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Young in Marlborough

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THE MAGAZINE OF MARLBOROUGH'S COMMUNITY AND CHURCHES

NUMBER 700 FEBRUARY 2020



Young in Marlborough

What do young people do in Marlborough? What is there for them to do, to join and to enjoy in their free time? This edition is not a survey, more a series of snapshots, but the picture is broadly two-fold. There are a lots of clubs and organizations of various sorts. Several of them are represented in the following pages: activities busy with scores of participants and an impressive number of committed and enthusiastic adults running them - though more volunteers are needed everywhere.

Tower and Town is grateful to all those who have kindly contributed in writing or allowed themselves to be interviewed. For lack of space, there is more going on than meets the eye here, including a whole range of activities at the Leisure Centre.

But there is another side expressed by one of the contributors:

“My personal opinion as a parent in Marlborough: there are LOADS of opportunities for clubs, eg ballet, tai chi, guides, scouts, cadets, penguins swimming, gymnastics and so on, but there are not enough ‘rainy day’ ‘turn up and do’ activities for youth, eg places to hang out, cinema, milkshake shack, indoor skate park, without travelling to Swindon.”

In the effort to redress this, you will also read in these pages of the crucial work of Lisa Farrell, Janneke Blokland and others (mostly with older children and teenagers) whose impressive efforts need more support to fill this gap.

John Osborne

Cover: Guides doing their Mixology Badge
Copyright: Marlborough Brownies and Guides

The Editor visits the Youth Centre at the Rec

Lisa Farrell and the Marlborough Community Youth Project:

Every Friday evening a large number of young people come to the Community and Youth Centre at The Rec, pre-teens and teenagers, boys and girls. Lisa Farrell has got this going: she inspired the Town Council's refurbishment and re-opening of the building two years ago and manages these Friday evenings with her helpers. She has a clear vision of what young people want and need after school: there are, for example, facilities for basketball and pool, cooking and drawing, and in the summer there is, of course, skateboarding outside.

Lisa clearly has a remarkable touch with these boys and girls: the atmosphere is busy, lively and noisy in a happy kind of way, but it is not rowdy and certainly not threatening. She makes it quite clear what 'goes' and what she will not tolerate.

She has a lot of support, without which none of this would happen. There is food in the kitchen: some is free, donated (like the 'party food' from Waitrose and Greggs) and some for sale, like the sweets. Megan, who has made a cake, and her aunt, Nicola, are two of the smiley adult volunteers who help and support. Guy, for example, arrives from his day job teaching at St Mary's to do some drawing and painting.

Equipment and help with the rent (the premises are hired from the Town Council) have come from various local sources, such as Waitrose, the Rotary Club, Marlborough College, Crosby and Lawrence and others, including Tower and Town. This generous support is absolutely vital to the running of these Friday evenings.

It all works, and works well, thanks to Lisa's connections and energy. Yet it is not enough: with more money the centre could employ a Youth Worker, open on a second evening, have more room, get a table-tennis table and a music system, install flood lights for the skateboard ramp in the winter, and do more, no doubt. There is public money available, but applying for it and getting hold of it is another matter. The demand is clear: the young people of Marlborough like a friendly place where they can hang out and it is, as their parents know, a safe environment. Lisa's vision and commitment deserves our continuing support.

Young People and the Church Janneke Blokland

I remember my first encounter with youth work in Marlborough. It was a Thursday-evening 'Hangout' session in Wesley Hall organised by the ecumenical Devotion Youth Project, where young people literally can hang out for an hour-and-a-half. I felt very much out of place surrounded by loud music, scooters, a tuck shop and about thirty teenagers milling around without a clear purpose.

Over the past few years, however, I have come to appreciate the value of offering times and places where young people can be themselves and, if they wish, have access to friendly adults who are willing to listen to them.

Most of the time, the role of the adults is providing food (toasties or pizzas) and hot chocolate, or playing endless rounds of table tennis, but it is often then that suddenly a meaningful and important conversation takes place. I remember particularly one evening when we lit candles in remembrance of someone whom many knew. Suddenly the atmosphere changed, and there was an intensity to the moment which I will not forget.

Working with young people is about building up relationships, realising that there is much to learn from each other. The annual Get There! Holiday Club started again in the summer of 2017. About 30-40 children and half the number of adults gather for three days of activities in August, including the building of bird-boxes and culminating in a full-blown water fight on the last morning. After a couple of years, both children and volunteers are looking forward to the next instalment.

As the state provision for youth work has been cut back, more and more comes down to the initiatives of volunteers and voluntary organisations. It is a challenge to provide our young people with the support and services they need, not just for a lack of money, but also because it is often hard to know where to start.

However, it is worth giving it a go. Spending an evening a week surrounded by teenagers, toasties and dance music may not suit everyone, but maybe you would consider teaching youngsters how to bake a cake or how to build a bird-box? A lot of projects already happen across Marlborough – some of which you'll find in this issue of Tower & Town – and there is more that can be done.

Get in touch with one of the schools, clubs or churches if you'd like to explore the opportunities to get involved.

Jessica Caudle, 'Bluebird', Leader of the 1st Marlborough Guides and Brownies, tells us about Brownies and Guides.

