

# ACTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

NOVEMBER 2002  
NUMBER 373



Meredale School in Solomon Road. This school will close in August 2003 after nearly a century of use. Your help is asked for memorabilia, photos and recollections for inclusion in a Celebration Day next July and a book 'Memories of Meredale' they hope to produce. See the letter on page 2.

## Robert J. Kitney

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Next Issue: December 7th  
Copy Date: Nov 19th Sm Ads Nov 22nd

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

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

## Editorial

Two suggestions have been made for the unnamed teacher on the left, dressed in flannels, in our front page photograph last month. Bill Taylor is one contribution or alternatively Mr Brady who was a sports master. Perhaps you can clarify the situation or throw a third spanner in the works! Alan Major, a frequent contributor to our pages, writes from Canterbury of his years at Rainham School for Boys, he also tells us of a new book he is publishing in November called 'A Little Book of Kent'. This apparently includes a two-page 'toast' to Rainham written for St Margaret's Church Magazine by Mr Smith, a prolific local historian and writer. Entitled 'A Rainham Toast for New Year' or 'An Old Toast Revived - Ye Olde Village of Renham', Mr Smith covers the entire history up to his time at Rainham. Mr Major remembers whilst working at Panda Press, in December 1947, he had the job to set up this piece originally in 10pt type with Latin Bold heading and had the foresight to keep a copy. An idea for a Christmas present, for that hard to buy for person perhaps, the book is priced at about £5. We have many other opportunities to spot the more unusual present at one of the many fairs, bazaars and sales we feature in our Diary this month. All are run by volunteers with the aim of raising funds, either for charity, or to provide the many extras schools rely on these days. You will be very welcome to go along and swell the crowd and if they can entice you to spend some money, you will probably have a bargain, and their time will have been well spent.

St Matthew's have come up with a novel idea I have not come across before. A Christmas Tree Festival will be held at the church in early December. Local organisations decorate their own tree and possibly stage a small display and collect for their charity. The church will be open at various times on three days for visitors to see the trees. If your group would like to decorate a tree ring Peter Hagger on 235056 for details. Thinking of new ideas to raise funds is always difficult but another one new to me is the 'Curryaoke' planned by The Friends of St Margaret's for November 16th. You probably need to be fond of curry and singing to make the most of this evening but if neither appeal the camaraderie of being with a group of people who are could provide a stimulating evening, more details from 373997.

It is good to know our local council has not forgotten us as our Christmas decorations went up in Rainham in early October, does this make them more cost effective if they are on show for a quarter of the year instead of just December? With a change of contractor for our local street cleaning services I am looking forward to a rapid improvement in the state of our roads and pavements, through the summer litter blowing in the breeze became a real hazard in several areas, it can only get better, I hope.

Do make the most of the pleasant autumn days and have a good month, we look forward to seeing you again in December.

## Correspondence

MEREDALE INFANT SCHOOL  
Dear Editor,

By now many of your readers will be aware that Meredale Infant School - formerly Rainham Council School - will be closing in August 2003.

The school in Solomon Road has served the Rainham community for over 95 years and we are asking former pupils, parents, staff and friends for contributions of their recollections, photos and memorabilia for inclusion in our Celebration Day which will take place next July.

We are also planning to produce a book, Memories of Meredale, which will include many of these items.

We will keep you informed of events taking place to celebrate the school's lifetime of achievement and hope that your readers will be able to support us.

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely  
Eileen James  
Headteacher  
01634 231405  
office@meredale.medway.uk

CURRYOAKE!  
Dear Editor,

The Friends of St Margaret's are holding a Curry and Karaoke Night at the Millennium Centre (off Gatekeeper Chase), Rainham, on Saturday 16th November at 7.30pm. Tickets at £10 per head include a two-course meal and entertainment provided by a pianist/singer. Please bring your own bottle. To book seats (up to 8 per table) 'phone Bev on 373997.

Yours sincerely  
Kay Jarvis  
(Friends Committee)

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR  
Dear Editor,

The 20th Gillingham Scout Group are holding their annual Christmas Bazaar on Saturday 30th November. There will be fun for all the family with a variety of stalls. Father Christmas will be in his 'grotto' to keep the children happy, and there will be

mince pies and mulled wine available to fortify the adults.

