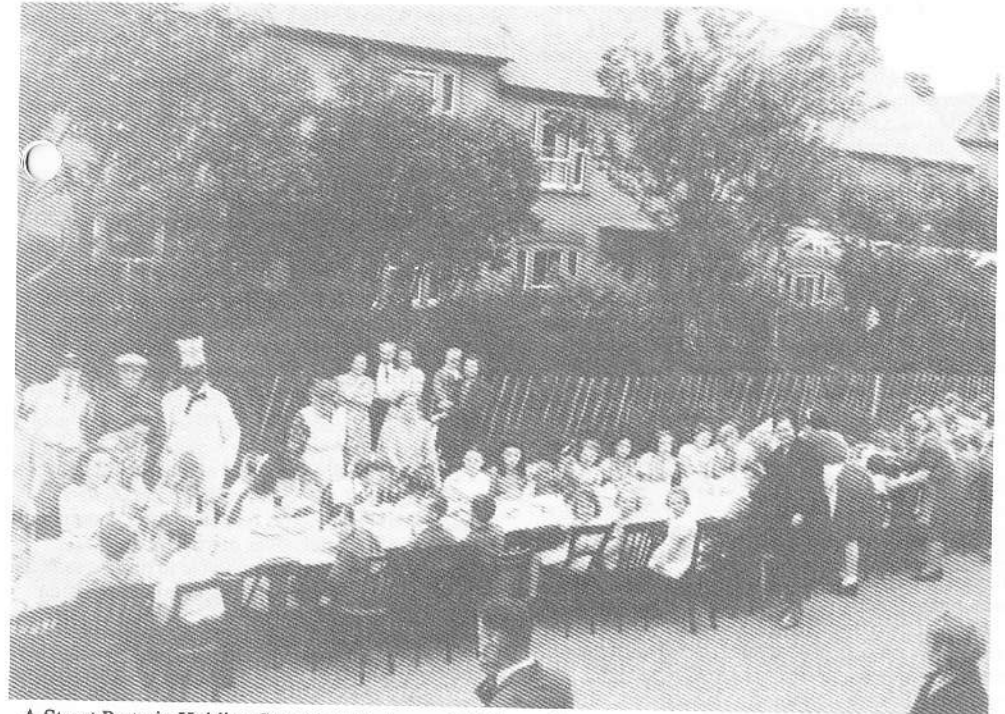


# ACTION FORUM

MARCH 2002  
NUMBER 365

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA ■



A Street Party in Holding Street held in August 1945 to celebrate VJ Day and the end of World War II. Will there be any such events to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Jubilee? See Freddie Cooper's article on page 8.

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Next Issue: April 6th 2002  
Copy Date: Mar 19th Sm Ads Mar 23rd

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

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

## Editorial

It is always sad when long established clubs or traditions cease for whatever reason, even more so when there are still willing members but no one can be found to take responsibility for the organisation. This month we have two examples, the Rainham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild have decided that they will have to close after 53 years as new young blood is not available. However, the popular Guild Choir is to continue but they do need a new accompanist, as do the Chatham Choral Society; if you have any experience either group would be very glad to hear from you, particularly if you can spare a couple of hours a week on a Friday afternoon or Monday evening. Do contact the groups if you can help. Another club who are appealing for organisational assistance is a luncheon club who provide meals at Signal Court, Rainham, every Wednesday. They have plenty of helpers but need someone to take charge. Could that be you? Please ring 360511 if you can help. The old saying 'If you want something done ask a busy person' is still true today but it seems we are becoming increasingly reluctant to take on these tasks. Action Forum readers have a reputation for providing help that is needed, let us hope that these two appeals are equally successful.

Due to the success of a venture started a couple of years ago more volunteers are needed to help the Community Friendship Project. This scheme, initiated by the organisation Hands, trains helpers to befriend and support anyone who feels isolated in the Medway area, the task is not onerous and volunteers are carefully matched to those they visit. In its simplest form this would just require a regular weekly visit to have a chat but it can involve much more if the volunteer wishes.

