

ACTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RESIDENTS OF RAINHAM AND WIGMORE

MAY 1981

NUMBER 135



The 10th **Rainham** SPECTACULAR

Cozenton Park

1.30p.m. Saturday

23rd May 1981

Dozens of stalls, attractions and sideshows

See inside for bargain offer on
programmes bought in advance.

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AF

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Editorial

The first words this month must refer, of course, to the Spectacular at Cozenton Park on the 23rd May. There are lots of attractions lined up to tempt you so why not put aside the afternoon for your enjoyment with the added bonus of not having to travel too far afield. Fingers crossed for some good weather!

Miss Rainham will be a closely contested challenge if all the lovely young ladies in the area are anything to go by — one can only sympathise with the judges in their predicament but no doubt the male ones will have certain compensations with such a pleasant duty. The month of May also brings with it the Dickens Festival in Rochester so look out for this week of events and join in if you feel inclined. There are many activities to suit all ages and you can dress up in the clothes of the period and really enter into the spirit of the thing.

With the 'brighter' weather either already here or in the offing, we bring to your attention in this issue, a few suggestions as to how you might check over your various pieces of apparatus used in the garden and perhaps in the home generally. However safe you think your equipment is, it is worth having a run over the points of safety just in case: it could mean an awful lot to you.

Holidays are beginning to stir the breast and with something to look forward to we can all manage to keep going for a bit longer. On this point, we would give a reminder to our distributors to make sure that Action Forum is pushed right through the door and not left hanging half way out of the letterbox. Indeed, we would ask everybody who pushes things through letterboxes to do likewise. If you are going away, it is always as well to alert a neighbour to the fact so that he or she can keep an eye on such things. If you are having an early holiday, may we wish you a happy time and some lovely weather to go with it! The rest of us will keep it all going in your absence, plod on and wait for our turn.

Correspondence

BARNARDO'S JUMBLE SALE

Dear Editor,

We should be very grateful if you would give publicity in the May Action Forum to our Jumble

Sale to be held in St Margaret's Hall, Orchard Street, on Saturday 27th June. This will commence at 11.30 am (the hall being open from 9 o'clock for items of Jumble to be brought) and admission will be 5p for adults, 3p for children. We shall have our usual Boutique where 'Good-as-New' clothing will be sold.

Thank you so much for your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely,
Mrs J.M. Chant
Thames Avenue, Rainham

AGE CONCERN

Dear Editor,

We would like to thank your many readers who responded to our March article; we no longer need wardrobes or water jugs, but we always need wool oddments and fabric remnants for our handicraft room.

Thanks also to Capital Business Machines we also now have a Photocopier.

A word to all retired gentlemen who like to be useful: We have a well equipped woodwork room, and plenty of oddments of timber, which could be made into small useful articles like bird tables, plant holders and small stalls, which could then be sold at fetes.

We hold regular fund raising events throughout the year at different venues. A recent Barn Dance was great fun.

Forthcoming events include a Street Collection on Saturday, 16th May (for which volunteers are needed); a Summer Ball, which is to be held at Upbury Manor Schools on 26th June, and a Bar-B-Que evening on 25th July. Tickets for all functions will be available from the Day Centre.

Our sincere thanks once again to all your readers for their assistance.

Yours sincerely,
Mrs N.L. Merrick
Secretary/Organiser
Day Care Centre
for the Elderly,
Woodlands Rd, Gillingham
Medway SE26 16

KENT ASSOCIATION FOR THE DISABLED I.Y.D.P. FUND — HELP US WHILE YOU PLAY

Dear Editor,

May we, on behalf of the Kent Association for the Disabled, make an appeal to your readers to 'Help Us While You Play'.

We are appealing to the Sportsmen and Sports-women in Kent, to donate 5p for each and every game they play, in this, the International Year of the Disabled Person; all monies collected will go to help the disabled in the county.

Some of the disabled you will be helping were

cricketers and footballers, in fact athletes of all kinds. Can you help, will you 'Help Us While You Play'?

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Q: How can you help

A: By donating 5p for every game you play in 1981.

Q: Who will it help?

A: The Disabled in need in the county.

Q: When do you pay?

A: Either in advance in anticipation of the games to be played, or at the end of each three month period.

Q: How can you pay?

A: By sending your donation to the National Westminster, I.Y.D.P. Fund, National Westminster Bank, 91 High Street, Maidstone, Kent.

Note: When you pay to the bank, please ask for an official leaflet to accompany the money.