All this takes place between 2pm and 5pm in the Scout HQ in Dukes Meadow Drive, Hempstead. Admission is 50p for adults (including lucky draw ticket) and free for accompanied children.

Thank you  
Mike Dowsett  
Beaver Scout Leader  
01634 373424

RAINHAM BOOKSHOP/GALLERY  
CLIFFE AIRPORT EXHIBITION

Dear Editor,

Through your good offices by 'lending' window space for the month of November we, as painters, would like to remind fellow artists and interested residents of our efforts, including the work on display in the Art Gallery Upstairs, of the many lovely aspects of the Cliffe peninsula currently under threat. Many regular gallery exhibitors are joining us in this venture. Don't miss it.

Yours faithfully  
Elizabeth Akehurst,  
John Evans, Eileen and  
Michael Peevers,  
Jenny Smith and  
Chris Turner

CHRISTMAS SHOW AT THE OLD REED BED  
STUDIOS

Dear Editor,

We are three local potters, two are recent graduates and the third a more established maker.

We will be having our Christmas show on the weekends of 7th-8th and 14th-15th December. Hours are from 10am to 5pm daily.

Visitors will have the chance to see a creative working environment with very individual types of work, some of which will be for sale. Please ring 01795 842481 during working hours for more information.

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Best wishes  
Louise Bassant  
Jean Lowe  
Pam Dodds

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VSO MEDWAY & MAIDSTONE

Dear Editor,

The committee of VSO Medway and Maidstone would like to thank all the Forum readers who attended our recent Wine and Wisdom at Thames View Infant School. The evening was a great success and we raised a total of £455 for VSO. We would also like to thank Peter Trowell, the Thames View caretaker, who was extremely helpful to us with regard to the organisation of the event.

Yours sincerely  
Pam Cole  
(Events Organiser)

SILENT AUCTION

Terry Wilson from Rainham will be trekking up the Amazon Jungle in Ecuador, South America, during early November to raise money for children with impaired hearing. To help him raise more money we are holding a SILENT AUCTION on SAT 30th NOV at the SCOUT HALL, EDWARDS CLOSE, WIGMORE. Tickets will be £1.50 each and will include a sausage and chips supper. Silent auctions are great fun and you can pick up a real bargain. For tickets or further information please contact Maggie Comley on 01634 235733.

Thank you for your support.

ST MATTHEW'S CHRISTMAS BAZAAR 2002  
2.00pm, Saturday 23rd November

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

- An 'Expotition' with Pooh Bear to the North Pole to see Father Christmas in his Grotto
- Children's toys & gifts
- Cakes & preserves
- Books & Bric-a-brac
- Tombola
- Children's games
- Prize raffle
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Bazaar entrance fee: 25p (adults)  
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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 November 2002

November 2nd – St Margaret's 50th Annual Bazaar, Millennium Centre, Rainham. 9.30am to 2.30pm, admission 30p. Ring 01795 475965 for details.  
November 2nd – Village Bonfire & Fireworks evening, Upchurch Paddock, 5.30pm. Admission £3 Adults, £1.50 Children. Ring 235420 for details.  
November 3rd – Ramblers Association. Start 10.00am. 10 miles. Meet at Shipbourne Church.  
November 4th – Medway Spinners, Dyers & Weavers Association. Beryl and Pat – Pasta Angels for the Christmas Tree. 7.30 to 9.30pm at the Annexe (Urchins Playgroup) building in Marlborough Road, Gillingham.  
November 4th – Countryside Event. Talk, 7.30pm, Riverside Country Park 'Tree Folklore'. £1.60, book on 378987.  
November 5th – Gillingham Horticultural Society Floral Art Group. 'Catherine Wheel' – a polychromatic spiral design. 7.30 to 9.00pm, United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham. Ring 234734 for details.  
November 6th – The Friendship Circle, 2.15pm, at Parkwood Christian Fellowship. Contact Mary Tindall 365758.  
November 6th – Rainham (Kent) Horticultural Society. Mr C. Bradshaw – Birds of the North Kent Marshes. 7.30pm, Pavilion Cricket Ground, Berengrave Lane, Rainham.  
November 7th – Gillingham Flower Arrangers. Among My Souvenirs – Petite. 7.30pm, The Garrison Church Hall, Mansion Row, Brompton.  
November 7th – Wigmore Thursday Club – The Weakest Link. 2.00pm St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore. For people over the age of 50. For further information telephone 235507.

