

The end of my first week as Mayor...

Sunday – 15th May



Today, Susan and I attended a Civic Service in Devizes to honour its new Mayor, Jane Burton. It was a lovely service and towards the end, Jane was presented with a copy of the New Testament.

The service was attended by many Mayors from across Wiltshire and we also met Lt Col. Matthew Cadman– Commanding Officer of 2MI. I understand that it's hoped that a link will be forged with Devizes in a similar manner to that which we ourselves have with 4MI Battalion.

After lunch we went along to Marlborough Bowls Club for a friendly match between the Town Council and Bowls Club members. It was very congenial and considering I last played more than 40 years ago, I believe that I acquitted myself! An altogether enjoyable and relaxing afternoon at a Club that offers such a lot to our community.

Saturday, 21st May

Today was a special Open Day at the Merchants House and I cut the ribbon to gain entry – accompanied by wife and Mayoress, Susan, the Beadle and Macebearers. Susan and I were given a conducted tour by the Chairman, Clyde Nancarrow and David Sherratt. There's always something new to see in this 'ongoing project' and we look forward to the opening of the museum in the not too distant future. There were plenty of visitors in evidence today! The Merchant's House celebrated its 25th Anniversary this year – a huge achievement and we have much to thank the Trust and its volunteers for in creating this splendid asset to the town.



Saturday, 28th May

Today found me in Marlborough High Street for my first collection for Wiltshire Air Ambulance, kindly helped by Councillor Alec Light and some volunteers provided by the charity. One young volunteer, Laura, was able to vouch for this fantastic service having been airlifted herself on more than one occasion.

Locals and visitors alike were generous and many stopped to chat – even the weather was kind despite what had been forecast. The response to this charity was totally positive and we raised more than £570. Thank you to everyone who helped and those who so generously donated to this worthy cause.

A good start to the Mayoral year.

Melksham's Civic Service



Sunday, 5th June

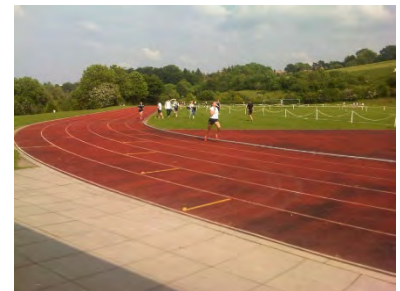
Today, Susan and I attended the Civic Service in Melksham. The Mayor, Ms. Terri Welch, who has previously been Mayor, spoke in Church about 'community'. The Church of St. Michael and All Angels is in a delightful setting and the weather favoured us after so many unseasonably cold days.

The service was well attended by locals and some now familiar Mayors, Deputy Mayors and partners from across Wiltshire plus the local MP, Michelle Donelan.

The Mayor's Cup

Tuesday 7th June

A thoroughly enjoyable afternoon at Marlborough College Athletic Track watching some of the students competing against St. John's Academy. The last event of the afternoon was a very exciting relay race.



Once all the various scores for all the events were added together then this year's winners turned out to be Marlborough College. All of this took place under the supervision of Marcus Sharrad - Master in charge of Athletics, and I duly presented the winners with the magnificent Mayor's Cup.

Sensory Garden



Wednesday 8th June

The weather could not have been better for our visit to the Brendoncare [Nursing Home](#) in Froxfield, a Registered Charity. The sun shone, a harpist played in the garden and I, with the help of one of the residents, cut the ribbon to open the newly created Sensory Garden.

The garden has been many months in the making and included some lovely sculptures and raised flower beds. Donations of both money and time have allowed its completion and it will be a real haven.

Susan and I chatted to all the residents and many staff including Carole Sawyers, the Chief Executive of Brendoncare and Tina Manterfield who is the Manager at the Home. She and her staff have created a wonderful atmosphere and all those living there seemed happy and contented. A very good visit.



Happy Birthday Your Majesty

Sunday, 12th June



Her Majesty's official 90th birthday. This was always going to be a special occasion, but I believe that it exceeded all expectations. The Service of Thanksgiving was made particularly poignant by the screening of the film clip from 1947 of then Princess Elizabeth making her memorable broadcast from Cape Town.

Two residents of Marlborough who were also born in 1926 were presented with posies by the Clergy, Rev. Canon Studdart Kennedy and Rev. Dr. Janneke Blockland.

The reception in the Town Hall was well attended and 'Royal' cupcakes and a glass of Bucks Fizz marked this very auspicious occasion. Lots of lasting memories on this happy day, not to mention an historic 'Civic Selfie' photograph.

My thanks to everyone who worked hard to make the day such a success.

Summer Concert

Saturday, 18th June



Susan and I attended a Summer Concert in St Mary's Church given by the [Marlborough Concert Orchestra](#) to mark their 10th Anniversary.

The programme under their wonderful Conductor Roselie Gentile, was varied - something for

everyone. It began with a lively piece by Rossini and culminated in the very stirring Marche Slav by Tchaikovsky.

In the interval we all adjourned to the grass outside the Church where we were offered 'Rossini' cocktails and William Tell cake!

We are so lucky in our town of Marlborough to have a concert orchestra of this calibre - an exceptional evening was enjoyed by everybody.

We very much look forward to the MCO concert on [3rd December](#).



MantonFest

Saturday, 25th June - [MantonFest](#)



Luckily, we were not greeted by mud, unlike certain other outdoor festivals! We were instead warmly greeted by Roger Grant who organises this increasingly successful event.

