AGTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RESIDENTS OF RAINHAM AND WIGMORE

JANUARY/ FEBRUARY 1991 NUMBER 242

Rainham High Street



One of the three new photographs of Rainham sold by The Friends of St Margaret's (see letter on page 2)

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Next Issue: MARCH 2nd 1991 Copy Date: Feb 12th Sm Ads Feb 16th Editorial: Mrs Barbara Mackay Miller, 5 Meresborough Cotts, Tel: 31307.

Advertising: Hamish Mackay Miller, 5 Meresborough Cotts, Tel: 31307.

Distribution: Alan Parmenter, 27 Bedson Walk, Tel: 365817.

Editorial

Rather belatedly a Very Happy New Year to all our readers. Now that 1991 is well and truly with us it is perhaps time to reflect upon Christmas past. Congratulations to the residents of Grain Road who once again contributed a magnificent free spectacle in the shape of their Christmas lights. For anyone who has not visited Grain Road during December it is well worth remembering next year. Most of the houses put on marvellous and imaginative displays which attract a continuous queue of slow moving vehicles during the evenings not unlike Blackpool's famous golden mile in September. Thank you very much Grain Road, you certainly add a massive dose of Christmas Cheer in this locality and long may your illuminations continue, they are certainly appreciated by many, many people.

Recent years have brought dramatic periods of weather particularly in Kent. I have heard explanations of the beginning of a new ice age for the extremely cold winter we experienced a few years ago, the Greenhouse effect is widely blamed for the record breaking temperatures last summer and similarly the drought which has affected us for at least the past two years, but I have heard little to explain away the frequent violent winds we are suffering. The first really bad storm I remember was only about ten years ago when at the time of one of the Fastnet boat races late in August a tremendous storm hit the small fleet causing many casualties. The same storm blew down the hop garden behind our house just as it was about ready for harvest. Since that occasion there have been a handful of further dates when the wind has been of sufficient strength to cause structural damage in Meresborough. But it seems to me that the storms are now occurring with regular monotony. Can anyone offer any explanation for these strong winds or is it just one of those things and we will eventually return to a long period of calmer weather. In a way it is a relief to at last have prolonged bouts of rain as at least it must be topping up our underground reserves and reservoirs so perhaps next year we will actually be able to grow some vegetables with reasonable hope of being able to water them and get a decent crop.

If your New Year's Resolution was to get out

more or to help other people we have just the thing this month. Several Scout Groups in and around Rainham desperately need adult help (see page 3 for details). The Scouts are nationally having a big recruiting drive for boys which obviously means they will also need additional leaders as well as replacing those who have to give up their office. If however you would prefer to work with girls new leaders are also required by the local Guide units. Mrs Gray on Medway 571589 can give you more information.

May we wish you all a very prosperous and successful 1991 and look forward to seeing you all again in March.

Correspondence (

THE FRIENDS OF ST MARGARET'S Dear Editor.

The Friends of St Margaret's Church have published three post cards of Rainham. They are on sale in the church, in Rainham Bookshop and in certain stationers and newsagents. You may wish to publish one or more of them in Action Forum (see the view of the White House and the High Street on our front cover).

The Friends help to raise funds for the upkeep of the church and anyone who would like to join us (membership is £3.50 per year) may wish to get in touch with me. We would particularly like to hear from residents of Rainham who would like to be associated with the church but not necessarily as members of the congregation.

Yours sincerely, Joe Ennis Medway 35182

RAINHAM JUDO CLUB

Dear Editor,

Rainham Judo Club has been an active cly in this area for the past 20 years, with the enth asm of Terry Malkinson, who runs the club, and his helpers and coaches.

To date we have a strong club membership of Juniors and Seniors. We have many successes in the competitive field.

The club is based at the Crest Factory at Bowaters roundabout — new members are always welcome.

For further information phone Terry on Medway 389477.

1ST LOWER HALSTOW SCOUT GROUP Dear Editor,

Is it possible that some of your readers could help us?

We are a small village Scout Group comprising about fifteen scouts who are in desperate need of a Group Leader. We have assistants to help run the Group but we need somebody to take over the general running. Our Scout Leader retired from the Group in the Spring after many years with us, and since then we have been struggling to keep the Group going. We are now at the point that if we can find no one to help us we may have to close, which would be a great loss for a small community where every club for the youngsters is vital.