November 7th to 9th – Wigmore MADS present 'Dead Guilty' by Richard Harris, 8.00pm, St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore. Tickets £5 (Cons £4) from 370639.  
November 7th-9th & 14th-16th – RaTS present 'The Business of Murder' by Richard Harris, 8.00pm at the Oasthouse Theatre, Rainham. Tickets £5.00 from 360506 weekdays 9am to 8pm.  
November 8th – Gillingham & Rainham Local History Society. Without let or hindrance. The story of passports (with slides). 7.15pm, Adult Education Centre, Green Street, Gillingham.  
November 8th – Dinner & Dance in aid of Cancer Research, King Charles Hotel, Brompton. Tickets £25, ring 363793 for details.  
November 9th – Instep Dancing. Saturday Social Dance, Rainham School for Girls. Ballroom Latin/Sequence. 8.00 to 11.00pm. Enquiries 01634 363738.  
November 9th – Medway & District Group of HF Holidays. Meet 11.00am Mote Park car park, Maidstone. Dry packed lunch. Approx. 3 miles.  
November 9th – Mierscourt PTFA Musical Wine & Wisdom, 7.30pm at the school. Teams of 8 adults £3.50, children £2.50. Ring 365377 for details.  
November 9th – Friends of Chernobyl's Children (Medway) Fund Raising Barn Dance. 7.30pm to 10.30pm, United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham. Dancing to live music. Bring & Share Supper. Tickets £5.00 from 366189.  
November 9th – Darland House Carer Group, Darland Avenue, Gillingham, are holding a Coffee Morning 10.30am to 12.30pm. Refreshments, cakes, preserves, bric-a-brac, books. Raffle. The Carer Group raise funds to purchase extra items not provided by NHS for 40 elderly residents.  
November 9th – Countryside Event, Riverside bird walk, Riverside Country Park, 1.20pm. £1.50, book on 378987.  
November 10th – Ramblers Association. Start 10.00am, 5.5 miles. Meet and park around Green at Leigh, west of Tonbridge.  
November 12th – Medway Antiques & Collectables Club. Coalport China Works. 7.30 to 8.00pm, St George Hotel, New Road, Chatham.

November 12th – Gillingham and District Fuchsia & Pelargonium Society. Talk by Fiona Byers on the work of Guide Dogs for the Blind (accompanied by a puppy). 7.30pm, Rainham School for Girls, Derwent Way, Rainham.  
November 12th – Rainham Evening Machine Knitting Club. 8.00 to 10.00pm. The Red Cross Gillingham Centre, 31 Balmoral Road, Gillingham. Contact no. 01634 862673.  
November 13th – Rainham Flower Club. Demonstration Marion Sudbury 'Yuletide Pageant', 7.30 to 9.30pm. Upchurch Village Hall.  
November 13th – Gillingham Horticultural Society. AGM. The Municipal Buildings. Resume of year's events. Refreshments to follow. For more details please ring Joyce 01634 360624.  
November 13th – Medway Camcorder Club. 7.30pm Medway Motor Yacht Club, Borstal, AGM. Ring 371570 for details.  
November 14th – Wigmore Thursday Club. Talk by the RNID (see 7th Nov).  
November 15th – Gillingham Recorded Music Society. Musical eccentrics. 7.15 to 9.15pm, St Augustine's Church Room, top of Rock Avenue, Gillingham.  
November 16th – Quiz Night at the Oast House. 8.00pm, Community Centre, Granary Close, Station Road, Rainham. Teams of 6, all are welcome. Contact no. 374558.  
November 16th – Upchurch Choral Society. Concert – when we shall celebrate the restoration of the church and the Jubilee in a concert called 'JUBILATE' works by Vivaldi, Stanford, Handel, Goodall, Chilcott and Rutter. Proceeds will go towards St Mary's Restoration Fund. For details telephone Helen Osborne on 01634 233576.  
November 16th – Medway & District Group of HF Holidays. Meet 10.15am Sole Street Station. Walk 6 miles.  
November 16th – Friends of St Margaret's. Curry and Karaoke Night. Millennium Centre (off Gatekeeper Chase), Rainham. 7.30pm. Tickets £10 per head to include two course meal and entertainment. Please bring your own bottle. Seats bookable, telephone Bev 373997.  
November 16th – City of Rochester Symphony

