AGTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

OCTOBER 2003 NUMBER 383

Memories of Rainham



The Oasthouse Theatre pictured in 1984.

This year the Rainham Theatrical Society celebrate the 40th anniversary of the opening of the theatre.

For more information on the RaTS' productions visit their website www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk

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Next Issue: November 1st Copy Date: Oct 14th Sm Ads Oct 17th

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

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

Editorial

Our long, hot and dry summer still continues as I write in mid September. Luckily the seasons have performed entirely to order lately with enough rain falling during the winter and spring to see us through this incredibly sunny, dry period we have had since May. If every year was like this what would we have to talk about? With temperatures in the 80s it is hard to think about Christmas but many organisations are busy preparing their fundraising events and always one of the first of the season St Margaret's Church invite you to their Autumn Bazaar to start your Christmas shopping at the well stocked stalls. Alternatively you may wish to attend one of the several charity concerts we advertise this month. Two campaign for a Square? Perhaps we can be guided by of these are to be held at the Royal Dockyard Church, a Trafalgar Concert in aid of the Jubilee Sailing Trust and another in early November on behalf of the Royal Star and Garter Home for disabled ex-servicemen and women. Slightly nearer home St Matthew's Church have a series of fundraising events in aid of their roof and renew appeal. These include a visit by the famous London Community Gospel Choir, Canterbury's Burning, a play performed by Theatre Roundabout, and a repeat of the successful Christmas Tree Festival first organised last year. Congratulations to the Oasthouse Theatre who celebrate 40 years in the building this year. Much hard work has gone into the conversion of the old farm building whilst regularly producing a full complement of productions each year; long may the company continue.

As usual we have several appeals for your help with voluntary work including one for ourselves for help with Action Forum distribution but less usually the Rainham Parochial Charity has money to give away in the form of grants to persons residing in the parish of St Margaret's for assistance with unforeseen expense that is not covered by the state benefit system. Besides individuals this also includes organisations in Rainham, so if you know of any project that would benefit do ask for an application

So plenty to do this month. I am pleased to be able to report that many of the footpaths around Rainham that had been overgrown and almost impassable, especially in the hot weather wearing just shorts and T-shirt, have been cleared and it is once again a

pleasure to walk through the orchards, apart, that is, from the unsightly rubbish that litters our paths. The council seem incapable of keeping our area clean and I do admit it is an ongoing relentless task, so how about each of us adopting a small area to keep litter free. Most Sundays we walk half a mile up our country lane to collect a newspaper from the service station (our local corner shop) and every week we collect at least one carrier bag of litter from the hedgerows. If all shopkeepers took responsibility for their immediate area and homeowners for a part of their road perhaps we could make a noticeable improvement to our environment. Rather than giving us all a blue box. I am quite happy to put my recyclable material in carrier bags. I would appreciate a rubbish picking up stick, this would avoid having to touch suspect items of litter and help prevent scratches and stings from brambles and nettles.

However you choose to spend October do have a good month and we will see you again in November.

Correspondence

Re: R.J. CHURCH -

THE REGENERATION OF RAINHAM, KENT Dear Editor.

I was inspired by this letter. Could we start a anyone who has experience in these matters. During my holidays in France I have always enjoyed quiet contemplative moments in village squares.

I would love to be able to do so after shopping in Rainham!

> Yours sincerely, N. Pratt

PUTTING THE HEART BACK INTO THE COMMUNITY!

Dear Editor.

I thought your readers would be interested to know that there is a new (non-profit making) centre for selfdevelopment, self-help and complementary therapies, open in Rainham. It is in the Meeting Rooms on the Motor service station, London bound M2 (the old Farthing Corner services) which is next to the Travelodge.

We felt there was a need for a true community centre where people are encouraged to meet and share

Our aim is for a place to encourage people to meet, share, support and build foundations for a stronger, healthier, happier community.

We would like to hear from young Mums who would like to run a supporting friendship group, and would be interested in baby massage, child development, etc.

We would like to have a keep-fit group for the notso-young.

A support/self help group for the lonely. Another for the bereaved.

Empowering people to help themselves.