Is there anybody who perhaps is a warranted Leader and would like to come back out of retirement? Or somebody who feels they would like to enter into this sort of hobby — it can be very rewarding? If you feel you would like more details please contact our Group Scout Leader, Len Saxton, on Newington 842805 any evening. We really would welgenue any enquiries.

H ye that you may be able to help in some way.

Yours sincerely, S.J. Baptie Group Secretary 14 Burntwick Drive Lower Halstow

ACTION AID WEEK Dear Editor.

I would like to say how grateful my wife and I were to the public for their support during our collection for Action Aid. We collected at the top of Pump Lane and in Langdale Close and the polite and helpful support we received was most encouraging.

The funds collected all go to help the work of Action Aid in combating illiteracy throughout the developing world.

By popular request, in order to take advantage of the longer evenings and to minimise the possibility of clashing with other major charity fundraising weeks it was been decided to change the date of Action Aid Week to the 1st-8th June 1991.

Thank you again all who contributed to last year' total of £75.98, we hope with your help to do ever etter next time.

Yours faithfully, N.R. Illman

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WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER ON THE JOURNEY TOGETHER Karibu (KAR EE BU) Welcome

The services world wide in 1991 are written by the women of Kenya and are held on Friday March 1st. They invite us to come on a safari, a journey, with them in prayer. They remind us that Jesus is the way and Jesus lights the way for us as we journey together.

There is to be a service for ladies and gentlemen of all the churches at 7.30 at St Margaret's Rainham and afternoon services at Twydall and Wigmore.

Hurambee Pulling together

GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND

Gillingham Branch thank everyone who helped us to make 1990 a good year. Owing to changed circumstances we need one or two new Committee members for 1991. If you would like to support a very good cause please ring Ron Mustill, 387446, 344 Broadway, Gillingham.

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Diary '91

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Tel: 33098

No charge is made for Diary entries.

January 19th - Medway & District Group HF Holidays. Meet at Herne Bay Station at 9.40am. Walk to Birchington. Return by train. 8 miles. Coastal walk.

January 20th — Medway Group Ramblers Association, Start 10,00am, Meet at Trottiscliffe Village Hall, GR643602. Park in the village hall car park. 7 miles.

January 24th - Barn Dance. 7.30-9.30pm. At Aburound House, Woodlands Road (opposite children's playground). Beginners welcome. Telephone Medway 57282 for further details.

January 24th - Medway Camera Club. The Reg Burton Trophy (prints) Judge Les Ayres. 7.30pm The Baptist Church Hall, Borstal Street, Borstal Village.

January 25th — Chatham Dockyard Historical Society. Early Naval Aviation History -Mr C Mottram, RNAS Yeovilton. Talk starts at 7.30pm. Medway Arts Centre, Chatham. Car parking free at back of Centre.

January 27th - Medway & District HF Holidays. Meet Rainham Station at 10.00am, About 10 mile walk.

January 27th — Medway Group Ramblers Association. Start 10.00am. Meet at Shipbourne near Tonbridge, opposite the Church GR594523

January 27th - Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.00pm Newington Station.

January 29th - St Matthew's Women's Fellowship. Tracing Family Tree - Mr Lerpiniere. 8.00pm in the Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore.

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January 30th - St Margaret's Church Hall, Orch Street, 7.30pm. Talk and Slides. Life in the Fa East by Mr J.M. McKenzie. Everyone welcome £1 includes refreshments.

January 30th - Medway and District Group HF Holidays. Leader Dick Fordham. Meet Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre, outside 'Safeways', 10.30am. About 5 miles walk, ending at Hempstead Valley at lunch time.

January 31st - Barn Dance. 7.30-9.30pm. At Aburound House, Woodlands Road (opposite children's playground). Beginners welcome. Telephone Medway 57282 for further details.

January 31st — Medway Camera Club. Members Evening.

January 31st — The Rainham Red Cross at oldir a Coffee Morning and Mini Jumble Sale at 10.30am at 46 Orchard Street. Admission 20p.