There, we chatted to a few stalwarts who had 'set up camp' at 8 am and also to some members of the '[Brighter Futures](#)' team who were this year's nominated charity at the 2016 festival.

The event is growing in size and popularity as each year passes and is a huge success thanks to the hard work of Roger and his team.

Councillors Mervyn Hall and Justin Cook and other members of the [MANP](#) team were in attendance with information about the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.



Civic Service at Malmesbury Abbey

Sunday, 26th June

My wife and I attended Choral Evensong at Malmesbury Abbey in England's oldest Borough. This was well attended despite very heavy rain accompanying us as we processed from the Town Hall.

The Service was also a blessing for the new Mayor of Malmesbury, Wayne Jones. He, his wife Caroline, members of [Malmesbury Town Council](#), many Mayors and Dignitaries from across Wiltshire were also joined by James Gray, the

local MP and Allison Bucknell, Vice Chair of Wiltshire Council.



The choral singing was spectacular, but one would expect no less as the Vicar, Neil Archer, spent some 20 years as an opera singer prior to his ordination.

Impressive surroundings, wonderful singing and a true joining together of Church and the Community.



Visitors from Marlborough New Zealand and the Opening of the Jazz Festival

Friday, 15th July



We greeted our visitors from Marlborough New Zealand, Councillor Cynthia Brooks, her husband Graham and two fellow travellers.

There was an exchange of books between us and we also received a gift of an oil painting, a view of their Marlborough, presented to us by Cynthia on behalf of the Mayor and Councillors.



After a tour of the Town Hall we processed, including our guests, along to the Castle and Ball to attend the opening of this year's Jazz Festival. Mrs Sarah Troughton, Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire, graciously declared the Jazz Festival open, noting that this was its 30th year. We were then treated to a performance by the pupils of St. John's Academy Jazz Band. They were brilliant!

Later in the evening, we attended a reception in the lovely garden of the Merchant's House hosted by Wiltshire Life. Lots to read about Marlborough in their July edition.



Skittles with Mencap

Saturday, 16th July

In the evening, as President and accompanied by my wife Susan, we visited Marlborough Football Club where we joined the organisers and Mencap members for an evening of Skittles. Just about everyone took part in a couple of rounds with the final involving an attempt to knock down just a single skittle - not very easy!



There was a wonderful atmosphere, a generous buffet and also a raffle where I had to draw the winning tickets. We were made very welcome and had a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Civic Service at Trowbridge

Sunday, 17th July



This evening Susan and I attended a Civic Service and Celebration at St. James Parish Church, Trowbridge. The Service was preceded by a reception in the Civic Centre where we renewed our acquaintance with the Mayor, Linda Self and many other Mayors from across Wiltshire.

We then assembled outside and were led by a Scottish Piper and processed to the Church. The Service was led by Revd. Dr. Rob Thomas and

was also attended by Dr Andrew Murrison, MP and Angus Macpherson who is Wiltshire's Police and Crime Commissioner.

Wreath Laying - Commemoration of the Battle of the Somme

Monday, 18th July

The Marlborough Branch of the Royal British Legion organised a wreath laying ceremony at the Wiltshire War Memorial at Salisbury/London Road.

This was in commemoration of the Battle of the Somme 100 years ago and for the 7th Battalion of the Wiltshire Regiment. The ceremony was attended by Councillor Alec Light of the Royal British Legion, my Chaplain Revd. Dr. Janneke Blokland who is the team curate at St Mary's who said prayers.



I attended with my wife and laid a wreath on behalf of Marlborough Town Council.

This was a particularly poignant ceremony for me as I lost an uncle at the Battle of the Somme.

4th Military Intelligence Battalion

Monday 18th July

I had been invited by the 4th Military Intelligence Battalion to their base in Bulford for an evening of debate in the Officers Mess. We received a warm welcome from Lt David Heathcote who went on to chair the debate.



Lt Col Matt Jones, the Commanding Officer, RSM Paul Inverarity and I were the judges and recognition was given to the best speaker as well as a prize of a gavel being awarded to the winning team (3 members).

It was a lively discussion worth plenty of questions from the floor - all quite thought provoking.

Susan, my wife and Mayoress, was with me and we both enjoyed the evening and are hoping that there will be many more opportunities to strengthen our ties with

4MI during my Mayoral year and beyond.

Southwest in Bloom

Tuesday, 19th July

Marlborough in Bloom - The Year of the Bee!

It could not have been hotter for the judges from the Royal Horticultural Society to consider Marlborough's entry for the South West in Bloom competition.

The judges set off on a two and a half hour tour guided by our Grounds and Estate Manager, Richard Beale. They were revived on their return to the Town Hall with drinks and special 'Bee' cupcakes.

There are so many people deserving of thanks for their efforts in making Marlborough a town to be proud of. To quote Marlborough in Bloom Chairman Anne Crawley, 'everything looks absolutely stunning!'



Our thanks also to the Polly Tearooms for hosting a splendid lunch for the Chairman and the judges.

Now, we must all wait patiently until the 6th October for the results. Thank you and well done to everyone involved. A great effort.

Visit to Parliament

20th July 2016



My wife and I and a small group visited the Houses of Parliament at the invitation of our MP, Claire Perry, our host. As well as seeing some famous politicians, when we met in a Commons Committee Room we found a ponderous Hilary Benn still sitting after another meeting of Her Majesty's opposition. When we entered he got up and left!

The House of Commons, Commons and Lord's Chamber always reminds me of our great democratic system, which is played out daily in Committee Rooms and the Chambers, in the running of our wonderful country. That day our new Prime Minister had her first Prime Minister's questions but, sadly, we did not get to see it as the Gallery was overbooked.

