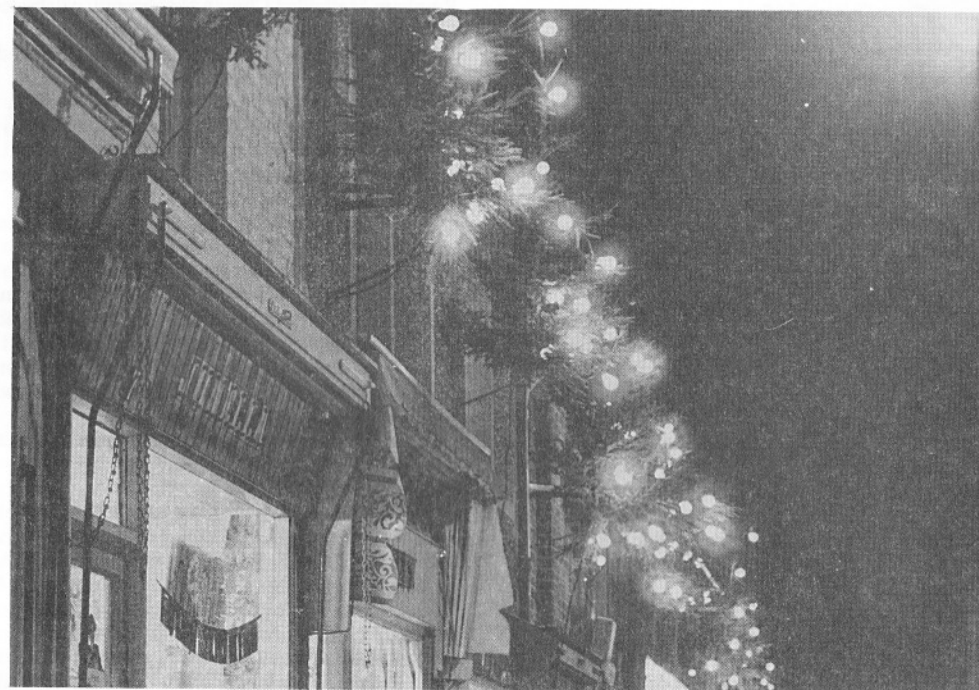


# ACTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

DECEMBER 2000

■ NUMBER 352



Station Road, Rainham, Christmas lights in the early 1970s. Rainham at this time held a Christmas Carnival and many local traders decorated their shops with colourfully lit Christmas trees. Most of the brackets are still in place, how about it shop keepers? Can we supplement the Council lamp post decorations with our own display?

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# AF

Next Issue: January 20th 2001  
Copy Date: Jan 2nd 5m Ads Jan 5th  
Editorial: Mrs Barbara Mackay Miller,  
5 Meresborough Cotts, Tel: 231307.  
Advertising: Hamish Mackay Miller,  
5 Meresborough Cotts, Tel: 231307.

## Editorial

I know it's supposed to be a sign of growing old but the years seem to slide by at an alarming rate. It does not seem possible that almost twelve months have gone by since we were all worrying about the millennium time bomb and planning great celebrations to see in the year 2000 as if the end of the world was nigh. Now as we approach the real beginning of the new millennium (ie January 1st 2001) life has returned to normal and few ambitious celebrations are being considered. True London would like to celebrate but even those plans have been scaled down and diversified under pressure from the people who actually have to cope with the massive crowds. So now several events will be held around the capital rather than one giant fireworks display in the centre as last year. We must be going through a warmer period, whether as a result of global warming or just the normal fluctuations of climate, as remembering back twenty years or so few people would have wanted to be outside partying on New Year's Eve, it was too jolly cold.

Thank you to the reader who has contacted us with the definitive answer as to when Rainham Mark Grammar first admitted girls. No one (not even the school) seemed quite sure. Anyway we have now been told of someone who was part of the first intake in September 1972, I think that finally settles most of the queries from the Rainham Quiz - until next year of course.

The Rotary Club of Gillingham have contacted us with details of their Christmas Charity collection. Santa's float will be touring different parts of Rainham and Gillingham from December 11th right up to Christmas Eve. All the money collected will be given to either local or international charities so please do support the Rotarians and give generously but above all turn out when they are near you and give them a wave. It is all too easy over the next few weeks to be so frantically busy that actually enjoying Christmas by joining in these local events and participating in the carol singing and Church Services is missed in the rush. We are after all celebrating the birth of Christ which sometimes gets forgotten.