February 1st - Gillingham Music Society. Request Night on Compact Disc. 7.15-9.15pm at Gillingham Adult Education Centre, Green Street.

February 3rd — Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.15pm Larkfield Village Hall.

February 3rd - Medway Group Ramblers Association. Start 11.00am. Meet at Adisham Village Green, S.E. of Canterbury GR228543. Park courteously in the village. Route: Adisham-Cooting Downs-Adisham-Bossington-Wingham Well-Bramling Downs-Adisham. Pub stop. (6.5 miles).

February 4th — Wigmore Road Safety Club (Tufty) 2.30-3.15pm at St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore.

February 7th - Medway Camera Club. An evening with Steven Kirk (slides).

February 9th - Medway & District Group HF Holidays. Meet Meopham Station 10.00am. Packed lunch, possibly pub stop. About 8 mile

February 9th — JUMBLE SALE. 10.00am Meredale Infant School, Solomon Road, Rainham.

February 10th - Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.15pm. Capstone Country Park.

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February 10th - Medway Group Ramblers Association, Start 10.30am. Meet in the public car park Upper Upnor. GR757706. Route: Upnor-Chattenden-Frindsbury-Upnor. Pub stop. (5.5 miles).

February 11th - Medway Organ Club presents Mark Speight. 7.30pm for 8 at Parkwood Community Centre.

February 12th - Gillingham & District Fuchsia Society. Phil Outred - Talk on Fuchsias. 7.30pm at The United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham.

February 12th - St Matthew's Women's Fellowship. Give us a Clue - Men's Fellowship. 8.00pm.

Febry 14th - Bredhurst Garden Club. Mrs Mary M abe, Southern Water Services. Illustrated Talk 'Work of Southern Water'. 8.00pm in the Village Hall.

February 14th - Maidstone Recorded Music Club. Definitely Not Romantic, music before 1800 and after 1945. Keith Hunter. 7.15pm Central Library, St Faiths Street, Maidstone.

February 14th - Medway Camera Club. 3rd Print Competition. Judge R. Force.

February 15th - Wigmore Evening Townswomen's Guild. Popular Music on the Organ — Mrs P. Ferrigan, Competition: Something in Brass. 8.00pm in the Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore.

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February 15th - Gillingham Music Society. 'From Walt Disney to Wagner' - How an interest in Music came from seeing 'Fantasia' - presented by Don Kingsnorth.

February 16th - INDOOR BOOT FAIR -St Margaret's Church Hall, Orchard Street, 10.00am-1.00pm. To hire a stall - £6 please ring 360090, 372680 or 35530. Refreshments available. Admission 20p.

February 16th - Medway and District Group HF Holidays. Social Afternoon at Rainham Methodist Church Hall, Station Road. 2.00pm to 5.00pm. Talk and slides by Dennis Turner on New Zealand. Refreshments 75p.

February 17th - Medway and District Group HF Holidays. Meet Higham Station 10.50am. Pub lunch at Cooling. 10 mile walk.

February 17th - Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.15pm The Strand car park, Gillingham.

February 17th - Medway Group Ramblers Association. Start 10.00am. Meet at Charing Station GR950491. Park at the Station (8 mile walk).

February 19th - Medway and District Group HF Holidays. Meet Rainham Station 10.00am. Calling at Gore Farm for snack lunch. 4-5 mile walk.

February 21st - Medway Camera Club. Club Action.

February 22nd — Chatham Dockyard Historical Society. Ships Badges and Their Connection with Kent by Mr H. Bennett & Mr D. Taylor. 7.30pm at The Medway Arts Centre, Chatham. (Old Town Hall).

February 23rd - Medway and District Group HF Holidays. Meet Sittingbourne Station 9.45am. Walk via Bredgar, Milhurst and Rodmersham. Packed lunch. About 10 miles. No dogs please.

