



THE GREYHOUND



The Official Newsletter of Marlborough Town Council

Spring Issue

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR—MR MICHAEL DOBIE

Following nominations by members of the public Michael Dobie was voted Citizen of the Year 2007. The presentation by The Mayor Councillor Mrs Peggy Dow took place in the Town Hall before the Christmas Light switch on.

The award which was sponsored by Waitrose was given to Michael for his voluntary work in the community. The Mayor added that she hoped this would become an annual event.

We asked Michael if he would like to write a short resume of his life which he was only to pleased to do.

Please read on:

I was born on St George's Day at Cherry Orchard, third eldest of seven sons to Vera and Bob Dobie.

We were all very lucky in having such wonderful parents especially our mum, who dedicated all her time to us boys and all the other children around.

With Bert New's scrap yard the railway and the forest as a playground we all had the best time growing up.

On my first day at St. Mary's Infant School I asked my mum how long I would be there and she said three years Micky. I said I hope you don't forget where I am after all that time.

For some unknown reason by the time I had reached 5 years old I had stopped growing and it became a mystery even with the specialists I had to see in Oxford.



Andy Davies Manager of Waitrose and the Mayor present Michael Dobie with his award

I soon learnt that being small and funny made me popular.

I didn't pass for Grammar School and as my dad was a lorry driver I don't think Mr Stedman would of approved of me anyway. So off I went to the Secondary Modern on the Common.

At the age of 15 I started to play the guitar and went on to join local bands Diamonds, Tall Walkers, Mickey Finn, Phobe's Gobi Desert All Male Canoe Club, comedy band Scallywags and retired from Gaffer and Willis comedy double act in 2000.

Although we'd been on the television a few times we never made it big. However we did support some famous bands and I met loads of famous T.V. personalities.

On 23rd February 1971 I married Heather and we had two wonderful sons Graham and Kevin.

I sold most of my equipment and enjoyed holidays and days out with my wife.

Having gone through Heather's kidney transplant and all that goes with it for 26 years she was suddenly diagnosed with cancer and sadly after a brave battle she died at home on 6th September 2006. She died in my arms with a smile on her face. Will I ever get over it? No I don't think so.

I help at the Jubilee Centre and I like to help out on Red Nose Day and thanks to the generosity of the towns folk raised £300 last year.

I enjoy playing my guitars and singing and writing songs, which I hope to record with a little help from my friends. Oh and I would just like to say sorry to all my neighbours.

I recently suffered a Chronic Subdural Hematoma and had a hernia operation but thankfully I am now fighting fit again and was lucky enough to go to Cebu in the Philippines where I had a fantastic time. I am hoping to return there shortly to try and help the street children. It made me cry to see them sleeping on a cardboard box and in such a sorry state. They are all so friendly and welcoming.

Well all I can say is thank you for making me Citizen of the Year I feel extremely honoured.

So I think you had better **WATCH THIS SPACE!!**

MANTON NEWS

Last year two dogs were tragically killed running out of the Jubilee Playing fields under the bar of the machinery entrance to the field

However, of more concern, in between the death of the two dogs a little girl ran out of the field in an identical fashion. Fortunately without accident, however the Town Councils health and safety officer carried out a review and the town council staff and open spaces committee developed a very cost effect solution

A field gate has been installed and a fenced Kissing gate arrangement to allow a place of refuge for safe crossing of the road by pedestrians. If you know of any other potential issues as this please contact the council.

Cllr Rich Pitts

Vice Chair of Open Spaces Committee



Entrance to Playing fields as it used to be....



Entrance to Playing fields as it is today...

Marlborough Town Council Precept Decision for 2008/2009

Residents will probably have seen in the local press that the Town Council precept - the small add-on to the Council Tax that stays in the town rather than going into the wider coffers of the District Council or the County Council - will increase from April 2008 from £1.50 a week for a Band D property to £2.25.

Gloomy news, not necessarily. It is because the town has effectively no cash reserves – previous councils have successfully kept Marlborough as one of the cheapest precepts in Wiltshire with the,

no doubt, unintentional result that not enough money has been allocated to cover unforeseen events.

However the Town Council is expected to have a reserve of at least 3 - 6 months' spending; it cannot borrow to cover an unforeseen shortfall. The auditors were very critical of the lack of reserves. Hence the need to build them, and quickly.

Where did the old reserves disappear to – the town used to have adequate reserves? A tricky question.

The town has been run very

frugally for many years with a very low precept, but bit by bit the reserves have dribbled away.

One of the consequences of a very low precept is that residents get little of obvious value for their taxes – almost all the precept is taken up by the necessary (by law) administration – record keeping, processing planning applications, cutting the grass. But having a slightly higher precept (once the reserves are at a safer level) than at present will be an opportunity to consider the more obviously valuable needs of the town.

FLOODING NEWS

Fortunately the heavy rain around the Christmas and New Year period, though causing a few anxious moments, never flooded the town. If it had done, we are now better placed than we were since the sandbags and a big polybag of sand are now stored in the fire station compound. Those whose houses are at most risk have the combination number so they can gain access and help themselves; anyone else who thinks themselves vulnerable can ask for the number from the Town Council. There are no promises on help in filling and moving sandbags – this will all depend on the circumstances and the availability of Town Council staff, fire officers, volunteers or anyone else.