We had a very nice tea under the Pugin inspired décor. A lovely visit.

New play area

Friday 22nd July



This afternoon I opened a new play area in Orchard Road, cutting the red ribbon on the swings. Up to now parents in the area have had to take their children across the busy Salisbury Road or George Lane to reach play areas at the Recreation Ground or at Cooper's Meadow.

It was a timely opening as we are at the beginning of the long break from school and I know it will be well used by local families. We will always need to provide areas for the children of Marlborough in which they can play safely and Councillor Alec Light has played an important role in getting this new one up and running.

Haine & Smith

Thursday 28th July

Today I cut the ribbon to open the refurbished Haine & Smith, opticians in our High Street. This practice has been in Marlborough for many years but, not always at this location. We met Malcolm, the Manager, and his very efficient and experienced staff who showed us around their refurbished premises providing them with new consulting rooms and state of the art equipment. My wife and I were very impressed.



Haine & Smith is still a family based business and support a nominated charity each year - true community spirit.

It is always good to see a local business thriving.

Mayor's Cricket Match

Wednesday, 3rd August 2016



What a team... Councillor Justin Cook, several members of Councillor Alec Light's family, four keen cricketers from 4 Military Intelligence Battalion, Councillor Fogg's son-in-law Jim (1st class wicket keeper) and last but no means least our Rector, Revd. Canon Andrew Studdert-Kennedy (Man of the Match)!

The result - a very close second place!!

Somewhat of a tradition I have been assured!

The match played against [Marlborough Cricket Club](#) was great fun and well attended - a friendly atmosphere.

At the instigation of Revd. Janneke Blokland the funds raised on the evening - £615 - will benefit some keen young Afghan cricketers currently residing in Berlin. They will receive equipment purchased from the funds.

A very successful and enjoyable evening was had by all.

Full match report at [Marlborough News Online](#)

August

August 2016

August is traditionally a quiet month for Mayoral engagements.

Other than the very enjoyable cricket match at the beginning of the month we have had a quiet time.

However, we have been getting to know most of the members and helpers at Mencap - first a visit to the Conservative Club where they all meet up on Tuesdays for activities and coffee, lots to do including painting and sewing. We then joined everyone for a skittles evening at the Football Club where young Sophie showed us how to do it by knocking down all of the skittles - a worthy winner and a fun evening.



Fun Day

Sunday, 28th August

The day after the deluge, Fun Day at the Recreation Ground. A great deal of hard work, organisation and enthusiasm had gone into setting up this event aimed at families and children. Heavy showers did not dampen the cheerful stallholders' spirits (well organised with covers at the ready) and for those who did brave the weather, they were rewarded with plenty to see and do.

Special thanks to all of those taking part, in particular the organisers, Councillors Lisa Farrell, Justin Cook and Mervyn Hall.

In excess of £1,000 was raised on the day and the profits will go towards keeping the Marlborough Youth Community Project going strong. Well done everyone.

200 year celebration at Marlborough Methodist Church

Sunday, 28th August 2016



On Sunday afternoon, Susan and I were lucky enough to attend a service of worship which included a party to mark 200 years of the Methodist Church here in Marlborough. The mood was relaxed and welcoming and we were warmly greeted by the Rev. Heather Cooper who had recently returned from a three month sabbatical. We all sat at tables and enjoyed a service of hymn singing, prayer and a 'potted history' of the major events of the last two

hundred years. We were also given a quiz which tested our knowledge of the bible before being served with afternoon tea including scones, jam and cream plus a special 200th anniversary cake.

It was a delightful and informal service which allowed plenty of opportunity to chat with our fellow worshippers.

Afternoon tea with the Lord Mayor of London The Rt.-Hon. Lord Mountstevens attended by Aldermen of the City

Friday, 2nd September 2016

Memories flooded back today when Susan and I attended the Lord Mayor of London's splendid Afternoon Tea in the grandeur of the Mansion House. In 2003, I received the Freedom of the City in the Guildhall opposite my old office in Gresham Street where I started my training in stockbroking with Colegrave & Co at the age of 18.

The tea was a part of a series of events to mark the anniversary of the Great Fire of London. An estimated 65,000 people were made homeless by the fire and collections were held across the country to raise funds. A total of £12,794 (worth £1.9 million in today's money) was raised and the record shows that Marlborough sent the sum of £50.





All of the Mayors and Consorts who attended had been invited as representatives of the area/town/county who had contributed to the relief fund. We were the only representatives from Wiltshire.

We chatted with the Deputy Lord Mayor of Exeter whose City had contributed a massive £1,048.19s.0d. There was also a chance for us to meet the Mayor of Taunton-Deane, Vivienne Stock-Williams and her husband Ian which was fortuitous as we will be attending the South West in Bloom presentation in October which is held in Taunton. We also chatted with the Mayor of York among others.

There were many further events planned for the weekend of 3rd and 4th September culminating in the burning of a wooden replica of the London of 1666 - in safety on the River Thames.

We, in Marlborough, of course, also suffered a Great Fire in 1653 which may be one reason why local people contributed so willingly to the London Fund.

Chippenham Civic Service

Sunday, 4th September

The Mayor of Chippenham, Councillor Terry Gibson, had kindly invited us and other Mayors and representatives of civic and community life from Wiltshire and bordering counties to a Civic Service. The service was led by Parish Priest Rev. Rod Key and the sermon delivered by Major Jackie Dixon of the Salvation Army who is the Mayor's Chaplain.