We intend to have different workshops such as creative floristry, yoga, tai-chi, meditation, deep relaxation, singing, juggling and discussion groups, therapy days and we also have a sensory room where you can just leave all outside stresses behind for a while.

If any of your readers are interested in what is going on, or can offer their help and ideas please ring any of the team members as follows, Yvonne 07774 262907, Jane 01634 233749, Wendy 01634 403634, Alan or Dee on 01634 362121, June 01634 235959 or Dave on 01634 668132. Or simply pop up and see the

This is our community and we want this to be a centre for all ages, to encourage that community spirit to grow by sharing time with each other.

Jane Marvell

ST MARGARET'S AUTUMN BAZAAR SATURDAY 1st NOVEMBER, 9.30am-2.30pm

It's that time again for our big fundraising Bazaar for St Margaret's Church. Do come along and join us in the splendid Millennium Centre (at the back of the churchyard).

Enjoy a splendid Ploughman's Lunch or just a cup of coffee and cake. Our stalls include: Greengrocery, Cakes, Toys, Books, Records etc, Gifts, 'Memories', Crafts and a Grand Draw with wonderful prizes.

A chance to buy, refresh, natter, and swell the much needed funds of your Parish Church.

Remember - the early birds get the best cakes!! See you there.

Margaret Meinertzhagen Bazaar Organiser

PS: If you have donations to offer (NO JUMBLE PLEASE!!) please ring 01795 475907 for info.

MASH

Medway Asthma Self Help are looking for extra trustees to help manage the centre. Skills from different walks of life would be valued, for example: management, co-ordination, administration, marketing or simply an empathy with asthma and the desire to help people. You would be required to attend approx eight meetings a year. Come along to our AGM on 3rd December to find out more - call 855844 for further details.

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A flourishing Guide Company who hold their meetings each Monday evening in school term time at Miers Court School urgently need adult help if they are to survive. If you enjoyed being a part of the Guide Movement as a child or have no experience at all but would like to work with enthusiastic youngsters do contact the Rainham South District Commissioner, Lesley Dennis, 01634 234738, to find out more. A full programme of training and mentoring for new leaders is available, just your time and enthusiasm is needed.

DISTRIBUTION

We have a fantastic band of volunteer helpers for Action Forum distribution but as always we could do with a bit more assistance. The money we previously paid for our door to door distribution is now given to charity. To date we have donated £2,900 to the Kajiado project, a locally run charity dedicated to providing clean water and schooling to villages in Kenya and £1,550 each to St Margaret's and St Matthew's Churches. If you could help us for an hour or so during the first week each month, not necessarily in your own road, to post copies of Action Forum through letterboxes we would be very grateful. Currently we need help in parts of Hempstead, several sections of Maidstone Road, part of Wigmore Road, Taverners Road, Harvesters Close and some parts of Mierscourt Road.

If you are able to help please contact us on either 231307 or at Rainham Bookshop 371591. Many thanks to those of you who already distribute, your help is much appreciated.

Barbara Mackey Miller

Craft Club meet every second Tuesday each month at Rainham Christian Fellowship, Twydall. New faces welcome, details from 260463.

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Diary 2003

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

No charge is made for Diary entries Diary Copy Date: 14th October 2003

October 4th – Instep Dancing. Social/Dance, Rainham School for Girls. Ballroom/Latin/ Sequence, 8.00 to 11.00pm. Details 363738.

October 4th – Medway Folk Dance Club. United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham. 7.30 to 10.00pm. Fund Raising Dance for 'Folk in Kent'. New members and visitors welcome.

October 5th – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 10.00am, Borough Green Rec car park on A25. 6 mile walk. No dogs.

October 5th – Medway & District Group of HF Holidays. Meet 10.30am, Sole Street Station. 7.5 mile walk.

October 5th – St Matthew's Church Family Harvest Festival, 9.30am. Harvest Songs 5.00pm followed by Harvest Supper in the Community Centre. Tickets £5.50 (children £3) from 231650 or 378906. Please bring your own drink and glasses.