Once again our Diary is packed with entertainment for you. Amateur Dramatics, Orchestral Concerts, talks and clubs fill most of the evenings, whilst walking groups and craft fairs take care of the daytime. There is plenty to choose from for young or old, so no excuse for not getting out and meeting people. If you do not mind a bit of mud many days recently have been ideal for a brisk walk, so whatever you do even if it is just curling up at home in the warm do enjoy this month and we look forward to April and springtime.

## Correspondence

### REUNION RAINHAM SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Dear Editor,

I am planning a reunion for all girls who joined the first year of Rainham School for Girls in September 1975. The reunion will take place at the school on 9th March 2002 from 1.00pm to 6.00pm. To cover our costs there will be a charge of £1.50 per person. For further information and details please contact me by phone on 01765 474165 or by email: Karen.davies6@talk21.com . I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,  
Mrs Karen Davies  
28 Volante Drive  
Sittingbourne

### WRCA: WIGMORE COMMUNITY AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Dear Editor,

All members of the association are reminded that the AGM will be held on Friday 19th April 2002 commencing at 7.30pm. Due to the increase in membership numbers it has been necessary to find another venue for the AGM which thanks to the kindness of the Headmaster Mr Hammond will now be held in the Fairview Junior School Hall.

The first half of the meeting will be attended by local members of the Kent Police Force, Medway Council Staff (with duties related to local community matters) and representatives of your Ward Councillors. They will be available to discuss matters of local concern. Those wishing to raise discussion items should initially contact any committee member or the Chairman prior to the meeting.

The meeting is of course open to all members of the WRCA, however if you are not a member why not join today by telephoning 361975 or 378769 to join, cost is only £5 per household for a full 5 years.

Yours sincerely,  
R.S. Dunn, Secretary  
to the Association

### REHEARSAL ACCOMPANIST (PIANO) REQUIRED

Dear Editor,

Chatham Choral Society is looking for a new enthusiastic rehearsal accompanist.

Rehearsals are held on Monday evenings from 8pm to 10pm, normally during term times, in St Luke's Church, City Way, Rochester.

If you are interested please contact the society's Chairman on Medway 404349 for an informal conversation.

Yours sincerely,  
Christine Lily

### ACCOMPANIST REQUIRED

Dear Editor,

With reference to the article (see page 7) concerning the closure of the Rainham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild.

May I further add that the popular Guild choir wishes to continue as an independent body. Because of this closure, our choir's pianist wishes to retire.

May I, through the auspices of your excellent magazine, extend an invitation to anyone with accompanying experience, who would like to spend two enjoyable hours with us.

Our repertoire consists of light classical pieces to popular songs from the shows.

Our venue is the Station Road Methodist Church Hall.

We meet on Friday afternoons between 2pm and 4pm. Please contact me on 01634 233946 for further information.

Yours sincerely,  
Mrs G.E. Gillard

### JUNIOR NETBALL

Dear Editor,

The Medway Junior Netball League has recently moved to Rainham School for Girls Netball Centre. Netball is played on Saturday mornings and is open to all children in Primary School (High-5 netball) and all girls from aged 11-18 years (7-a-side netball). We welcome any age group, particularly school years 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. There are qualified coaches available for all ages. Interested? Please contact me for more information. Phone 01634 375069, email: Kathy.moon@tesco.net .

Thank you,  
Kathy Moon

### KNITTING FOR ZAMBIA

Dear Editor,

May I through Action Forum thank all the ladies who so kindly have spent their time knitting squares and jumpers, also soft toys, that will be sent to the Miss Falconer's Orphanage in Zambia. We do appreciate your effort and kindness. Our thanks on behalf of Twydall Evangelical Church (Twydall).

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### St Margaret's Parish Church, Rainham FLAMES OF INSPIRATION

Following the huge success of the art and craft exhibition held at Whitsun last year, we are holding another Exhibition in the Millennium Centre at Whitsun 18th to 19th May 2002.

As last year, the items in the exhibition will be for display only and will not be for sale. We would like to invite you to enter items in the exhibition, it is not just an exhibition of work by church people, but a celebration of the talents of all local people. We did have some entries from people who do not attend St Margaret's last year, but we would be delighted to see more this year.