Brownies and Guides is a girl-led youth group, where girls can learn new life skills, make a difference in their communities and learn about the world around them: they go on camps, day trips and sleepovers. We have regular weekly meetings on Tuesdays (Guides) and Wednesdays (Brownies) where the girls get together with their friends, get creative, learn new skills, participate in outdoor adventures and explore diversity. A girl may learn to put up her first tent, learn about body confidence, do a musical performance, conquer fears on an abseil tower or even attend her first festival. (There is lots more on the Girlguiding website).

For me my proudest moment is seeing the girls shine. We have girls from a variety of schools, they learn to socialise, and when the shyest girl stands up and sings in our talent show, or protests for climate change and their voice is heard, that's when I am proudest. In collaboration with girls, Girlguiding has recently developed a new programme, designed with a large range of badges and opportunities for girls to be the best they can be. A highlight as a leader was recently awarding three girls the top Gold Award and recognising them for their efforts with their choice of a slime-making Halloween party!

Our recent activities at Guides have included participating in badgework under the 'take action' theme, raising money for charities such as Dementia UK and Cancer Research. Soon we will be learning to cook ethically, and how to look after ourselves using natural remedies. This sounds like serious stuff, but is all intertwined with friendship and other activities such as swimming, bowling, climbing, water balloon fights, baking and first aid.

The biggest challenge for us, just like the Scouts or the Youth Centre, is getting enough adult volunteers. We have over 40 children on our Brownies waiting list (who will then feed into Guides), who are missing out on these opportunities due to a lack of volunteers. Volunteering can bring benefits to the community and to individuals. <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved>.

Jessica Caudle has been 'Bluebird', leader of the 1st Marlborough Guides and Brownies, for 23 years and was recently recognised for the length of her volunteering in a service at Westminster Abbey. She writes "This was a proud moment: as a volunteer I have learned many other skills too, including believing in myself, embracing opportunities and being aware of global issues that affect young girls and women."

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Availability and more information about each development - Osprey Court (NW3 7AA) near West Hampstead, Heathside (NW11 7SB) near Golders Green, Challoner Court (BR2 0AB) in Bromley and Town Mill (SN8 1NS) in Marlborough - can be viewed on the website www.ospreymc.co.uk



For further enquiries, please contact Lorraine Wash on (020) 8569 8364 or email lorraine.wash@ospreymc.co.uk



Clive Robins introduces the Editor to Marlborough Junior Rugby.

If you go up to the Common on Sunday mornings you – like your Editor – will be sure of a big surprise. You will see vast numbers of boys (and girls) busily running around playing small versions of rugby on numerous adjacent pitches. They are divided into year groups from six year olds upwards and play a handling and running game with no collisions. This form of the game is the norm until they reach a much older level when some contact, such as rucking and tackling, is introduced. There is a huge amount of enthusiastic activity, with constant movement from the players in their yellow and black jerseys and constant encouragement from the adult coaches in their red tracksuit tops. The emphasis is clearly on skills, exercise and fun.

The support and appreciation of the many parents on the touchline is impressive and it was a great pleasure to see these mini games being played without tears on the pitch or over-exuberant support on the edge.

Clive Robins, the chairman of the junior section of Marlborough Rugby Club, whose two main pitches and pavilion are on the Common, tells me that there are over 250 junior members and over thirty adults coaching and refereeing. This is remarkable, and is clearly the vital basis of the Colts and Senior Rugby that the Club runs so successfully at teenage and adult level.

Clive refers me to the June 2019 edition of Rugby Club Magazine, where there is a special two-page feature on the Marlborough club and its junior section. The article is full of praise for this “fine example of a club playing an important role in the local community”. It is “blessed with marvellous volunteers across all age groups” and has “an outreach programme across local schools”, providing coaching at St John’s, for example.

To get involved either as player or coach, phone Clive on 07887 724928 or e-mail youthchairman@mrjc.co.uk. Or get your mum or dad to ring up for you.

What makes 40 or more children and their parents and grandparents and friends queue up outside St Mary's Church, Marlborough, twice a term at 4pm on a Sunday afternoon?

Near high days and holidays St Mary's Church becomes a special place full of eager children and adults too. The church is filled with tables laden with a variety of craft materials, card, glue, paint, clay, biscuits, icing. Children cluster round making Advent candles, iced biscuits, night light holders, clay tree decorations, or - depending on the time of year and our theme - we may be measuring how many potatoes we can carry or how many press-ups we can do in 30 seconds. When the weather's right we may be outside finding treasure in the grounds. Recently we had people dressing up in Middle Eastern costumes for a photo shoot.

A particular highlight of Every *Messy Church* is the junk modelling. This is led by a crack team of designers. They are grandparents who amaze us every time with their ingenuity. Among other things they have created are a huge cardboard angel, Goliath the giant, a manger complete with farm animals (and a camel), a golden Temple, and even a huge glider.

After all the activities comes a chance to be in more thoughtful mode: singing, listening to stories, entering the prayer space where we think and pray for people who matter to us, often using a craft activity to help us.

We end up sitting on the floor having a huge picnic tea.

We are doing *Messy Church*, which is part of an international movement to enable families worldwide to experience the fun and community that being part of a lively church family can bring. Part of that experience is being able to receive support too in times of difficulty.

Everyone is welcome: this is for all ages so anyone can come and join in.

Our next *Messy Church* is on *Sunday 23 February*. Why don't you come?



