

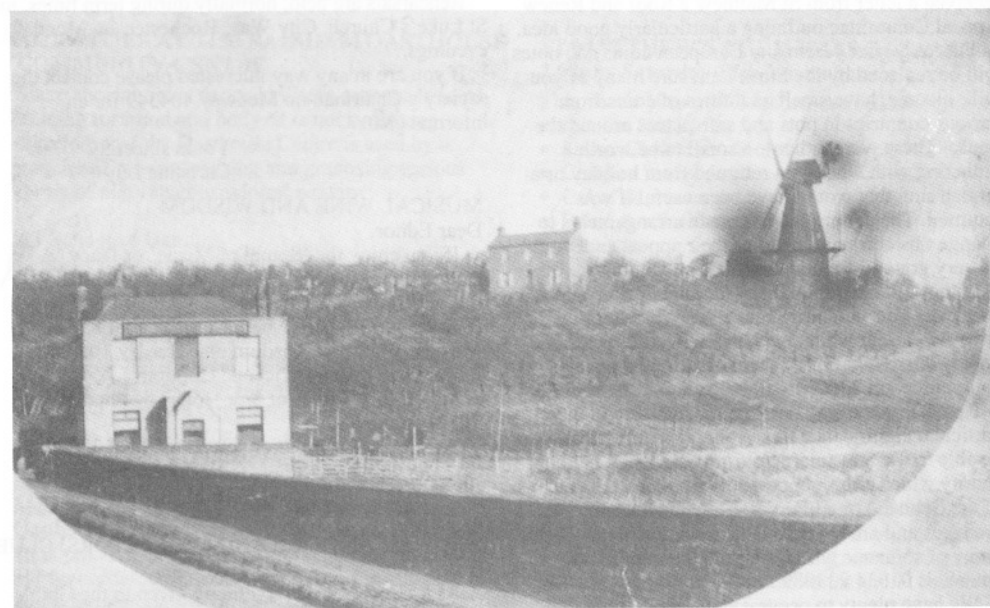
ACTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

NOVEMBER 2001

NUMBER 362

Memories of Rainham



The Lord Stanley Public House in Otterham Quay Lane, see the article by Freddie Cooper on page 8.
The mill at the top of Windmill Hill was destroyed by fire in 1910.

Robert J. Kitney

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Next Issue: DECEMBER 1st
Copy Date: Nov 13th Sm Ads Nov 16th

Editorial: Mrs Barbara Mackay Miller,
5 Meresborough Cotts, Tel: 231307.

Advertising: Hamish Mackay Miller,
5 Meresborough Cotts, Tel: 231307.

Editorial

Last month, after I had completed the editorial, we received a letter from St Matthew's Roof and Renew Appeal Committee outlining a particularly good idea. In February next year many European coins and notes will be replaced by the Euro. I am sure many of you will, like me, have small quantities of coins from various countries in pots and safe places around the house. These were either too small to be worth bothering with when you returned from holiday or a largish sum that would have been useful if you returned. The committee has made arrangements to change this currency in aid of their appeal and would be very grateful for any contributions. I am sure other charities will have thought of the same idea so do check out your favourite cause, but whatever you do have a clear out whilst the coins will still have some value. Peter Hagger, the secretary of the Appeal Committee, on 235056 will be glad to hear from you.

Remembrance Day on November 11th will have particular significance this year and we are pleased to be able to include an article from SSAFA, a national charity which helps support survivors and dependants of the British Armed Forces. They have local branches and are eager to help anyone in need. If you know of someone who is eligible the number to contact is 01634 233989.

We have plenty to occupy your leisure time this month. The Christmas Fayre season is well advanced and many schools and societies are hosting events, these together with concerts and amateur productions could happily fill all the coming Saturdays. One of the more unusual events is an evening by the Kent Recorder Ensemble on December 1st in St Margaret's Church.

Many thanks to everyone who has responded to our pleas for help with the distribution of Action Forum. We are slowly getting there but we still have a few spots where more assistance is needed. Certain areas of Hempstead, Wigmore and Parkwood spring to mind so if you live in these areas or are mobile and would be willing to help for an hour or two each month we would still be very happy to hear from you either on 371591 or 231307.