As usual at this time of year our next edition will be a combined January and February copy. This allows us all to have a break during the Christmas

holidays but be assured we will be back with you on January 20th and then regularly the first Saturday of each month. Until then have a very Happy Christmas and we will see you again in January.

## Correspondence

RAINHAM METHODIST CHURCH,  
STATION ROAD

Dear Editor,

Rainham Methodist Church has recently celebrated the 100th anniversary of the completion of the building on the site at the corner of Station Road and Wakeley Road. In 1983, we added an extension, which includes a kitchen and toilets, and a car park, but otherwise, the outside of the building has largely remained unaltered. However, over the years many alterations and improvements have been made to the interior, and people who venture inside are often surprised at how warm, inviting and peaceful it feels inside the church itself.

**The church is open for tea and coffee on Wednesday afternoons, between 2.30 and 3.30pm.**

We warmly invite you to drop in for a 'cuppa' and a chat, if you would like to do so. However, if you prefer, please feel free to come in for a quiet read, or just to sit still for a while, away from the general rush and bustle of our busy lives.

We look forward to meeting everyone who comes.

Yours sincerely  
Roy Buchanan  
(Tel: 01634 388569)

BARN DANCE

Dear Editor,

The Medway & Maidstone branch of Voluntary Service Overseas are holding a Barn Dance on Saturday 20th January 2001 at Hillyfields School, Church Path, Gillingham. The live music will be provided by Rakes of Rochester and the ticket price of £7 will also include a sausage and chips supper or a vegetarian alternative. Our dances are always fun evenings and no experience is necessary as the band has a caller so come along and enjoy yourselves in that 'flat' period after Christmas and New Year. You will need to book in advance for this event so please contact Pam and Phil Cole on Medway 376608 to secure your tickets.

Yours sincerely  
Pam Cole

THE GUIDE ASSOCIATION  
RAINHAM SOUTH EAST DISTRICT

Dear Editor,

Calling all readers!  
Did you enjoy Guiding? Were you lucky enough to enjoy the spirit of Guiding at its best?

Guiding is moving forward in many ways for young women from ages 5 to 25. An exciting new

programme is evolving for all sections, Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Rangers.

We want as many girls as possible to enjoy Guiding and all it can offer, but many units in this area are under threat of closure due to shortage of adult help.

Whether you can only offer a few hours a week, or want to join us as a uniformed leader, your help will be greatly appreciated.

**Think differently. Be confident. Join us.**

For further information, please contact Mrs Carole Spry on 01634 682065.

Yours sincerely  
Mrs Carole Spry  
District Commissioner  
Rainham SE District

RAINHAM SECONDARY SCHOOL

Dear Editor,

I wonder how many of your readers remember the Rainham Secondary School in Orchard Street. I attended the school from 1954 to 1958 and have fond memories. There were some amusing times. One I recall was when we were changing back into our school uniforms after having PE in the Hall and Mr Brown (PE master), counting the seconds down from 10 to 1 with a slipper in his hand ready to clout anyone still left in the changing room. You received an extra one if you rushed past him, semi-dressed, carrying clothes, and changed in the corridor outside. Other times were pleasing, Mr Pearce (Gardening master), by showing an interest in gardening but most of us probably only wanting to be out on the garden in order to see the girls in the other half of the school crossing over to change classrooms between lessons. Also the music club, in the lunch hour, run by Mr Springate (Alfy), the Music master when he endeavoured to teach us an appreciation of good music, mostly classical, and we would drive him frantic preferring to listen to Little Richard and Buddy Holly and the Crickets.

There was Mr Berry (History), Mr Richards (Maths) and Mr Crellin (English) who made the most impression on me at that time because I had and still have a great love of English Literature. I was pleased to have made contact with him recently after all these years through his old Cambridge college, and I was

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most surprised to learn that he was the author of a few books, one of which he kindly sent to me.

Two locally 'famous' old boys that I recall, one being Mr Rodney Chambers, the local councillor and the other being Mr Anthony Smith, one time Financial Director at Gillingham Football Club. No doubt others have gone on to great things. They were a good crowd to be with from forms 1A through to 4A, a mixed assortment but a happy crew. Halcyon Days!