Dickens Festival

DICKENS FESTIVAL ROCHESTER
MAY 28 / 29 / 30 / 31 1981

The Dickens Festival in Rochester once again promises a wide variety of colourful events. Let us hope for better weather this year that more people may go and enjoy the flavour of a Dickensian week-end. A full programme is available but to wet your appetite some of the events are listed below. These range from Mr Pickwick's Breakfast, through walking tours, coach tours, Punch and Judy, a Treasure Hunt, Mr Micawber's Tea Party, Old Time Music Hall, Grand Ox Roast, Dickensian Costume Contests to Mr Fezziwig's Ball. Many other items also appear on the programme and of course the Street Market and Craft Fayre on Saturday afternoons are too good to miss!

Distribution

Volunteers are needed to help with the distribution of Action Forum. If you have a spare hour once a month there are two ways that you could assist Alan

Parmenter to deliver some of the 15,500 copies that we have each month. We are in need of Main Distributors in the Parkwood and Mierscourt Valley areas. For this the use of a car is essential as the job is to take bundles of Action Forum to the people who will do the house to house posting. The other way in which you could help is of course the actual door to door delivery. This normally takes about an hour preferably during the first weekend of each month. If you think you could help in any of the roads listed below please give Alan a ring (Medway 365817) he will be delighted to hear from you.

Similarly if you know of a road that is not covered at the moment and you are willing to help do let Alan know. The roads in need of distributors are:—

SMARDEN WALK
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STIRLING CLOSE
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WOLLASTON CLOSE
WILDMAN CLOSE
STANDEN CLOSE
HARVESTERS CLOSE

Bargain Offer

SAVE 25p
ON YOUR ENTRY PROGRAMME FOR THE
RAINHAM SPECTACULAR

The many attractions at the 10th Rainham Spectacular on Saturday 23rd May will provide an excellent afternoon's entertainment for all the family at only 50p each (OAP's and children under 16 25p, under 5's free).

SPECIAL OFFER: All programmes bought before the day will be at 25p each, including entry. Available from Rainham Bookshop, Benhams and Anne's Woolshop in Station Road, The Chocolate Box in the High Street, Martins the Newsagent at Parkwood and Rainham Mark Post Office.

Offer closes Friday 22nd May.



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Diary '81

Keeper: Mrs Christine Smith
31 Brockenhurst Close
Tel: 33098

No charge is made for Diary entries.

- May 4th – Parkwood Community Association, Photographic Society. Photography with a professional model. Meetings 8.15 pm in Parkwood Community Centre.
- May 4th – Medway Towns 18 Plus Group. Meal out – 'Rose and Crown' Shorne.
- May 5th – Women's Fellowship of St Matthew's Wigmore. Wisdom Hospice. Meetings held on alternate Tuesdays, at 8.00 pm in the Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore.
- May 5th – Wigmore & Rainham Men's Branch TOC H. Visit to our Maidstone Branch – meet at St Phillips 8.00 pm.
- May 6th – Berengrave Park Ladies Club. Cabbages and Kings. Talk by ex-headmistress Miss Cox. Meetings held at 8.00 pm in the Methodist Church Hall, Station Road, Rainham.
- May 7th – Hempstead Leisure Club. Games Afternoon. 2.15 pm in the Village Hall.
- May 7th – Swale Footpaths Group. Meet 7.00 pm Selling Station, 5 mile walk with a pub stop.
- May 9th – Swale Footpaths Group. Meet 9.30 pm Faversham Station, 15 mile walk to Boughton Aluph, returning by bus. Pub stop in Bodlemere.
- May 9th – CONCERT. MISCELLANY. Music, Drama and Verse performed by the Wigmore M.A.D.S. at St Matthew's Church, Drewery Drive, Wigmore. 8.00 pm. Programme 50p Adults 30p OAPs and Children.
- May 9th – Medway Towns 18 Plus Group. Day Trip to London.
- May 10th – Swale Footpaths Group. Meet 10.30 am Three Squirrels, Stockbury, a 10 mile walk and a pub stop.
- May 10th – Campaign for Real Ale. Lunchtime Social at the Plough & Harrow, Oad Street, 12 noon.
- May 10th – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Gads-hill lay by, on right hand side of the Rochester-Gravesend Road (A226) on the Rochester side of Gadshill for walk towards Shorne and Higham, leader Maurice Church, meet 2.30 pm.
- May 11th – Medway Towns Philatelic Society. Annual General Meeting and One-Sheet Competition. 7.30 pm at the Kings Head Hotel, High Street, Rochester.
- May 11th – Rainham Young Wives 'Sugar is a Business' – Tate & Lyle. Meetings held 8 pm in the Methodist Church Hall, Station Road, Rainham.
- May 11th – Medway Towns 18 Plus Group. Bi AGM 8.00 pm at the Black Lion Public House, Mill Road, Gillingham.