As yet we are enjoying a particularly good autumn, it could almost be summer except the days are so short. Long may it continue so we can all enjoy the

colourful countryside before we really have to think about winter. Have a very good month and we will see you again in December.

Correspondence

MUSICAL DIRECTOR REQUIRED

Dear Editor,

Chatham Choral Society (formerly The Royal Dockyard Choir) is looking for a new Musical Director to start in January 2002. The society is a mixed choir, performing a variety of works from Choral to Modern Day, at different venues in the Medway Towns.

Rehearsals are held, normally during term times, in St Luke's Church, City Way, Rochester, on Monday evenings.

If you are in any way interested please contact the society's Chairman on Medway 404349 for an informal chat.

Yours sincerely
Christine Lily

MUSICAL WINE AND WISDOM

Dear Editor,

If you enjoy the 'Sound of Music' or fancy 'A Little Night Music', 'Get Down Saturday Night' (Oliver Cheatham 1983) and have 'Fun Fun Fun' (Status Quo 1996) at Miers Court School PTFA Musical Wine and Wisdom on Saturday 10th November, 7.30pm. Tickets: Children £2.50, Adults £3.50. Tables of 8 or 'Join Together' (Who 1972) on the night!

For tickets/information telephone Med 370808.

Yours sincerely
F.M. Holton
Miers Court PTFA

MEDWAY ANTIQUE AND COLLECTORS' CLUB

Dear Editor,

As a result of recent publicity given to the Club's activities we are delighted that we have gained nine new members this year with the prospect of several more guests at recent meetings soon also joining us as members. Our meetings usually last approximately two hours with excellent speakers, a good friendly social atmosphere, an optional raffle for Club funds and an enjoyable non competitive quiz. All meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at The Gordon House Hotel, High Street, Rochester, starting at 8.00pm, although many members often arrive half an hour or so beforehand for a drink and chat.

Nobody needs to be knowledgeable about antiques to enjoy the wide range of topics and interests covered during the Club's year. As well as the enjoyable meetings at least one outing and an annual Weekend Break away are arranged. If there are spare places visitors are most welcome to join in these outings although once having come as a guest to a meeting the strong likelihood is that you will soon want to become a member! Guests are asked to pay

£2.50 per meeting. If you would like any more details please contact our Chairman, Mrs Jean Mattingley, on 240082 or our President, Mr Cyril Baldwin, on 851512 or come along to one of our meetings. The next meeting is on Tuesday November 13th when Mr Ian White will give a talk on 'Corkscrews and Antiques of the drinks trade'. The first meeting of the New Year after our Christmas Dinner in December will be on Tuesday January 8th when Mrs Julia Page will be giving a talk with the intriguing title 'A Miscellany of Scottish Beauty'. Why not make a New Year's Resolution to see what you are missing and join us then - you will be made most welcome.

Yours sincerely
Wynn Evans

ACTIVITIES AT THE RAINHAM OASTHOUSE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Since ancient times dance has been seen as an ideal training for mind and body. It is not surprising therefore that the Oasthouse Centre is used by a number of groups teaching and practising various forms of this valuable cultural activity.

A1 School of Dancing

The A1 School of Dancing gives lessons to children and adults in ballet, tap, and jazz at the Centre on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The pupils work towards gold, silver and bronze medals awarded by the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing. The new term starts on 13th November.

To find out more ring Pearl Dale on 01795 478864.

Dreamcatchers Linedance Club

The Dreamcatchers Linedance Club is run by Jim McShane and Tracey Mason. It meets at the Oasthouse on Thursday nights between 8.00pm and 10.00pm. The latest dances are taught and also all the old favourites. Admission is £2.50 for adults and £2.00 for children. Beginners and children are welcome.

Members of Dreamcatchers have entered competitions. In the Universal cup and other competitions Tracey Mason has won two gold medals, and other members, Eve and Catherine

Weller and Sarah-Jane Miller, have won gold and silver medals. The club even provided a team of children to compete in the World competition against other countries. But everyone is welcome to come, whether to dance seriously or just to have fun.

