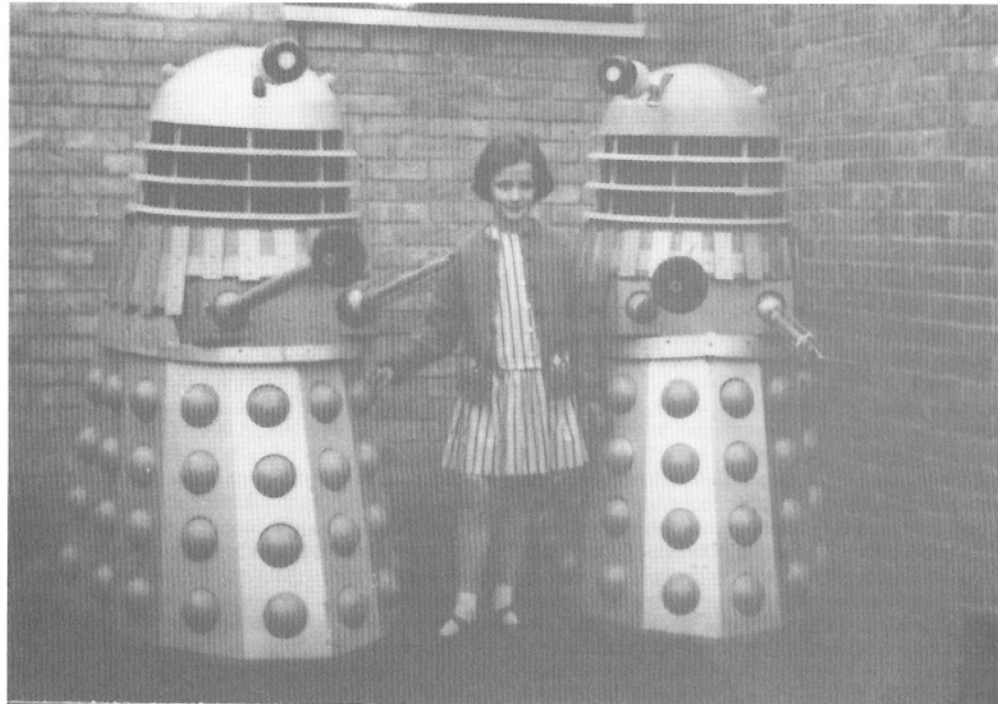


ACTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA ■

NOVEMBER 2009
NUMBER 449



In c1964 the Daleks from Dr Who came to Wakeley Junior School in Rainham. Sheila Ralph (nee Audley), pictured here with them, vividly remembers the occasion. She would love to know more about how these very popular TV characters came to be invited to Rainham and any other details about the event from anyone who remembers the visitation. See her letter on page 3.

Robert J. Kitney

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Next Issue December 5th 2009
Copy Date: Nov 17th, Sm Ads Nov 25th

Editorial: Barbara Mackay Miller
Advertising: Hamish Mackay Miller

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(above Sunburst Books)
Telephone: 01634 310011

Editorial

I have for many years, probably since my children used to watch Blue Peter and follow their advice to the letter, fed the birds in our garden with peanuts, fat balls and seed between Christmas and Easter. We were able to watch a good selection of small birds with occasional added interest if a woodpecker arrived and of course the perennial dozen or so pheasant who clustered hopefully waiting for droppings. However this year we realised that actually the smaller birds also need help through the summer months, when they are feeding their fledglings, before the seeds are available on the vegetation. So we have continued all year providing fat balls and peanuts and have been rewarded with daily exhibitions from a variety of performers. It is not unusual to have a queue of sparrows lining up in the shrubs waiting their turn or a dozen or so all trying to feed at once, not very successfully. Occasionally a real bully flies in and won't allow anyone else near the food but the trouble is he is so busy attacking intruders he has no time to actually eat anything. The antics are a constant source of entertainment during daylight hours. My mother, who lives in Pump Lane, also used to enjoy watching the high jinks at her bird table but a few years ago the birds all but vanished and have never reappeared. One day on the annual bird survey weekend I remember her count for the hour watching was one pigeon and two aeroplanes flew overhead! We have a letter this month from a reader in Wigmore who reports the same thing, suddenly all the garden birds have vanished from her woodland. Can anyone explain why this should happen and how the birds can be encouraged to return. Putting feeders out has not helped in my mother's garden. It is such a shame as the display of feeding birds provides great free entertainment for all the household amongst us particularly those who spend much of the day alone. We include many Bazaars, Fairs and Sales in our pages this month to which you are invited and many have a 'Christmas' theme. As it is yet again, as I write, a beautifully sunny and relatively warm day, it is hard to imagine that Christmas is only two months away. Please do read on and decide which events you would like to support. All the organisers will be most appreciative of your presence. Have a good month, enjoy the sunshine whilst it lasts and we will see you again in December.

Correspondence

TWYDALL SCHOOL

Dear Editor,

In 2010 it will be 70 years since Twydall School opened. Since then it has split into separate Infant and Junior Schools, but when it opened in 1939 it was 'Twydall Lane Junior Mixed and Infant School'.

We are planning to celebrate the year with a summer fete but in the meantime we wondered whether anyone who used to attend has any memories or anecdotes they would be able to share with us. The pupils would love to read/hear them and it would be great if we could put together a book.

If anybody can help or knows of someone who could then please contact me.

