AGTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

AUGUST 2005 NUMBER 402



I wonder if many people remember this folly that stood on the plot of land at the top of Twydall Lane now occupied by The Church of the Latter Day Saints. For the history of this intriguing building see Freddie Cooper's article 'Things Aren't Always What They Seem' on page 7.

Robert J. Kitney

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Next Issue: September 3rd 2005 Copy Date: Aug 16th Sm Ads Aug 19th

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Editorial

August is traditionally the holiday month but it now seems that more and more people take their holidays at other times of the year. However, it certainly looks as though it is going to be a hot month when it is tempting to leave windows open to try to catch some slight breeze so the advice to us all to try to be 'good neighbours' is no less important. Generally, the idea is for us all to be aware and take notice in our immediate neighbourhood. Take note of parked cars you do not recognise. Do not be afraid to ask if you can help if you see anyone hanging about in your road. The mere fact that someone has noticed them could be enough to dissuade a potential house breaker and above all try not to make life easy for the intruder 'y leaving doors open. It unfortunately only takes a few seconds for a sneak thief to grab your handbag if 12.15pm and 2.30pm. Guitars can be provided. it has been left on show. We would all like to think we live in an honest, upright society and that we can live as our relatives did a hundred years ago but recent events have shown us all too clearly that the world has moved on. Hindsight is a wonderful thing but much heart searching and regret can be prevented by reasoned anticipation and listening to the prevention of crime advice we are given. When crime Dear Editor, becomes too difficult in an area the criminals move on, perhaps if enough areas made an effort crime would cease to pay. Neighbourhood watch schemes work because everyone is vigilant but you do not need notices on the lamp posts to be aware of what is going on near you.

This is the year of the volunteer and if you have not already found a new interest Home Start would encourage you to think of them. They are an organisation who help young families in their own homes. In our modern society few new mums have access to their own relatives for help and advice. A little befriending from a trained volunteer may be all that is needed to give the children the best possible start in life. As the volunteers are usually parents themselves there is understandably a constant need for new helpers as their circumstances change. The next preparation course will begin in September, perhaps it is something you could consider doing, ring 01634 270717 to find out more.

It is always good to have feedback about previous issues of Action Forum and this month we have

letters about two different pictures we have used on the front cover. I am pleased to be able to name some of the children pictured in June, can anyone fill in the gaps? (see page 3). It was also good to receive a letter from Miss Winter, their Headmistress at the time. We have been requested to help Mr Marks who is anxious to hear any news of a gentleman named Wally who was in a picture we used a couple of years ago. Mr Marks would be very pleased to have any information you may be able to supply (also page 3).

Whatever you are doing, going away, having a holiday at home or working, do have a very good month and we will see you again in September.

Correspondence

GUITAR WORKSHOP Dear Editor,

My colleague Mike Collins and I are running workshops at St Margaret's Junior School on Thursday 18th August entitled:

· 'An Introduction to the Guitar' (for 7-11-year-olds) comprising activities, tutorial, games and mini-

· 'Guitar Ensemble Playing' (for students of Grade 1 to 3 standard).

Each workshop will last for two hours and will cost £8.00. Starting times are available from 10am,

Budding guitarists' parents can contact me on 01634 319706 or 07960 958178 for further details and/or to book a place.

Yours faithfully, Shaun Murray

HARVEST TEA

The Lions Club of Gillingham and their partners are arranging a Harvest Tea on Sundays 2nd and 23rd October.

We would like to invite Senior Citizens of the Gillingham and Rainham area to join us for tea and entertainment. FREE tickets are available by post from Mrs Brenda Woodrow, 53 South Avenue, Gillingham ME8 6EF, or telephoning 01634 362851, also Mrs Yvonne Iles on 01634 373840.

Transport can be arranged and we would particularly like to see people who live alone or do not have the opportunity to get out too often. Please encourage family, friends and neighbours to attend.

Arrival time is 3.30pm and we hope many of you will take the opportunity to join us and enjoy the afternoon at The Millennium Centre; we expect to finish about 6 o'clock.

> Yours sincerely, Rosie Jordan on behalf of The Lions Club of Gillingham

ROYAL NAVY ADMIRALTY INSPECTION -THURSDAY 9th JUNE 2005

Dear Editor,

The 4th Gillingham (Rainham) Sea Scout Group would like to thank everybody who helped to make the Inspection so successful, whether on the evening itself or the run-up.