WINE & WISDOM

Wine & Wisdom in aid of 'Raise the Roof' Fund at St Margaret's Church. To be held in the Orchard Room of St Margaret's Millennium Centre on Saturday 10th November, 7.30pm. 8 to a table. £5 including ploughman's supper and wine. Tickets from Alan (235751) or Ann (372680). Quiz Master Derek Randall, MBE.

ST MATTHEW'S CHRISTMAS BAZAAR 2001 2.00pm, Saturday 17th November

This year's bazaar will feature the following attractions and stalls:

- Father Christmas' Grotto
- Children's toys & gifts
- Cakes & preserves
- Dried & silk flowers
- Tombola
- Children's games
- Prize Raffle
- Refreshments

Bazaar entrance fee: 25p (adults)

Entrance to see Father Christmas £2 (includes children's gift)

All proceeds to St Matthew's Roof & Renew Appeal.

BROWNIES NEED HELP

Are there any Brownie Guiders, or aspiring Brownie Guiders reading this? The Guider in charge of the 8th Rainham Pack is shortly moving out of the area, leaving the group without a leader and in danger of closing.

The girls meet on Tuesday evening 6.30 to 8.00pm at St Margaret's Infants School, Orchard Street, Rainham. For further details please ring either Lesley on 234738 or Eve on 233856. We look forward to hearing from you.

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Diary 2001

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

No charge is made for Diary entries
Diary Copy Date: 13th November 2001

- November 5th – Wigmore WRVS Darby & Joan Club meet 2.00 to 4.00pm, Howard Hall, Woodside, Wigmore. We mostly play bingo, have a raffle, tea and biscuits. People over the age of 50 are welcome and transport can sometimes be arranged. Ring 362662 for details.
- November 5th – Medway Spinners, Dyers & Weavers Association. Spinning. 7.30 to 9.30pm at the Annexe (Urchins Playgroup) building in Marlborough Road, Gillingham.
- November 5th to 10th – RSPB Christmas Stall. Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre. Ring 230153 for details.
- November 6th – Medway Scrabble Club. 2.00 to 4.00pm. Riverside Indoor Bowls Complex, Chatham.
- November 6th – Gillingham Horticultural Society. Floral Art Group. 'CHRISTMAS WREATH' fresh and/or dried material. 7.30pm, United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham. For further information telephone 01634 234734.
- November 7th – Friendship Circle. Parkwood Christian Fellowship. 2.15pm. Contact number 01634 365758.
- November 7th – The Staff and Children of Wakeley Junior School invite you to an OPEN MORNING at the school, 9.30am to 11.30am. Come and meet the teachers and children. Look around the school's Visually Impaired Unit and IT Suite and see how well everyone is coping after the recent fire. Refreshments available. Everyone welcome.
- November 8th – Colourstrings Kindermusik (up to 18 months) 12.45-1.20pm. (Children 18 months-3 years) 1.30-2.10pm, 3.10-3.50pm. Children (3-4 years) 2.20-3.00pm. School age children (4-6 years) 4.00-4.40pm. St Paul's Church Hall,

- Parkwood. For information telephone 01435 872086.
- November 8th – Wigmore Thursday Club. Recycling & Future in Medway by Brian Barker. 2.00pm, St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore. For people over the age of 50. For further information telephone 235507.
- November 8th, 9th, 10th & 15th, 16th, 17th – RaTS present 'Rough Justice' by Terence Frisby. 8.00pm. Tickets £4.80 from 360506 (weekdays 9am-8pm).
- November 9th – Rainham Oasthouse Community Centre, Granary Close, 'Guy Fawkes' Meal & Quiz, 8.00 to 11.00pm. Ring Lynn Cas 370327 for details.
- November 9th – Countryside Event, Birdwatching Cruise, £17 payable in advance, sorry no under 14s, book on 378987.
- November 9th – Gillingham and Rainham Local History Society. Roses, Castles & Canals (illustrated). Mrs Daphne Knight. 7.15pm, Adult Education Centre, Green Street, Gillingham.
- November 9th – Mid-Kent Astronomical Society. Guest Speaker Neil Bone with a talk on 'Meteors'. 8.00pm, Riverside Country Park, Lower Rainham Road, Nr Gillingham. All welcome. Contact number 01634 308035 evenings and Wednesday mornings only.
- November 9th – Musical Playtime. 8 months to 3 years. £2.50 session. 1 15pm, Hempstead Village Hall. For further information telephone 01622 630423.
- November 10th – QUIZ NIGHT at Bredhurst Village Hall. All proceeds to Cancer Research. 7.30pm. Tables of 8. Tickets £5, Sausage and Chip Supper. Bring own drink. Contact Alison Jupp on 01634 234490 to book.
- November 10th – Boot Fair in aid of 'Raise the Roof' Fund, Millennium Centre, 10.0am to 12 noon. Tables £6, ring Ann on 372680 to book. Admission 25p.
- November 10th – Wine & Wisdom in aid of 'Raise the Roof' Fund. 7.30pm, Millennium Centre, Rainham. £5 a head including supper, 8 to a table, tickets from Alan 235751 or Ann 372680.