Marlborough Floral Club

Please come and join us for an enjoyable afternoon out. We meet at Mildenhall Village Hall at 2pm on the first Thursday of the month



There is a Guest Demonstrator and the arrangements are raffled at the end. Tea and biscuits are served afterwards

Members' Annual Subscription £35 Visitors £6.

For more information please call Micky Graham 01672 514301

Marlborough Hockey Club Juniors

Sarah Kendall

Marlborough Hockey Club has been running a junior section for nearly 30 years, seeing it grow from strength to strength. Taking children from ages 7 to 18, the club aims to engender a fun environment while developing players of the future, be they good club players through to those who play in the England Hockey Player Pathway.

The hockey club has been fortunate in its close relationship with Marlborough College, both through use of the fantastic pitches and facilities to a number of the staff coaching on Sunday mornings. A number of staff play in senior teams and over the years we have been pleased that some of the college students have also played for the club.

Without the support of the College the club would not have been able to grow and accommodate the number of children who wish to play especially following the fabulous 2012 London Olympics. The season following this saw the junior section double in size. Numbers have continued to be strong with approximately 300 under 18's taking part in training and matches each week.

Training sessions have moved on from just Sunday mornings to the older age groups training on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, with many also joining in with senior training and going on to represent the club in senior league teams.

The hockey club works hard to support how we coach the children and is active in coach development through courses and this year putting on a development programme with England Hockey. This also encompasses the support of young leaders and Duke of Edinburgh award volunteers, many of whom continue to help coach the younger players after they have completed their awards. All our coaches, umpires and committee members are volunteers. We are incredibly lucky that they invest so much of their time.

There has also been success for a number of our children who have gone on to represent the club at County and Regional level and ultimately at the England Hockey Futures Cup.

The hockey club looks forward to many more years playing on the blue pitches and the enjoyment of young players learning the sport of hockey.

Get in touch with sarah@lawmtender.co.uk to join.

News from Savernake Hospital

Janet Louth and Pat Harper, Co-Chairmen, report on the work of Friends of Savernake Hospital and the Community in 2019

This past year has seen Ailesbury Ward split into two units – a medical unit (Ailesbury) and a rehabilitation unit (Chestnut Unit). Following a £900 grant for the purchase of physiotherapy stairs, the Friends quickly followed this up with a further grant of £2,600 for the purchase of a variety of much-needed rehabilitation/exercise equipment and dementia assistance equipment early this year.

With the additional equipment, patients on Chestnut Unit are able to manage their own care more quickly – making their breakfast, getting dressed independently and even helping with the bed-making. The aim is to support the patients where they need assistance, but otherwise to encourage independence. The approach has been successful, with 11 patients being discharged in November. Discharged patients leave messages on the ‘chestnut tree’ – touching and inspirational comments, full of gratitude to the wonderful hospital staff.

Both units enjoy art sessions, which included creating a poppy wall and poppy artwork for Remembrance Day. Ailesbury Ward would be delighted to hear from volunteers who would like to help with these art sessions – and to spend time with patients, particularly those suffering from dementia, who benefit so much from a one to one chat.

The Friends have also supported the setting up of a Learning and Development Hub for nursing staff on Ailesbury Ward which includes a permanent simulation training room where apprentice nurses and trained clinicians can practise and refresh their skills. We thank the volunteers who run the hospital Shop, for taking the trolley shop up to Ailesbury Ward each weekday and for all their baking and craft-making for raffles. Thank you also to our fellow trustees. Thank you to those who have made donations over the past year which allow us to continue to support the work of our local health professionals and the services they provide. The grants we have been able to make this year total £29,659.50.

A grant of over £4,500 from the Friends has assisted with the purchase of laptops, an intravenous arm, a mannikin, catheterisation models, anatomical charts and furniture. The hub will attract new recruits and support long-term nursing staff on-site.

Out in the community

In March the Friends provided a vital lifeline of £4,440 to Arts Together for its Wellbeing Service in Marlborough and Pewsey, after it was threatened with closure

due to lack of funding. Since 2000, Arts Together has worked with frail older people in rural Wiltshire, providing art projects spread over 30 sessions a year. The Wellbeing Service enables its members to attend and participate, and to enjoy a home-cooked meal together.

Other grants made by the Friends this year have included funding towards the Pewsey Community Area Partnership's purchase of two Raizer chairs for Community First Responders (CFRs). The Raizer chairs enable a single CFR - attending a call to tend to an elderly person who has had a fall but is uninjured - to help that person to their feet safely without needing an ambulance to be called out.

Other grants have included funding of equipment for local surgeries, and grants to the Community Nurse Team and Cotswold House based at Savernake Hospital.

Supporting Brighter Futures

The Friends have just pledged £10,000 towards Brighter Futures' "Better Births Appeal" for new equipment for the Maternity Department at Great Western Hospital, including mobile foetal heart monitors, variable height cots and a new birthing bed.

A word of thanks

We must thank the Friends' volunteers who run the hospital Shop, for taking the trolley shop up to Ailesbury Ward each weekday and for all their baking and craft-making for raffles. Thank you also to our fellow trustees. Thank you to those who have made donations of £29,950 over the past year which allow us to continue to support the work of our local health professionals and the services they provide.

If any of you would be interested in joining our team of volunteers, or joining the committee, we would be delighted to hear from you: email info@friendsofsavernake.org or 01672 288167.