February 24th - Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.15pm Cossington. Turn left immediately after Garage at bottom of Bluebell Hill and park on right.

continued on page 13

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4TH GILLINGHAM (RAINHAM) SEA SCOUT GROUP

1991 heralds the 75th Anniversary of Scouting in

The 1st Rainham Scout Troop was formed in 1916 and is still in existence today but under a different

The 4th is the only Sea Scout Group in the Gillingham District which is recognised by the Royal Navy, for its standard of dress, discipline, knowledge and badgework. This year the Group is hoping to arrange a number of events to celebrate our 'Birthday' and one of these will be to hold an 'open weekend' for all ex Cubs, Scouts, leaders and helpers to visit our headquarters in Berengrave La Rainham, to meet old colleagues and friends and to reminisce over the 'good old days'.

During this weekend we are hoping to stage a small exhibition of photographs and memorabilia covering the history of the Group.

May we through your publication ask if any of your readers who were members of the above Groups that have any photographs, badges, etc. that they can loan to us for this weekend, we would be extremely grateful.

They will of course be carefully looked after and returned. Please contact the following who will

arrange collection: Group Scout Leader Ray Austin 763 Lower Rainham Rd Rainham, Gillingham Kent ME8 7UB Tel: Medway 30039

Ass.Group Scout Leader Brian Cull 141 Berengrave Lane Rainham, Gillingham Kent ME8 7UJ Tel: Medway 32848

MEMORIES OF RAINHAM

Dear Editor.

The picture of Station Road Methodist Church in a recent issue of Action Forum brought back memories of my boyhood. The church was only twill-three years old, the Minister was Rev. James Stephens, the Secretary Mr Harry Mattocks, and the Sunday School Superintendent Mr Alf Ransley.

I was learning the violin, and when I was eleven

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my teacher, Mr Billy Edmonds, thought I was proficient enough to join the orchestra which played with the organ for evening services. We had long music stands which hooked over the front pew, and bentwood chairs which were kept behind the Communion rail, Mark Ransley, Monty Clark, Bert Mears, Norman Stephens (the Minister's son), Leslie Long and I played the violin, and Billy Edmonds and Sonna Kitchingham the 'cello. The orchestra had its heyday in the early 1930s, but by 1936 its number dwindled to one violin.

When I first went to the church the choir pews were against the wall on both sides, and the pulpit had a flight of steps both to the left and right. The pulpit steps and choir stalls were removed and resited on the stepped platform to the right of the pulpit, and the vestry and organ loft built to house the new organ. This was built by Tovey, organ builder of Maidstone. Miss Salmon was organist, succeeded by Mr Fred Golding and later Miss Roots, Mr Frank Friday having been organist of the original instrument.

The highlight of the year was the Sunday School Anniversary, held on the second Sunday in June. All the children sat on a platform erected in front of the pulpit, and either recited a poem on sang action songs. The preacher was always Mr Fred Auger, a farmer from Borstal near Rochester. He was wonderful with the children, always finding something to praise even when we forgot our lines. The church was so crowded for the anniversary service that forms were brought in from the schoolroom and placed in the aisles, where they were quickly filled.

Concerts were organised to raise money for the Church Organ Fund. First there would be a 'Men's Effort', then a 'Women's Effort' and finally a 'Combined Effort'. These were always well attended and much enjoyed.

My church-going days ended in July 1939 when I was called up in the first batch of militia, but I look back on those pre-war years with much happiness.

F.C. Foster 109 High Street Newington, Sittingbourne

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In Britain wildlife habitats have been disappearing at an alarming rate and many species are now on the danger list.





Many people have expressed their concern for Kent's countryside by joining the Kent Trust for Nature Conservation.

The KTNC was found in 1958 and today is

- protect and conserve the wildlife of Kent
- encourage wider public interest in the county's natural history
- offer opportunities for anyone to play a practical part in conservation work on nature reserves and other valuable sites throughout the country.

The KTNC is one of 48 County Trusts and 30 urban wildlife groups who are actively promoting wildlife conservation in Britain.

On a national level, the Trusts and their 180,000 members are represented by the Royal Society for Nature Conservation.

WHAT DOES THE KTNC DO?

KTNC acquires land of specific wildlife interest and importance. Each area is carefully protected and managed as a nature reserve. To date the Trust has more than 3,500 acres of Kent's countryside in its

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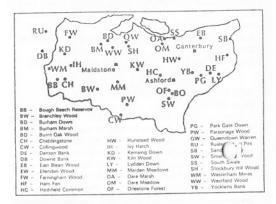
care. KTNC provides advice to landowners on all aspects of nature conservation. Local Authority planning departments frequently liaise with KTNC from the earliest stages of development projects.