The Group has now retained its status as the No.1 Royal Navy-recognised Sea Scout Group in the country, which is a very prestigious award and involves a rigorous inspection on water and land every two years.

Yours sincerely, Dave Perkins Group Scout Leader 43 St Edmunds Way 01634 375560

ST MARGARET'S SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPH Dear Editor,

I was very interested and intrigued to see on the cover of the June issue of Action Forum. a photograph of my top class of 7-year-olds, taken by Mr Peak in 1951, their last term in the Infants'

I have this photograph too, but sadly, I did not put names on the back, and as I am nearing my 95th birthday, my memory is not so good!

I do remember the children though, very well, and with a great deal of fondness, also many of their parents.

I was appointed Head of St Margaret's Infants' School in 1945, taking over from Miss Barlow on her retirement after 35 years' service.

Mr G.K. Turner was the Head of the Junior School and Miss White and Mrs Wain were my other two teachers. The Rev. Jordan was the vicar, and visited the school regularly.

I wonder where all these lovely children are now? Perhaps one or two of them may let me know?

It was a very big wrench to leave Rainham after six very happy years, but my next 19-and-a-half years as head of Twdall Infants' School were very happy too.

Best wishes to Action Forum.

Yours sincerely, Florence E.M. Winter (Miss) 17 Coppice Court Kingsdown Close Hempstead ME7 3TE

Editor: I am pleased to be able to report that we have some names for the pupils in the picture. Maureen



Bell (Greenwood) standing with her back to the camera in the top left hand corner tells me Faye Howe is the first girl sitting centre left under the flowers with Christopher in front of her. He is sitting beside Janice Cox, stripy cardigan, centre front with cards on her desk. Next but one behind Janice with her head bent forwards is Helen. Elizabeth Winchester is right at the back in the centre seated next to the girl with bunches who is standing up reading, finally Jane Oswick is also standing reading at the back, on the right hand side.

MEMORIES OF RAINHAM Dear Editor,

I am a regular reader of Action Forum and was particularly interested in the photograph you had on the front cover some months back (August 2003). It was taken outside St Margaret's Church, Rainham, and showed three old men on the seat with another one standing as if in argument. I think the man standing was someone I once worked with called Wally. He lived in Ivy Street and I last worked with him on a fruit packing centre that was being built for Fred Scott's West Moor Farm. It was 1949 or thereabouts and it was my first job after the Services, I was only 19 years old at the time. We were doing the ground work, no JCBs then, and Wally taught me how to dig. He showed me the correct use of a fork and told me that a forkful of earth moved more in one go than my pitiful shovel. He knew all there was to know about moving earth and was a wonderful man to work with, talking all the time about old time Rainham while the other men talked of nothing but cricket. I have often wondered if anyone else remembers him and how he fared as I have never seen him since.

> Yours faithfully, Mr D.C. Marks 103 Harrow Road Hempstead, ME7 3QB

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Diary 2005

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No charge is made for Diary entries Diary Copy Date: 16th August 2005

August 7th - Litter blitzers, 10.00am to 12 noon. At Capstone Farm Country Park. Contact no. 01634 812196.

August 7th - Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 10.30am Reculver Rowers, 10 mile walk. No dogs. Contact no. 01634 317993.

August 8th - Track the Treasure. 11.00am to 2.00pm. At Riverside Country Park. Book in advance 01634 378987.

August 9th - Rainham Evening Machine Knitting Club. 8.00 to 10.00pm, Abbeyfield (Rogers House), Drewery Drive, Wigmore.

August 9th - Medway Antiques and Collectors Club. Mr Dennis Worcester - Walking Sticks. 7.30 for 8.00pm, St George Hotel, New Road, Chatham. Details 365861.

August 9th - Gillingham and District Fuchsia & Pelargonium Society. Post talk by Judges. 7.30pm, Rainham Girls School, Derwent Way.

August 10th - Birdwatching Cruise, From Gillingham Pier. Book in advance 01634 378987. August 10th - Bredhurst WI, Walk and Natter.