October 6th – Medway Spinners, Dyers & Weavers Association. Kathleen – Taking African Art Into New Dimensions. 7.30 to 9.30pm at the Annexe (Urchins Playgroup) building, Marlborough Road, Gillingham.

October oth – Chat and Play at Kidstreet, Jenkins Dale, Chatham, for parents and children. 11.00am to 1.00pm, admission 50p per family. EVERYONE WELCOME (organised by National Childbirth Trust) details 07950 939898.



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October 7th – Gillingham Horticultural Society Floral Art Group. AGM and planning for 2004. 7.30 to 9.00pm, United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham.

October 7th – Wigmore Men's Fellowship. Stage Steak. 8.00pm at a local restaurant. Closed meeting.

October 8th – Rainham Flower Club (Kent). Workshop, 7.30 to 9.30pm, Upchurch Village Hall. October 9th – Wigmore Thursday Club. Brian Self –

Development of a Garden.

October 10th – Gillingham and Rainham Local History Society. Extraordinary General Meeting. Hostelries of Rochester. 7.15pm, Adult Education Centre, Green Street, Gillingham.

October 10th – Parkwood Schools Bingo Night at Parkwood Junior School Hall, Deanwood Drive, Rainham. Doors open 7.30 for 8.00pm start. Adults only.

October 10th - 'Old Rainham' talk by Freddie Cooper, Oasthouse Theatre, 7.30pm. Tickets £3 from 374183.

October 11th – Autumn Barn Dance at St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore. Dancing to Distracted Times. Fund Raising Event (ticket only) 01634 362843.

October 11th – Musical WINE & WISDOM, Miers Court Primary School, Silverspot Close. Everyone welcome. Ring 388943 to book a table.

October 12th & 19th – Harvest Tea for Senior Citizens, ring 362851 or write to 53 South Avenue, Gillingham ME8 6EF for free tickets.

October 13th – Wigmore WRVS Darby & Joan Club Autumn Bazaar, 2.00pm, Christmas Items, Preserves, Gifts, Cakes, Gardening and Clothing plus a Tombola and Raffle. Details 362662.

October 14th – Rainham Evening Machine Knitting Club. AGM with a further programme. 8.00 to 10.00pm, Red Cross Centre, Balmoral Road, Gillingham. Contact No. 862673.

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October 14th – Medway Antique & Collectors Club. AGM and talk by member. 8.00pm, St George's Hotel, New Road Avenue, Chatham.

October 15th – Wigmore Afternoon Townswomen's Guild. Mr Black – After you, Madam Mayor. Competition: Unusual Spoon. 1.45 to 4.15pm, Howard Hall, Woodside, Wigmore.

October 15th – Bredhurst Garden Club. Mr Dusty Miller – Talk 'Growing Vegetables from Scratch'. 8.00pm in the Village Hall.

October 15th – Bredhurst WI Annual Meeting. October 15th – Medway & District Group of HF Holidays. Meet 10.00am Mereworth Church. 7.5 mile walk.

October 16th – Rainham Afternoon WI. Financial Advice – Mr B. James. 1.45pm, Methodist Church Hall, Wakeley Road, Rainham.

October 16th – Wigmore Thursday Club. Phoenix Singers.

October 16th-18th – Gillingham Operatic & Dramatic Society GUYS & DOLLS. 7.30pm, Central Theatre, Chatham. Matinee 2.30pm Sat. Tickets from 861188 or Box Office 338338.

October 17th – Gillingham Recorded Music Society. George Gershwin. 7.15 to 9.15pm. St Augustine's Church Room (top of Rock Avenue), Gillingham.

October 18th – Medway Spinners, Dyers & Weavers Association. Day Workshop. 9.30am to 3.30pm on Sandy Art.

October 18th – WI Craft Fair 10.00 to 12 noon, Millennium Centre, Rainham. Lots of bargains and refreshments, come and enjoy yourselves.

October 18th – Medway Folk Dance Club. (see 4th Oct)

October 18th & 19th – Maidstone Model Railway Exhibition, Senacre Technology College, 10.00am to 4.30pm. Admission £3 adult £1.50 child.