This was followed by a presentation of Civic Awards and refreshments which were also served in St Andrews Church.

An enjoyable afternoon meeting up with many increasingly familiar faces from across Wiltshire.

Marlborough students in The Gambia

Tuesday 13th September 2016



The [Marlborough Brandt Group](#) invited Susan and I to a presentation by student volunteers of their 2016 summer visit to The Gambia. We were met by Karen Bulsara, the new Director of MBG who took over in February 2016 from the indefatigable Dr. Nick Maurice. Karen is also a Director of St John's.

We also met Anita Brew of MBG who had accompanied the 13 students on their month long visit to [Gunjar](#). All of the students took part in recounting the more memorable aspects of their visit, backed up by photographs and a short video. They had helped to build a new school and having seen it through to completion, were able to witness the delight of the young children for whom this was a new classroom. It was clear that the volunteers had enjoyed being a part of a very different community and that they were overwhelmed by the kindness of the host families and the people of Gunjar as a whole. The bond between them was apparent and it was obviously quite a wrench when they left to return to Marlborough.

The presentation was not only interesting but also heart-warming and served to remind us just how important the bond is between the Marlborough Brandt Group and Gunjar. Long may it continue!

Wilton Civic Service

Sunday 18th September 2016



Wilton, the former county town of Wiltshire and the Ancient Capital of Wessex is a lovely small town with many splendid buildings - not least of which is Wilton House.

At the invitation of Mayor, Trevor Batchelder, a civic service was held in the stunningly beautiful Church of St Mary and St Nicholas. The church which is Grade 1 listed was built in 1845 for the huge sum of £20,000 thanks to the Hon. Sidney Herbert and his mother the Russian Dowager, Countess of Pembroke. It was designed by T H Wyatt in the Italianate style. The celebrant for the service was Rev. Mark Wood and my wife and I felt hugely privileged to attend in such awe-inspiring surroundings.

Coombe End Court and Savernake Hospital Re-Union

Thursday 22nd September 2016



Coombe End Court, London Road

With Susan, I was invited to open the refurbished Dementia Care Household at [Coombe End Court](#) where we were greeted by the Manager, Mrs Andrews. This has been a major refurbishment project costing around £240,000 and the results are impressive. A shop, cinema and Bistro have been included as well as 'Kaspers Cafe' named after the resident cat! The

Care Home, which has 60 en-suite rooms, is part of the [Orders of St John Care Trust](#) which has other homes across the country. We met the Chairman, Don Wood, CBE (pictured, 2nd) and also Dan Hayes, the Chief Executive (pictured, left).

None of us can claim to 'look forward' to the mental and physical trials that old age can bring, but it is reassuring to know that we have a care home here in Marlborough which offers specialist care for almost every challenge. Through greater understanding, kindness and patience, we can all be positive about the future.

[Read more at Marlborough News Online](#)

Nurses Reunited

At the request of former Mayor, Tony Gray and his wife Mary, we briefly attended a re-union of nurses who had all worked at the Savernake Hospital. Some still live locally but others had travelled long distances for this. Lots of shared memories and swapping of 'war stories'.

Mayor's Charity Concert

Friday, 23rd September 2016

St Peter's Church was the glorious setting for our Charity Concert in aid of [Wiltshire Air Ambulance](#) and [Swift Medics](#) with members of [Marlborough Concert Orchestra](#) playing music from Mozart, Saint-Saens and the wonderful Trout Quintet by Schubert.

The [concert](#) was well attended and very much enjoyed by everyone. I would like to thank Rob Napier and his fellow musicians for their superb rendition of the pieces and their generosity in performing for the charities. Also to David du Croz and his fellow Trustees for allowing us to use [St Peters](#) (David's help and advice was invaluable). Dr Nick Maurice provided help and the wisdom of his experience too.

Finally, the volunteers from Wiltshire Air Ambulance and Swift Medics who attended on the night, not to forget former Mayor Robin Notton and his wife Anne who manned the door and poured the wine at the interval. Thanks to you all.

There was only one 'downside' to the whole event - washing up approx. 100 glasses on the following morning!



Salisbury Civic Day

Friday 30th September 2016



The area in front of the Salisbury Guildhall was taken up by vintage and French markets as we arrived for a Civic Day at the invitation of Salisbury's Mayor, Councillor Derek Brown, OBE. After coffee and a welcome by the Mayor followed by a quick look at the impressive Maces, we travelled by coach with other Wiltshire Mayors as well as Mayors from Bath, Dorset and Hampshire, to the South Wiltshire University Technical College (UTC).

The UTC is housed in the former Salisbury Police Station and has been transformed into a modern, professional learning environment where the aim is to prepare 14–19-year-olds to become

scientists, engineers and computer technologists. The College works closely with employers in the region and the University of Southampton. We were all most impressed.

We were then given an illustrated talk by Steve Godwin of Salisbury Business Improvement District (BID) who explained the benefits felt by local traders from joining the scheme. This is something we have considered here in Marlborough.

Our next stop was The New Inn (roughly 700 years old) where we all enjoyed a splendid lunch before departing for a 'whistle stop' tour of Salisbury Cathedral. The Mayor, Derek Brown and his wife, Penny (herself a former Mayor) both make the time to be official guides for the Cathedral - 2 out of 600!

On return to the magnificent Guildhall, we enjoyed afternoon tea and marvellous entertainment by Elevate Dance Company which recreated the 'Roaring Twenties' with their dance routine, including the Charlestone.