Yours sincerely  
Michael Croucher  
29 Lubbock Walk  
Rainham

## CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Rainham School for Girls will be holding their Christmas Bazaar in the main school hall on Tuesday 5th December at 6.00pm. Christmas goods, crafts, games.

For information, contact Mrs L. Carroll, 01634 362746.

## DISTRIBUTION

Help is still needed in some parts of Wigmore, Parkwood and Hempstead to deliver Action Forum each month. Highly recommended as good exercise in the fresh air, we would welcome your assistance during the first week of each month. (Except the combined January/February edition which comes out on January 20th.) If you have a couple of hours to spare please contact Hamish Mackay Miller on 231307 or at the Rainham Bookshop 371591.

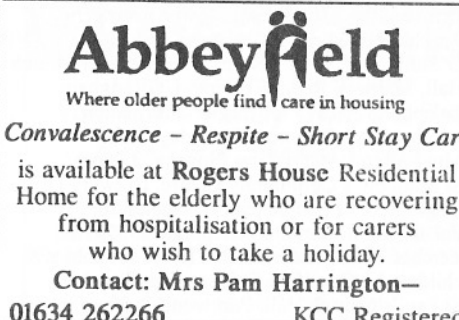


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# Diary 2000

Keeper: Mrs Christine Smith  
275 Wigmore Road  
Wigmore  
Tel: 233098

No charge is made for Diary entries  
Diary Copy Date: 5th January 2001

- December 1st – Wakeley Junior School  
CHRISTMAS FAYRE 3.00 to 5.00pm.  
Admission 30p. All welcome.
- December 2nd – St Peter's Bredhurst CHRISTMAS FAYRE. Village Hall, Hurstwood Road. Charity Shop on site also open from 1.30pm.
- December 2nd – Medway & District Group of HF Holidays. Meet 10.15am West Malling Long Stay car park opposite The Bull PH. Walk to East Malling via King's Hill. Packed lunch. PH available. Approx 5 miles.
- December 3rd – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Walk followed by Christmas Lunch.
- December 4th – Medway Spinners, Dyers & Weavers Association. Christmas Party – Contribution Supper, Lucky Dip, Entertainment by Mrs Lee Ault – Victorian Dress. 7.30 to 9.30pm. Urchins Playgroup Buildings in Marlborough Road, Gillingham.
- December 5th – Floral Art Group. 7.30pm United Reformed Church, Gillingham. Telephone 234734 for details.
- December 5th – Rainham School for Girls CHRISTMAS BAZAAR. Main School Hall, 6pm. For more details ring 362746.
- December 5th – Medway Scrabble Club. 2.00 to 4.30pm, Riverside Indoors Bowls Complex, Chatham.
- December 6th – Rochester & West Kent Art Society workshop. 7.30 to 9.30pm at the Brook, The Old Town Hall, Chatham.
- December 6th – Friendship Circle. Parkwood Christian Fellowship. 2.15pm. Contact 365758.
- December 6th – Gillingham Horticultural Society Christmas Dance. Telephone 234734 for details.
- December 7th – Gillingham Flower Arrangers. Teaching Evening – 'Christmas Door Ring' by Viv O'Sullivan. 7.30 to 9.30pm. The Garrison Church Hall, Maxwell Road, Brompton, Gillingham. Telephone 851371 for further information.
- December 7th – Wigmore Thursday Club. Mrs Prescott – Christmas Flowers. 2.00pm St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore. For people over the age of 50. For further information telephone 235507.
- December 7th – Kindermusik Classes for babies & children by Qualified Colourstrings Teacher, St Paul's Church Hall, Parkwood. 1.00pm to 5.30pm. Babies-18 months, 18 months-3 years,