- November 10th – Musical Wine and Wisdom. Miers Court PTFA School Hall. 7.30pm. Tickets: Adults £3.50 Children £2.50. For information/tickets telephone 370808.
- November 10th & 11th – Model World Exhibition. Black Lion Leisure Centre, 10.00am to 5.00pm. Admission Adults £3.50 Children & Cons £2.00.
- November 11th – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.00pm, Waitrose car park, Allington. 5 miles. No dogs. Ring 01732 841433 for details.
- November 11th – Ramblers Association. Start 10.30am. 5 miles. Meet and park at Walter Burke Avenue, in Wouldham.
- November 12th – Wigmore WRVS Darby & Joan Club (see 5th Nov).
- November 12th – Medway Organ Club. Artist Jim Layzell. 7.30pm, Parkwood Community Centre. Admission £3.00. Contact telephone number 01474 812466.
- November 13th – Gillingham and District Fuchsia & Pelargonium Society. A change from Fuchsias & Pelargoniums with a talk on 'My World of Roses' given by Bill Bosson. 7.30pm, The Rainham School for Girls, Derwent Way, Rainham.
- November 13th – Rainham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild. Auctioneer, Going Going Gone – Mr Coe. 2.00pm at St Margaret's Millennium Centre, Gatekeeper Chase, Rainham.
- November 13th – Medway Antique and Collectors Club. Corkscrews and Antiques of the drinks trade. Mr Ian White. 7.30 for 8.00pm, Gordon Hotel, High Street, Rochester. For further information telephone 366586, 851512 or 852905.
- November 13th – Rainham Evening Machine Knitting Club. 8.00 to 10.00pm. The Red Cross (Gillingham Centre), 31 Balmoral Road, Gillingham. Ring 862673 for details.
- November 14th – Bredhurst WI. Mr Robert Canis. A Nature Photographer's Year. Competition: An Item in Pearl. 7.30pm in the Village Hall.
- November 14th – Rainham Flower Club (Kent). Demonstration: Linda Shackleton 'Christmas Magic', 7.30 to 9.30pm in Upchurch Village Hall.
- November 15th – Rainham WI Members Meeting. 1.45pm, Methodist Church Hall, Corner of Wakeley/Station Road, Rainham.