Altogether, a varied and interesting day - one to remember.

Photo: Our Mayor and Mayoress (right) with The Mayor of Shaftesbury, Dr Richard Tippins with his Consort Susan. Behind them are the Salisbury Maces and the enormous silver basting spoon presenting by Queen Victoria on her visit to Salisbury.

RHS Southwest in Bloom Awards

Wednesday, 5th October 2016

Susan and I travelled to Taunton on Wednesday to attend an evening reception hosted by Mayor Vivienne Stock-Williams and her Consort, Ian. We had already met them when we attended the Great Fire of London event at the Mansion House in London last month and it was good to meet again. Other familiar faces from across the South West were there and we also had the opportunity to meet Mayors from all over the area. This was essentially the prelude to the following day when the [South West in Bloom](#) awards were to be announced and presented.

Thursday, 6th October 2016



The feeling on Thursday was one of subdued anticipation as we all waited to see who had won what! This ceremony is very much the 'Oscars' of the gardening world and this feeling was strengthened when we learned that the awards would be presented by Lord and Lady Fellowes (he of Downton Abbey fame).

Of the twelve groups entered by Marlborough, we had achieved four top level results of

Outstanding. After a lunch break we went on to collect the South West Tourism Association cup and a Silver Gilt award. Further reasons for celebration came when The Lamb Inn public house in The Parade won the Shaun Gregan Cup for the best floral display by a pub in the South West. A special award was given to the Marlborough Waterfront in Kennet Place as joint winner of the London and Manchester Trophy for the most outstanding environmental initiative.

We can rightly be proud of how well Marlborough did in this competition and it was a team effort, involving not only the Town Council's Grounds Team but also local businesses, shops and largely unseen volunteers who all worked so hard. Well done to you all.

All the Fun of the Fair!

Saturday 8th October 2016

No-one could have failed to hear the opening proclamation by our Town Cryer and Beadle, Mike Tupman, MBE for this, the first of the 2016 Mop Fairs. It was lovely to see so many families and children as we processed through the fair and I braved a couple of the rides after I had declared the Mops open.

I began to feel a bit like the Pied Piper of Hamelin as I was followed around by a growing band of children who were canny



enough to know that they would get free rides if they stuck with the Mayor and his party!

It was a happy and relaxed atmosphere and a reaffirmation of our strong relationship with the Showmen's Guild whose members are responsible for bringing the fair to town.

Royal Wootton Bassett Civic Service

Sunday 9th October 2016

At the invitation of the Mayor, Councillor Mary Champion, we attended a Civic Service at St Bartholomew and All Saints Church. The service was delightful with many children taking part in the readings with the emphasis on friends, family and the community. We were also treated to an instrumental performance from Royal Wootton Bassett Academy and a charming rendition from the children of the Community Youth Choir.

Wonderful to see so many of the younger generation attending Church.

Mayor's Golf Match at Marlborough Golf Club

Thursday 13th October 2016

I have to start by confessing that I do not play golf! However we assembled a very respectable team in the shape of members of the Town's Grounds Team plus our inimitable Town Cryer/Beadle Mike Tupman MBE and four representatives from the 4th Military Intelligence Battalion at Bulford. All I can say about the outcome of the match is that we came second!!! An enjoyable and friendly match followed by a delicious dinner.



This year the Rose Bowl Trophy eluded us - perhaps next year we may even have a 'golfing Mayor'.

A trip to Bulford

Tuesday, 8th November 2016



I was privileged to be invited by Lt. Col. Matt Jones the Commanding Officer, to dine at the 4th Military Intelligence Battalion's Officers Mess at Bulford. The food and wine was first class and the hospitality second to none and I was made to feel extremely welcome. After dinner we sang the National Anthem which, I believe, is the tradition on these occasions. I was collected from

home by a 2nd Lieutenant and left back home to Marlborough at the stroke of midnight.

A night to remember which I enjoyed.

Armistice Day

Friday, 11th November 2016



Always a solemn day where we reflect on those who gave their lives for us and a chance for us to pay them their due respect. I was joined on the steps of the Town Hall by Councillors including Councillor Alec Light, Chairman of the British Legion, my Chaplain, Dr Janneke Blokland, members of 4MI Battalion plus the Principal of St John's Academy with her Head Boy and Head Girl. Also in attendance were many students also from St John's. After the two minute silence had

been observed, we processed to the War Memorial in London Road for the laying of our wreaths. Afterwards I visited, with Councillors Andrew Ross and Alec Light, those Commonwealth War Graves at our cemeteries where we placed posies of poppies on each of the graves.

Remembrance Sunday

Sunday, 13th November 2016

A day when we all remember those who died for us in World Wars and the poignancy of the occasion is palpable. One cannot help but be aware that all across the nation in towns, cities and villages this two minutes silence is being observed. This year marked the 100th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme and when one learns that over 19,000 men lost their lives on the very first day of the battle then this is indeed a reason to pause for thought.



Prior to our church service in St Mary's, I was privileged to review the members of 4th Military Intelligence Battalion with the Colonel Matt Jones and RSM Paul Inverarity together with Cadet Forces from Marlborough College, St John's and other assembled groups including the Scouts and Brownies.

At the appointed hour with military precision we marched to the Marlborough War Memorial behind the Phoenix Brass Band to observe the two minute silence and the laying of wreaths. With my fellow Councillors and the Colonel, we went to the High Walls to observe the march

past and salute prior to joining the large congregation for the Service of Remembrance. This was conducted by the Rector of Marlborough, Canon Andrew Studdert-Kennedy and the sermon was preached by Rev. Dr Janneke Blokland.