St Peter's Church ANNUAL QUIZ

This popular brain-teasing evening of fun will take place at St Peter's Church at 8pm on **Friday 21st February**. Tables (6-10 persons) must be booked in advance as space is limited. Book by email to du.croz@btinternet.com Cost is £5pp (£4pp for members of St Peter's Trust) - payment to be made on the evening. Cash bar available.

Brilliant Young Musicians at St Peter's Church

German prize-winning violinist, Johanna Roehrig, who is currently studying for a Masters at the RAM, continues the international flavour of these concerts on **Sunday 1st March at 7.30pm**. Tickets (£10/£8) in advance from Sound Knowledge, White Horse Bookshop, or on the door on the night.

What Tara Did Next – She Cycled to Kathmandu

John Osborne

This was an amazing achievement, described by Tara herself in an inspirational, illustrated talk at St John's last November. Tara Parks was born in Marlborough and after university, failing to get into the Army with a wrecked but reconstructed knee, was looking for a way of proving herself. Genes and role models help: her father, Nick, a mountain and ski guide, ran Outdoor Activities at the College a while back. Funds? The evening was set up by the Kempson Rosedale Enterprise Trust which had provided her with some financial support and was celebrating its 30th year of enabling young people from St John's and Marlborough College to 'get on their bikes', so to speak.

Tara's bicycle, 'Bobby Dawes', lay below the stage and she was joined in her presentation later by her brother, Archie, who had accompanied her on the last 100 days of her seven month trip. Tara made it clear that the journey was "entirely for herself" and not, for example, for any sort of scientific research. She showed images of vast, rough landscapes, which appeared more mountainous and tough as the journey went on, but her lively and honest commentary was more about her personal journey than a description of the route. She warmed up, to test the kit – bike, tent and herself - by cycling from Land's End to John O'Groats. That took 21 days. The next journey took 243 days, through 21 countries. But with only four punctures.

Tara admitted to fear and unease as she set out: people might steal, dogs might attack... But an accident she suffered in Bosnia was a turning point. She learned "to put herself into the hands of strangers," she said, and she began "to see the world with open eyes" and an "open heart". She learned to assume that people, often very poor, were friendly and kind, to "say yes" to opportunities and "to be relaxed."

Refused a visa for Turkmenistan, Tara flew beyond and continued on her bike in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Next up was Xinjiang where the Chinese authorities' insistence that they travel by taxi seemed designed to prevent foreigners having any contact with the local Uighur people. The approach to India via the Tibetan plateau looked (from her photographs) and sounded (from her commentary) extraordinarily demanding, as day after day she scaled passes of over 4000 m. Tempted by exhaustion to give up and go home she was sustained by the company of brother Archie, who provided extra energy and humour, and leaped into creating song and dance duets with her. Her mantra at this point became: "What I achieved

yesterday, I can achieve today.”

India by contrast was hot and smoggy, and as they pushed on to Kathmandu at 100 km a day doubts emerged about what the end of the trip would feel like. Arriving at their chosen finishing point in Kathmandu, with no cheering crowds to greet them, a monkey stole the celebratory banana Tara was about to eat. But at breakfast next day the unexpected appearance of her father brought a much happier conclusion.

Tara’s final point from this exhilarating and inspiring presentation was not so much the physical achievement – that was obvious to us all in the audience - but that “You don’t have to be a professional explorer to rebuild your confidence.”

To read Tara’s fascinating online blog, just google Tara Parks – Pedal to Nepal.

2nd Marlborough Scout Group in brief

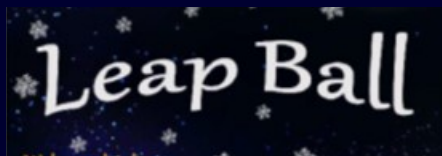
All meetings in term time at the scout hall in George Lane. Open to boys and girls:

- Beaver Scouts (6 to 8 years old). Monday evenings, 6pm to 7.15pm
- Cub Scouts (8 to 10). Tuesday or Thursday evening, 6:30 to 8:00pm.
- Scouts (10½ to 14). Wednesday evening 7:00pm to 8:30pm.

To join the waiting list visit <http://2ndmarlborough.wiltshirescoutcentre.org.uk>. If you are interested in becoming a leader or being part of the committee please do get in touch with Group Scout Leader Ken McDougall at kenfmcd@icloud.com or Committee Chair Derek Baker at dbak64@gmail.com.

More information and pictures on the Tower and Town web site.

*Something a little special coming to Marlborough Town Hall
on Saturday 29th February 2020*



*Welcome drinks Three course dinner Charity auction
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Tickets £60, free bubbly for tables of 10
Doors 6.45, carriages at midnight
Enquiries/tickets: MarlboroughLeapBall@gmail.com
A fundraiser for the 2nd Marlborough Scout Group*

What's On

Regular events

Every Monday

- 6pm Recreation Ground, Salisbury Road. Bowls Club.
- 7.30pm Christchurch. Marlborough Choral Society.
- 7.45-9pm Bell-ringing practice at St George's, Preshute.