But we will do what we can to help.

The flood risk for most of the town is not great, though we are connected to the Environment Agency's floodwatch system – we are relatively close to the source of the Kennet and upstream of the town is quite a lot of woodland to slow the rate at which run-off occurs. Besides that the plan for the whole river, in which we play our part, is that if a flood risk exists the remaining hatches are opened to hurry water downstream and drown the remaining water meadows. You see this in action at Cooper's Meadow just downstream of the Waitrose car park and managed by the Town Council.

Alexander Kirk Wilson
Town Council and Flood Warden

MARLBOROUGH ROTARY CLUB

Marlborough and District Rotary Club were again responsible for erecting the Christmas tree in the High Street (kindly donated by T.H.White). They also organised the collection on December 14th and 24th for Helen House which provides respite and end of life care for children and young adults. The collection raised £1,800.

Their next big fund raising event will be the first of their two annual Car Boot Sales which take place at the Elcot Lane football ground, on Bank Holiday Monday, May 26th.

Further details of their activities may be obtained from the Club Secretary on 01980 630506.

Councillor Tony Spranger

Marlborough Station Crime Performance

31st December 2007	Recorded Crime					Detection Rates		
	This Time Last Year	So Far This Year	No +/-	%+/-	Forcewide % +/-	Last Year %	Current %	Current Forcewide %
All Crime	776	703	-73	-9.41%	3.10%	20.60%	22.80%	23.80%
Burglary Dwelling	50	31	-19	-38.00%	-4.70%	12.00%	16.10%	15.70%
Burglary Other	96	86	-10	-10.42%	1.00%	6.30%	11.60%	9.10%
Robbery	2	2	0	0.00%	11.80%	0.00%	0.00%	31.70%
Violent Crime	173	121	-52	-30.06%	-2.70%	43.40%	58.70%	50.70%
Theft From Motor Vehicle	81	82	1	1.23%	8.60%	6.70%	1.20%	5.00%
Theft Of Motor Vehicle	14	19	5	35.71%	23.24%	7.10%	10.50%	15.60%
Criminal Damage	144	152	8	5.56%	7.10%	14.60%	14.50%	14.50%
Drugs	32	23	-9	-28.13%	-32.50%	78.60%	90.50%	109.20%
Key	Improvement over Last Year							
	Stable compared to Last Year							
	Worse than Last Year							

**HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED BEING A
VOLUNTEER
WITH THE YOUTH
DEVELOPMENT SERVICE?**

Would anyone be interested in finding out more about how they can help the young people of Marlborough reach their full potential by working as a volunteer for the Youth Development Service, based at the Youth Centre in Marlborough.

Please contact Cllr. Mrs Edwina Fogg or the Town Clerk at the Council Offices, 5 High Street, Marlborough, SN8 1AA for more information.

Congratulations to the Marlborough Lights Committee for a magnificent display in the High Street again this Christmas. Marlborough Town Council make a significant financial contribution of £5,000 towards the erection and dismantling of the lighting but it is through the efforts of the Committee that the displays have been extended to the Town Hall and The Parade

**RELIEF MACEBEARER
REQUIRED**

The Town Council require a relief Macebearer to attend civic occasions in the absence of either of our appointed Macebearers.

If you are interested please write to:
The Town Clerk
at the Council Offices,
5 High Street, Marlborough,
SN8 1AA for more information.

The Town Council operates an Equal Opportunities Policy

CIVIC EVENTS/SERVICE

Peppercorn Rent Ceremony Thursday 20th March 2008
Merchant's House

Civic Service Sunday 27th April 2008
St. George's Church

Marlborough Town Council

Council Offices

5, High Street

Marlborough

SN8 1AA

Tel: (01672) 512487

Fax: (01672) 512116

E-mail: enquiries@marlboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk

Website: www.marlboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Come and have your say on what's happening in Marlborough

Town Hall Monday 7th April 2008 6.00 p.m.

YOUR TOWN COUNCILLORS

The Mayor

Councillor Mrs Peggy Dow 512074

The Deputy Mayor

Councillor Mrs E.M.Hannaford-Dobson 513181

Councillor S. R. Dobson 513181

Councillor G. Francis 519067

Councillor B. Castle 513955

Councillor N. Fogg 512656

Councillor A. R. Ross 512169

Councillor A. Kirk Wilson 513861

Councillor Mrs E. Fogg 512656

Councillor R. Notton 513747

Councillor Mrs M. Rose 515500

Councillor T. Spranger 516338

Councillor G. Loosmore 513185

Councillor S. Radnedge 512145

Councillor R. Pitts 516978

Councillor A. Sycamore 07799 368494

SURGERIES

Councillors hold a regular surgery every month in the Library from 10.00am to 11.00am.

The dates and Councillors due to be present in April & May 2008 are:

Saturday 5th April 2008

Councillor G. Loosmore (West Ward)

Councillor G. Francis (East Ward)

Saturday 3rd May 2008

Councillor S. Dobson (West Ward)

Councillor R. Notton (East Ward)

The next edition of The Greyhound will be available in the Summer. It is distributed free of charge to households in the Marlborough Parish as an insert with the Adviser. Further copies are available from the Library and the Town Council Office.