- November 15th – Colourstrings Kindermusik (see 8th November).
- November 15th – Wigmore Thursday Club. Bee-keeping by Mr Clare (see 8th November).
- November 15th – Countryside Event – Riverside Bird Walk, 10.00am to 12 noon, Riverside Country Park. Ring 378987.
- November 16th – Gillingham Recorded Music Society. The Merry Widow – explained Tony Brace (Orpington BMS). 7.15 to 9.15pm, St Augustine's Church Room (top of Rock Avenue), Gillingham. Ring 852905 for details.
- November 16th – Musical Playtime (see 9th Nov).
- November 16th – Wigmore Afternoon Townswomen's Guild will be having a BAZAAR in the Howard Hall, Woodside, Wigmore. Tables for cakes, bric-a-brac etc. Entry 50p includes tea and biscuits.
- November 17th – St Matthew's CHRISTMAS BAZAAR. This year it will be within the Church with many of the usual attractions. 2.00pm, Drewery Drive, Wigmore.
- November 17th – AUTUMN FAIR at Longford Court, 11.00am to 1.00pm. (1st right off Miers, Court Road).
- November 17th – Talk 'The Architectural History of St Margaret's Church', 2.30pm in the church, tickets £5 from 389919, 372680 or at the door.
- November 17th – Rainham Oasthouse Community Centre, Granary Close. Quiz Night, 8.00pm. Ring 374558 for details.
- November 17th – City of Rochester Symphony Orchestra concert, Central Theatre, Chatham, 7.30pm. Liszt Piano Concerto, tickets from 715148.
- November 18th – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 10.30am Crown Point Inn, Ightham. 5 miles. Dogs on leads.
- November 18th – Ramblers Association. Start 10.00am. 7 miles. Meet at Filston Lane car park in Shoreham. Pub stop at end.
- November 18th – Upchurch Choral Group present 'Music for St Cecilia's Day' at Upchurch Parish Church. 7.00pm. Admission £2.50.
- November 18th – Countryside Event, Woodland Walk, Capstone Country Park. Ring 812196

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SSAFA FORCES HELP KENT BRANCH

On Remembrance Day the thoughts of the nation will be with those who gave their lives for the country. But we must also remember many who survive and their families who may now be in dire need. The Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association - Forces Help (SSAFA Forces Help) wants to reach them.

This national charity was founded in 1885 to support dependants of the British Army in Egypt and the Sudan. Today, working with the Royal British Legion and all the other service charities, it helps serving and ex-Service men, women and their families in need. It takes particular care of the elderly. Anyone who has served in the regular forces for just one paid day is eligible. Members of the Reserve Forces and their dependants are also eligible if they completed three years' satisfactory service. SSAFA Forces Help can also help many war veterans of the Merchant Navy.

The charity provides advice, practical help and friendship. It assists with financial grants those who are in distress and whose needs are not met by the State. These grants may be one-offs towards, for instance, replacing an irreparable fridge or cooker. Or in some cases a weekly allowance might be arranged to supplement low income. Every year assistance is provided to more than 2,000 people in Kent, amounting to over £300,000.

Within Kent, SSAFA Forces Help is organised in 19 Divisions, conforming mostly to local government boundaries, and covering the whole of the county outside the line of the M25 (inside is covered by Greater London), so help is not far away if you need it, and qualify for it. At the heart of SSAFA is the caseworker, who works in a one-to-one relationship with his or her client, aided where necessary, by specialists (in debt management, for example). The caseworker will have been fully trained, and will have a good knowledge of the Social Services.

If you or anyone you know is eligible for help and is in need please contact one of the following numbers. Absolute confidentiality will be maintained.

County Secretary: 01580 755725

Medway (Chatham, Gillingham & Rochester):
01634 233989

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ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF ST MARGARET'S CHURCH

Sponsored by the Rainham Historical Society a talk on the architectural history of St Margaret's Church, followed by a cream tea, will be given on Saturday 17th November 2001 at 2.30pm, in St Margaret's Church. Tickets £5 from Katherine 389919 or Ann 372680, or pay on the door.

An illustrated copy of the talk will be on sale for £2.25.

All profits to 'The Friends of St Margaret's Church' in aid of the Roof Fund.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

St Peter's Church, Bredhurst, Christmas Fayre will be held at 2.00pm on 1st December 2001, at Bredhurst Village Hall.

As a small village community church, we are always so very grateful to anyone who takes the time to support us - and in so doing, helps to preserve our lovely church for future generations.

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Hartlip Parish Church is holding a Christmas Bazaar in the Village Hall on Saturday 1st December at 2.00pm. The bazaar will be opened by David Fosdike (Meridian Tonight presenter). Everyone is very welcome, please do come and support our church.

Activities in November 2001 at the Rainham Oasthouse Community Centre, Granary Close (adjacent to Rainham Station)

Every Monday

Rainham Bridge Club 7.30 to 11.00pm.
Contact Audrey Clarke, 01634 230370

Every Tuesday

Badminton 7.00 to 11.00pm.
Contact Laraine, 01634 373833

Every Wednesday

Whist Club 7.30 to 11.00pm.
Contact Mrs K. Naylor.