August 11th - Children's Fishing workshop. 9.00am to 1.00pm. At Capstone Farm Country Park. Book in advance 01634 812196.

August 12th - Marine Week activities. 12 noon to 3.00pm. At Riverside Country Park. Contact no. 01634 378987.

August 12th - Seashore explores 10.30am to 12 noon, 1.30 to 3.00pm. At Riverside Country Park. Book 01634 378987.

August 14th - Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 10.00am Vigo Village car park. 6.5 mile walk. Contact no. 01634 374923.

August 15th - Rainham Evening Women's Institute. History of Windmills - Mrs Harris. Competition:

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Italy, 7.30pm, Platters Farm Lodge, Highfield Road, Rainham.

August 15th - Pond Life. 10.00am to 12 noon, 1.00 to 3.00pm. At Capstone Farm Country Park. Book 01634 812196.

August 15th - Medway Spinners, Dyers and Weavers. High Summer Cream Tea. (see 4th July)

August 17th - Bredhurst Garden Club. Mr John Waller. Demonstration 'Living Willow'. FUCHSIA SHOW, 8.00pm, Village Hall.

August 17th - Rainham Flower Club. Come and Have Fun. 7.30pm, Upchurch Village Hall. Contact no. 01634 374448 or 01322 662524.

August 17th - Wigmore Afternoon Townswomen's Guild. 15-1 - Miss Greenstreet. Competition: Pretty table mat. 1.45 to 4.15pm. Howard Hall, Woodside, Wigmore.

August 17th - Medway Camcorder Club. 7.30pm, Chattenden Community Centre, Swinton Avenue, Chattenden, Rochester.

August 18th - Guitar Workshop, St Margaret's Junior School. An Introduction for 7-11 year olds or Guitar Ensemble (Grade 1-3) £8, 10.00am, 12.15pm or 2.30pm. Details 01634 319706 or 07960 958178.

August 20th - Instep Dancing. Social Dance, Rainham School for Girls, Derwent Way, Ballroom, Latin, Sequence. 8.00 to 11.00pm.

August 20th - Kite flying, 10.30am to 5.00pm. At Capstone Farm Country Park. 01634 812196.

August 20th - Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 10.30am, Faversham Railway Station. No dogs. Contact no. 01634 317993.

August 21st - Kites over Capstone. 10.30am to 5.00pm. At Capstone Farm Country Park. 01634 812196.

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August 22nd – Beetles, bugs and beasties. 10.30am to 12 noon, 1.30 to 3.00pm. At Riverside Country Park. Book 01634 378987.

August 23rd - Rainham Evening Machine Knitting Club. (see 9th August)

August 25th - Children's Fishing workshop, 9.00am to 1.00pm. At Capstone Farm Country Park. Book 01634 812196.

August 25th - Kent Family History Society Medway Branch. 'Care of the Poor' by Dr Ron Cox. 1.30 for 2.00pm. Strood Library, Bryant Road. Contact no. 01634 722959.

August 25th - Rainham & District Dollshouse & Miniaturist Group, St Thomas of Canterbury Church Hall, London Road, Rainham. 7.30pm, all welcome. Details 01634 235760.

August 28th - Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 2.00pm, Brogdale (grass car park), Faversham. 5 mile walk. No dogs. Contact no. 01795 535941.

August 28th & 29th - Open Ship of the Lord Nelson Tall Ship, Basin 2, Chatham Dockyard (no charge) sponsored mast climb, 28th. Details 01474 823040.

August 29th - Wildlife detective, 10,30am to 3,30pm. At Capstone Farm Country Park. Contact no. 01634 812196.

August 31st - Medway Camcorder Club. (see 17th August).

September 1st - Wigmore Thursday Club. 2.00pm, St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore. For people over the age of 50. For further information telephone 235507.

September 1st - Medway Camcorder Club. We visit Spring Park Camcorder Club for an exchange of films - ideas welcome.

September 3rd – Rainham (Kent) Horticultural Society. Show Day, Holy Trinity Church Hall. 2.00 to 4.00pm. Contact no. 01634 387176.

September 4th - Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 10.00am Lay-by Old Chatham Road, Lower Bell. 6 mile walk. No dogs. Contact no. 331027.