Every Tuesday

- 10.30-12noon Mildenhall Village Hall. Music and Movement for the Mind, for people living with dementia & family carers. Alzheimer's Support 01380 739055 or www.alzheimerswiltshire.org.uk
- 2-3.30pm Savernake Hospital. Carers' Support Café. (2nd Tuesday)
- 2.45pm The Parlour, Christchurch. Women's Fellowship. (2nd & 4th Tuesdays)
- 7.30-9pm Bell-ringing practice at St Mary's, Marlborough.

Every Wednesday

- 10am Jubilee Centre. Drop-in, Tea/Coffee. 12.30 Lunch.
- 10.15-11.45am St Peter's Church. Carers' Support Cafe. (Last Wednesday of month).
- 12.30pm St George's, Preshute. Teddy Prayers & Picnic. A special service for U5s & carers followed by a picnic lunch. (Wednesday 19th)
- 1.30-3.30pm Town Hall. Sunshine Club for over 55s.
- 7.30-9pm Bell-ringing practice at St John's. Mildenhall.
- 7.30-9.30pm St Mary's Church Hall. Marlborough Community Choir.

Every Thursday

- 10.30-12noon Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. Music for the Mind. Alzheimer's Support. 01225 776481. (Every Thursday during term-time).
- 7-8.30pm Wesley Hall, Oxford St. Hangout & Devotion. Youth Club.

Every Friday

10-12 noon Christchurch C

By Appointment

Library. Marlborough & D
Drop-in advice. Help line:

February calendar

1st (Saturday)

9.30-10.15am Froxfield M
Band: Learn to Play. First t
(adult), £1 (child).

5th (Wednesday)

6-8pm White Horse Books
Exhibition (to 23 Feb) Op
Marlborough Night Gard
Jonathan Genton.
7.30pm Wesley Hall, Oxfo
McSweeney: 'Team Rubico
agency'. New members an

6th (Thursday)

1pm Mildenhall Village Ha
Demonstrator: Carole Nor
Visitors £6. Micky Grah
2.00pm Kennet Valley Hal
Embroiderers' Guild. Talk
Thread Embroidery in Rus

9th (Sunday)

12 noon Barbury Race Co

12th (Wednesday)

12.30pm 40 St Martins. W
Lunch. 514030.
7.45pm Wesley Hall, Oxfo
Association. AGM and tal
'Natural but not Wild'.

14th (Friday)

Marlborough College: Star
St John's Academy: End o

15th (Saturday)

11am-3pm. Crofton Pump
7.30pm Town Hall. Hot N

Crush Hall. Foodbank.

District Dyslexia Association.
07729 452143.

Memorial Hall. Phoenix Brass
Session. Cost weekly £2

Workshop. Book Launch &
Evening Night: 'In the
Town Vol 2' by Gavin James &

High Street. WI. Speaker: Rich
son. Disaster response
and guests welcome.

Mill. Floral Club: Guest
Speaker: 'Two of a Kind'.
0114 514301. See page 8.

Lockeridge.
by Pamela Smith: 'Metal
Dissia'. Visitors £5.

Course. Point-to-Point.

Widows' Friendship Group

High Street. Gardening
Work by Patricia Elkington:

End of Half Term.

End of Term 3.

Station. Open Day.

New Orleans Jazz 'Doolally

'Tap' and WMC Youth Jazz. £20 in aid of Alzheimer's
Support and Arts Together. 01249 701628.

17th (Monday)

11am Ellendune Community Centre, Wroughton. The
Arts Society: Kennet and Swindon. Lecture by
Christopher Chanter: 'The Rebuilding of the Town of
Ypres after its total destruction in the Great War'.
Guests welcome £7. 01793 840790.

18th (Tuesday)

6pm White Horse Bookshop. Talk by Gavin Jones &
Jonathan Genton: 'In the Marlborough Night
Garden'. £5.

20th (Thursday)

7.30pm Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. National
Trust Assn. Talk by Marion Brotherhood. 'Fighting
the Agents of Deterioration'. £4 non members.

7.30pm St Peter's Church. Marlborough History
Society. Talk by James Holden: 'Wiltshire Gate
Lodges'. Guests welcome £5. Students half price.

21st (Friday)

8pm St Peter's Church. Annual Quiz. Tables 6-10
persons. Book in advance: du.croz@btinternet.com.
£5 pp (£4 members). See page 11.

23rd (Sunday)

Marlborough College: End of Half Term.

7.30pm Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge. Film: 'Knives
Out'. £7 (under 16s £5).

24th (Monday)

St John's Academy: Start of Term 4.

25th (Tuesday)

7.30pm Bouverie Hall, Pewsey. The Arts Society
Pewsey Vale. Lecture by Doug Gillen: 'Hidden
Canvasses: Street Art and the City'. Visitors welcome.
£7. Membership Secretary: 07775 683163.

29th (Saturday)

6.45pm-12 midnight Town Hall. Leap Year Fundraiser
Ball for 2nd Marlborough Scout Group. See page 13.

1st March (Sunday)

7.30pm St Peter's Church. Brilliant Young Musicians.
Concert: Johanna Roehrig (violin). £10 (£8 members).

On Getting Children to Read

Debby Guest

I'm horribly aware that sleeping, eating and *Persuading Children To Read* all send parental anxiety rocketing up to 11 on the Comparison/Fretting scale. Reading is *so* important for developing vocabulary, general knowledge, empathy, memory, concentration and on and on...and yet, some children just *don't*. Is it your fault? Is your child doomed to fail in life? Should you seek help?