- May 13th – Wigmore & Rainham Men's Branch TOC H. Games evening and coffee at Charles', 8.00 pm.
- May 13th – Bredhurst W.I. Resolutions for Albert Hall. Competition – A Blue Bloom. Meetings 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.
- May 13th – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Top end of Maidstone Road, Wigmore (near link road bridge) 7.00 pm.
- May 14th – Hempstead Leisure Club. Mrs Joan Gordan with slides of Homes and Houses.
- May 14th – United Kingdom Federation of Business Women. Members Evening – Report from Scarborough. Meetings held at 7.30 pm in the United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham.
- May 14th – Rainham Evening Townswomen's Guild. Talk by the Medway Ports Authority. Competition – Longest list of fish. Meetings held at 7.15 pm in the Methodist Church Hall, Station Road, Rainham.
- May 14th, 15th, 16th, 21st, 22nd & 23rd – The Rainham Amateur Theatrical Society present 'THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ERNEST' by Oscar Wilde. Curtain up 8.00 pm. Bookings from Mrs Warn Tel: 364415 before 5.00 pm and after 7.00 pm.
- May 15th – Gillingham Gramophone Society. Annual General Meeting. 7.00 pm – 9.00 pm in the Music Room, Gillingham Adult Education Centre.
- May 15th to 23rd – Medway Little Theatre Club. 'EVERYTHING IN THE GARDEN' a modern 'black' comedy by Giles Cooper. Tickets Members £1, guests £1.25, children 80p. Parties of 12 or more £1.20 each, to be paid for in advance. Box Office: Mrs M. Martin, 394 City Way, Rochester. Medway 41767 (not Mondays).
- May 16th – 17th Gillingham (St Margaret's Rainham) Scout Group. Cub & Scout Five-a-Side Football. Competition – Side shows. Refreshments – something for all the family. 10.00 am–6.00 pm. Rainham Recreation Ground, Station Road.
- May 16th – Swale Footpaths Group Working Party. 9.30 am. Meet at the Red Lion, Bodlesmere to erect signposts.
- May 16th – BARN DANCE at Rainham & Wigmore Community Centre. £1.25 including Supper. Member & Guests. Tel: 362110.
- May 16th – Bredhurst School MAY DAY FETE. Crowning the May Queen, and Maypole Dancing.
- May 16th – Medway Towns 18 Plus Group. DISCO at St Matthew's Church Hall, Drewery Drive, Wigmore.
- May 17th – Swale Footpaths Group. Meet 10.30 am Selling Station, 5–6 mile walk.
- May 17th – Medway Towns 18 Plus Group. Pub Evening 'Malta Inn', Maidstone.
- May 18th – Parkwood Community Association. Photographic Society. Macro by Mr Osborne.

- A.R.P.S. Meetings at 8.15 pm in the Community Centre.
- May 18th – Hair Care and Beauty Evening at Rainham Girls School 7.30 pm. Admission 70p.
- May 18th – Rainham Young Wives. Film and Talk – Cancer Research.
- May 18th – Medway Towns 18 Plus Group. Punchlines.
- May 19th – Women's Fellowship of St Matthew's Wigmore. Theatre Trip.
- May 20th – Wigmore & Rainham Men's Branch TOC H. Business Meeting. 8.00 pm at 25 Wigmore Road.
- May 20th – Wigmore Evening Townswomen's Guild. Inn Signs by Mr Champion. Competition – A recipe for a contented mind. Meetings held at 8.00 pm at the Smallholders Hall.
- May 20th – The Cuckoos Ladies Club. An evening with 'Sainsbury's Food Counsellors' talking on value for money 'This involves you'. 8.00 pm in the Rycroft Hall, Boundary Road, Chatham.
- May 20th – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Luton recreation ground car park (nr Wagon at Hale pub) 7.00 pm.
- May 21st – Hempstead Leisure Club. Flower Arranging Demonstration by Mrs Webster.
- May 21st – Campaign for Real Ale. Social at the Bell, Rochester at 8.30 pm.
- May 24th – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet at Hartlip Church for walk towards Queensdown Warren, leader Sandra Wyatt (cars may be parked in the school car park) 2.30 pm.
- May 25th – Parkwood Community Association, Photographic Society, evening of close up photography.
- May 25th – Campaign for Real Ale. Sheerness Beer Festival. 12 noon onwards. Tel: 360644 for details.
- May 25th – Medway Towns 18 Plus Group. Day Trip to Hastings, Ice Skating.
- May 27th – Wigmore & Rainham Men's Branch TOC H. Rededication Service – Rev. Peter Bird, Colin Elliott, Rev. Perkins.
- May 27th – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Bredhurst Bell, 7.15 pm.
- May 28th to 30th – Medway Little Theatre Club's contribution to the DICKENS FESTIVAL. Tickets Members £1, guests £1.25, Children 80p. Parties of 12 or more £1.20 each to be paid for in advance. Box Office: Mrs M. Martin, 394 City Way, Rochester, Medway 41767 (not Mondays).
- May 28th – Hempstead Leisure Club. Blossom Drive.
- May 30th – Medway Towns Philatelic Society. Kent Federation Day, Maidstone.
- May 30th – COUNTRY & WESTERN DANCE. Caller Ernie Jessup, at Deanwood Junior School, Long Catlis Road. Tickets £2 including food. Tel: 35518.
- May 30th – Medway Towns 18 Plus Group. Bowling Whitstable.
- May 31st – Swale Footpaths Group. Meet 2.30 pm at Borden Church, a 3-4 mile stroll.