October 19th – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.00pm, Boughton Aluph – The Lees on the A251. 5 mile walk.

October 20th – Rainham Evening WI. Annual General Meeting. Hands on craft. Competition: a small ROUND object. 7.30pm, Platters Farm Lodge, Highfield Road, Rainham.

October 21st - Gillingham Horticultural Society Floral Art Group. 'Austrian-style Table Centres', teach in with Wynne Prescott. (see 7th October) October 21st – Wigmore Men's Fellowship. A visit to Vietnam, an illustrated talk. 8.00pm, Marlborough Unit, 41a Maidstone Road, Rainham. Open meeting.

October 22nd – Wigmore Afternoon Townswomen's Guild. Birthday Lunch.

October 23rd – Wigmore Thursday Club. Tony & Betty, Slides of Amalfi.

October 24th – The Medway Geographical Society. Behind the Scenes of the National Trust – Mr Andrew McElwee. 7.30 to 9.00pm. Adult Education Centre, Green Street, Gillingham.

October 24th – Trafalgar Concert, Royal Dockyard Church, 7.45pm. Tickets £7 from 01474 823040, in aid of Jubilee Sailing Trust.

October 25th – Instep Dancing. (see 4th October)
October 25th – Medway & District Group of
HF Holidays. Meet 10.15am, Hollingbourne
Railway Station. 7.5 mile walk.

October 25th – London Community Gospel Choir in Concert. 7.30pm at St Matthew's Church, Drewery Drive, Wigmore. Tickets (reserved seats) £12 each from Dilys Smith 01634 233478.

October 25th – Nearly New Sale, Holy Trinity Church Hall, Twydall Lane, 2.00 to 3.30pm. Admission 30p, lots of good quality clothes, baby equipment, books and toys at amazing prices. Organised by National Childbirth Trust, details from 07950 939898.

October 25th – Upchurch Horticultural Society. Late Autumn Show, Upchurch Village Hall, 2.30pm.

October 26th – Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 10.00am, Black Horse pub, Stansted. 5 mile walk.

October 27th – Medway Spinners, Dyers & Weavers Association. Beryl – Knit in Lace. (see 6th Oct)

October 28th - Rainham Evening Machine Knitting Club. (see 14th October)

October 30th – Rainham & District Dollshouse and Miniaturist Group. 7.30pm, St Thomas of Canterbury Church Hall, London Road, Rainham. Details Mrs Wildridge, 312038.

October 30th – Wigmore Thursday Club. Service, Sales Stall & Beetle.

October 31st – Gillingham Recorded Music Society.

Quartet of Guardian Angels – Delius.
(see 17th October) Continued on page 11

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THE RAINHAM PAROCHIAL CHARITY The Charity Commissioners formed this charity in 1980 from six separate charities from the 'Ancient Parish of Rainham' for the benefit of persons resident in the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Margaret's, Rainham. The charity is able to make small grants to those in need and who live in the above parochial area. The charity is unable to make grants in areas which are the responsibility of statutory state benefits but may be able to assist those who have perhaps

by the benefit system,. If you need help or know of someone who does, contact the Hon. Secretary of the Trust at the address

incurred unforeseen expenses which are not covered

In 2001 the Charity Commissioners gave approval for any surplus income to be given as grants to other organisations and/or project which are for the general benefit of persons in the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Margaret, Rainham. This year the Trust has some £800 in unspent income and if you know of any organisation or project which is for the general benefit of the persons, apply for a Grant Application

Further information and Grant Application forms may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Mr G.J. Fagg, 62 Tufton Road, Rainham, Kent ME9 7LF. Telephone 01634 233288.

KIM DANGERFIELD -Champion Tea Lady of Rainham Cricket Club Reaches Oval Final

Kim Dangerfield's teas started at Rainham Cricket Ground three years ago when her son John began playing for the club as a colt. Since then John has graduated to the adult teams and Kim's teas have bowled so many people over that she was recently entered for the Radio Four Test Match Special tea lady competition.

