

Stonebridge Get Involved

The Big Picnic



Saturday 9th September 1pm onwards

Bring a picnic to enjoy by the river
& discover Stonebridge Wild River Reserve

River & pond dipping
Mini bug hotel making
Fly casting
Free soft drinks

Wildlife walk led by
natural history writer
Peter Marren



Stonebridge Wild River Reserve, Marlborough
is accessed from Stonebridge Lane.
Contact Anna for more info 07780381709 or
anna@riverkennet.org

Funded by

Wiltshire Council
Where everybody matters

Marlborough Puppetry Festival - Celebrating Pelham Puppets

The weekend of 8/9 July was a special one when memories of Pelham Puppets were re-visited to celebrate the founding of the company in Marlborough by Bob Pelham in 1947. His toy making venture started in Silverless Street before moving to 1 & 2 Kingsbury Street, which was then known as Victoria House. As the business grew, it was relocated to larger premises in Elcot Lane and then onto a factory site in London Road which became its long term base until 1987. Pelham Puppets was the largest employer in the town and many local families still have connections, puppets and fond memories of the company.



The festival began with a Puppet Parade in the High Street headed up by the Phoenix Brass Band, followed by a giant Punch & Judy, an impressive dragon created by students from St John's, a giant Merlin and lots of other puppets. The festival took place in venues throughout the High Street with exhibitions of Pelham's early years at St Peter's Church and The Merchant's House. There was a free exhibition of various puppets together with shows throughout the weekend at the Town Hall and Priory Gardens. Another

The Greyhound

special guest, performing as well as ever, was the original Muffin the Mule, another puppet celebrating being in his eighth decade.



Part of the weekend involved a Civic Service at St Mary's Church attended by our Town Mayor and Town Councillors, Deputy High Sheriff, David Lewis, the Chairman of Wiltshire Council, Cllr. Mrs Allison Bucknell, Chair of the Area Board, Cllr David Sheppard and Mayors from across the county. The service included puppet performances and a presentation by David Leech, current owner of Pelham Puppets and all the congregation was invited back to the Town Hall for refreshments and to view the exhibition.



The weekend was sealed with a finale performed by the Marlborough Academy of Dance and Drama, choreographed by Cheryl Heuston and danced by her talented young performers. Marlborough Town Council is now working towards erecting a blue plaque to commemorate Bob Pelham. Councillors feel that it is right that he is recognised for the important



part he played in Marlborough, designing and making puppets known and loved throughout the world. A real Made in Marlborough success story. The Town Council would like to thank David Leech who masterminded the festival and without whom this event could not have taken place. Our thanks and congratulations also go to the local Event Committee headed up by Amba Chawla and all her hardworking, committed volunteers, students at St John's, The Rotary Club, our Special Constables, Wiltshire Council, The Merchants House and St Peter's Trust, the Revd Canon Andrew Studdert-Kennedy and many more.



A gallery of photos from the event and a video of the Puppet Parade are available on the Town Council's website at www.marlborough-tc.gov.uk

Comments and enquiries to the council are always welcome, you can contact us on:-

Tel: 01672 512487 Email: enquiries@marlborough-tc.gov.uk

Web: www.marlborough-tc.gov.uk