- June 1st – Medway Towns Philatelic Society. Marine Invertebrater. Mrs E.M. Banks, 7.30 pm at the Kings Head Hotel, High Street, Rochester.
- June 1st – Parkwood Community Association. Photographic Society 'Around the World' with Mr Gray Lancaster.
- June 1st – Rainham Young Wives. Floral Art Demonstration.
- June 1st – Medway Towns 18 Plus Group. Talk on R.N.L.I.
- June 2nd – Women's Fellowship of St Matthew's Wigmore. Vineyards.
- June 3rd – Wigmore & Rainham Men's Branch TOC H. Country Tour of Mid Kent – arranged by Colin and Jim meet at the Smallholders at 7.00 pm.
- June 4th – Hempstead Leisure Club. Games Afternoon.
- June 4th – Swale Footpaths Group. Meet 7.00 pm. Teynham Station, walk towards Conyer with a pub stop.
- June 5th – Swale Footpaths Group. Youth Hostelling weekend, for details telephone Alan Smith, Sittingbourne 24287.
- June 7th – Swale Footpaths Group, meet 2.30 pm. Chestnut Street, (off A249 near Key Street) a joint outing with the Medway Towns Footpaths Group. 4-5 miles.
- June 7th – Medway Towns 18 Plus Group. Ramble and Pub Evening.
- June 8th – Rainham Young Wives. 'Where Do Your Rates Go?'.
- June 8th – Medway Towns 18 Plus Group. Bat and Trap – Black Lion.
- June 10th – Wigmore & Rainham Men's Branch TOC H. Talk on Precious Metals and Jewellery – Fred Welch.
- June 10th – Bredhurst W.I. Make-up Demonstration 'Charles of the Ritz'. Competition – 'Make-up' a Slogan.
- June 10th – Campaign for Real Ale. Social at the Staff of Life, Cooling Street, 8.30 pm.
- June 10th – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Motney Hill car park – Lower Rainham Road, 7.30 pm.
- June 13th – United Kingdom Federation of Business & Professional Women. Council Meeting – Watford.
- June 13th – SALE in aid of Molly Wisdom Hospice. 2.00 pm in the garden of 674 Maidstone Road, Wigmore. Refreshments provided. Please bring and buy and help all you can for this worthy cause.
- June 13th – Wakeley Junior School. FETE. 2.00 pm. Admission 10p.
- June 13th – Medway Towns 18 Plus Group. Regional Disco.
- June 27th – BARNARDO'S JUMBLE SALE. 11.30 am St Margaret's Hall, Rainham. Admission 5p, children 3p.

The 10th Rainham Spectacular 1981

GIRLS: ENTER FOR MISS RAINHAM NOW!

The Miss Rainham Contest is to be held at the Rainham Spectacular on the afternoon of 23rd May in Cozenton Park, Rainham.

The lucky winner will receive £70, the second prize is £20, and the third, £10. These prizes have been donated by the sponsors, Rainham Traders Association.

One of the judges will be the Mayor of Gillingham, Councillor H. Blease, who takes office on 19th May, 1981. The Mayor will perform the official opening of the Spectacular at 1.45 pm.

The prizes will be presented by the Chairman of the Rainham Traders Association, Mr P. Durlin, and the new Miss Rainham will be crowned by the retiring Miss Rainham, Dawn Elms.

The new Miss Rainham's first duty later in the afternoon will be to present the cup to the winning team in the Tug of War and the prizes to the teams in the final. She will also make the prize draw in the grand Spectacular raffle, which has prizes donated by local traders.

