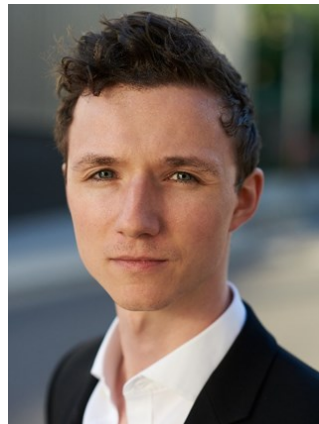
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# News from the Churches

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## Marlborough Churches Together

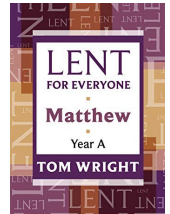
The AGM was on 1 February. Please contact Rachel Rosedale for information about it. Rachelrosed1@gmail.com

The next Fraternal is on Wednesday 8 March, 12 noon at the Rectory.



## Lent for Everyone

This year's Lent course is based on *Lent for Everyone* by Tom Wright, former Bishop of Durham. His book, scholarly and accessible, focuses on Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew. Please join our daily readings and our small groups to discuss this. *See page 3.*



## Easter Procession! on Easter Saturday 9 April

Marlborough Churches Together invite everyone to take part in a semi-dramatized procession from St Mary's Church along the High Street to St Peter's Church at 11am on Easter Saturday, 9 April. We will assemble at 10.15am in St Mary's Church to practise songs and put on (optional) simple costume. Details to follow. To find out more contact: hcstokes@gmail.com

## Marlborough Anglican Team

St Mary's: Friendship café meets on Saturday 4 March and then the first Saturday of the month. (*Poster page 25*)

Warm Wednesdays continue on Wednesdays, 10.30 am. (*Poster page 25*)

Mothering Sunday Posy Party: Saturday 18 March, 10am to 12 noon in St Mary's Church Hall.

St George's: 10.30am Morning Worship: activities for children, 5 and 19 March. Children are always warmly welcome, but of special interest may be the All-Age service on the first Sunday of the month and our new offering, a children's activity table at our Morning Worship on the third Sunday of each month: 19 March, 16 April, 21 May, and 18 June.



## Christchurch Methodist Fellowship

would like to thank everyone for their prayers and practical support over the past months. We felt upheld as we moved to a new future. Since then the majority of us have begun to worship together with St Mary's where we have felt such a warm welcome. We have certainly felt led by God as we charter new territory and we have found much in common. We feel truly blessed and look forward to learning more of God as he guides us in the strength of His Holy Spirit. We continue to keep in touch with all our members wherever they have found their new spiritual homes. We also feel hugely blessed that our building continues as



God's House and wish Emmanuel God's Speed and Blessing as they make it their spiritual home.

Contact: [office@christchurchmarlborough.org.uk](mailto:office@christchurchmarlborough.org.uk); 07564 082092. Postal address: Christchurch Methodist Fellowship, c/o The Manse, 18 Priorsfield, Marlborough. Website <http://www.christchurchmarlborough.org.uk>

## Emmanuel



4pm Sunday: weekly service at Emmanuel Church on New Road, Marlborough, SN8 1AH (formerly Christchurch) with crèche and Sunday School groups. Mid-week we offer a variety of activities including homegroups meeting in Marlborough, Pewsey and Ogbourne St George and community groups as below. For more details please check our website at [emmanuelmarlborough.org](http://emmanuelmarlborough.org)

**Little Friends Toddler Group** Thursdays during term time, 10-11:30 am at the Marlborough Community and Youth Centre.

**Explorers** Fridays during term time, 6-7:15pm at the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough. Our kids club for school years 3-6.

**Friday Nights** Fridays during term time, 7:30-9pm. Our youth club for school years 7-11 at the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough. Friends, fun & faith – everyone welcome!

**Hope Explored** A three session short introduction to Christianity, from Luke's Gospel. For more details, email [office@emmanuelmarlborough.org](mailto:office@emmanuelmarlborough.org)

## Sparklers



Monday 20 March 3:45-4:45pm (doors open at 3:30pm) at the Wesley Hall, Oxford Street, Marlborough. A monthly kids club for school years Reception to Year 2. Games, Snacks and Bible Stories!

## 30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World Praying with Joy

These last few years have presented the world with challenging situations. *30 Days* prepares content for each annual prayer guide months in advance, not knowing what will be happening when Ramadan next approaches and what the world will be facing. So this year we decided to focus the theme of our prayers for the Muslim world away from tragedies and challenges, and towards hope and joy. While continuing to pray for the needs of Muslim people, in our 2023 prayers we will emphasise stories of good things that are happening in Muslim communities and focus prayer on seeing more good things happen. Copies of the booklet will be available from Mustard Seed.



# Tower and Town staff

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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 April issue by Tuesday 14 March 2023 please.

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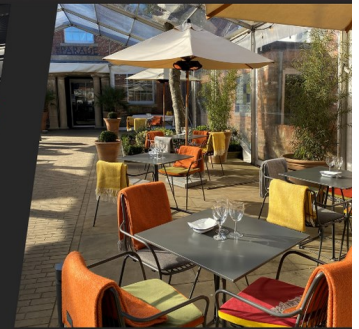
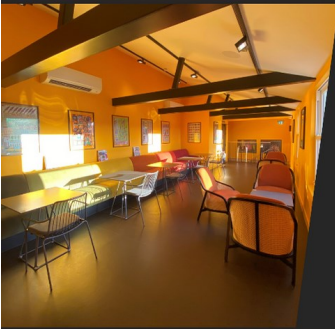
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