Orchestra, 'Viennese Gala Concert, 7.30pm, Central Theatre, Chatham, ring 404977 for details.  
November 17th – Ramblers Association. Start 10.00am. 11 miles. Meet and park at Hollingbourne Rail Station.  
November 18th – Rainham Evening WI. Letter 'W' Lakes – Gardens & Reflections. 7.30pm Platters Lodge, Highfield Road, Rainham.  
November 18th – Medway Spinners, Dyers & Weavers Association. Daphne – Batik (see 4th Nov).  
November 19th – Gillingham Horticultural Society Floral Art Group. 'Christmas Decoration' plus prepare for Christmas Show (see 5th Nov).  
November 20th – Bredhurst Garden Club. Fred Booth Illustrated Talk 'Wild Orchids of Kent'. Gift Stall provided by Kent Trust for Nature Conservation. 8.00pm in the Village Hall.  
November 20th – Wigmore Afternoon Townswomen's Guild. Competition: A Coaster. 1.45 to 4.15pm, Howard Hall, Woodside, Wigmore.  
November 20th – Countryside Event, National Tree Week, ring 378987 for details.  
November 21st – Gillingham Flower Arrangers. Candle Light (see 7th Nov).  
November 21st – Rainham Afternoon WI. Annual Meeting. 1.45pm, Methodist Church Hall, Station Road, Rainham. Contact no. 01634 372479.  
November 21st – Wigmore Thursday Club. Doug Harris Entertains (see 7th Nov).  
November 22nd – The Medway Geographical Society. Hong Kong – Mr Bob Appleton. 7.30 to 9.00pm, Adult Education Centre, Green Street, Gillingham.  
November 23rd – Instep Dancing (see 9th Nov).  
November 23rd – St Matthew's Church, Drewery Drive, Wigmore. 7.30pm, Concert featuring Celtic Harpist and Folk Singer Annie Mawson. Tickets Adults £5, Concessions £4, available from Peter Hagger (01634 235056). Accompanied children free.  
November 23rd – Guild of St Helena, Christmas Bazaar, 10.00am to 12.30pm, Lampard Centre, Sally Port, Brompton. 50p admission.


Continued on page 11

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## Correspondence

### RAINHAM SCHOOL FOR BOYS

Dear Editor,

Reference the letter from John K. Austin and the teachers at the Rainham Senior School for Boys in your August issue, I was a pupil there in wartime, 1940 to 1943, when it was on a war footing.

Teachers then were, starting with Mr Wilbraham, past retiring age, then Mr Bowden, who we also had specially for music practise i.e. singing, 'Where Ere You Walk' etc. Next was Mr Taylor, who early on was called up into the RAF. Then Mr Sargeant for general lessons; how often he told us about his experiences as a First World War prisoner of war. Occasionally Mrs Drake, youngish and 'admired' by the boys, if another teacher was away. The final class was that of Mr Gleadle, who seemed to have some RAF service role, possibly with AT Cadets as he sometimes arrived in RAF uniform.

Woodwork and metalwork, such as it was due to shortage of materials, was taught by Mr Sneath, who we nicknamed for some mysterious reason Mr Slice. The ARP had part of the school and most windows and doorways were sandbagged. Headmaster was fearsome Mr Smith.

My piece of the garden 'for the war effort' was at the far end opposite the girls' toilets and entrance to the playing field. It only seemed to grow beetroots and brussels sprouts. As the girls frequently ran onto the playing field for games wearing only white vest and navy blue bloomers, the garden did not get a lot of attention by the boys at that end. When I left school in 1943 every boy in my class had a job to go to. I became an apprentice printers typesetter at Mr Godfreys in the High Street.

Yours sincerely  
Alan Major  
41 Heaton Road  
Canterbury. CT1 3PY

### CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EVENING

The Rotary Club of Chatham with the assistance of the other Rotary Clubs in the Medway Towns is once again holding a Christmas Shopping Evening for the

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elderly and infirm.