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After submitting several menus Kim was chosen to prepare teas for cricket commentators and former England cricketers like Ian Botham, David Gower, Mike Atherton, Mike Gatting, Henry Blofield and Mark Nicholas at Lords on August 2nd. She impressed them so much that she won the first heat and qualified as one of four finalists to appear at the Oval on September 6th when England played the final test match against South Africa.

What was the secret of her success? A combination of strawberry flan and gypsy tart won the day although she regards her specialities as carrot cake and sandwiches. Whatever her secret Kim was a great hit with the Test Match Special team at the Home of Cricket.

In the final at the Oval on September 6th, Kim was confident after impressing a range of ex England cricketers at Lords. That was until she discovered that she was up against a professional caterer from Warwickshire who feasted the judges on gammon and smoked salmon, not what one would expect to be found on the tea table for the average club cricketer. The final proceeded, Kim did her best with her sandwiches, chocolate cakes and carrot cakes but she had to settle for Runner-Up position. This was still a great achievement for a person with only three years' experience as a tea lady.

2003 was an almost but not quite season for both runner-up Kim and Rainham First XI who narrowly missed promotion to Division One of the Forester Kent County League. The First XI will be trying again next season but will Kim try again or will this be the end? Although she was a little disappointed with what happened in the final at the Oval she says that she would like to try again next year.

David Wood

ST MATTHEW'S CHURCH -2ND CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Following the success of last year's Festival, St Matthew's Church, Drewery Drive, Wigmore, is to stage a 2nd Christmas Tree Festival over the weekend Saturday 6th to Monday 8th December. We are inviting organisations or charities to provide and decorate a Christmas Tree. They can also mount a small display about their work and have a collecting box for their own organisation or a nominated

For more details please contact Peter Hagger (01634 235056).

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Nature Notes

NATURE NOTES FOR SEPTEMBER

September brings early morning mists and the first heavy dews. The colours of the countryside begin to change; leaves turn from green to yellow and berries from green to red or black. But although there are hints of autumn, summer usually lingers on and many plants remain in flower. In September, therefore, we often have the best of both worlds. The end of the month frequently brings an 'Indian Summer', an expression first used in the United States in the 19th century probably because the native Americans used such days to store their crops and prepare for winter.

A good place to see both the last of the summer flowers and the first of the autumn berries is Darland Banks. In September the dominant colours of the flowers are the blues, mauves and purples of the field scabious, greater knapweed, marjoram, spear thistle and dwarf or stemless thistle. The latter thistle hugs the ground and is called the picnicker's peril. On sunny days small tortoiseshell, painted lady, meadow brown, gatekeeper and common blue butterflies can be seen flitting above the flowers and grasses of the

The main berries to be seen in September are those of the hawthorn, dogwood, wayfaring tree, whitebeam, blackthorn, elder, bramble and dog rose.

The elder is a high magical tree (or bush) which has more folk law attached to it than any other tree of its size. Furthermore, it has always been regarded as one of the most bountiful sources of home medicine. The berries of the elder have a pungent taste but they complement other fruits very well and, mixed with crab apples or blackberries, for example, make delicious preserves and pies. They can also be made into a rich, dark red wine. Generations of school children have used the hollowed out stems of the elder bush as pea shooters.

Blackberrying was, until recently, one of the few acts of foraging in the countryside that had survived from ancient times. These days most people pick their the annual Model Railway Exhibition in Maidstone, blackberries not by the roadside or along hedgerows but at fruit farms. The berry at the very tip of the bramble stalk is the first to ripen and is the sweetest

and fattest of all. The later ripening berries are less juicy than the earlier ones but are fine for pies and jams. By October the remaining blackberries have often picked up mildew and bacteria and turned sour.

The oval red berries of wild roses have long been used as food. They are now known to have a higher proportion of vitamin C than any other common fruit or vegetable. During the Second World War rose hip syrup became as familiar to wartime children as dried egg. Rose hip seeds were used by mischievous school boys as itching powder.

Birds to be seen on Darland Banks in September include magpies, wood pigeons, kestrels and green woodpeckers. The latter species of woodpecker spends more time on the ground than the others. It moves in clumsy hops and frequently keeps a look out for danger. It has an extremely long sticky tongue with which it searches for ants. In the air the green woodpecker has a deeply undulating flight. It has a loud ringing laugh or 'yaffle' which can sometimes be heard in our own gardens, usually in the early morning.