Forms for entry into the Exhibition will be available in Church on Sundays and from the Church Office Monday-Friday 10.00am-12 noon. Enquiries to Pam Ormiston 01634 365789.

### THE RAINHAM AFTERNOON TOWNSWOMEN'S GUILD

It is with much regret that after 54 years the RATG will be closing in March as we are unable to form a new committee, mainly due to falling membership, age and health reasons.

The Guild has held monthly meetings for 53 years in the old St Margaret's Hall, Orchard Street and in the new Millennium Hall during the past year.

Tribute must be paid to Mrs Irene Jeffery, a founder member, as she has been such an inspiration within the Guild and Federation. Our thanks go to all the many members who have served as officers or on committee.

The past years have provided good companionship, many friends and much enjoyment from speakers on subjects both amusing and edifying. Time spent in group activities – Social Studies, Drama, Choir, Creative Leisure, not forgetting all the wonderful outings, luncheons, Christmas parties, etc. Such happy memories to reflect on.

Our good wishes go to all members past and present and to all the Guilds in Thames and Medway Federation of Townswomen.

Molly Blatchford and Joan Warn

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# Diary 2002

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

No charge is made for Diary entries  
Diary Copy Date: 19th March 2002

- March 2nd – Medway & District Group of HF Holidays. Meet 10.00am Loose Chequers PH. Walk to East Farleigh. Packed lunch. PH available. Approx 7 miles.
- March 2nd – City of Rochester Symphony Orchestra, Concert, Mozart Opera & Concert Arias, 7.30pm Central Theatre, Chatham. Tickets from £7.50 available from 715148 or the Box Office 403868.
- March 2nd – Medway Folk Dance Club – 7.30 to 10.00pm, United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham. Callers Les and Mike, ring 366189 or 388546 for details.
- March 3rd – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 10.00am Larkfield Village Hall off New Hythe Lane. 6 miles. No dogs.
- March 3rd – Ramblers Association Medway Branch. Start 10.00am. 11 miles. Meet at public park in Lenham, rear of Dog & Bear PH. Picnic lunch midway.
- March 4th – Medway Spinners Dyers & Weavers Association. Show and Tell – any craft. 7.30pm to 9.30pm at the Annexe (Urchins Playgroup) building in Marlborough Road, Gillingham.
- March 4th – Wigmore WRVS Darby & Joan Club. Anniversary Tea. 2.00 to 4.00pm in the 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.
- March 5th-9th – Upstage Productions present Boogie Nights The Seventies Musical, 7.45pm, Central Theatre, Chatham, Tickets £8.50-£10.00 from 235820 or Box Office 403868.
- March 6th – Medway & District Group of HF Holidays. Meet 10.30am, Rainham Station. Dry packed lunch. Approx 5 miles.

- March 6th – Ramblers Association Medway Branch. Start 10.00am. 7 miles. Meet and park in public car park/picnic site near Huckling. Bring refreshments. Contact no: 01634 234519.
- March 6th – Coffee Morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Relief, Committee Rooms, First Floor, Municipal Buildings, 10.00am to 12 noon. Everybody welcome – please come.
- March 6th – Wakeley Junior School Open Morning, 9.30 to 11.30am. Everyone welcome, ring 231965 for details.
- March 6th – Rainham Horticultural Society, 7.30pm, Pavilion, Cricket Ground, Berengrave Lane. Ideas for Containers. Mrs T. Osbourne, details from 387176.
- March 7th – Wigmore Thursday Club. Joy Whittington talks about Nell Gwyn. 2.00pm, St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore. For people over the age of 50. For further information telephone 235507.
- March 8th – Gillingham and Rainham Local History Society. German V1 and V2 Rockets during World War Two (with slides). Mr Frank Turner, 7.15pm, Adult Education Centre, Green Street, Gillingham.
- March 8th – Mid-Kent Astronomical Society. Guest speaker: Nik Szymanek, imaging from La Palma. 8.00pm, Bredhurst Village Hall. Contact No: 308035.
- March 9th – 1940s Wartime Dance, 7.30 to 11.00pm, featuring The Donn Barcott Band, Lloyds Sports Club, Featherby Road. Tickets £8.50 from Helen on 373414.
- March 9th – Rainham School for Girls Reunion (those who started in Sept 1975). 1.00 to 6.00pm at the School, £1.50 per person. Ring 01795 474165 for details.
- March 9th – Friends of Wakeley School Music Quiz Night. 7.30pm, £3.50 per person, tables of 8 (adults only) details from 231965.
- March 9th – UCM Jumble Sale, St Thomas of Canterbury Church Hall, London Road, 11.00am. Admission 20p, ring 233293 for details.
- March 10th – Countryside Event, Living Willow Sculptures, 10.30am to 2.00pm, Capstone Court Park. Book in advance, £2.00 from 812196.