This event will take place at Woolworth's, High Street, Chatham, on Tuesday 26th November, 6pm to 8pm.

Those attending will be provided with refreshments during the evening by the staff at Woolworth's and entertained with Christmas Carols by the Chatham Choral Society.

If any Medway resident would like to attend and needs transport by car or ambulance to this event, they should contact Rotarian Margaret Keen, between 11th and 15th November on Medway 662862 (9am to 5pm) or 831142 in the evening.

### CONCERT AT ST MATTHEW'S CHURCH, DREWERY DRIVE

Our Autumn series of concerts ends on **Saturday 23rd November** at 7.30pm, when we welcome the return of **ANNIE MAWSON**, the Celtic harpist and folk singer who helped us celebrate the Jubilee earlier this year. Tickets from Peter Hagger (01634 235056) – £5 adults, £4 concessions, accompanied children free.

### CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL: 7th-9th December

Everyone is warmly invited to visit our **Christmas Tree Festival** to be held in St Matthew's Church, Drewery Drive. Local organisations will be decorating their own Christmas Trees, some staging small displays, and collecting for their charity. Admission to the Church will be **FREE** – refreshments available.

**Saturday 7th** open 10am to 4pm. At 7pm the **Sing Out Christmas** Gillingham Salvation Army Band will be leading Carol Singing – come and join us.

**Sunday 8th** open 2pm to 4pm.

**Monday 9th** open 3pm to 4pm. At 2pm **Mothers Union Carol Service** open to all. At 8pm **Great Lines Music Centre** will be holding their **Christmas Concert** – admission free – retiring collection – all very welcome.

If any local organisation would like to erect a tree please contact Peter Hagger (01634 235056).

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Christmas Trees  
Holly Wreaths*

# Nature Notes

## NATURE NOTES FOR OCTOBER

Of the dozen or more villages on the Hoo Peninsula, St Mary's Hoo is my favourite. From a distance, the setting of the church, among a clump of trees and roof tops, looks more Norfolk than Kent. Still surrounded by gravestones, the church is now a private house. The school, also now a home, displays a plaque recording its erection in 1868. The plaque includes the names of Henry Pye and the Rev. Robert Gascoyne Burt. Pye was a progressive farmer who had great influence on farming techniques in North Kent. Burt had the living at St Mary's for 59 years during which, it is said, he never wrote a sermon and very rarely gave one.

In early October I revisited the village. The surrounding fields had been harvested and either harrowed or ploughed. The yards of St Mary's Hall and Ross farms held stocks of bales of hay and straw ready for the over-wintering of cattle still feeding on the marshes. Just outside the village I sat down on the edge of the high ground and took in the view. Ahead of me were the marshes, the River Thames and Essex.

Most of the marshes consist of grazing land which is divided into fields by drainage dykes. The fields are important for breeding birds such as redshank, lapwing and snipe and for the relatively rare brown hare. They are dominated by common grasses such as bents, fescues and foxtails. By October the grasses were in seed and the fields themselves had a dry, yellow appearance. The dykes, with their emergent vegetation, support large numbers of waterfowl, the water vole (which is one of Britain's most threatened mammals) and many species of dragonfly and damselfly.

During the month of October birds such as widgeon, pintail and brent geese come back to the Thames Estuary for the winter whilst, on the higher ground, visiting redwings and fieldfares join the resident thrushes in feeding on the autumn berries.

To my left I could see the edge of Northwood Hill, an RSPB bird reserve. Here breed rooks, nightingales and the largest colony of herons in the country. I wondered how many more seasons were destined to

pass before the wood was felled, for herons and low flying airliners do not mix happily together.

As I sat looking down on a possible site of London's fourth airport, I wondered what Henry Pye and Robert Gascoyne Burt would have thought of the Government's proposals. The Rev. Burt seemed to have liked to lead a quiet life and would not have welcomed thousands more souls to his parish. If he is stirring in his grave I would have to tell him that the omens are not good. Not so long ago the Government gave approval to the Medway Ports Authority to create a car import terminal on The Lappel, an extensive area of riverside mud at Sheerness which supported thousands of waders. The new terminal gives welcomed employment to local people. But it also supports the jobs of thousands of car workers in the Far East and those who ferry the cars to Sheerness.