Every Thursday

Rainham Chess Club 7.30 to 11.00pm.
Contact Tom Stonehouse, 01634 231374

Weightwatchers 5.30 to 8.00pm

Dreamcatchers Line Dancing 8.00 to 11.00pm,
01634 300026

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Nature Notes

This month's Nature Notes are based on a short bicycle ride of some of the leafy roads of Wigmore and Hempstead.

I started and ended my ride at the junction of Woodside, Hoath Lane and Wigmore Road which is the historical centre of Wigmore. In the first half of the 19th century Wigmore was almost entirely covered in woods. The area was owned by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests which was the forerunner of the Forestry Commission. A cluster of buildings named on early maps as Wigmore occupied land on which the Spyglass and Kettle now stands. By the 1860s much of Wigmore was covered by small orchards and market gardens.

I cycled a short distance along Hoath Lane and turned left down Hospital Hill into Hempstead Road. From there I had a good view of Darland Banks in its autumnal colours. The first leaves of the downland trees or shrubs to change colour are those of the dogwood. By early autumn they had turned a rich claret. The leaves of the whitebeam (the undersides of which are white and felty in Summer) had turned yellow and would eventually become brown. The leaves of the field maple were a golden yellow and would later become a vivid orange brown.

I turned left into Spekes Road which remains an unadopted highway. It forms part of the track which led from the Star Inn on Watling Street to Bredhurst. It is overshadowed for much of its length by tall beech trees and is presumably typical of tracks through Hempstead before its development.

Crossing Hoath Way I joined Wigmore Road and made a diversion into King's Frith Recreation Ground. The then Gillingham Borough Council planted many ornamental trees round the edges of the ground including rowan or mountain ash. At the time of my visit the latter trees were covered in bright red berries which are the food for resident blackbirds, song thrushes and mistle thrushes as well as winter migrants such as fieldfares and redwings. Large scale Ordnance Survey maps of the early 1960s show that the area of the recreation ground previously consisted of scattered buildings on small plots.

Just beyond the junction of Wigmore Road and Fairview Avenue I called into Wigmore Park. The same maps as mentioned above show the park to have previously been covered in fruit trees. Alongside the southern boundary of the park are large cherry, oak, sweet chestnut and ash trees, the haunts of wood pigeons, jays and squirrels. There is an impressive four stool sweet chestnut tree at the Bredhurst Road entrance to the park which appears to be a survivor from an old chestnut coppice.

I returned to my starting point. Sight of the trees behind Wigmore Garage reminded me that there used to be a rookery there. Rooks no longer breed in Wigmore (or Hempstead) but other members of the crow family do so. I have noticed jackdaws on the chimney of a cottage in Woodside whilst magpies, carrion crows and jays are fairly common residents among the leafy roads of Wigmore and Hempstead.

Joe Ennis

THE LORD STANLEY

In July a reader asked the editor if anyone knew the correct location of the Lord Stanley, a fair number responded, some were right some wrong. I started a search by visiting Peter Sargent who has recently transferred his Ordnance Survey Map business from Chatham to rooms above the Rainham Bookshop and obtained maps of this area dated back to 1801. I was fortunate enough to have the advice of my neighbour Mrs Ellen Tyler (née Swan) who spent her early life in Caroline Place, a terrace of 16 houses built by Eastwoods for their 'Brickies' on the road alongside the Three Sisters PH.

I learned a lot from my studies which I hope to share with readers later but none of this was as persuasive as the picture of the Lord Stanley which by chance I found on page 12 of the Rainham Red Book. This was apparently taken before 1910 as the Mill at the top of Windmill Hill is also in the picture at the bottom of the hill on a site which, I believe, is now occupied by a bungalow and various commercial undertakings.