- 3-4½ years, 4½-5½ years and 5½-7 years.  
Ring 07977 432504 for further information.
- December 7th – Wigmore MADS present 'A RAINBOW TO CHRISTMAS', a light hearted concert at St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore, at 8.00pm. Tickets £3.50, £3.00 concs. (Coffee and mince pie included) available from Sue on Medway 370639.
- December 7th-16th – Medway Little Theatre present 'THE RAILWAY CHILDREN'. Box Office 400322.
- December 8th – St Margaret's Church 'First Steps' Parent, Baby and Toddler Group. 1.30 to 3.00pm in St Margaret's Church Hall, Orchard Street. Further details telephone Mrs Edwards 01634 371134 or Mrs Hartland 01634 372051.
- December 9th – The National Childbirth Trust. Children's Christmas Party at St William's Church Hall, Walderslade Village, at 2.30pm to 5.00pm. Watch the Nativity Pantomime 'A Lad In A Manger', enjoy a teaparty and meet Father Christmas. To ensure that all children receive presents and tea, it is essential to book tickets in advance (£5 before 25th Nov, £5.50 thereafter). Children under 8 only please. Under 1s FOC. 01634 843059.
- December 9th – Upchurch Choral Group presents Concert of Christmas Music. Upchurch Parish Church, 7.30pm. Tickets £2.50, under 12s free. Telephone 361295.
- December 9th & 10th – COUNTRYSIDE EVENT. Christmas Fair, 11am to 3pm, Riverside Country Park. All welcome.
- December 9th – Medway & District Group of HF Holidays. Meet 10.15am, Snodland Station. Packed lunch PH Pilgrim's Rest available. Approx. 6.5 miles.
- December 12th – Gillingham Fuchsia & Pelargonium Society. CHRISTMAS PARTY.
- December 12th – Medway Antique and Collectors Club ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER. Gordon Hotel, High Street, Rochester.
- December 12th – Rainham Evening Machine Knitting Club. PARTY. Red Cross House, Orchard Street.



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- December 12th – Rainham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild. Christmas Party. St Margaret's Hall. Ring 388701 for details.
- December 13th – Medway Camcorder Club. Composition, framing etc. 7.30pm. Medway Motor Yacht Club. MCC Film of the Year Competition. Ring 305490 for details.
- December 13th – Bredhurst WI Birthday Party. Mrs Dorothy Gray Hoping for a Few Laughs. 7.30pm in the Village Hall.
- December 13th – Rainham Floral Club (Kent) Christmas Party. St Margaret's Hall, Orchard Street.
- December 13th – Medway Towns Cactus & Succulent Society. Special Christmas evening of hundreds of plants shown on screens by Rob Stevenson. Mince pies, cakes and drinks provided. 7.30pm Salvation Army Hall, Strood. For details telephone 374798. New members welcome.
- December 14th – Wigmore Thursday Club. Carols and Readings (see 7th Dec).
- December 15th – Gillingham Recorded Music Society Christmas Social. 7.15pm, Gillingham Adult Education Centre.
- December 15th – St Margaret's Church 'First Steps' Parent, Baby and Toddler Group (see 8th Dec).
- December 16th – Tea Dance with Music Hall Entertainment to mark the closure of the Old Church Hall, Orchard Street. 7.00 to 10.00pm. Tickets £2.50 from Ann Gray 372680.
- December 16th – Rainham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild. Social Studies 'Inns of Gillingham'. Ring 388701 for details.
- December 18th – Rainham Evening WI. Colour Red Party 7.30pm, Platters Farm Lodge, Highfield Road, Rainham.
- December 18th – Birdwatching Cruise. Tickets £16.50 payable in advance. Ring 378987.
- December 19th – Medway Scrabble Club (see 5th Dec).
- December 20th – Bredhurst Garden Club. Christmas Dinner. Members only. 8.00pm in the Village Hall.
- December 20th – Hempstead WI. PARTY TIME. 7.45pm in the Village Hall.
- December 20th – Wigmore Afternoon Townswomen's Guild. CHRISTMAS PARTY. 2.00pm in the Howard Hall, Woodside, Wigmore.
- December 21st – Winter Tales, 7.30pm in The Prince of Guinea, Medway Road, Gillingham. £3 Adults only.
- December 21st – Wigmore Thursday Club. Informal (see 7th Dec).
- December 22nd – Nature Awareness Day. 10.30am, Capstone Farm Country Park. £1.00 per child. Ring 812196 for details.
- December 27th – Medway Camcorder Club 'Use of Video Mixer' (see 13th Dec).
- December 30th – Festive Guided Walk. 2pm start, Capstone Farm Country Park. Book in advance 812196.