Fairtrade Presentations

Tuesday, 15th November 2016



I had great pleasure in presenting a plaque to the Managers of Waitrose, Polly's Tearooms, Pizza Express, the Marlborough Pub and Valentines Design for their stocking of Fairtrade Products. Marlborough is now an official [Fairtrade Town](#) and long may this continue. The event was organised by Tesco Manager, Nick Helps and Dr Nick Maurice.

Christmas Lights Switch-on

Friday, 18th November 2016

It may have rained on Friday evening and was cold but, it certainly did not dampen the enthusiasm of the many people, lots of young families, who braved the elements. Having boarded the sleigh and joined Father Christmas outside the Town Hall we processed behind our Beadle and Town Cryer, Mike Tupman, MBE and Macebearer, Barry Mercer. We travelled all along the south side of the High Street and back up to the stage on the north side. Nigel Kerton was MC for the evening and the audience had been treated to music and singing from St John's Band, Marlborough Academy of Dance and Drama, the Marlborough Community Choir and the Marlborough Rock Band. All contributed magnificently to the event. Just before the switching-on of the lights, I announced the 2016 Citizen of the Year, Anne Crawley, Chair of Marlborough in Bloom. Anne has contributed so much to the town entries into South West in



Bloom. I presented her with a beautiful engraved glass bowl. Together we pressed the 'magic plunger' and the Christmas lights became a reality. It marks the beginning of the festive season here in Marlborough.

Craft Fair in the Town Hall

Saturday, 19th November 2016



My wife Susan and I met Fred Wilcox this morning at the Town Hall to open a weekend [Craft Fair](#).

The stalls were stacked with original, hand-made gifts and there was a very happy atmosphere. This is a lovely place to purchase something special for Christmas - all very different from mass produced goods. Fred has been running this event for many years and every year he has made a collection for the Mayor's Charity and this year my charities are [Swift Medics](#) and [Wiltshire Air Ambulance](#). We are very lucky to have someone with such a generous community spirit running this annual event.

Savernake View Care Home

Friday, 2nd December 2016

Susan and I were greeted at [Savernake View](#) by Managers Sarah Jacka and Beth Goldsby prior to switching on the Christmas lights at this new care home. We were treated to carol singing from the choir 'Help for Heroes' from Burbage. All of us were encouraged to join in and then a young lady sang a solo - 'Frosty the Snowman'. This was particularly charming. The atmosphere was warm and many of the residents from Priory Court (part of the whole development) attended as well as many of the care home residents and their families.



After the Christmas lights had been switched on I presented a Care Certificate to a senior member of the care staff before being shown some of the home's modern facilities including an impressive cinema which boasts comfortable armchairs with footrests and a starry lit

ceiling. We have been promised a more comprehensive tour in the New Year and will look forward to that.

Marlborough Concert Orchestra at St Mary's Church

Saturday, 3rd December 2016

We have come to expect excellence from our [Marlborough Concert Orchestra](#) and this evening was exceptional. The main part of the programme was a Brahms Double Concerto in A minor for violin and cello. The two soloists were superb, Irene Enzlin (cello) a former Yehudi Menuhin School pupil with a Marlborough connection and the violinist Vera Chen who has been playing since the age of seven. Both are good friends and had an obvious rapport. We were charmed by them both, a sublime performance.

We are so lucky to have a Concert Orchestra of such a high standard here in Marlborough, they provide us with a splendid evening's entertainment.

Now, we must all be patient and look forward to their next concert on 25th March 2017.

A big thank you to all of them and special thanks to Rob Napier and Anna Marsden too.

Visit to Prospect at Savernake Hospital

Friday, 9th December 2016

In September 2016 Marlborough Town Council awarded a grant of £2,040 to [Prospect](#) for the purpose of a new lifting cushion for use at the [Outreach Centre](#) at Savernake Hospital.

Today I was able to see the 'end product' and to appreciate that this piece of equipment will enable a patient to be lifted from the floor with the help of just one person. It's estimated that this equipment could benefit as many as 100 people a year.

Prospect supports people who are dying and also those who are grieving. It is a local charity and all services are free of charge to patients and families. Zoe O'Reilly and Felicity Hindle were on hand to show just how the lifting cushion operates.



Marlborough College Carol Service at the College Chapel

Friday, 9th December 2016



This is always a much anticipated occasion and never disappoints. The Council were graciously hosted by the [Master](#), Jonathan Leigh and his wife Emma, to a drinks reception prior to processing to the Chapel for the service of Lessons and Carols. I read Lesson 6 Matthew 2; 1-12. This is a moving service and marks the beginning of Christmas in a time-honoured way. The Choir is truly marvellous and its rendition of Bogoroditse Djevo in its original Russian was especially beautiful. An evening to remember.

Mencap Christmas Party

Saturday, 10th December 2016

My wife and I arrived at [Kennet Valley Hall](#) in Lockeridge in the pouring rain, but our spirits were immediately lifted by the warm welcome and smiling faces, all much in evidence. There was an excellent live band which encouraged many to take to the dance floor and the sense of enjoyment was obvious.



There were many familiar faces among the members and helpers whom I greatly admire. They are all unpaid volunteers and it was a great pity that we had to leave to attend another event. There was a great sense of anticipation... for a surprise guest!!! WHO?

A Christmas Celebration performed by Marlborough Choral Society at St Mary's Church

Saturday evening, 10th December 2016

This was our first encounter with this wonderful local [Choral Society](#) and their performance was highly impressive.