- March 10th – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.00pm Hartlip Church. 5-6 miles. Dogs on leads.
- March 10th – Ramblers Association Medway Branch. Start 10.00am. 12 miles. Park and meet at the War Memorial just north of St Margaret's Bay. Contact No. 268422.
- March 11th – Wigmore WRVS Darby & Joan Club. (see 4th March)
- March 11th – Countryside Event. Talk, 7.30pm, Riverside Country Park. Dragonflies and Butterflies by Jeremy Burgess. Tickets £1.50. Book in advance 378987.
- March 12th – Rainham Evening Machine Knitting Club. 8.00 to 10.00pm, The Red Cross (Gillingham Centre), 31 Balmoral Road, Gillingham. For further details telephone 862673.
- March 12th – Rainham Afternoon Townswomen's Guild. Annual General Meeting. 2.00pm. St Margaret's Millennium Centre.
- March 12th – Medway Antiques and Collectors Club. 7.30 for 8.00pm, The St George Hotel, 7-8 New Road Avenue, Chatham. 'Under the Hammer', Mr Leslie Gillham. Ring 365861 for details.
- March 12th – Rainham Minders, 9.30 to 11.30am, Methodist Church Hall, Station Road, Rainham. All Registered Childminders welcome, ring Claire 376270 for details.
- March 12th – Fuchsia & Pelargonium Society, 7.30 to 10.00pm, Rainham School for Girls, Derwent Way, Rainham. A-Z of Fuchsias – Carol Gubler. Ring 853864 for details.
- March 13th – Ramblers Association Medway Branch. Start 10.00am, 11 miles. Meet and park Hollingbourne Rail Station. Contact No. 01634 851187.
- March 13th – Bredhurst Women's Institute. 7.30pm, Bredhurst Village Hall, Abbey Court School Special Needs, Mr Paul Horsman. Details from Gill Smith 372250.
- March 13th – Countryside Event, Riverside bird walk, Riverside Country Park, 10.30 to 12.30pm. Book in advance 378987.
- March 13th – Medway Evacuees Reunion Group, Riverside Indoor Bowling Green, Dock Road, Chatham, 1.00 to 4.00pm. Non-Members Welcome. Ring 814922 for details.

- March 14th – Wigmore Thursday Club. Michael Blee – Gore Farm. (see 7th March)
- March 14th-23rd – Medway Little Theatre present 'Cat's Cradle' by Leslie Sands, 7.30pm. Box Office 01634 400322.
- March 15th – Gillingham Recorded Music Society. Like father, like son – Roger Apps. 7.15 to 9.15pm, St Augustine's Church Room (top of Rock Avenue), Gillingham. Ring 852905 for details.
- March 15th – Wine and Wisdom Evening, 7.30pm, St Matthew's Church, Wigmore. £5.00 per person, in aid of Roof & Renew Appeal, details from 387055.
- March 16th – Darland House Carer Group, Darland Avenue, Gillingham, 10.30am to 12.30pm. Coffee Morning, refreshments, cakes, bric-a-brac, raffle with many prizes.
- March 16th – Victorian Murder/Mystery Evening for Save the Children. Rainham School for Girls, Derwent Way, Rainham. 7.00pm. Tickets £6.50 including supper, ring 375610 or 376873 to book. Victorian costume optional.
- March 16th – Medway & District Group of HF Holidays. Meet 10.15am Wateringbury Station. Walk to East Farleigh. Packed lunch PH Tickled Trout available. Walk 6.5 miles.
- March 16th – Medway Folk Dance Club, caller Jane Dryden. (see 2nd March)
- March 16th – Quiz Night at Oast House Community Centre, 8.00pm. Teams of 6, all welcome. For details ring 374558.
- March 17th – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.00pm, Bush Road, Cuxton. 6 miles. Dogs on leads.
- March 17th – Ramblers Association Medway Branch. Start 10.00am. 6 miles. Park in layby along by Crown Point Inn on the A25 just west of Ightham. Contact No. 01622 738183.
- March 18th – Medway Spinners Dyers & Weavers Association. Spinning. (see 4th March)
- March 18th – Wigmore WRVS Darby & Joan Club. (see 4th March)
- March 18th – Rainham Evening WI. Letter 'O'. Wartime Memories, Mrs Goodhew & Mrs Gillam Hill. 7.30pm, Platters Lodge, Highfield Road, Rainham.