## DIARY 2001

- January 4th – Birdwatching Cruise (see 18th Dec).
- January 6th – JUMBLE SALE, St Matthew's Church Community Centre, 11.00am.  
Jumble may be delivered 7.30 to 9pm 5th Jan and 9am to 10.30am 6th Jan. Admission 50p.
- January 9th – Rainham Evening Machine Knitting Club. AGM. 8.00pm to 10.00pm at the Red Cross House, Orchard Street, Rainham. For details telephone 862673. Friendly club welcomes new members.
- January 9th – Rainham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild. 2pm. 'Kentish Villages'. Ring 388701 for details.
- January 10th – Winter Walk around Motney Hill. 11am to 4pm. Book in advance 378987.
- January 16th – Rainham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild. Social Studies 'Inns of Gillingham'. Ring 388701 for details.
- January 17th – Bredhurst Garden Club. Maisie Holmes Talk 'Adventures into the Unknown'. 8.00pm, Village Hall, Bredhurst. HYACINTH SHOW.
- January 19th – Gillingham Recorded Music Society. 7.15pm Adult Education Centre, Gillingham. 'Well, I'm blown'. Ring 235612 for details.
- January 20th – Medway & Maidstone VSO Group. Barn Dance, Hillyfield School, Gillingham. 7.30pm. Live music by the Rakes of Rochester. Tickets £7.00 (including hot supper). For more details telephone 376608.
- January 22nd – Medway Spinners, Dyers & Weavers Association. Show and Talk. 7.30pm to 9.30pm at the Urchins Playgroup Building, Marlborough Road, Gillingham. For further information telephone 01634 372207.
- January 23rd – Rainham Evening Machine Knitting Club (see 9th Jan).
- January 24th – Wigmore Afternoon Townswomen's Guild. DIY. Competition: Prettiest Table Mat. 2.00 to 4.00pm. Howard Hall, Woodside, Wigmore.
- January 24th – Winter Birds Study Day, 10am to 3pm at Riverside Country Park. £18.50 per person. Ring 845359 to enrol.

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## Correspondence cont'd.

### AFTER EIGHT CLUB

Dear Editor,

You have kindly published for our singles club in the past and two years on we have a well established club.

Don't be lonely in the long winter evenings, come and join in the fun. We are a friendly group of over 40s enjoying club nights, quizzes, parties, bowling, meals, theatre, dog racing and much more.

Interested in making new friends? Contact:

Sandra 01634 301362

Pat 01634 232803

### ROTARY CLUB OF GILLINGHAM

The Rotary Club of Gillingham would like to announce the routes of our Christmas Float for December 2000. Santa's sleigh with Santa on board is taken around each route between 6.00 and 8.15 in the evening collecting money for charity. As members give their time freely, and cover all expenses themselves, we are pleased to confirm that 100% of the money donated goes to local and international charities.

Rainham routes are as follows:

#### Saturday 16th December

The float will be in Rainham Precinct between 9am and 1.00pm.

#### Wednesday 20th December

Ellison Way, Macklands Way, Cobdown Grove, Station Road, William Street, Taswell Road, Wakeley Road, Ten Acre Way, Burstock Way and Shorefields.

#### Thursday 21st December

Tufton Road, Suffolk Avenue, Northumberland Road, Berengrave Lane, Chalky Bank Road, Wooldleys Road, Broomcroft Road, Bushmeadow Road, Signals Close, Childscroft Road and Parkfield Road.

#### Friday 22nd December

Bettescombe Road, Taverners Road, Elmstone Road, Lonsdale Drive, Arthur Road, Herberts Road, Broadview Avenue.

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### Gillingham Routes

Monday 11th Sunnymede Ave to Sturdy Ave  
Tuesday 12th Trafalgar St to the Municipal B'ding  
Thursday 14th Darland Ave to Zetland Ave  
(inc Yeoman Drive)

Friday 15th St Johns Road to Vicarage Road  
Monday 18th South Ave to Hawkhurst Road  
Saturday 23rd In Gillingham High Street between  
9.00am and 1.00pm

Sunday 24th (5.00 to 7.15pm)  
Stuart Road to Sturdy Ave

### MEDWAY LITTLE THEATRE

From the 7th to 16th December Medway Little Theatre present THE RAILWAY CHILDREN adapted by Dave Simpson from the novel by Edith Nesbit.

Our Christmas production this year is the classic tale of children grappling with their new surroundings in and around a country railway station at the turn of the century, in the traumatic circumstances of their father's imprisonment on a false charge of espionage.

Box Office 01634 400322.

### PANTOMIMES

CENTRAL THEATRE, Chatham.

ALADDIN. 14th December to 7th January.

Box Office 01634 403868.

WOODVILLE HALL THEATRE, Gravesend.

PETER PAN. 21st December to 6th January.