Migrating house martins and swallows are a fairly common sight over Darland Banks in September. They will have passed down through East Anglia, crossed the Thames and be heading for the coast somewhere between Dungeness and Beachy Head. They are a sure sign that summer is coming to an end. Joe Ennis

THE 22nd MAIDSTONE MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION, 18th & 19th OCTOBER 2003

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Picture the scenes of vestervear, with steam trains going about their everyday tasks - passenger trains, freight trains and shunting. The humble branch-line trains, which were very important to their communities were also very much part of the scene. It is now 2003, but you can still enjoy these sights of yesteryear - and enjoy too, some latter-day British scenes plus layouts showing model railways based on North American, Moroccan and German practice, and a tramway - all recreated realistically in miniature at on Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th October.

Some of the layouts will have a 'Kent' interest as their theme, and they include 'Chatham Dock', 'New



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Bridge Street' and 'Manston'. This will be the first occasion that they have been exhibited at the annual Maidstone Model Railway Exhibition.

'Chatham Dock' is being exhibited by the nationally-known Chatham & District Model Railway Club and is the second one of the Club's layouts to be constructed based on the theme of aspects of the former Chatham Dockyard's activities. Featuring both 'British Rail' and Dockyard locomotives, the setting is the Exchange Point where both locomotives would meet.

'New Bridge Street' has been constructed - and is being exhibited by - Paul Hefford, a Member of the River Model Railway Club (Dover).

'Manston' is based on the former railway line which was constructed - from the coastal line just to the west of Birchington - to Manston Airport when it was built, but that line was dismantled subsequently. Andy Hopper, the layout's owner, is a Member of the City of Canterbury Model Railway Society.

The Medway Queen Preservation Society will be exhibiting a model of the famous Medway Oueen Paddle Steamer which took part in the Dunkirk Evacuation in 1940, and which the Society is restoring.

The annual Maidstone Model Railway Exhibition, which is one of the largest such events in the South East, is being organised by the Kent & East Sussex Railway's Maidstone Area Group. The Senacre Technology College is the venue for the Exhibition: the College is adjacent to the A274 Maidstone to Sutton Valence and Tenterden road. The College is approximately two miles from the town centre, and there is plenty of free parking.

There will be 20-plus model railway layouts in three halls, in a variety of gauges and scales, and they include layouts which have been featured in nationally-published journals. Many of the layouts, in addition to the three mentioned above, are being exhibited by Kent-based individuals and groups, and

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other exhibitions will be coming from Derbyshire, Essex, Hampshire, Surrey and Sussex to take part.

Society and Trade stands (including a Bookseller, Computer Simulations, and a stand selling many useful types of tools including tools for craft work) will complement the exhibits and the popular reasonably-priced refreshments will be available.

The Exhibition's admission charges will be £3 per Adult and £1.50 Child (over four years of age) and will be open from 10am to 4.30pm (last admission 4pm) both days.

Previous years' Exhibitions have attracted visitors from near and far - not only from the 'local' area, but from as far away as Aberdeen, Birmingham, Bristol, Carlisle, Ipswich, Swindon, Northumberland, Belgium and Holland.

Why not make a visit to the Maidstone Model Railway Exhibition on 18th and/or 19th October? There will be much of interest for the young and the not-so-young alike - and you might even win the Star Prize!

A TRAFALGAR CONCERT

North Kent Branch of the Jubilee Sailing Trust - the Medway Mariners - invite you to The Royal Dockyard Church at The Historic Dockyard, Chatham, for a celebration in words and music of Britain's maritime tradition.

We welcome soloists William Leigh Knight, Patricia Williams, Andrew Downer, Martha Knight and The Tempus Ensemble. They will entertain you with songs, readings and music of the sea both familiar and less well known. There will also be the opportunity for some audience participation.

This promises to be a memorable evening that we as mariners of all ages and abilities are proud to present for you on Friday 24th October.