September 4th - Medway Spinners, Dyers and Weavers Association. Possible attendance at RSPB Fair at Bromhey Farm, High Halstow.

September 4th - Thanksgiving Service, 10.30am, St Margaret's Church, Rainham, to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of First Steps Mother, Toddler and Baby Group.

September 6th – Gillingham Horticultural Society Floral Art Group, 'Up the Pole', a vertical arrangement (fresh). 7.30pm, United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham. Contact no. 01634 234734.

September 7th - Rainham (Kent) Horticultural Society. Mrs J. Talboys - Garden talk with slides. (see 3rd September)

September 8th - Rainham & Wigmore Retired Civil Servants Fellowship. 2.00pm, Methodist Church Hall, Station Road, Rainham. Society Activities: Beetle Drives, Quizzes and Bingo.

September 8th - Wigmore Thursday Club. Talk on Medieval Housewives by Mrs Toni Mount.

September 10th - BREDHURST VILLAGE SHOW. September 10th - Instep Dancing, (see 20th August)

September 10th - National Childbirth Trust Nearly New Sale. Baby goods and maternity wear. Rainham School for Girls. 1.30 to 3.30pm, admission 50p children free.

September 11th - Medway Towns Footpath Group. Meet 10.00am, Hoo St Werburgh car park. 5.5 mile walk, Contact no. 01634 371948.

September 11th - Open Auditions for The Stage Theatre Societies 'Cinderella', Bredhurst Village Hall, 6.00 to 7.00pm, ages 7-13 years, 7.30 to 10.00pm, ages 14-25 years. Details 07791 359939.

September 12th - Medway Spinners, Dyers and Weavers Association. Subs due - then spinning, 7.30 to 9.30pm, Urchins Kindergarten, Marlborough Road Annex, Gillingham. Contact no. 01634 578294.

September 13th - Upchurch WI. Mrs Molly Poulter on 'We Bought An Oast'.

September 13th - Rainham Evening Machine

Knitting Club. September 16th - Macmillan Cancer Relief. Doris

Perrin invites you to a Coffee Morning, Rainham Cricket Club, Berengrave Lane, 10.00am to 12 noon. Entrance £1 includes a cup of coffee or tea. Cake stall. Preserves, Bring & Buy, Raffle, etc. All welcome, do come and bring a friend.

September 16th - Mid Kent Astronomical Society. 7.45pm, Bredhurst Village Hall, Hurstwood Road, Bredhurst. Peter Parish - Constellation of the Continued on page 13

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WIGMORE COMMUNITY AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION (WCRA)

Do you have minute-taking skills? Can you spare a bit of time? Do you want to help keep Wigmore a pleasant place to live? Do you like to know what is going on in your local area?

If so, you could be just the person we need. WCRA is an Association (formed in 1986) which represents the residents of Wigmore on a wide range of planning, environmental, policing and other issues. We have around 250 member households which comprise over 600 people.

Our present secretary wants to lay down his pen after a stint of four years (although I am pleased to say that he will stay on the Committee) and we must have a new secretary.

The main duties will be to take minutes of Committee meetings (every two months) and (working with the Chairman) produce the minutes of the Annual General Meeting. The latter are circulated to all WCRA members. The Secretary is a full member of the Committee and participates in all discussions. All the Committee members give their services free of charge.

If you live in Wigmore and think you could do this very useful job, please contact me for a chat.

Roger Baker (Chairman) 01634 362599 THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM

One of my neighbours sent me the photo of the pseudo Tudor farmhouse which appears on the cover which she had found in her album, asking if I knew where it was located and when it was demolished. I immediately thought that I knew its location but when I studied it I wondered if, in the circumstances, it would have had a chimney and I didn't remember the wall. I satisfied my doubts when I realised that there were no outbuildings, any farmhouse from Tudor times would have needed ancillary outbuildings.

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Many older residents will recall that this building appeared in the late 1950s or early '60s in the field at the top of Twydall Lane in which the Mormon Church now stands. I was on Gillingham Council at the time and remember Mr Frank Thomas, a farmer who lived at Mill House, Windmill Road, above where that road used to join Chatham Hill, submitting a planning application for a residential farmhouse on the Twydall Lane site.