Continued on page 11

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## HELP NEEDED

Is there a volunteer to take charge of a Luncheon Club every Wednesday from 8.30am to 2.00pm? There are plenty of helpers but need a person to attend each week to organise.

Telephone 01634 360511.

The Wednesday Luncheon Club is held at Signal Court, Station Road, Rainham.

## RAINHAM CELEBRATES QUEEN'S GOLDEN JUBILEE

Rainham leads the way in Medway's Jubilee celebrations!

Plans are underway for a Community Project in Rainham to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee. This Community Project is a joint venture with Rainham Theatrical Society and St Margaret's Church and is being organised by Dean Caston (RaTS Chairman), Revd Alan Vousden (Vicar of Rainham) and Revd Andrew Harding.

The event is to be held on Sunday 2nd June and will include a Pageant, National Service of Thanksgiving and a Variety Concert in St Margaret's Church.

Dean Caston said 'This celebration will have something for all ages and promises to be a really exciting day.

If you would like more information please contact Dean Caston on 01634 374183.

## AFRICAN ART EVENING

Would you like to buy an unusual gift or a special something for the home? If so then please come along to an African Art Evening that will be held in aid of St Margaret's Church at the Millennium Centre (entrance through the Cricketer's car park) on Wednesday 20th March at 8.00pm. Refreshments will be available. The admission charge is 50p. We look forward to seeing you there.

## RAINHAM OASTHOUSE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Activities at the Rainham Oasthouse Community Centre, Granary Close (adjacent to Rainham Station) Contact Tom Stonehouse 01634 231374 for details.

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## AFTERNOON DELIGHT

Afternoon Delight is an afternoon of simple crafts and games followed by a time of worship. This is for people with learning disabilities, family and friends, care home residents especially welcome. It happens four times a year and is hosted by some Medway churches in St Mark's Vicarage Hall, Gillingham.

The next gathering will be 24th March 2.30 to 4.30pm. If you can help or know anyone who would like to come please contact Rachael Littlewood, 41 Regent Road, Gillingham, ME7 5JD or Celia Dickinson 363786.

## UPSTAGE PRODUCTIONS present BOOGIE NIGHTS - THE SEVENTIES MUSICAL

Remember the 70s? Those carefree days of kipper ties, flares, platform boots, The Likely Lads and Ford Cortinas?

Well Upstage Productions are back with 'Boogie Nights' from 5th to 9th March 2002 at the Central Theatre, Chatham, 7.45pm.

Packed with all the greatest disco classics 'Boogie Nights' will have you up on your feet grooving to hits such as YMCA, I Will Survive, Boogie Wonderland, Celebration, Disco Inferno and many many more!

For tickets call 01634 235820.

## WINE & WISDOM EVENING Friday 15th March at 7.30pm

If any of your readers would be interested in testing their skills, there is to be a Wine & Wisdom Evening at the Community Centre, St Matthew's Church, Wigmore, to raise funds for the St Matthew's Roof & Renewal Appeal. £5 per person - supper included.

Tickets from Gavin Cargill 387055.

## ST MATTHEW'S CHURCH ROOF & RENEW

The efforts and generosity of so many during five years of continuous fund raising have enabled phase one - re-roofing and improving the Community Centre - to commence. The refurbished centre is to be officially opened on Saturday 9th March 2002 when it will be open to the public between 11.00am and 4.00pm.