KTNC works closely with the local education authorities at every level to encourage student interest and practical involvement in nature conservation.



Young naturalists can join the WATCH club, which is the national environmental club for young people and the junior wing of the County Trust movement. KTNC actively promotes wildlife conservation through lectures, exhibitions, events and regular contact with the media.

KTNC has ten local Groups representing the Trust in their communities. Each provides a wide ranging programme of activities and, through the Trust's 'village representative network', ensures that local opinion can be voiced.



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HOW YOU CAN HELP

The countryside belongs to us all and it is therefore our responsibility to protect the varied habitats and the wildlife they support. The task of conserving nature is an immense one and, while much of the work is carried out by dedicated bands of volunteers, support and help is always needed.

Do you enjoy the 'outdoor life'? Then join our Conservation Volunteer teams for a Sunday task on one of our nature reserves.

Are you a natural organiser? Then support the local group commmittee. Your help in manning displays, selling Trust goods, arranging walks, talks and events will be very welcome.

Are you a keen naturalist? Then become a Trust sun or or recorder.

Most important of all, you can be part of the KTNC by becoming a member.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP?

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- Kent Wildlife Focus, three copies annually (KTNC publication)
- Local group events programme and newsletter
- Access to KTNC nature reserves
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Otterham Creek, Otterham Quay Lane, Rainham, Kent. Phone: Med. 32961 WATCH Member (WATCH is the national environmental club for children and forms the junior wing of the County Trusts.

Members receive their own magazines 'WATCHWORD' and 'Kent WATCH News' and take part in a range of WATCH activities.

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*£5.00 for up to four children of the same family living at one address.

P.O. Box 29, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1YH. Tel: Maidstone 53017

LATEST RSPCA NEWS (Gillingham Branch)

I am sure that our House to House Collectors in the Wigmore, Parkwood and Rainham area will be pleased to note that we raised £854.37 in 1990. Our thanks to the Collectors, and also the many kind and interested residents who contributed to the Branch Funds. I do hope you will be able to help again.

I met our Inspector today when I was with the Secretary planning our newsletter; he was organising bags of dry peat for bedding for some rescued

His latest adventure was in 4 feet of treacherous mud; with some other helpers; rescuing an injured swan which was unable to walk, and was stranded on a mud flat.

Luckily the swan was captured and taken for veterinary treatment. There was a nasty infected gash on the swan's leg where a fisherman's hook had become embedded. After treatment the swan is now recuperating at a foster home, and it is hoped that it will be returned to its mate on the river in a week's time.

Let us all make 1991 a Happy and Safe Year for our precious wildlife. Fishermen please make sure you have packed up all your discarded tackle — everyone take home all your litter. Plastic bags and plastic bottle rings are a great danger in the country-side too.

Perhaps our slogan should have been KEEP BRITAIN CLEAN AND SAFE.

RSPCA Member and House to House Collector

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Scouts

Our trip to breadhurst woods

When I went to breadhurst wood. I first was told to put my bag with the others, then I went and played on the obstacle course. After that we were put in groups and played this game where you had to find a card with a letter on it they were hard to find, but we got all ours, but the unfair part was that if you got all yours you could get the other groups cards. After we had lunch we went on the obstacle course, the ones who got over it got a point for there arrow work. After that we cooked sausages and marshmay 's on the fire. After, we built some huts and tested them with flour, but it got through ours. After, we played a game, where we ran away and you had to get to the flag post with out getting caught. We had two games of it then we had to go home.

> Chris Burkett 7th Gillingham

Christopher is a Cub Scout in the 17th Gillingham (St Margaret's, Rainham) Group, Scott Pack, who meet on Monday evenings, between 6 and 8 pm at Wakeley Road School.

This Cub pack urgently needs helpers, male or female, who would enjoy spending a couple of hours a week working with youngsters between the age of 8 and 10 years.

No previous experience of Scouting is necessary. Please contact Mrs Pat Smith, Berengrave Lane. Tel: 33300 for further information.

Thank you.