Mr Thomas became very irate when the application was refused and became involved in various much publicised protests which included exhibiting and painting large signs on the high wall facing Chatham Hill which so many saw on their journeys to and from work. Eventually he erected the structure as shown in the photograph which was very realistic but used solely for storing hay, straw and other agricultural purposes which required no planning permission.

The building was probably about 100 yards beyond the western boundary of Rainham but it became a feature for many years until it was eventually demolished when the site was developed.

Freddie Cooper

ALLSTAR BATONETTES

Batonettes are majorette based but with a contemporary edge using urban dance moves set to modern and funky music.

We are based at Woodlands Road Youth Centre and train for only one hour a week on Thursdays, 7-8pm, at a cost of £2.50 per class. We currently have 12 members aged between 10 and 16 and are actively recruiting especially in the 13+ age group.

Although we have only been running since early March we have already given seven successful performances including several school fetes in Rainham, Bredhurst village fayre, the Woodlands Centre 40th Anniversary celebrations and the Try Angle awards at the Brook Theatre.

Our aims and objects include:

- * Providing a fun and safe environment for children to express themselves through music and movement.
- * Promoting team work by giving children the opportunity to make friends and have their input
- * Recognise and reward effort in the form of certificates and prizes.

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Nature Notes

NATURE NOTES FOR JULY

'Unkempt about those hedges blows An English unofficial rose' From 'The Old Vicarage, Grantchester', by Rupert Brooke, 1887-1915

More than one hundred species of wild rose grow in the British Isles and it is not clear whether Rupert Brooke had any particular species in mind when he wrote the above lines. However, the two most common wild roses likely to be seen climbing up unkempt hedges, both here in Kent and in Brooke's Cambridgeshire, are the dog rose and the field rose.

Now that mechanical flail cutters are in widespread use by farmers it is likely that there are less unkempt hedges about than there were in Rupert Brooke's day. Nature reserves are usually good places to find unmanicured hedges and so, in early July, I walked the hedgerows around Queendown Warren Local Nature Reserve, which is managed by the Kent Wildlife Trust. I came across many examples of the dog rose but only a few of the field rose. The latter are, however, quite common on some motorways where they will presumably have been planted rather than have spread naturally. The sweet-scented blooms of the dog rose are generally deep pink but sometimes can be white. The field rose has pure white flowers which have a musky, honey scent.

Also growing among the unkempt hedges about Queendown Warren at the time of my visit were travellers' joy, honeysuckle and hop. The flowers of traveller's joy, with their four small and greenish petals, are said to be surprisingly fragrant. It is, however, in the winter months that the plant becomes especially noticeable. It drapes the hedges and banks on the North Downs with fluffy white seed heads. Hence it has the alternative name of old man's beard.

It has been claimed that the flowers of the honeysuckle have one of the sweetest and best loved scents of all British wild flowers. The scent is strongest at night in order to attract pollinating moths and is more muted and subtle in the daytime. Honeysuckle is a robust climber and can distort the shapes of the young branches that it uses for support.

Straight growths of coppiced hazel or ash trees that have been twisted into 'barley sugar' shapes by the honeysuckle can be used in the making of fancy walking sticks.

The hop's thick vines and bunches of cone-like fruiting heads can often be seen scrambling up telegraph poles and their supporting stays. Here in Kent they will usually be the relics of old hop gardens but it could be that the example I saw near Holly Farm on the Yelsted Road was a native plant. Hops were introduced as a bittering agent in brewing at the end of the middle ages and 'beer' flavoured with hops began to be distinguished from 'ale' made without them.

I took the opportunity to take a look at the flowers in bloom on the main bank of the warren. I came across yellow rattle, rock rose, pyramidal orchid, bird's foot trefoil and marjoram, among other flowers. Marjoram is a pleasantly aromatic herb with bunches of pink or purple flowers and the species is a characteristic herb of Mediterranean cooking. There were quite a number of common blue butterflies flitting about in the sunshine. The caterpillars of the common blue feed on plants of the pea family such as bird's foot trefoil.

During my walk on and around the warren I saw or heard the yellow hammer, turtle dove and skylark, amongst other birds. The male yellow hammer has a somewhat monotonous song but it is one of the most familiar sounds of summer. Indeed, the bird sings well into summer and long after many other song birds have fallen silent. Bush tops and overhead wires are commonly used by the male yellow hammer as perches from which to sing.