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# Nature Notes

Nature Notes for January and February are based on a visit to the Isle of Harty in the south east corner of the Isle of Sheppey. It is reached by means of a narrow road off the A250 to Leysdown-on-Sea.

Capel Fleet, a fresh water channel, separates the Harty Marshes and the high ground of the Isle of Harty proper from the rest of the Isle of Sheppey. On the day of my visit flocks of widgeon, coot, oyster catcher and shelduck were feeding either on or by the side of the Fleet. Above the water, spherical orange markers had been placed at intervals along some overhead cables as a warning to unwary swans, geese, ducks and waders.

Beef cattle and sheep grazed on the adjoining Harty Marshes. A large flock of lapwing wheeled about in the sky above the marshes. I could also see a lone harrier quartering the marshes for voles or other mammals. It was either a marsh or hen harrier.

The high ground of the Isle of Harty had been set with either winter wheat or green animal fodder. A group of mute swans were feeding in a field of the latter. There were also patches of sweetcorn which had apparently been set for the feeding of the many pheasants and red legged partridges that I came across. The birds were quite tame and had presumably been hand reared for the benefit of shooting parties.

The church of St Thomas a Beckett stands on high ground overlooking the Swale. It dates from the late 11th century and is lit by oil lamps and candles. Fortunately, it was open at the time of my visit. Sir John Betjeman had 'memories of the church in its splendid isolation, with sea birds wheeling by, the Thames so wide as to be open sea and the air so fresh as to be healthier than yoghurt'.

I myself particularly liked the stained glass window at the west end of the church, that is, under the stumpy bell tower. It contains the words 'To Everything there is a Season'. Spring is represented by sheep and lambs, summer by a horse-drawn hay mower, autumn by wheat sheaves being loaded into horse-drawn hay cart and winter by the feeding of hay to cattle in a snow covered farmyard.

I moved on to the Harty Ferry Inn for a coffee. From the grounds of the inn there are views of the hard used by the ferry boat in getting to and from the mainland. It was last operated in 1941. Feeding alongside the Swale were brent geese, curlew and shelduck. I could see the delicate tower of Faversham parish church and Shepherd Neame's brewery.

Overlooking the marshes between the inn and the Swale were what I at first thought were bird watching hides. But a notice revealed that they were in fact stands from which people could do clay pigeon shooting. So, if you do intend to take in the view from the Harty Ferry Inn you may wish to avoid weekend visits. It is a great pity that the peace and quiet of the place is occasionally shattered by gunfire. But I suppose that the publican cannot make a living from bird watchers who simply buy a cup of coffee. Even so, I suspect that Sir John Betjeman is turning in his Cornish grave.

Joe Ennis

## RAINHAM'S CORONATION CELEBRATIONS

Many editors, both national and local, have commented upon the apparent apathy by our people toward celebrating the Queen's Golden Jubilee and I have been comparing this with the coronation celebrations in Rainham in 1953. First I tried to remember how we lived at that time and I was surprised at the changes which have occurred.

The population of Rainham was around 10,000, probably only a quarter of that now and six years before we had emerged from a damaging and exhausting war. Certain foods and particularly building materials were still rationed and licences had to be obtained even for new wood to carry out repairs. There were no mobile phones and only a low percentage of residents had static telephones, most of which were shared lines. The main means of communication was still by mail. Council house building was increasing but licences for individual private development were very limited, there was no estate building but a three bedroom pre war house could be bought for under £1,500. A primary school had been established in the huts on the old Anti Aircraft Battery site in Maidstone Road as there was no school for infants and juniors south of the A250 to accommodate the high birth rate of the 'baby boom'

years immediately after the war. Some of the army huts were still occupied by squatters. The land between Rainham Mark and Darland Avenue on the south side of the A2 was still owned by the War Department and mainly unused. There was no Rainham shopping centre, no supermarkets or out of town shopping. Parkwood was still an attractive woodland area with a steep grassy bank in the middle known to us as 'The Den'.