The Spectacular will provide an afternoon of entertainment for the whole family. Apart from the beauty contest, there will be arena displays by the Dagenham Girl Pipers, Merion Jones' Sheep Dog Display team, a 7-a-side football match between representative sides from Gillingham and Chatham Town Football Clubs, and a tug-of-war contest between teams in the Kent Tug-of-War League. There will also be many side stalls from charity and commercial organisations and static displays by the Armed and Civil Services, Road Safety Office, Dental Activity Caravan (children who bring their old toothbrush to the caravan will have it exchanged for a new toothbrush), the Scarface Mob, Miniature Railway, Punch and Judy shows, traction engines, a fun fair by Monty Hammond & Sons and pony rides.

Art Exhibition: An Invitation to Local Artists; All local artists are invited to display their work at this Exhibition. Bookings in advance are not necessary: just bring your work to the Park for display along the fence starting from the 'Library' gates, in time for the official opening at 1.45 pm. The only charge is a 20% commission on sales.

The Rainham Spectacular is organised by the Rainham & Wigmore Community Association, the aim being to raise funds for the Community Centre at the Station Oasts, Granary Close, Rainham. Admission is by programme, in advance from Rainham Bookshop, 25p, or on the day, adults 50p, children 25p.

MISS RAINHAM 1981

Girls complete the entry form for Miss Rainham 1981 NOW

First prize £70
Second prize £20
Third prize £10

The lucky winner will be chosen at Cozenton Park on Saturday May 23rd

Don't delay, entries should be made on the coupon below - Closing date Monday May 18th.

MISS RAINHAM 1981 ENTRY FORM

Name
Address
.....
Age
Phone No.
Occupation
Hobbies
I agree to abide by the rules of the competition.

Signed
Please return to: Paul Barton, 72 Macklands Way, Rainham by May 18th.

RULES

1. The competition is open to girls aged between 16 and 28 as at May 18th this year. They must be resident in the Medway or Maidstone areas.
2. Entries will only be accepted on the official form.
3. Entries must be accompanied by two recent photographs. The organisers cannot undertake to return the pictures.
4. Entrants will be required to attend Rainham Spectacular on May 23rd at 3 pm in day wear.
5. No entries will be accepted after May 18th.
6. The judges' decision will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.
7. The winner will be expected to make the prize draw at this year's Spectacular and may be called upon to perform other duties during the course of the year.

Wanted

SECOND HAND BOOKS, TOYS AND RECORDS
WANTED

The tenth Rainham Spectacular will be in Cozenton Park on Saturday 23rd May. A note on some of the many attractions appears elsewhere in Action Forum.

To raise money for the Station Oasts Community Centre there will be stalls selling good quality second hand books, toys and records. If you can help by giving suitable articles to be sold please contact one of the organisers to arrange delivery/collection. Alternatively small parcels may be left at the Rainham Bookshop in Station Road.

The organisers are:-

Records: Julie Searle - Medway 35491

Toys: Paul Barton - Medway 364793

Books: Barbara Norwood, 12 Edwin Road - Medway 364072

Paul Barton would also be pleased to hear from anybody who can help sell programmes in advance or man sideshows on the day.

Flower Festival

ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL FLOWER FESTIVAL

The Festival is being arranged under the direction of Mrs Evelyn Mercer, Chairman of the Kent Area of the National Association of Flower Arranging Societies, by the Flower Clubs from the whole of Kent, together with the Cathedral Flower Guild. There will be a programme of music in the Cathedral and an exhibition of Kent crafts and embroidery in the Crypt.

Festival Open

Friday 19th & Saturday 20th June 8.30 am - 9 pm
Sunday 21st June 11.45 am - 8 pm

Exhibition Open

Friday 19th & Saturday 20th June 9.30 am - 7 pm

Rainham Spectacular Raffle

WIN A 12" PORTABLE TV FOR 10p

or one of 15 other prizes donated by local traders. Tickets available in many local shops or at the Spectacular.

The TV has been donated by **BURNS RADIO AUDIO VIDEO**, 96 Woodlands Road (Med: 52858). Other prizes for the raffle and sideshows have been donated by Rainham Fisheries, Tuesdays Child, All Games, Annes Woolshop, Rainham Bookshop, PAT, Perrings, Bentalls, Benhams, Floracraft, Len Payne, James Barry, Studio 21, Scottish & Newcastle, All Seasons, RB Sales & Service, The Chocolate Box, Halrose, Quilters, Grants Off Licence, Woolcraft, WO Sayers, Clifford Miller, Bottle & Brew, Rainham Stores, Rainham Mark Post Office and Govier Hairstyles.

The Rainham & Wigmore Community Association would like to thank all these local traders for their generosity.



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Rides from Rainham

BY KEMSLEY AND I
"Apple and Strawberry Country"

It was a typical hot Summer's day as we set off down the High Street for a spin to Bobbing and Borden with instructions to bring back some strawberries for tea.