The programme was truly varied and offered something for all tastes. The opening Christmas Oratorio by Camille Saint-Saens was a beautiful seasonal offering. We were then treated to a traditional Irish piece in the form of a Harp Solo played by the accomplished Katie McClaughry. There was a selection of Australian carols and



further pieces by various traditional composers, culminating in a choral fantasy on old carols by Gustav Holst.

The spirit of Christmas was very much present and the performance excellent.

Town Hall Craft Fair

Sunday, 11th December 2016



These [Craft Fairs](#) are organised by [Fred Wilcox](#) who collects donations for the Mayor's Charity every year instead of charging an entrance fee. Fred is a kind and generous person and he travels here from Wells in Somerset to set up and supervise the fairs.

We first met him in November when he raised £380.65 over a weekend. This will go to be shared between Swift Medics and the Wiltshire Air Ambulance. Today, [Sunday](#), he had raised a further £152.12.



Thank you and well done Fred.

Town Hall Concert for Marlborough Macmillan Cancer Support

Sunday evening, 11th December 2016



Janet Buck, the Secretary of Marlborough [Macmillan](#) Committee, was there to greet us to a Christmas Concert and to introduce us to Steven Goodrick, the Fundraising Manager for the whole of Wiltshire (an enormous territory). This concert is organised locally by the Committee and funds raised will help provide specialist nurses to the Great Western Hospital in Swindon.

The [Kennet Vale Band](#) and [Pewsey Male Voice Choir](#) provided an evening of top notch entertainment with audience participation encouraged in the singing of carols. This was a fun evening and many of the audience attend every year. Both the Kennet Vale Band and the Pewsey Male Voice Choir perform without fees and they certainly put on a wonderful show.

Mencap Carol Concert St Marys Church

Tuesday, 13th December 2016

Susan and I attended St Mary's Church for the Mencap Carol Service and were delighted to see a re-enactment of the Nativity performed by members of Mencap and their wonderful supporters. The Rev. David Maurice was the celebrant for the Service, ably assisted by his son. Everyone joined in the carols and it was a happy occasion.

Carol Service at St Mary's Marlborough

Sunday 18th December 2016

A warm welcome by Rev. Dr. Janneke Blokland for a packed church on this last Sunday before Christmas. Young and old enthusiastically joined together for the singing of familiar carols and the choir sung a couple of pieces.

There were seven readings of which I read the fifth, Matthew 2 v.1-11 a Christmas Reflection by our Rector Revd. Canon Andrew Studdert-Kennedy.



Marlborough's community spirit at it's best.

May I wish all the people of Marlborough A HAPPY and peaceful Christmas and a BRIGHT AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR.

Carer Support Wiltshire

Friday, 20th January 2017



I attended the launch of the appeal for £25,000 for [Carer Support Wiltshire](#) which was held at Deacons the Jewellers and Clockmakers in the High Street.

The Carer Support Wiltshire [Appeal](#) aims to raise £25,000 to help some of the county's 45,000 unpaid carers win some time back for themselves.

I said: "It is very important to recognise the unsung heroes who go about the business of giving loving care or support to family members, children or friends day in and day out, sometimes without a break or respite for themselves, I understand, and I venture to say, that there may be some that nobody knows about. I am pleased to be lending my support to the appeal".

Catherine Hurford, Chief Executive of Carer Support Wiltshire said: "All the money we raise through this appeal will go directly to enabling carers to have a bit of time for themselves".

Prospect Hospice Outreach Centre

Wednesday, 25th January 2017



I attended, along with my wife and the Deputy Mayor, Mervyn Hall, an evening presentation with Prospect Hospice at [Savernake Hospital](#). We were a mixed group, including a retired nurse, local solicitors and the Marlborough College Proctor, William Finlay, who was accompanied by a sixth former who intends to read medicine at university. There was a

tour of the facilities available and a presentation explaining their set-up (mainly volunteers) and available services. This was undertaken by Mike Kennedy who is the Communities and Events Fundraiser and Genevieve Arney, the events and Community Manager.

We are lucky to have this fantastic facility here in Marlborough - mainly funded through enthusiastic local fundraising.

Westbury Civic Service

Sunday, 29th January 2017



We were greeted at the Laverton in Westbury by the now familiar Mayor Stephen Andrews and his wife Mayoress Mary.

The weather was appalling and we, along with the other Mayors from across Wiltshire and a Deputy Lord Lieutenant braved the pouring rain for a group photograph prior to processing to the beautiful Parish Church of All Saints.

The Church dates back to the 14th Century and we enjoyed a service which included an address by the Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum.

After the Service, everyone who had attended was invited back to the Laverton for refreshments - a most welcome hot cup of tea.

The Showmen's Guild of Great Britain Lunch - Swindon Hilton

Tuesday, 28th February 2017



This is an annual event for the Showmen's Guild where they host their own members (from the western section) as well as Mayors from many of the towns that are visited by their Fairs throughout the year. The Fairs were once a seasonal event with a period of respite for the Showmen. This is no longer the case and they now travel throughout the year with very little time off.

Everyone received a very warm welcome and my wife Susan and I were seated at a table with three generations of the Whitelegg family, namely Billy and his wife Louise, two daughters with their husbands and one grandson - also called Billy.

It was both interesting and enlightening to get an insight into the close 'family ties' that are clearly vital within the larger family of the Showmen's Guild.

It was an excellent lunch and we listened with interest as we learned of the many charities and organisations which benefit from the generosity of the Showmen.