The turtle dove's purring song is symbolic of a languid summer's day. Bare branches are much favoured by the male as a song perch. The bird's flimsy nest is typically built in a hawthorn bush. The pink breast and the orange and buff chequered upper parts of the turtle dove distinguish it from the more common and familiar collared dove.

The skylark has an unmistakable song flight and typically hovers at the same spot in the air as it sings. The male's song is notable not only for its quality and variety but also for duration, which can last for several minutes. Furthermore, the skylark sings for more than half the year.

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I would like to think that, at Oueendown Warren, I smelt the fragrances and heard the bird calls that would have been familiar to Rupert Brooke on a summer's day in Cambridgeshire a hundred and more • Recognise achievements, success and excellent, years ago.

Joe Ennis

MESSAGE FROM ALLAN WILLETT, CMG, LORD LIEUTENANT OF KENT

Editor: Last summer Hamish and I had the pleasure of attending an afternoon reception held by the Lord Lieutenant of Kent as representatives of Action Forum, During our conversation the Lord Lieutenant offered to write an article for Action Forum explaining his role in the county. Unfortunately, the following article arrived too late for our New Year edition and too long for subsequent months, so I have held it until I had space to print it in full. I apologise that it is rather out of season but I hope you will nevertheless find it of interest.

In wishing all readers of Action Forum the compliments of the season, I look back on what has been another eventful year for our county - and forward to a series of momentous commemorations in

Some may wonder what a Lord Lieutenant is and what he does. In a nutshell, I am The Queen's representative in the county, the 28th recorded holder of the office that dates back to 1558.

It is military in origin and until some 80 years ago its holder was responsible for all military measures necessary for the maintenance of order and local defence.

Although an ancient office, it has been modernised and has a highly relevant and important role in support of the Monarchy and our great county in the 21st century.

The role of the Lieutenancy is entirely nonpolitical. And there is no pay.

I chair the County's Advisory Committee on Justices of the Peace and their appointment, and present honours and awards on behalf of the Crown.

I have a county-wide network of Deputy Lieutenants - all chosen for their enormous contribution to the county. Their local and specialist knowledge and experience is increasingly being used to positive effect in key sectors ranging from education to youth services, and from business to the rural economy.

Today, as the Monarch does for the nation, the

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modernised Lieutenancy aims to:

- Provide a focus for county identity, unity and pride
- · Give a sense of stability
- and
- · Promote service to others.

Our aspiration is to celebrate Kent - its unique history and culture, serve its communities, and contribute positively to its future.

The thing that has impressed me most during my community visits over the past 12 months is the selfless contribution that so many volunteers make to Kent's varied communities.

And the thing that gave me most pleasure was to be able to thank many of them on Her Majesty's behalf for their hard work and dedication.

The voluntary sector - life-blood of our communities - is thriving, and nowhere more strongly than in the Rainham area, as the columns of Action Forum confirm. Our sincere thanks to them

Kent County Council and Medway Unitary continue to make steady progress looking after our county's interests regarding the Thames Gateway and high-speed rail link - changes that will alter the face of Kent for ever.

Independent research confirms that Kentish people identify strongly with our county. We are proud of our history, and rightly so as the vanguard of our

I am quite sure that the people of Kent are up for the challenges and will grasp the opportunities and make the best of them.

And I am determined that the Lieutenancy should play its part in keeping the wonderful spirit of Kent

Major events are being planned for 2005.

For the first time I intend to hold a civic service to thank Kent mayors for the excellent work they do.

It is also the great Year of Victories, and I look forward to leading the people of Kent in commemorating the 65th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, the 60th anniversary of VE and VJ Days and the 200th anniversary of Trafalgar.

We will be holding major services and parades in Rochester, Maidstone and Canterbury, with the veterans themselves - including those who did their bit on the home front - taking centre stage, and I hope Rainham will be well represented.

Continued on page 11



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LORD LIEUTENANT from page 9.

I hope, too, that these events will be commemorated throughout the county with thanks given for the great sacrifices made by earlier generations in the cause of peace.

To me, these celebrations are not only about looking back. Unless we meet the new challenges and CINDERELLA OPEN AUDITIONS retain Kent and all it stands for we will not have lived Dear Editor, up to the ideals for which those generations sacrificed so much.