Don't panic. Although all the benefits listed above are real and important, many happy and intelligent people are not readers. Just because it's 'good for you' doesn't mean everyone will, or should do it, let alone enjoy it. Running around a muddy sports field is good for you after all, and I've resisted doing that all my (reasonably long and so far healthy) life. I am however, generally, on the side of books and reading, so if you are really concerned about a bibliophobic child, think about the following –

Do *you* read for pleasure? Just as with eating, example is all. 'Do as I say, not as I do' has never worked with any kid. Let them see you reading/eating broccoli as a natural and enjoyable way of spending time. Don't get too hung up on *what* they read. Not everyone 'gets' stories, and less confident readers often prefer non-fiction, magazines or even comics. If it is fiction then it doesn't have to be 'good' literature – I read some terrible trash when young (still do, in fact.) Think of all words as exercise for those reading muscles, building up stamina for more challenging texts. Do allow children to choose their own books, even if you have to grit your teeth over the selections. Don't expect reluctant readers to become enthusiastic over the books you read and enjoyed when you were young, several hundred years ago. There's a vast selection available now, ghost-written for 'celeb' authors, luridly jacketed or number umpty-hundred in a sensational series, and if that's what they *want* to read it'll do more good than a copy of *The Children of the New Forest* breeding dust mites.

As for reading ages, keen readers skip across the spectrum of 'suitability', and the less enthusiastic don't need extra pressure. A ten-year old reading a book that's supposed to be for a younger or older child is not a reason for particular pride or shame. The ability to read chunks of prose is a skill, the ability to understand and process what you read comes with wider life experience – ironically, the kind of experience that natural bookworms sometimes take longer to acquire. If you're concerned about vocabulary, consider audio books, which make long journeys more bearable, are another way of increasing concentration levels *and* can cunningly get some of the 'classics' ticked off by stealth. And take time to read aloud to children, even when they are older, independent readers. It's another way to move

them along to texts they might not feel up to tackling alone.

Finally, remember reading hasn't always been regarded as a Good Thing – only a few generations ago children who spent time indoors with their noses in books were chased out into the fresh air. Give it time and perhaps fashion will swing round again and your non-reader will become the child everyone wants to boast about!

You will note I haven't actually recommended any books – no room, alas, and far, far too many to make a useful selection. If you want advice then always ask teachers and librarians, or, you know, your Friendly Local Bookshop.....

Forthcoming Exhibitions at The White Horse Gallery

Gabriella Venus

I am very pleased to be able to share a preview of upcoming exhibitions at The White Horse Gallery. It's looking like another great year with fifteen shows in the pipeline, so here's how you can keep up to date with what's happening:

- Head to The White Horse Bookshop website www.whitehorsebooks.co.uk.
- Follow The White Horse Bookshop on Facebook and Twitter.
- If you wish to receive news, invitations to exhibitions, private views, book talks/launches, art workshops and other events taking place in the bookshop and gallery, or for other information, join the mailing list via the website, or pop into the shop, or telephone 512071.

Exhibitions 2020

5 Feb	Gavin James	Night Sky Photographs
26 Feb	Art in Recovery	Paintings/Sculpture
18 March	Alison Grant	Art/Sculpture
15 April	Mark Wickham	Drawings
6 May	Open Art 1	
27 May	Open Art 2	
17 June	Textile Group	Textiles
8 July	Bill Mather	Paintings
29 July	John Nicoll	Paintings
19 Aug	Richard Cole	Watercolours
9 Sept	Sarah Jackson	Abstracts
30 Sept	Victoria Jinivizian	Paintings
21 Oct	Endellion Lycett Green	Flower Paintings
11 Nov	Brian Hanlon	Paintings
2 Dec	David Inshaw	Etchings

The Junior Georgians Andrew and Amanda Brown

The Children's Choir of St George's Church, Presbute

Singing is one of the greatest sounds of human expression, and the sound of children singing is a supreme moment of making music, working together and having fun. Anyone who has seen the film *The Chorus* knows the change that came over the school once the children started to sing. We both discovered the joy of singing at a young age and have made the most of opportunities to join choirs ever since.

Seven years ago, with the encouragement of our musical vicar at the time, we formed the Junior Georgians choir for boys and girls aged 7-12, together with accompanist Heather Croucher. Thanks to an upbeat article in the Gazette & Herald, six enthusiastic singers signed up, and Harvest Sunday 2013 saw us singing in church for the first time on our pattern of four main services a year.

St Augustine famously said: "To sing is to pray twice" - to which we would add: "...and have a lot of fun praising God." Having fun perhaps comes top of the list. We always start with warm ups which get the body and the vocal cords into action. Singing rounds is a great way to learn about holding a vocal line and singing in harmony with others around you. As we rehearse the service music the children also learn about singing techniques of breathing, phrasing, dynamic range and so on, as well as music theory such as symbols, note values and expression markings. It's designed to open minds to, we hope, a lifetime of enjoyable and knowledgeable music making.

Over the past seven years, 45 children have sung in Junior Georgians. With the choir averaging about 12 singers, there is plenty of exciting repertoire that we have built up, as well as new pieces to explore. On Christmas Eve, for example, we sang a modern two-part harmony round *Natus est Immanuel* from memory, as well as Rutter's beautiful *Angels' Carol*. There is no charge for being part of the choir, and we always welcome new singers. Junior Georgians will be singing next on Mothering Sunday (22 March), with Sunday late afternoon rehearsals starting on 1 March.