Just after the junction with the Lower Hartlip Road we came to the three disused brick kilns familiar to users of the A2. The caretaker of the site was in his back garden feeding his chickens so we asked permission to have a look at the old brick works. One can now see straight through all three kilns, but when they were in use (ie when clay was being fired in them) they would have been closed at both ends by a wall of bricks. We examined the furnaces along the sides of the kilns and the large groove down the centre of each kiln through which part of the heat of the furnaces was transmitted to the clay. We also had a look at the iron trolleys onto which the clay was stacked and wheeled into the kilns. The caretaker told us that the kilns were soon to be demolished (another bit of industrial archaeology gone!) and that it was hoped to turn the site into a small industrial estate.

Beyond Newington, and immediately after Keycol Hospital, we turned left off the A2. Just before we joined the main road to Sheppey we came across the remains of two British Rail express parcel vans now serving as hovels in a field of horses. One still had the destination 'Camden' scrawled on it and the other 'Peterboro' and 'Blackburn'. It occurred to me that their final days in a field in rural Kent were somewhat of a contrast to working-days spent under trails of steam and smoke along the tracks between towns and cities further north. I returned to the saddle to find Kemsley out of sight. He clearly didn't want to listen to any reminiscences I might have about steam engines and express parcel trains.

I caught him up outside Bobbing Church chatting to a couple of Dutch girl cyclists who had stopped for a breather in a lay-by. They had just disembarked at Sheerness and were heading for the camping site at Wormshill in the Downs south of Sittingbourne. They had typical heavy Dutch bicycles (with the most inappropriate trade name of 'Gazelle') loaded down with camping gear. We wished them a happy holiday and admitted to them that we ourselves had grown much too soft to enjoy the rigours of a cycling cum camping holiday amongst the rolling countryside of England.

We entered the porch of Bobbing Church only to find the door locked. Above the door was a nest of young swallows. On the floor below the nest, laid out to catch the droppings, was a copy of the Kent Gazette weighed down by that bane of the local gardener — pieces of Kentish flint stone. A number of small eyes were watching us as we sat

down in the porch. Within a short time an adult swallow flew in to the nest. It was only when the parent bird turned to fly out again that it noticed us and let out a cry of alarm.

We walked to the back of the Church hoping that the view down The Swale might be some compensation for being denied a look at the interior of the building. But the view consisted essentially of Kemsley Paper Mill and the encroaching suburbs of Milton Regis and Sittingbourne. The only redeeming feature was that of the squat tower of Milton Church. As we left Bobbing we had a brief view of Sole Place, a red brick building opposite the Church, bearing two terracotta plaques each inscribed with the date 1702 and a set of initials (presumably one set was of the first owner and the other was of his wife).

We crossed the A2 at Key Street and, on the edge of Chestnut Street, came to three black and white houses — Hook's Hole (on the Wealden Pattern), Tudor Rose Cottage (much restored) and Oldstede (dated 1613). We left the A249 and headed for Borden. Just before the County Primary School we stopped to pick some wild cherries — small, but quite nice! The school, an attractive Victorian flint building, is situated some way out of Borden, in an old chalk pit, half way between the village and Chestnut Street. The most likely explanation for its strange position is that it was built jointly by the people of Borden and Chestnut Street on an inexpensive site of similar distances from both communities.

We left our bikes against its Norman tower and entered Borden Church. Above the door hung a painting of the Royal Arms of George — dated 1719. As Kemsley reminded me, it was made compulsory by law to display the Royal Arms in Churches following the restoration of King Charles II to the monarchy after Oliver Cromwell's Commonwealth. Under the Arms was a text from the Bible — 'Fear God. Honour the King'. One imagines that these words might have been five of the very few the ordinary villagers of Borden of those days could read.

We had a quick look at the 15th century Borden Hall half hidden by trees to the North of the Church and then crossed over the road to the blacksmith's shop opposite the Maypole public house. We peered through its grimy windows. On the walls hung a number of horseshoes and littered about the shop were bits of scrap metal and car parts. Between two furnaces with accompanying anvils hung a cardboard sign on which was chalked — 'In God we trust. Others pay cash'. Were the words above the Church door in the blacksmith's mind when he wrote out the notice?

After a slow ride down the village street — a pleasant mixture of farms, cottages and council houses — we doubled back, wheeled right at the Church and headed down Wises Lane towards Key Street. When almost in Rainham, and still with no strawberries, we turned right into Oak Lane and with some relief found the pick-your-own field open.