The same scenario may well repeat itself with any airport on the Hoo marshes. Their international importance for bird life may not save them. The peninsula would be covered in concrete, tarmac and brick. The airport would bring employment to the people of the Medway towns but it is likely that far more jobs would be created in the tourist industries in Florida, Spain, Greece and the rest.

What would Henry Pye have made of all this? He was the man who put right years of neglect of the drainage channels of the marshes. Prior to his work the marshes would have been badly waterlogged - good for wildfowl and wildfowling but not conducive to efficient farming. He was one of the first farmers in Kent to use Aveling and Porter steam engines complete with ploughing equipment and threshing tackle. Finally, he was instrumental in bringing the railway to the Hundred of Hoo so as to better enable farmers to get their produce to market.

Henry Pye was clearly a farsighted man who was not afraid of progress and change. So would he have been able to make sense of the concreting over of the Hoo Peninsula? For I cannot!

Joe Ennis

## THE CHANGING FACE OF RAINHAM

It was encouraging to see so many residents at Joe Ennis's slide show depicting 'Old Rainham' and I

was pleased to answer questions afterwards. I wonder if the obvious new interest in the history of our locality is being adequately catered for by present organisations. Many properties have been lost in the High Street and many more are likely to be fundamentally changed or demolished as residential development replaces business premises so I checked with the directory to compare the area depicted in most of the slides around the turn of last century.

The population of Rainham in 1901 was 3,693 (probably around 40,000 for the same area now), employment was mainly in agriculture and brick or cement making, farming was in the doldrums and many residents were very poor as they were not paid for production lost due to inclement weather and most families had many more children than now. It was a make and mend society and few would travel outside of the village for purchases so Rainham shops would have provided every need and there was plenty of competition.

The High Street, going east, started at the Cricketers on one side and The White Horse opposite, all properties to the west were then in London Road and, like many of our roads at that time, neither were numbered so postmen had to quickly learn where everyone lived. The advertisements in Kelly's Directory of 1908 give, perhaps, the best explanation of life just nine years before I was born and emphasise the origin of two of the most influential inventions of our time. That for The White Horse quotes telephone number 10 and shows pictures of both a horse drawn charabanc for outings and a brake to transport residents or to collect commercial travellers from the station by appointment. It obviously took advantage of the new motorised travel as in addition to providing 'Livery and Bait Stabling' it also had a 'Motor Garage and Pit'. The proprietor was Mr Charles Adie whose son Leigh succeeded him and I believe that grandson Ron continued later. Prior to the Adie's Mr Sayer was 'mine host' and it was he who, it is said, planted a chestnut tree in front of the Church to commemorate the birth of each of his children.

The Cricketers had no advert in Kelly's but that in The History of Rainham (Kent) by Edwin Harris published in 1917 was equally interesting. The

proprietor Mr C.W. Shaw had taken over from Mr Harry Charles Taylor and advertised that it was 'Home from Home' and 'the place to spend a pleasant holiday'. This hostelry also had 'Stabling and a Motor Garage'.

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Freddie Cooper To be continued

## JOURNEY OF THE MAGI

The Springs Dance Company from Bromley will be performing 'Journey of the Magi' in St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore, South Gillingham, on Saturday 30th November, at 7.30pm. Tickets cost £5.00 or £4.00 (concessions) including mince pies, mulled wine or fruit juice. Box Office: 370639.

'Journey of the Magi' is the presentation by a professional performing group of T.S. Eliot's poem, in music, dance and drama. We believe that it will help us to prepare for the Christmas season. Readers of Action Forum are warmly invited to share in this production. Do come, be entertained and inspired, take some time away from the shopping and other activities that keep us all so busy at this time of year, and make this the beginning of your Christmas celebrations. You will be very welcome.