Over the festive season our thoughts are especially with Forces' personnel from Kent involved in peace support operations – and with Kent's emergency services, those caring for others, and those who are ill or alone.

I wish everyone the compliments of the season and a happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year.

TALL SHIP MAST CLIMB

During the Trafalgar Celebrations in Chatham Lord Nelson will be in Basin 2. (Outside the dockyard, i.e. no entry charge.) We will be having open ship on Sunday Morning 28th August, followed in the afternoon by a sponsored mast climb. In the evening there will be a Nelson Party with music and dancing. A further open ship will be held on Monday morning 29th August. Lord Nelson was built to integrate able-bodied and disabled people to crew a tall ship at sea. Come and support the Jubilee Sailing Trust which truly changes lives.

For further details of any of these events or to take part in the sponsored mast climb, please contact Brian Portway on 01474 823040.

BRIDGE FOR BEGINNERS (This is an amended notice)

I am offering 8 classes this Autumn, from 10.00 to 12 noon, on the following WEDNESDAYS: September 14, 21, 28 and October 5; then a break till November 2, 9, 16 and 23.



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The venue will be the Methodist Church Small Room, which is located at the junction of Station Road and Wakeley Road, Rainham.

The cost will be £40, payable in two halves. Further details available from Derek Bendle tel. 364531.

I am writing to you to inform your readers about Open Auditions that are occurring on Sunday 11th September for The Stage Theatre Societies Annual Pantomime, 'Cinderella'. We are looking for keen enthusiasts between the ages of 7 and 25 who are ready to tread the boards and sing, dance and act their way to a fantastic family panto! The auditions will be held at Bredhurst Village Hall between 6.00 and 7.00pm for those aged between 7 and 13, and between 7.30pm and 10.00pm for those aged 14 to 25. All you need do is turn up at the specified time. Dockyard over the August Bank Holiday, the tall ship and all will be revealed, however, if you would desire any further information, then please contact Richard on 07791 359939.

Kind regards, Richard Hillier Chairman of STS

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Diary 2005

September 16th – Open Day First Steps Mother, Toddler and Baby Group. Millennium Centre, Rainham, 1.30 to 3.00pm, to celebrate 25th Anniversary. All members past and present welcome.

September 17th – UCM Jumble Sale, St Thomas of Canterbury Church Hall, London Road, Rainham. 11.00am, admission 20p. All proceeds to our charity for 2005, The Oncology Unit, Maidstone Hospital. Details from 233293.

September 17th – Grand Opening Gala, St Margaret's Infant School, Rainham, new Foundation Block. 2.00 to 5.00pm, admission 50p. All are very welcome.

September 24th – Car Boot Sale, Rainham Mark Grammar School, 9.00am to 1.00pm. Cars £7, Vans £10, contact 01634 281043 for details. October 1st – Sea Scouts (4th Gillingham) Indoor

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October 2nd – Lions Club Harvest Tea, 3.30pm, Millennium Centre, Rainham. For Free tickets write to 53 South Avenue, Gillingham ME8 6EF or ring 91634 362851 or 01634 373840.

October 23rd – Lions Club Harvest Tea. (see 2nd Oct)

Rainham Evening Machine Knitting Club meet on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month at Abbeyfield (Rogers House), Drewery Drive, Wigmore, from 8.00 to 10.00pm. Old and new members are most welcome to join us. For more details phone 01634 862673.

Yoga Class at the Oast House each Wednesday 7.30 to 9.00pm. For more information contact Don Sharp 01634 303227.

Hempstead Parent & Toddler Group meets each Thursday in term time at The Pavilion, Hempstead Playing Field from 1.15 to 2.45pm. Admission £1.50 per family, details from Mrs J. Cadby 323447.

Scottish Country Dancing, Medway Caledonians meet each Monday Bredhurst Village Hall, 1.30 to 3.45pm, £1.00, Tuesday St Paul's Church, Parkwood, 8.00 to 10.00pm, beginners and intermediate, £1.50, Thursday St Mary's Island Community Centre, 8.00 to 10.15pm, £1.50. Details 01795 476274 or www.medwaycaledonians.ik.com

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