The 'pub' eventually became 'Barnes Shop' and a Mrs Beryl Shave wrote to explain that her mother, Mrs Minnie Hopper, now 93, was Mr Barnes' daughter so I was able to ascertain family information

at first hand. I was unable to find out when the 'L.S.' opened as a licensed house but understand that it was named after a Stanley Wakeley. It closed in 1918 when Mr Barnes opened the shop which subsequently served those living in the fairly isolated areas of Otterham, Upchurch, and Lower Halstow, first by horse and cart and later with a van. Mr Barnes died in 1956 but his daughter Ethel carried on the business until VAT was introduced and left the premises in 1980. The building remained empty for a period before, like the Mill at the hilltop, it was destroyed by fire.

Mrs Tyler also told me about Mr Richens, whose shop next to the Three Sisters PH was already established when Mr Barnes arrived in 1918. He supplied most general needs from meat to oil, in fact like most village 'butchers', he had a slaughter house at the top of the garden. We had one within 30 yards of the C of E School at the top of Station Road and our lessons or play were often accompanied by the squeal of pigs.

One has to remember that there was a small general store in most roads for the odd daily purchase, we had no refrigerators or freezers and children were often sent for small quantities 'on the slate' (payable on pay day). I would presume that Otterham residents would have come by bus or bike to Rainham for their main purchases. Regular rounds by cart or van were made by milkmen, bakers, greengrocers, a fishmonger, and coalmen and, when in season, a shrimp and winkle man on a tradesman's cycle clanging a bell before Sunday teatime. For those able to purchase fair quantities a boy would call from the International, Quinells, or Roses on Thursdays for an order book for groceries to be delivered the following day.

Although few lived in the immediate vicinity it is an indication of the number employed in the manufacture and distribution of bricks and cement that there were three 'pubs' in Otterham Quay around the turn of last century. In addition to the Lord Stanley and the Three Sisters there was also the Anchor and Hope which was demolished in 1921 and a Working Men's Club (period of activity unknown but I seem to remember it about 200 yards N.E. of the Three Sisters around the time of the last War).

Incidentally the Three Sisters PH and all that side of Otterham Quay is in Upchurch (Swale), the boundary line runs roughly up the centre of the creek.

I hope to write more about brick and cement making and barge transportation when Otterham was a hive of industry around the early 1900s in a later issue.

Freddie Cooper

KENT RECORDER ENSEMBLE

The Society of Recorder Players is a nationwide organisation for amateur recorders players, the 50 branches having a total membership of 1,600. The Kent Branch was formed in 1986 and, for the past five years under the title The Kent Recorder Ensemble, has given four concerts each winter in churches, residential homes and schools in and around Maidstone. We have also played in Rochester Cathedral and will be returning to Canterbury Cathedral for the third time on 12th May next year. The twenty or so members rehearse weekly in Maidstone under the direction of Karen Barton and have a wide repertoire ranging from Renaissance to Jazz. Most members plays three different sizes of recorder, some four or five, from the tiny soprano to the enormous sub-contra bass. At most concerts we invite a player, or players, of different instruments, or singers, to share the programme with us.

On 1st December we welcome the KCYI String Quartet. The Kent Centre for Young Instrumentalists (KCYI) is Kent Music School's Saturday Centre for musically gifted children aged eight to eighteen. It gives a broad musical training - tuition on two instruments, general musicianship and the opportunity to play in ensembles and orchestras.

We would be delighted to see you at St Margaret's Church on 1st December at 7.30pm; our programme should suit most tastes - Byrd, Holborne, Philips and Tallis (16th and early 17th century English music) plus some interesting and lively contemporary pieces, but nothing avant-garde, we promise! Children are very welcome and there will be an interval with refreshments. For further information on the concert, on The Society of Recorder Players or on joining Kent Branch, please contact Noreen Johnson, Branch Secretary, tel. 01634 364020, e-mail: noreenrecorders@aol.com.

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November 19th — Rainham Evening WI. Letter 'K'
Talk & Slides of Our Choice — Mr Coe. 7.30pm,
Platters Lodge, Highfield Road, Rainham.

November 19th — Medway Spinners, Dyers &
Weavers Association. Megan will tell us about her
Design Course (see 5th November).

November 19th — Wigmore WRVS Darby & Joan
Club (see 5th November).

November 19th — Parkwood Leisure Club. Christmas
Sale, 2.30pm, St Paul's Church, Parkwood, in aid
of Demelza House. Admission free.