Box Office 01474 337459/60.

HAZLITT THEATRE, Maidstone.

CINDERELLA. 1st December to 7th January.

Box Office 01622 758611.

ORCHARD THEATRE, Dartford. DICK

WHITTINGTON. 8th December to 14th January.

Box Office 01322 220000.

MARLOWE THEATRE, Canterbury.

CINDERELLA. 7th December to 20th January.

Box Office 01227 787787.

The Rainham Amateur Theatrical Society.

SLEEPING BEAUTY. 11th, 12th, 13th, 18th, 19th,  
20th, 25th, 26th, 27th January. Box Office 360506.

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# Nature Notes

## NATURE NOTES FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

Nature Notes in this edition of Action Forum have a Dickensian flavour. November's Notes come from Higham Marsh and December's from Rochester.

I parked my car in Church Street, Higham, close to the graveyard of St Mary's Church. The church lies on the edge of Higham Marsh alongside a farm built among the remains of a Benedictine nunnery. It is likely that Charles Dickens had in mind the isolated church of St Mary when he wrote the scene from 'Great Expectations' in which the escaped convict Magwitch appeared from behind a gravestone and grabbed young Pip.

Dickens described the place where Pip lived as the marsh country which was intersected by dykes and lined with alder trees and pollarded willows. Dickens noted that scattered cattle, mounds and gates broke the flatness of the marshes.

It was with this picture in my mind that I set off northwards, on a cold November day, towards Cliffe Fort and the Thames. I passed Cliffe Pools which are flooded clay workings. On the water I could see mute swans, great crested grebes, tufted ducks and coots. At Cliffe Fort, overlooking the Thames, I had a good view of Coalhouse Fort on the Essex Bank at East Tilbury. I walked along the sea wall in the direction of Gravesend. In the saltings beyond the wall were flocks of lapwing, pintail duck and brent geese. On the mud of the estuary I could see curlew, redshank, oyster catcher and shelduck.

I returned to St Mary's Church along the top of a medieval causeway which crosses Higham Marsh. I disturbed a couple of herons searching for fish or other prey in the dykes. Feeding among the cattle on the grazing marsh was a flock of small brown birds which I guessed were either skylarks or meadow pipits. Higham Marsh is still much the same as Dickens described it, except that, as a result of drier conditions, alder trees no longer grow there.

In mid December my wife and I usually go to Rochester Cathedral for the Christmas Concert given by the Rochester Choral Society. Last year we left the

cathedral by the West door at about 9pm and heard a robin singing as we walked towards Chertsey's Gate (Jasper's Gate in Dickens' imagination). We stopped to listen, as did a number of concert-goers, but the robin itself remained invisible in the semi-darkness of the cathedral garden.

Both male and female robins have red breasts and both sexes hold their own territories in Winter. Females also therefore sing in Winter in order to warn off other robins. In Spring, however, boundaries change and the male's song becomes louder and more robust. The robin is popular, familiar and very confiding in human beings. It is not therefore surprising that the bird which most commonly appears on our Christmas cards is the robin.

A year ago, the carols of Rochester Choral Society, the song of the cathedral robin and the Christmas lights strung across the High Street made for a magical December evening. I wonder whether we shall get a repeat performance this December.

Joe Ennis

## CHANGES IN ORCHARD STREET

Two of the older buildings in Orchard Street were vacated as furniture stores at the end of July by Lukehursts who have acquired new facilities at Sittingbourne. Both were erected over one hundred years ago and were very important to residents during the intervening period. The rather dilapidated eyesore opposite Thames Avenue was purchased by the Kent County Council over thirty years ago to protect the line of the anticipated Rainham Bypass which has now been cancelled and I presume that the buildings will now be demolished and the land used for housing.

The original building on site was solely that small section at the northern corner with a wooden frontage bordering upon the pavement. It was mainly corrugated iron, a material which was so popular and serviceable for many utility buildings before asbestos became available. The more permanent buildings to the rear were added piecemeal post war. I believe Cartiers, the Kent superstore firm used it before Kent Candy and then Lukehursts, all for storage purposes.