*If your child or grandchild loves singing and would like to join, please do contact us.
amandabrown46@hotmail.co.uk*

The Importance of Community and Friendship

Rachel Rosedale

I was struck by a talk given to the Marlborough Gardening Association recently by Val Compton. (Val is responsible for setting up the community garden in Kennet Place). She talked about the importance of community in her life. She was brought up on a 1930's housing estate in Pinner, now swallowed up by London. Each house had a garden but also the planners had ensured there was some communal space and a bit of woodland where people could meet and children play. If she ever needed help, she could find a friendly person.

Later she moved to an expatriate community where she found the same sense of supportive community. It wasn't until she found herself in a very different situation in a country where she didn't speak the language, was pregnant with her first child and lonely that she realised what she had lost. Luckily when she arrived in Marlborough, many years later, recently widowed, she dropped in to the Merlin Hotel Bar (now Pizza Express) and found unexpected kindness and friendship.

Most people find friendship through belonging to one or more interest groups. For some it is their church, for me Quakers where in Meetings on Sundays I feel at home and accepted warts and all, with friends who share a set of values that are largely in tune with my own and where I am allowed to just be 'in the presence of the spirit'. We look out for each other.

We now live in a secular society: church is not for all, but I believe the need for community is.

I am part of many groups, some purely for fun and leisure, but also the Marlborough Area Poverty Action Group that aims to alleviate poverty in any way they can in the Marlborough Area. We befriend the homeless (just greeting and chatting to them makes them feel valued), run the Foodbank, provide hampers to families in need at Christmas, enable children who for various reasons would not otherwise be able to do activities at the Leisure Centre in school holidays and organise a summer outing for these families. As we get to know these people better we are able to give more appropriate support when needed. MAPAG is a community group open to all.

Where do you find friendship and community?

Marlborough Churches Together

Usual Sunday Service times

Christchurch, New Road (Methodist)

- 9.00am Service with Communion (1st Sunday)
- 10.30am Morning Service with Junior Church and crèche

Society of Friends, Friends Meeting House, The Parade

- 10.30am Meeting for Worship

St George's, Preshute (C of E)

- 8.00am Holy Communion (1st and 3rd Sunday)
- 10.00am All Age Service (1st Sunday)
Parish Communion (other Sundays)

St John the Baptist, Minal (C of E)

- 8.00am Holy Communion BCP (2nd Sunday)
- 9.30am Parish Communion (1st and 3rd Sunday)

St Mary's, behind the Town Hall (C of E)

- 8.00am Holy Communion (BCP on 4th Sunday)
- 10.00am All Age Worship (1st Sunday): Parish Communion and Junior Church and crèche on all other Sundays
- 5.30pm Informal service except on 1st Sunday.

St Thomas More, George Lane (Roman Catholic)

- 11.00am Sung Mass (See also below)

Marlborough College Services are shown at the College Chapel

Weekday Services

St Mary's Holy Communion: 10.30am Wednesday

St Thomas More Mass: 10.00am Mon, Tues, Wed and Sat Holy Days

St George's 4.30pm Weds: Tea Time followed by Evening Prayer
12.30 pm Weds February 19th: Teddy Prayers & Picnic,
a special service for U5s & carers followed by a picnic lunch

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*Anglican Team Office, Church Cottage,
Silverless Street, SN8 1JQ*

Pedigree Herefords moove into Savernake Forest

Savernake Forest is currently home to sixteen Pedigree Herefords along with eighteen calves who are busy helping to restore ancient woodland pasture. The new fencing is there to keep them in, not to keep people out.

Forestry England writes:

“Ancient wood pasture is best described as being open space between copses of trees or large Ancient and veteran trees.

“Savernake Forest is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest partly due to its wood pasture areas and the associated nationally rare fungi and lichen species.

“Through natural browsing and trampling, the cattle will help to reduce bracken and scrub and increase the life span of the veteran trees for which Savernake Forest is most notable.”

Cattle will be onsite from spring until the acorns fall in early October; they will be then be moved to other grazing locations for the winter.

FROM THE REGISTERS

Funerals - we pray for the families of:

- 14th November Dorothy Jean Spackman (90) of Coombe End Court, Marlborough
Kingsdown Crematorium
- 15th November David James Whatley (82) of High Street, Manton
North Wilts Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett and St George's, Preshute
- 10th December Walter Raymond 'Ray' Doughty (78) of Cornerfields, Marlborough
St Mary's, Marlborough and Cemetery
- 12th December Muriel Phyllis Clark (100) of Highfield Residential Home, Marlborough
St George's, Preshute and North Wilts Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett
- 20th December David Arthur Uttley (80) of Betjeman Road, Marlborough
North Wilts Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett and St Mary's, Marlborough
- 24th December George Johnson (93) of St David's Way, Marlborough
North Wilts Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett
- 25th December Christine White (91) of Wye House Gardens, Marlborough
North Wilts Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett and St George's, Preshute
- 29th December Audrey Grobelny (97) of Merlin Court Care Home, Marlborough
North Wilts Crematorium, Royal Wootton Bassett

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George Johnson

George died on Christmas Eve. Three years ago he talked to Tower and Town and in his memory we reprint extracts from the article we published then, with an update.