Plastic boxes filled, we headed home. Within a couple of minutes we were in sight of Rainham Church tower. As we pedalled our way towards it, I remarked how impressive it looks, from any direction. 'Indeed it does' murmured Kemsley, about a hundred yards later. His thoughts seemed to be more on tea than Kentish ragstone.

Gardens of Kent

Bali-Hai — Mrs & Mrs L.O. Miles, 91 Chestnut Ave, Walderslade.

Interesting small garden (one sixth acre) with alpine and rare plants incorporated in rockeries, bog gardens, peat beds, ponds and borders. No dogs. Tea and cold drinks. Adm 25p, children 10p. April 19th to August 2nd every Sunday (2pm-6pm)

36 Champion Close, Walderslade — Mr & Mrs G. Olsen.

Colourful small rockery garden with wide range of interesting plants and shrubs; greenhouses and conservatory specialising in geraniums and pelargoniums.

No dogs. Tea. Adm 20p, children 10p. May 3rd to August 30th every Sunday (2pm-6pm)

Bradbourne House Gardens (East Malling Research Station) East Malling. Entrance to Bradbourne House is east of New Road, East Malling. Hatton Fruit Garden, Bradbourne House, consists of demonstration fruit gardens of particular interest to amateur fruit growers occupying walled garden, formerly kitchen garden of Bradbourne House. Gardens include various intensive tree farms of apples and pears together with model fruit gardens of tree, bush and cone fruits. Members of staff available for questions. Teas. Adm 25p, children 5p. Sunday May 10th (2pm-6pm)

Crown Point Nursery — Messrs G. Reuthe Ltd, Igtham. Car parking facilities by tarmac road in entrance. Access to nursery from A25 by drive through woodland. Woodland garden of 8 acres for culture of rhododendrons, azaleas and other shrubs. Plants for sale. No dogs. Adm 30p, children 15p. Sunday May 10th (2pm-6pm)

Doddington Place — John Oldfield Esq. Doddington, 6 miles S.E. of Sittingbourne — from A2 turn south at Teynham signposted 'Doddington 4½m' Large garden, landscaped with wide views; trees and yew hedges; woodland garden with azaleas and rhododendrons, rock garden. Light teas. Adm 40p, children 10p. Sundays May 17th and May 31st (2pm-6pm)

The Grange, Benenden — Capt Collingwood Ingram. Own hybrid rhododendrons and special strain of polyanthus; big collection of rare trees, many of

them unique specimens, including largest eucalyptus in England. Adm 30p. Sundays May 3rd and May 10th (11am-6pm)

Oxon Hoath — Mr & Mrs Henry Bayne-Powell, near Hadlow. Car essential via A20, turn off south at Wrotham Heath on to Seven Mile Lane (B2016) at Mereworth cross-roads turn right and through West Peckham.

10 acres; landscaped with fine trees, rhododendrons and azaleas; woodland walk; cedar avenue; formal rose garden; peacocks. Large Kentish ragstone house (not shown) principally Georgian but dating back to C14; Victorian additions by Salvin. At one time owned by Culpeppers, grandparents of Catherine Howard. View over C18 lake to Hadlow Folly.

No dogs. Tea and cakes in picnic area if fine. Adm 35p, children 15p. Sunday May 24th (2pm-7pm).

Rock Farm — Mr & Mrs P.A. Corfe, Nettlestead, 6 miles west of Maidstone. Turn south off A26 onto B2015 and then 1 mile south of Wateringbury turn off right.

Garden of 1½ acres skilfully set out around old farmhouse and buildings; planned and planted since 1968 and maintained by owner; plantsman's collection of shrubs, herbaceous plants, ornamental pond. Plants for sale at nursery on the premises.

No dogs. Adm 30p, children 15p. Saturdays May 16th, 23rd, 30th; Wednesday May 27th; Saturdays June 13th, 20th; Wednesdays June 3rd, 10th, 24th; Saturdays July 4th, 11th; Wednesdays July 12th, 15th, 22nd (11am-5pm).

Scotney Castle — Mrs Christopher Hussey; The National Trust. On A21 London-Hastings, 1½ m south of Lamberhurst.

Famous picturesque landscape garden, surrounding moated C14 castle, which was created by the Hussey family in the 1840's. House (not open) by Salvin built in 1837. Special Exhibition in old castle May 25th-August 31st (same days and times as garden). Gift shop.

No dogs. Picnic area in car park. Adm £1, children 50p (during period of exhibition (May 25th-August 31st) £1.20, children 60p). Dates April 1st-Oct.31st daily except Mondays and Tuesdays, but open Bank Holiday Mondays. Hours: April and October 2pm-5pm, May-Sept 2pm-6pm.