It may be difficult to appreciate but for 43 years from February 1911 it was home to the Freemason's

Rochester Lodge and I have been fortunate to be loaned a short history of the lodge written by Wally Russell who died recently. Wally records that meals after the early meetings were taken at The Lion (not Green Lion then) when the cost for 30 was (10 pence) each plus whisky at 25 pence a bottle. Wally mentions that the only heating was by a Tortoise stove (similar to the large black free standing ones we had in the old schools) and on arrival for a rather important meeting the room was full of smoke as birds had built nests in the chimney and their guests had to be occupied elsewhere until the smoke was cleared. Apparently some of the members were Officers from the RE barracks at Brompton and as trams ceased early in the evening many had to walk home. The Lodge eventually moved to the vacant Methodist Church in Ivy Street in May 1954.

The false ceiling of the old building has a golden five pointed Star of David with a smaller star attached so I thought that perhaps the building may have been erected or used for religious purposes before 1911. The 1908 Kelley's directory shows it used by Harvey's School but I have failed to find any recorded use before that date.

The other building now likely to be converted into two flats is the Provident Baptist Chapel which has a plaque outside showing that it was erected in 1884 with an internal wall tablet recording that it was built 'in affectionate remembrance of Thomas Stanley Wakeley, pastor of this Parish who for 28 years preached to this Church and congregation. Died 27th May 1899'. Obviously the members met elsewhere before 1884 and I just wonder if they may have built or worshipped in the corrugated iron building a few yards up the road.

The Wakeley family had a great influence upon the life of the village around the turn of last century, they farmed hundreds of acres employing a large number of residents in various capacities, both male and female, full and part time. The main employment was agriculture, brick and cement making, all highly labour intensive. The various branches of the 'Wakeley' family resided in some of the largest houses. Mr Seymour Wakeley lived at 'The Limes' in Broad Walk (now gone), Mr Richard Mansfield Wakeley and Joseph resided at Moor Street House on

the corner of Seymour Road (then called Wakeley Lane) even though Wakeley Road had been opened up off Station Road.

In fact it is also shown on maps of that period as Moor Street Lane so it has had at least three names but fortunately no residents were seriously inconvenienced. Mr William Wakeley lived at Macklands House now part of the sheltered house complex in Station Road. The member of the family known nationally was Sir Cecil Wakeley KBE CB FRCS, who, having served in the Navy during the first war became a Surgeon Rear Admiral in the second. He held the illustrious position as President of the Royal College of Surgeons from 1949 to 1954, and at one time lived in Maidstone Road, Chatham. I understand that his son William now resides in Hartlip. I hope, with the co-operation of a member of the family, to write more about the history of the Wakeley family in due course.

Rainham was described at the turn of the century as a 'populace village and parish comprising 3,562 acres of land with a population in 1901 of 3,693 (887 children in four schools including 80 in the Lower Rainham National School). Among the religious organisations mentioned is the Original Peculiar People who met at 'Meeting House Chapel' situated about halfway along William Street on the southern side. I wonder if the present residents know of its history, I suppose that some of our present citizens must be descendants of its members!...

Freddie Cooper

## SWIM FOR MACMILLAN

The Medway Committee for Macmillan Cancer Relief held a sponsored swim at the Black Lion Swimming Pool in Gillingham on Saturday 16th September. Entrants of all ages took part and once all the monies are collected, it is expected that close to £900 will have been raised.

The swim will be held again next September and anyone wishing to take part can contact me for sponsorship forms on Medway 376621.

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## Diary 2000 Cont.

January 25th–February 3rd – Medway Little Theatre  
present 'Time and Time Again' by Alan  
Ayckbourn. Box Office 400322.

January 26th – The Medway Geographical Society.  
Pakistan Islamabad to Gilgit Himalayas. Part II:  
Mr P.H. Woodland. 7.30 to 9.00pm. Adult  
Education Centre, Green Street, Gillingham.

January 27th – Medway & District Group of  
HF Holidays. Meet 10.00am White Hart PH,  
Cuxton. Walk to Cobham. Packed lunch or choice  
of PH. 7/8 miles.

February 3rd – Medway & District Group of  
HF Holidays. Meet 10.30am Rainham Station.  
Dry packed lunch. Approx 5 miles.

February 5th – Medway Spinners, Dyers & Weavers  
Association. Bring in completed Friendship  
Cushions. Spinning (see 22nd Jan).

February 7th – Medway & District Group of  
HF Holidays. Meet 10.30am Cliffe Six Bells PH.  
Packed lunch, PH available. 6 miles.

February 13th – Rainham Evening Machine Knitting  
Club. Demo (see 9th Jan).