George grew up in Marlborough, the youngest of three children whose father was a painter and decorator. In the Second World War he was conscripted as a 'Bevin Boy' and did his war service in the mines of South Wales. There "in the canteen" he met Nan, a miner's daughter. They married in 1948 after George was demobbed, a marriage that lasted 60 years. Back in Marlborough he worked as a painter for Eade's and after living on the corner where Dible and Roy are now, George and Nan had their own house built and gave it its unpronounceable Welsh name.

From 1963, he went to work at the College and became general foreman in the Estate Department. After he retired he continued as supervisor in the dining hall, where he was valued for his straight and easy manner with the pupils, to whom he was "George".

George served for over thirty years in the local 'retained' fire brigade, staffed by volunteers, many of them in the building trade. He and his colleagues were called out for the major fires that scarred Marlborough in the second half of the 20th century: Dible and Roy's, where the One Stop and Post Office are today; the Polly, for which – he was always reticent here - George, Frank Odey and Bob Cox were awarded the Queen's Commendation for Bravery for rescuing the children upstairs; and the tannery, where the "water froze" as they pumped it from the river. After George retired, he was awarded the medal for long service with the Fire Brigade and the BEM.

He was a respected and much-liked man, mainly because he respected and liked other people. He was undemonstratively steady and serious, but always sociable and hugely good-humoured. When he was 85 he did a parachute jump for charity and raised £3000. When he died, his coffin was borne down Marlborough High Street on a 1943 vintage fire engine and round the court of the College in front of scores of staff and pupils, who applauded him out of the gates on his way to the crematorium at Wootton Bassett – which was full beyond its capacity.

News from the Churches

Marlborough Churches Together Fraternal

meets on Wednesday February 5th, 12.30pm at the Manse, Priorsfield.



Women's Fellowship

meets at Christchurch, New Road at 2.45pm for tea, coffee and chat on Tuesday February 11th and with Father John Blacker on Tuesday February 25th .



Messy Church

on Sunday February 23rd from 4 to 6pm in St Mary's Church. All ages welcome but under 8s must be accompanied by parents, grandparents or carers. For more details see page 8, or contact Caroline: cphilps2@gmail.com

Ash Wednesday

is celebrated this year on Wednesday 26th February with services at



- 10.00am Pewsey Methodist church
- 10.00am Mass at St Thomas More Catholic Church, George Lane, Marlborough
- 10.30am St Mary's, Marlborough offering the imposition of ashes
- 7.00pm Stations of the Cross St Thomas More Catholic Church
- 7.30pm Mass at St Thomas More Catholic Church
- 7.30pm St George's, Preshute

Blessed Ashes will be given at the Catholic Masses.

Lent Course: *The Pilgrim's Progress*

The Churches of Marlborough are delighted to be offering a Lent Course this year based on John Bunyan's classic *The Pilgrim's Progress*. This book has helped countless people through the ages to grow in their faith. The story is an allegory, which follows 'pilgrim' as he journeys from the slough of despond towards the celestial city. Books have been secured at a big discount and are available to buy for £4.50 from the churches and Mustardseed. Some like reading on their own and there is a scheme available for this. Others enjoy discussing what they are reading and so across the town there will be small groups meeting. Please consider joining a group for the five weeks of Lent; see your church noticeboard for more details or to sign up. It can take a few pages to get used to the old fashioned language but the book reaps great rewards for those who read on. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 26th.



Marlborough Area Poverty Action Group (MAPAG)

meets on Monday March 2nd at 7.30pm in Friends Meeting House, The Parade.

Sunday Lunch Club

Please contact Christchurch office (513701) for the next date.

Foodbank

The drop-in centre at Christchurch is open every Friday morning 10am - 12noon, for those with Foodbank vouchers. Collection boxes for donations are available in our churches or at the local supermarkets. <https://devizesdistrict.foodbank.org.uk>



David Uttley

David Uttley passed away on 20th December 2019 at Prospect Hospice after a long illness. He was well known in the town and for many years took photographs for the cover of Tower and Town.

David was born in Halifax but moved around the country with his Quaker parents who cared for refugee children after the war. They moved to Bristol and then to Trowbridge where David went to the Grammar School.

David trained as a teacher in London and taught there for a few years before returning to this area to work for the Marlborough Times as a photographer. He took up a post teaching agricultural science at Pewsey Vale School where he stayed for 21 years. During this time he was responsible for setting up a livestock unit where calves and pigs were looked after by the students and many a lamb was born there. Alongside this was a wildlife pond and area breeding wildfowl. Later he joined St. John's School in Marlborough as a supply teacher. Besides teaching, David ran a very successful photography business with his wife, Dianne, taking pictures of countless weddings in the area as well as engaging in portraiture and commercial work.

David belonged to a number of organisations over the years, namely Round Table, Rotary, 41 Club and U3A. He was also on the committees of Marlborough Christmas Lights and Avebury Rocks, the latter raising money for the Prospect Hospice.

Shire publications produced a number of books in their 'Discovering' series including Somerset, Devon & Gloucestershire which were written by David and his wife, together with many more publications using his photographs. Later he produced *Marlborough in Colour*, a book of coloured photographs and information. This was followed by *Marlborough People*, a book for the millennium with photographs taken by David.

We send our condolences to his family and friends, by whom he will be sadly missed.

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