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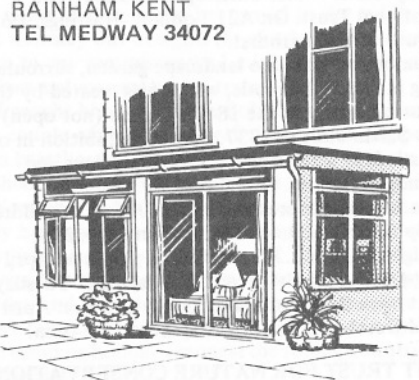
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Use the right tool

Always use the right tool for the job - it's safer.
Keep your tools clean and in good repair, and give
each one a quick check over before you use it. Have
all your tools ready before you start work. Don't let
children play with them or near them.

Fencing

- * Keep fences in good repair. Hammer in any nails
that are sticking out.
- * Make sure the garden gate has a safe catch,
especially if there are young children in the home.

Mowing the lawn

- * Wear trousers and heavy shoes, and keep your
feet well away from the mower. Keep children away
too.
- * Check the lawn for loose stones, etc., before
starting the mower.
- * Mow by moving the mower away from you.
- * Mow across slopes, not up them.
- * Don't use an electric mower in the wet. Stop and
unplug the mower before checking a fault or clearing
clogged blades.

Using electric power tools

- * Use tools made to British Standard BS 2769 and
follow the maker's instructions carefully.
- * See that plugs are correctly wired and fused and
that all plugs and flexes are in good repair.
- * Use properly installed power points, not makeshift
wiring extensions or adaptors. Make sure outdoor
points are under cover, or use a proper weatherproof
unit. Have installations checked from time to time.

Greenhouses

- * Use greenhouse heating systems according to the
maker's instructions, and have them checked regularly.
- * Remove and replace broken glass straight away.
- * Don't let children play around the greenhouse.

Painting and decorating

- * If you need to use a ladder check that it is in
good repair.
- * Stand the ladder at a safe angle, making sure that
the foot is secure. Once on the ladder, don't
overreach.
- * When using a blowlamp, keep it pointed away
from yourself and other people. Take care not to set
light to any materials nearby.
- * Store turps and brush cleaners where children
can't get at them. Don't leave brushes or cups of
used turps lying around.

Burning garden rubbish

- * Have the fire well away from the house or shed.
- * Light with firelighters - never petrol or paraffin.
- * Never throw empty cans, etc., especially aerosols,
on the fire.
- * Don't let children play around the fire.
- * Keep an eye on the fire and afterwards throw
water on the embers.

Using garden furniture

- * Before use, especially after the winter, check
chairs, sunbeds, garden swings, etc., for wear and
tear. Make sure metal parts are not corroded and
wooden parts are free of splinters.
- * Show children how to put up and take down
chairs safely.
- * If you have a garden swing, make sure it is firmly
based and warn children not to stand in the direct
line of the swing.

Disposing of large refuse

- * Local authorities provide places where residents
can conveniently deposit refuse free of charge at all
reasonable times. In some areas a collection service
is provide, either free or at a reasonable charge.
Ring Medway 50021 Ext 31.

- * Refrigerators, cookers, etc. Small children can
get trapped while playing inside old refrigerators and
cookers. To prevent this, take off the door; if this is
not possible, smash or take off the catch so that the
door can be opened from inside.

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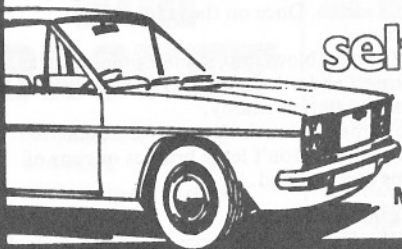
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NINTH MEDWAY ONE-ACT DRAMA FESTIVAL

Once again, groups from all over the county are
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has become an annual event, due to popular demand,
and groups enter from further and further afield, as
the word passes around.

This year adjudication will be by Brian Saunders,
a very popular Kent drama adjudicator; the Festival
Director is Gwen Grindley, and Dulcie Lewis is
Festival Secretary. The Festival runs from July 11th-
18th, approximately.

The running times for plays can be between
20 and 50 minutes, rehearsal time is allowed at
Medway Little Theatre, during the previous week,
and the Theatre Club as usual will give any assistance
possible with furniture, props, and the use of lights
and sound equipment. Teams wishing to borrow
furniture or check on equipment beforehand are
welcome to do so, and can book an appointment
with Gwen Grindley for this purpose. They are
advised to do this well beforehand if they are
borrowing, to ensure availability.

Entries giving the type of play, (i.e. comedy,
drama, etc) and approximate running time must
reach Dulcie Lewis by May 25th latest, together
with a £5 deposit — this will be refunded if the
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All entries and preliminary enquiries should be
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