I doubt if more than a third of householders had a car but I had recently acquired my first vehicle, a 5cwt Ford van with a bus seat in the back for my 6-year-old son and all cars were coloured black. Most people still travelled to work by bus or bike and life was far from easy for many post war newly weds who still lived with in-laws or in 'rooms'. Partners living together would have been frowned upon. I found a copy of a letter which I wrote to the local paper emphasising the need for a by-pass, the M2 was eventually opened in 1963, but no link road was included in the original design so that had to be fought for to avoid even more traffic travelling along the A2 through Rainham High Street en route to the link roads in Chatham and Sittingbourne.

These were the circumstances under which we were living when a Public Meeting, which attracted about 100 residents, was called some eight months before the Coronation. An organising committee was then formed with myself as Chairman, which is why I still have a file to which I can refer. Mr R. Lucas, Manager of Rainham Co-operative Society, was Vice Chairman, Mr J. Lewis, Manager of Barclays Bank, became Treasurer and the Organising Sub-Committee was chaired by Dr G.O.S. Reid. There were 51 organisations covering many interests in Rainham at that time and some of them arranged fund raising events to cover anticipated expenditure.

The events arranged for the great day had to take account of the increased interest in television as this was the first great national attraction since its introduction and many people bought their first set for the occasion. I remember buying a second hand 9-inch set which had to be viewed from a few feet but when that was a great advance on wireless. It was assumed that many residents would wish to view the actual ceremony and subsequent events until early

afternoon so events on 2nd June started around 2.30pm. The Carnival arranged for Wednesday 27th May had to be cancelled twice before it was eventually held and some of the events arranged for Coronation Day were also curtailed by inclement weather, which was disappointing to many who had laboured to ensure a happy and successful day.

A copy of the programme had been delivered in advance to every household and I forget which events had to be cancelled or restricted. The RE Cadet Band opened by playing as they marched along various roads leading to the Recreation Ground. Other events included the Peter Pan Starlets, London Mime Theatre, Tug of War Heats, and a Sheep Dog Demonstration. It was anticipated that over 1,000 children would attend the free tea which was to be followed by a Comic Football match, Maypole Dancing and The Fueding Dudes with Hill Billy songs. Free tickets were provided for children to enjoy pony rides, and all types of side shows.

There were 23 races for children aged from 5 up to 16, the youngest running 80 yards and the 15 and 16 year olds had both cycle and one mile track races. The Rainham County Secondary School from Orchard Street had a House Relay for a Shield whilst all other 1st, 2nd or 3rd places received money.

There were many street parties whilst houses, shops and street standards were decorated, Gillingham Council also helped by erecting Coronation Arches across the A2 at West Moor Farm and outside the Vicarage which at that time was next to the Post Office. The day ended with a dance in the Co-operative Hall.

The population seemed to be captivated by the Coronation of our young Queen and almost everyone entered into the spirit of the occasion. Rainham was proud to play its part.

P.S. Whilst typing this article a radio announcement has confirmed that the Salisbury Avenue NWA and Residents Association has cancelled its proposed Golden Jubilee celebrations due to lack of interest and the cost of insurance! However, I am pleased to hear that a Community Project jointly with the Rainham Theatrical Society and St Margaret's Church are planning some celebrations.

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## Diary 2002

- March 19th — Floral Art Group, Easter Bonnet, fresh or silk flowers. (see 5th March)
- March 20th — Wigmore Afternoon Townswomen's Guild. AGM. Competition: Paper Weight. 1.45 to 4.15pm. Howard Hall, Woodside, Wigmore.
- March 20th — Bredhurst Garden Club SPRING SHOW. Judge G. Chilmaid D.L. Dean Illustrated Talk 'Pelargonium' 8.00pm in the Village Hall.
- March 20th — Ramblers Association Medway Branch. Start 10.00am. 6 miles. Meet at Mereworth Church. Pub stop at end. Contact No. 01634 711734.
- March 20th — African Art Evening, 8.00pm, Millennium Centre, 50p admission in aid of St Margaret's Church.
- March 21st — Wigmore Thursday Club. Birthday Tea Doug Harris entertains with Karaoke. Competition: Easter Card. (see 7th March)
- March 21st — Wigmore Thursday Club, 2.00pm, St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Birthday Tea — Trevor Norwood entertains.
- March 21st — Rainham (Afternoon) WI. 1.45pm, Methodist Church Hall, Wakeley Road, Rainham. Creating Beautiful Borders, Mrs S. Hartfree. Ring 372479 for details.
- March 22nd — The Medway Geographical Society. Sinai Desert and the Red Sea — Mr A. Waters. 7.30 to 9.00pm, Adult Education Centre, Green Street, Gillingham.