Please be in your seats by 7.45pm. A complimentary glass of wine or soft drink is included and will be served during the interval.

Tickets £7 including a complimentary glass of

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Diary 2003

November 1st - St Margaret's Autumn Bazaar. Millennium Centre, 9.30am to 2.30pm, details 01795 475907.

November 1st - Medway Folk Dance Club. (see 4th Oct)

November 2nd - Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.00pm, Tonge Church, nr Sittingbourne. 6 mile walk. No dogs.

November 3rd - Chat and Play Session. (see 4th Oct November 4th - Gillingham Horticultural Society. Floral Art Group. 'Mirror Image' - Two matching arrangements.

November 5th - Rainham Kent Horticultural Society A play about the life of Cramer Your Garden Problems Solved, An informal question time.

November 6th - Wigmore Thursday Club - Major Sylvia Smith, Salvation Army Past & Present.

November 7th - Canterbury's Burning - The Turbulent Life of Thomas Cramer. St Matthew's Community Centre, 8.00pm. Tickets £5 (£4 con) on the door or from 387425.

November 8th - Instep Dancing.

November 8th - Lower Halstow Village Hall. Gravesend Concert Band. 8.00pm. Contact No. 01795 842701.

November 8th - Medway & District Group of HF Holidays. Meet 11.00am, Mote Park car park. Approx. 3 mile walk.

November 8th - Royal Star & Garter Home, Charity Concert, Royal Dockyard Church. 7.30pm. Tickets £6, details 234973.

November 12th - Home Start Medway, seminar 'A Day with a Difference'. £10 per person, ring 570717 for details.



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LONDON COMMUNITY GOSPEL CHOIR CONCERT - Saturday 25th October at 7.30pm

You may have already heard that the famous London Community Gospel Choir are giving a concert at St Matthew's Church, Drewery Drive, on Saturday 25th October at 7.30pm. The choir have toured throughout the world and appear regularly on TV including taking part in Comic Relief. Tickets are priced £12, all seats are reserved, and are available from Dilys Smith Tel: 01634 233478. All proceeds from the concert will go towards the St Matthew's Roof & Renew Appeal.

CANTERBURY'S BURNING -

On Friday 7th November at 8pm at St Matthew's Community Centre there is the opportunity to see a professional play performed by Theatre Roundabout entitled Canterbury's Burning - it presents a vivid picture of Thomas Cramer's struggle to keep the English Church intact.

Tickets are available from Roy Bishop (01634 387425) or Avril Coomber (01634 378096) or on the door at £5 each (£4 concessions).

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This Scheme was set up by Hands and Gillingham Volunteer Bureau and operates across the Medway area. We offer help to anyone who feels isolated from the community and would like to have regular contact with someone. Now that the summer is nearly over and holidays are just good memories could you spare a few hours a week to befriend others?

Volunteer befrienders may be asked to help in a variety of ways such as by discussing what the particular problem is, to encourage someone to get out, to support them in attending groups or perhaps just to talk about how the week has gone. As part of socialising possibilities our scheme runs social groups, a lunchtime get-together and occasional outings and volunteer helpers are invaluable to help new members integrate.

Because of our past successes we again need more volunteers, both befrienders and group support helpers. All our volunteers are supported by the Project Worker and their fellow volunteers, and are carefully matched to a client. Training will also be given.

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The Medway Towns are home to the largest number of ex-service personnel in the UK and many of the 190 residents at the Royal Star and Garter Home have resided in the area. All money raised during the evening will be donated to this very worthwhile charity.

The evening's entertainment will be supplied by the 'New Phoenix Players', an extremely versatile and popular local musical company. It will consist of songs, music and dance made popular throughout the 1940s. During the show there will be a special tribute for Remembrance Day, this will include Standard Bearers from local branches of the Royal British Legion and cadet corps.

The evening will conclude with a rousing, flag waving mini 'last night of the Proms'!

The Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Medway have agreed to attend the concert as Guests of Honour, and Colonel Janet Gillies will represent the Home on the evening.

More information from Mr Colin Obee, 01634 234973. Email colbee2000@aol.com.

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