THE DARLAND BANKS NEED YOU

This splendid open space is now being managed by a joint team from the KTNC and the Council. They have decided what needs doing, and, with the help of a poll of local householders, have been confirmed in their plan to graze cattle within the existing pade k fencing. Some will know that the alternative plan of putting a fence around the perimeter came second. Having lost that battle, the war against the encroaching scrub must not also be lost.

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The KTNC, the MTCV, the MUWG, all have the Banks on their schedule, but they have other responsibilities also. This cri de coeur is to all locals who enjoy the Banks as much as you do your back garden; especially to those whose dogs enjoy it even more.

Your muscle and enthusiasm is needed on the first Sunday of each month to put the management plan into effect. Before the cattle can tackle the young shoots, you and I have to cut down and burn the mature ones. Come along at 10 o'clock for a couple of hours (or longer if you can stay). If you are prepared to bring a bowsaw, lopper or secateurs, that would help, but it's not necessary. Some tools will be available, and there's always the fire to tend and the tea to make. What you must do is wear a pair of stout gardening gloves. The stuff we are fighting is vicious!

See you there; if not on January 6th (because you wont have read this by them) or February 3rd, then surely you'll come on March 3rd? Come on, put the dates in your new diary. Now!

Yours sincerely, D.J. Bendle 22 Gainsborough Close

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Arts in Medway are leading a workshop on how voluntary groups and organisations can produce good-looking posters and newsletters, without too much expense.

The workshop will take place at the CVS Office, Bridge Centre, 15a New Road Avenue, Chatham, on Saturday 19th January.

The emphasis will be on good presentation, using the photocopier and a few tricks of the trade.

The day will begin at 10am and the last hour, from 3pm until 4pm, will offer opportunities for using the desk top publishing facilities at the CVS.

Cost of attending is £7.50, to include a buffet lunch. Don't miss this opportunity to brighten up your organisation's image.

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MEDWAY

Diary '91

February 24th — Medway Group Ramblers Association. Start 2.00pm. Meet at the Riverside Country Park, Rainham (4 miles).

February 26th - St Matthew's Women's Fellowship. Australian Evening.

February 26th - Medway Camera Club. Wilson Memorial Trophy (slides). At Maidstone, St Andrew's Hall, Oakwood.

February 28th - Medway and District Group HF Holidays. Meet 'Running Horse' Chatham/ Maidstone A229 road. 2.00pm. About 41/2 mile

Fel ry 28th - Medway Camera Club. 4th Print Competition, Judge G. Boden.

March 1st - Women's World Day of Prayer 'On the Journey together'. 7.30pm St Margaret's Rainham and in the afternoon at Twydall and Wigmore.

March 1st - Gillingham Music Society. 'The Nineteen Thirties' - An Anthology of Words and Music from Harold and Dorothy Rogers.

March 2nd - Medway and District Group HF Holidays. Meet Sole Street Station. 10.40am. Dry lunch on Downs at Upper Halling, possibly

March 2nd - Medway Group Ramblers Association. Start 10.30am. Meet at Stoke Church, on the



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March 3rd - Medway and District Group of HF Holidays. Meet Aylesford Station 2.00pm. Riverside walk to Allington Locks — 4 miles.

March 3rd — Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.15pm. Penenden Heath (Bottle Bank).

March 3rd - Medway Group Ramblers Association. Start 10.30am. Meet at Eynsford (on the A225) in the car park, GR540655. (6 miles),

March 4th - 'Wigmore Road Safety Club (Tufty)'. 2.30-3.15pm.

March 7th - Maidstone Recorded Music Club. AGM.

March 7th - Medway Camera Club. Towards better photography. A.E. Pullen ARPS (taped).

March 8th - Medway and District Group HF Holidays. Annual General Meeting to be held at 'Dodgers Diner' Restaurant, High Street, Rochester. 7.00pm followed by an interesting talk by Mr Cheesman on Country Walking Sticks.

March 9th - Wakeley Junior School, Wakeley Road, Rainham, JUMBLE SALE, 2.00pm.

March 10th - Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.15pm West Malling car park, on left at top of main street.

March 10th - Medway Group Ramblers Association, Start 11.00am, Meet at the Westgate end of St Dunstans Street, Canterbury (4 miles).

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