November 19th — Countryside Event. Talk: Spirit of
Invicta by Bob Ogley. Tickets £1.50. Ring 378987
to book.

November 20th — Medway Scrabble Club (see 6th
November).

November 20th — Gillingham Horticultural Society.
Floral Art Group prepare for Christmas Show
(see 6th November).

November 21st — Bredhurst Garden Club. Speaker
from the RNIB. Talk: 'Guide Dog Owner'. Gift
Stall provided by the Royal National Institute for
the Blind. 8.00pm in the Village Hall.

November 21st — Wigmore Afternoon
Townswomen's Guild. Local Areas — Mr Coe.
Competition: An Evening Bag. 1.45pm to 4.15pm,
Howard Hall, Woodside, Wigmore.

November 22nd — Colourstrings Kindermusik
(see 8th November).

November 22nd — Wigmore Thursday Club. Barry
Sims, Superintendent of Medway Registry Office
(see 8th November).

November 23rd — The Medway Geographical
Society. Mid Africa. Mr D. Wise, 7.30 to 9.00pm,
Adult Education Centre, Green Street, Gillingham.

November 23rd — Musical Playtime (see 9th Nov).

November 24th — Gillingham Horticultural Society.
Floral Art Group. CHRISTMAS SHOW (Judge
Avril Hill). 2.30 to 4.30pm. Sale Tables, Teas and
Home-made Refreshments, Raffle. Exhibits of high
standard (see 6th November).

November 24th — Darland House Carer Group,
Darland Avenue, Gillingham are holding a Coffee

Morning, 10.30am to 12.30. Refreshments, cakes,
bric-a-brac, raffle with many prizes. The Carer
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by the NHS for the elderly residents with mental
health problems.

November 24th to December 2nd — Countryside
Event, National Tree Week. Ring Colin Holloway
332468 for details.

November 25th — Medway Towns Footpath Group.
Meet 2.00pm, Otford, opposite The Bull. 5½ miles.
Dogs on leads.

November 25th — Ramblers Association. Start
10.00am. 7 miles. Meet at Bearsted Village Green.
Pub stop at end.

November 26th — Wigmore WRVS Darby & Joan
Club (see 5th November).

November 26th — Countryside Event. Talk:
Gardening with Trees, Riverside Country Park,
7.30pm. Tickets £1.50, ring 378987 to book.

November 27th — Rainham Evening Machine
Knitting Club (see 13th November).

November 29th — Rainham & District Dolls House &
Miniaturist Group. 7.30pm, St Thomas of
Canterbury Church Hall, London Road, Rainham.

November 29th — Colourstrings Kindermusik
(see 8th November).

November 29th — Wigmore Thursday Club. Service,
Sales Stall and Clueless Crossword (see 8th Nov).

Continued on page 13

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November 29th — Barnardo's Christmas Evening.
Callaway Room, St Margaret's Millennium Centre,
8.00pm. Tickets £2.00, ring 233405 for details.
November 29th — Tales from the Mariners, 7.30pm,
The Three Mariners, Pom Clayton, admission
£4.00, Conc £2.00.
November 30th — Gillingham Recorded Music
Society. Once a Jolly Swagman — Peter Dawson,
Allan Palmer (see 16th November).
November 30th — Mid-Kent Astronomical Society.
Constellation of the month. Sky reviews with Pete
Parish. Observing if clear, 8.00pm, Riverside
Country Park. Contact number 01634 308035
evenings and Wednesday mornings only.
November 30th — Musical Playtime (see 9th Nov).
November 30th — Rainham Oasthouse Community
Centre, Granary Close. Folk Club 8.00 to 11.00pm.
Ring Lynn Cass 370327 for details.
December 1st — St Peter's Church, Bredhurst
CHRISTMAS FAYE. 2.00pm, Bredhurst Village
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December 1st — Hartlip Parish Church Christmas
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December 1st — Kent Recorder Ensemble,
St Margaret's Church, Rainham, 7.30pm.

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Anyone who would like to have a stall (£6/Table)
please contact Katrina Piddock on 01634 366712.

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Boot Fair in aid of 'Raise the Roof' Fund at
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