February 17th – Medway & District Group of  
HF Holidays. Meet 10.15am West Malliang Long  
Stay car park opposite The Bull PH. Packed lunch.  
PH available. 6 miles.

February 19th – Medway Spinners, Dyers & Weavers  
Association. Knitting Techniques and Tunisian  
Crochet. Please bring some shop double knitting  
wool, size 8 needles and if you have it, a Tunisian  
crochet book. 7.30 to 9.00pm.

February 21st – Bredhurst Garden Club.  
C.C. Andrews, MBE. Talk: 'Hellebores'  
(see 17th Jan).

February 21st – Wigmore Afternoon Townswomen's  
Guild. Sweets: Mrs Clift. Competition: Oldest Coin  
(see 24th Jan).

Rainham Chess Club meets every Thursday 7.30 to  
11.00pm, RWCA Oast House, Granary Close (off  
Station Road). Contact Mr Springett on 01634  
856903 for details.

Upchurch Horticultural Society meet the first  
Wednesday of each month (except August) in the  
Village Hall at 8.00pm. Ring 01634 230349 for  
details.

## ORCHARD STREET CHURCH HALL

Friends of St Margaret's Church  
are holding a celebration  
TEA DANCE

to mark the closure of the  
old church hall

on SATURDAY 16th DECEMBER 2000  
7 – 10pm, Church Hall, Orchard Street.

Tickets: £2.50 – includes  
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or phone 235530 or 230430

## MEDWAY CAMCORDER CLUB Unique Successes at Kent Film Festival

Medway Camcorder Club achieved outstanding, if  
not unique, success, at the Kent Film Festival held in  
Canterbury on Saturday 14th October. The Rochester  
club collected no less than seven of the possible  
twelve trophies that were up for grabs!

Although the recipients of course collected the  
awards, it goes without saying that the continuing  
team work and enthusiasm throughout the club was a  
large contributory factor. The wide-ranging choice of  
subject matter was also commented on.

Medway Camcorder Club has been running for  
over ten years and meets fortnightly at Medway  
Motor Yacht Club, Borstal. Further details from  
01634 371570.

## DAMAGED CAR

Please would the white-haired elderly woman driving  
a white car in the Small-Holders' Car Park on  
Thursday 19th October, 10am approx, who smashed  
into the passenger side of my parked dark green  
Fiesta please contact me: **Mrs Crowdes** Tel No.  
**01634 363999** or anyone who saw or who knows  
anything about the accident.

Thank you.

HMF AT HIDSONS

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	Rainham Methodist Church Station Road, Rainham	St Margaret's Parish Church High Street, Rainham	St Thomas' RC Church 61 London Road, Rainham and St Peter's RC Church 108 Beechings Way, Twydall Parish Priest: Fr Douglas Bul Tel: 232972
Dec 17			
Dec 23	Minister: Rev David Faulkner Tel: 852429	Vicar: Rev Canon Alan Vouden Tel: 231538	
Dec 24	4.30pm Carol Service  10.30am Family Service 11.15pm Christmas Eve Communion	6.30pm Carol Service 10.30am Family Communion 1.00pm Crib Service 5.00pm Crib Service 11.00pm Midnight Mass	7.00pm Children's Mass at St Thomas' 9.00pm Carols at St Peter's 9.30pm Vigil Mass at St Peter's 11.30pm Carols at St Thomas' Midnight Christmas Mass at St Thomas'
Dec 25	No service in this church Nearest Methodist Church: 10.00am at Third Ave, Gill'ham	8.00am Holy Communion 10.30am Family Service	9.30am Family Mass at St Thomas' 11.00am Family Mass at St Peter's
Jan 1	No service in this church Noon see under St Margaret's	Noon <u>United</u> Service for the New Year followed by 'Bring & Share' lunch	10.00am New Year's Day Mass at St Thomas' Noon see under St Margaret's

The Churches in Rainham unite in wishing you and your family  
God's Joy and Peace this Christmas and throughout the coming year.

## COUNTRYSIDE EVENTS

### DECEMBER

Christmas Fair  
Saturday 9th December and  
Sunday 10th December  
11am to 3pm

At Riverside Country Park  
Christmas cards and gifts for sale in the visitor centre  
with guided walks and children's activities.  
Further details on 01634 378987.

Birdwatching Cruise  
Monday 18th December  
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Friday 22nd December  
10.30am start

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