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- March 23rd — Chatham Choral Society Easter Concert, St Augustine's Church, Rock Avenue, Gillingham, 7.30pm. Directed by Peter Litman, works include Maunders' Olivet to Calvary, Faure's Cantique de Jean Racine and Haydn's Te Deum Laudamus. Tickets £5, children under 12 £1, available at the door or from 361755.
- March 23rd — Medway & District Group of HF Holidays. Meet 10.15am Newington Station. Packed lunch. PH available or refreshments available at Craft Centre.
- March 23rd — Miers Court PTFA Craft Fair, School Hall, 11.00am to 2.00pm. Local Handmade Crafts for sale. To book a table ring 370808.
- March 23rd — Countryside Event, Wildlife Gardening. 1.30pm, Capstone Country Park. Tickets £1.50. Book in advance 812196.
- March 24th — Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.00pm Leeds Village Church. 7 miles. Dogs on leads.
- March 24th — Ramblers Association Medway Branch. Start 10.00am. 6 miles. Park and meet at St Mary's Church, Lower Higham. Contact No. 01634 711057.
- March 24th — Ramblers Association Medway Branch. Start 10.00am. 10 miles. Park in public car park at Chilham. Contact No. 01634 851187.
- March 24th — Afternoon Delight, Art & Craft Club for people with learning difficulties, St Mark's Vicarage Hall, 2.30 to 4.30pm. Ring 363786
- March 25th — Wigmore WRVS Darby & Joan Club. (see 4th March)
- March 26th — Rainham Evening Machine Knitting Club. (see 12th March)
- March 26th — Rainham Minders. (see 12th March)
- March 28th — Wigmore Thursday Club. Service, Sales Stall and Beetle. (see 7th March)
- March 28th — Rainham & District Dollshouse & Miniaturist Group, 7.30pm in St Thomas of Canterbury Church Hall, London Road, Rainham. Contact 312038 for details.
- March 28th — Tales from the Mariners, 7.30pm at The Three Mariners, Lower Rainham Road, £4.00. Helen East & Rick Wilson. Ring 852614 for details.

Continued on page 13

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## Diary 2002

March 28th – Gillingham Horticultural Society,  
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'Growing Sweet Peas' – Mr Browning.  
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for details.

March 28th – Charity Quiz Evening, Royal Star and  
Garter Home. Prison Officers' Club, 7.30pm.  
Tickets £3 per person, 6 per team. Ring 234973 for  
details.

March 29th – Mid-Kent Astronomical Society. Social  
Evening. 8.00pm, Bredhurst Village Hall.

March 30th – Medway Folk Dance Club, caller  
Hazel. (see 2nd March)

March 30th – Countryside Event, Track the Treasure.  
11.00am start. Riverside Country Park. £1.00 per  
child (under 16 must be accompanied). Book in  
advance 378987.

March 31st – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet  
10.00am, Church Street, Higham. 5 miles. Dogs on  
leads.

March 31st – Ramblers Association Medway Branch.  
10.30am, 8 miles. Park at the Green in Boughton  
Lees. Contact No. 01634 711734.

April 1st – Countryside Event, Capstone's Easter  
Challenge. £1.00 per child (under 16 must be  
accompanied). Details from 812196.

April 2nd – Floral Art Group. Show Work and  
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April 3rd – Countryside Event. Children's fishing  
teach-in, 9.30am to 12.30pm, Capstone Country  
Park, for 8-16 years, £5.00 per child. Equipment  
can be provided. Book in advance 812196.

April 4th – Wigmore Thursday Club. Mrs Shandley –  
Extend Exercise. (see 7th March)

April 4th-6th – Medway Little Theatre present the  
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April 5th – Gillingham Recorded Music Society.  
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April 6th – Gillingham Horticultural Society Spring  
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