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## Diary 2002

November 23rd — CHRISTMAS BAZAAR, St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore. 2.00pm. Father Christmas Grotto, £2.50. Many stalls, refreshments. Admission 25p.  
 November 24th — Ramblers Association. Start 10.00am. 5 miles. Meet and park in car park off A25 on east side of Westerham.  
 November 26th — Rainham Evening Machine Knitting Club (see 12th Nov).  
 November 26th — Christmas Shopping Evening for elderly and infirm at Woolworth's, Chatham, ring 662862 between 11th and 15th Nov 9.00am-5.00pm or 831142 evenings to book transport.  
 November 27th — Medway Camcorder Club, 60 sec competition (see 13th Nov).  
 November 28th — Rainham & District Dollhouse and Miniaturist Group. 7.30pm, St Thomas of Canterbury Church Hall, London Road, Rainham. Contact no. 01634 312038.  
 November 28th — Barnardo's Christmas Evening, Millennium Centre, Rainham, 8.00pm. Admission including refreshments £2.00. Lots of stalls, all welcome, ring 233405 for details.  
 November 29th — Gillingham Recorded Music Society. Scottish Folk Music (see 15th Nov).  
 November 30th — Gillingham Horticultural Society Floral Art Group. CHRISTMAS SHOW. 2.30 to 4.30pm.  
 November 30th — CHRISTMAS BAZAAR, Miers

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November 30th — 20th Gillingham Scout Group CHRISTMAS BAZAAR. 2.00 to 5.00pm, Scout Headquarters, Dukes Meadow Drive, Hempstead. Admission 50p Adults, accompanied children free.

November 30th — The Springs Dance Company will be performing their drama, dance and musical presentation of 'Journey of the Magi' in St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore. 7.30pm. Tickets £5.00 or £4.00 (concessions) including mince pies, mulled wine or fruit juice. Box Office 370639.

November 30th & December 1st — Countryside Event, Christmas Fair, Riverside Country Park, 11.00am to 3.00pm, details from 378987.

November 30th — Silent Auction on behalf of hearing impaired children, Scout Hall, Edwards Close, Wigmore, 7.30pm. Tickets £1.50 includes sausage & chip supper from Maggie 235733.

November 30th to December 1st — RSPB Christmas Stall, Riverside Country Park.

December 2nd — Medway Spinners, Dyers & Weavers Association, Christmas Party, 7.00 to 10.00pm (see 4th Nov).

December 3rd — Gillingham Horticultural Society Floral Art Group, Christmas Bash evening out (see 5th Nov).

December 4th — The Friendship Circle (see 6th Nov).  
 December 4th — Gillingham Horticultural Society Christmas Dance, Lloyds Social Club, 8.00 to 11.00pm. Dancing to 'Adams Apple'. Tickets £6 (£7 non members) includes Buffet, ring 360624 for details.

December 5th — Wigmore Thursday Club, Mrs Vicki Harris 'History of Maidstone Zoo' (see 7th Nov).

December 6th — Gillingham Recorded Music Society Christmas Social with music (see 15th Nov).

December 6th — Xmas Fyre Friends of Wakeley School, 3.15pm, Wakeley Junior School. Admission 30p, many stalls and attractions.

December 7th — Sing Out Christmas, Carol singing around the Christmas Trees at St Matthew's Church to music by Gillingham Salvation Army Band.

Continued on page 13

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## Diary 2002 cont

December 7th & 8th - Christmas Show at the Old  
Reed Pottery Studios, The Street, Lower Halstow  
(opp The Three Tuns) ring 01795 842481 for  
details.

December 7th to 9th - Christmas Tree Festival,  
St Matthew's Church, Wigmore, admission free,  
7th 10.00am to 4pm, 8th 2.00 to 4.00pm, 9th  
3.00 to 4.00pm. Ring 235056 for details.

December 9th - Great Lines Music Centre, Christmas  
Concert, St Matthew's Church, Wigmore,  
admission free (retiring collection).

December 9th - Mothers Union Carol Service, all  
welcome, St Matthew's Church, Wigmore.

December 10th - Gillingham & District Fuchsia &  
Pelargonium Society Christmas Party (see 12th  
Nov).

December 10th - Rainham Evening Machine Knitting  
Club (see 12th Nov).

December 11th - Rainham Flower Club Christmas  
Party (see 13th Nov).

December 11th - Bredhurst WI Birthday Party,  
entertainment by The Kent Music School, 7.30pm.

December 11th - Medway Camcorder Club,  
Animation Demonstration (see 13th Nov).

December 12th - Wigmore Thursday Club.  
Mrs Phippen 'Christmas Stocking' (see 7th Nov).

December 12th - Countryside Event, Birdwatching  
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Gamers Guild, 7.30 to 11.00pm  
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