Civic Dinner

Friday, 24th February 2017

There is something special about seeing our wonderful Town Hall lit up on a winter's evening with the front doors open in welcome. It is a few years now since we hosted a Civic Dinner here in Marlborough, and this evening our honoured guests were Lt. Colonel Matt Jones and some members of his Battalion of 4 Military Intelligence. Other guests included the Mayors of Devizes, Highworth and Wilton, some of our own Councillors and many stalwarts from our community. The atmosphere was friendly and the food excellent and I believe that everyone enjoyed themselves.



I was presented with a cheque for £500 by 4 Military Intelligence which was for the benefit of the [Wiltshire Air Ambulance](#), once of my nominated charities for this, my Mayoral year.

Since receiving the Freedom of Entry of our Town some years ago, 4 Military Intelligence have continued to support us on many occasions throughout the year and we were all glad to have a chance to recognise their continued support.

Fairtrade Presentation and Reception

Saturday, 4th March 2017



Thanks to the efforts and kindness of Dr Nick Maurice, Susan and I attended this Fairtrade Reception in our Town Hall. It was extremely well attended - more than 100 people - and we all sat at circular tables and enjoyed Fairtrade refreshments courtesy of Nick Helps, the Manager of our local Tesco.

I warmly welcomed Sophie Long and Patrick Kaberia to Marlborough. Sophie, from the [Fairtrade Foundation](#), explained the principle of the set-up and the way in which it helps people to help themselves by offering viable local employment and thus improving living standards and allowing people to choose how to spend any monies.

The highlight of the evening was a presentation by Patrick Kaberia, a tea planting farmer, who was able to explain just how he had personally benefited, having worked as a tea farmer for the

past 24 years in Eastern Kenya. Patrick spoke straight from the heart and it was illuminating to listen to such a personal success story.

Now that Marlborough has [Fairtrade status](#) we must continue to support the Foundation and all that it stands for, and pass this message onto future generations.

Mencap morning at the Conservative Club

Tuesday, 14th March 2017

This is a regular Tuesday morning meeting with members at the Conservative Club and as President my wife and I attend when we can to speak to everyone and watch the various activities going on supervised by the excellent Sue Bailey and her husband David plus a few other volunteers.

These endearing people come from mainly Marlborough and outlying villages plus Devizes. We need more volunteers to come forward to help us with outings from Marlborough and this year we hope to go to Bristol Zoo and other events to keep our members happy and contented. Do please call Sue Bailey on 01672 514513 for further information.

The Bobby Van Trust

Thursday, 16th March 2017

The [Wiltshire Bobby Van Trust](#) provides home security for elderly, vulnerable and disadvantaged people throughout Wiltshire who have been the subject of burglary, harassment, house crime, domestic abuse or fire. I was pleased, on behalf of the Town Council, to present the Trust with a small cheque for this excellent mission chaired by Robert Hiscox. The Patron is HRH the Duchess of Cornwall.



Spring Concert at St Mary's Church

Saturday, 18th March 2017

[Marlborough Choral Society](#) and [Devizes Chamber Choir](#) joined forces under the direction of David Ripley for a delightful Spring Concert in St Mary's Church, Marlborough. The concert is to be repeated on 1st April in St Andrew's Church, Devizes should you wish to attend.

The evening began with an impressive rendition of Zadok the Priest, one of Handel's Coronation Anthems and a piece that most of us would recognise, very stirring! The second piece was the beautiful Gloria, composed by Vivaldi and featuring the Soprano, Emma Banham and Alto, Alice Simmons.

Finally, after the interval we were treated to a seldom performed piece by the more modern composer, [John Rutter](#), as the choir sang Six Canticles of Creation, The Gift of Life.

The joining together of these two choirs proved to be an excellent and successful venture with their voices filling the Church.

My wife and I look forward to the next Choral Concert in June.

Visit to Mount House Gallery, Marlborough Open Studios

Wednesday, 19th April 2017

This is a great opportunity to view all types of artworks produced by local artists. The event is sponsored by David Dudley and he and his wife, Kim Vine, were there to welcome us to this private viewing and exhibition. Without sponsorship such as this, many artists would struggle to find recognition. There were so many lovely pieces and we did succumb to purchasing a picture!

Hungerford Mayoral Reception

Friday, 21st April 2017

Martin Crane OBE, Mayor of Hungerford and his wife, Virginia, are much to be admired as they have held the Office of Mayor and Mayoress for no less than 5 years all told. He is now stepping down at the end of this term and they were presented with some very smart garden tools which came with hints concerning an allotment! It was a particularly enjoyable evening for Susan and myself as we formerly lived at the Old Vicarage and managed to 'catch up' with former neighbours and many familiar faces from the past.

A thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Warminster Town Council

Mayors from Bath, Dorset and Hampshire, to the South Wiltshire University Technical College

Sunday, 23rd April 2017



This was very much a 'swansong' for me and my fellow Wiltshire Mayors as we are all coming to the end of our Mayoral Year. The Minster Church of St Denys was the venue and we met Warminster's new Town Clerk, Fiona Fox, who has only recently taken over the office. Today was, of course, St George's Day, something that was pointed out to us by the Revd. Jacques Desrosiers, himself a French Canadian, as he quizzed the congregation on their knowledge of our English Patron Saint. It was a special service and we were treated to some sublime singing courtesy of The Military Wives Choir, something of a coup on the

part of the Mayor of Warminster, Councillor Paul MacFarlane. The final hymn, a rousing rendition of Jerusalem, was very fitting on St George's Day.