Yours sincerely
Elizabeth Poynter,
c/o Twydall Junior School,

Romany Road, Twydall ME8 6JH

BREDHURST CAT ADOPTION CENTRE

Dear Editor,

The Friends of Bredhurst Kent Cat Adoption Centre together with the Medway local group of the RSPB will be holding a Grand Christmas Bazaar on Saturday 21st November at St. Matthew's Community Centre Hall, Drewery Drive, Wigmore 11am-1pm. Don't miss out on bargains galore. Cats Protection and RSPB goods, quality bric a brac, books, cards, calendars and gifts will be on sale at low, low prices! Refreshments will be available. Entrance is only 20p. All profits will go to the Bredhurst Cat Adoption Centre and the RSPB. Please make a note in your diary and come along to support our local furry and feathered friends in need!

With very best wishes,
Linda Lisgarten
Secretary, Friends of Bredhurst
Kent Cat Adoption Centre

WHERE ARE ALL THE GARDEN BIRDS?

Dear Editor,

I have a woodland garden - well that is how it has evolved from a Wigmore smallholding over 55 years. During the last two to three months the garden seems to be devoid of my wonderful collection of birds, except for one rather moth eaten blackbird, female I think - with no head plumage, grey with wrinkles. Usually there are 6 or 7 sparrows, 4 or 5 dunnocks, 2 robins, 3 sets of blackbirds, 5 or 6 great tits, some years a family of blue tits, a thrush, starlings and (still here) collar doves and wood pigeon. I never use pesticides.

Has anyone else in the Wigmore area lost their birds or have any theories regarding this sad evacuation? I really miss them.

Yours sincerely,
M.M. Wigmore Road
(Name & address supplied to the editor)

WHEN THE DALEKS CAME TO RAINHAM

Dear Editor,

My father, Robert Audley was Headmaster of Wakeley Junior School from c 1963-68. Sadly, after his second marriage broke up he took his own life just before the start of the Autumn Term that year. (He had been a Far East POW & suffered tremendously as a result.)

The photograph, on the front cover, of myself with two Daleks was taken at the school summer fete - probably in 1964. This was my favourite dress that year!

I remember the Daleks arriving and how we were able to see inside (they were like a pedal car to operate) and some lucky children had a ride. It didn't reduce in any way my belief in the ones on TV, but then no one that day was exterminated...

I would love to know if others remember the event and can put a precise date to it, most especially how was the visit arranged, it seems now that it was such an incredible achievement when they were making real TV history.

Yours sincerely,
Mrs Sheila Ralph
Trowbridge Lodge
West Ashton Road, Trowbridge
Wiltshire BA14 6DW
Email sandjr.seend@virgin.net

WIGMORE MADDS

Dear Editor,

Wigmore MADDS present 'We found love & an exquisite set of porcelain figurines aboard the 'S.S. Farndale Avenue' by David McGillivray & Walter Zerlin Jnr on 12th, 13th & 14th November at 8pm in St Matthews Community Centre, Wigmore. It follows the comical misadventures of the Ladies of the Farndale Avenue Housing Estate Townswomen's Guild Dramatic Society as they set out on a romantic cruise.... Or, at least, it would be, if the cast could stop bickering amongst themselves, the stage crew could pick up their cues and any of the actors could remember what they were supposed to be doing or saying on the stage.

Despite that, they struggle through the plot as an unexpected love triangle develops on the voyage, inevitable shipwreck, sojourn on a desert island and eventual rescue. Nobody is quite sure how it finishes

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though: that part gets rather overlooked amidst the chaos.

Tickets £6 & £5 concessions from Sue on Medway 370639.

Yours sincerely
Sue Burrows

KASAI MASAI

St Matthew's Community Concerts - Saturday 21st November

Dear Editor,

We continue our international theme with the 3rd concert of the St Matthew's Community Concert Programme for 2009/10.

Kasai Masai perform traditional African music from the equatorial villages, on modern instruments but maintaining the traditional atmosphere. A great opportunity to try another musical culture here in Gillingham! Kasai means "river" and Masai, is the well known African tribe.

St Matthew's is situated in Drewery Drive, Wigmore. The concert commences at 7.30pm. Can readers please contact me on 01634 372508, e-mail mattconcerts@hotmail.co.uk or send a sae to 42 The Goldings, ME8 0AX. Tickets are £7.00 each and selling fast, so early booking is essential. Students and accompanied children are admitted free (booking is required).

Can I also mention a visit by the Traben Trarbach Big Band on 7th November. These youth musicians perform rock, pop, swing and classical music in a variety of combos including a 55 piece Big Band. This concert is free (retiring collection, refreshments available), and commences at 7.30pm at St Matthew's Community Centre (right next to the church). Please support these young musicians on their exchange visit with Rochester Grammar School.

Yours sincerely
Paul Warren

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Diary 2009

No charge is made for Diary entries
Copy should be in writing either by email to
af@thenet.uk.net or

5, Meresborough Cottages, Meresborough,
Gillingham, Kent ME8

Diary Copy Date: 17th November

November 7th – Rainham Evening WI, Christmas Craft
Fayre, 10.00am to 12noon Millennium Centre,
Rainham. All welcome. Refreshments available. Any
enquiries please 'phone 364702.

November 7th – The Old Barn Orchestra Concert in aid
of Demelza Children's Hospice and the church itself, at
All Saints' Church at Frindsbury, 7.30pm. Tickets £10
(£1 for children) from 01634 376979.

November 7th – Medway Folk Dance Club, United
Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham,
7.30 – 10.00pm. New and experienced dancers
welcome with or without a partner, for more
information ring 366189 or 388546.

November 7th – Traben Trarbach Big Band. These youth
musicians perform rock, pop, swing and classical music
in a variety of combos including a 55 piece Big Band.
The concert is free (retiring collection, refreshments
available), 7.30pm at St Matthew's Community Centre.

November 7th – Instep Dancing, Rainham School for
Girls, Derwent Way, Ballroom, Latin, Sequence
dancing 8.00 – 11.00pm, ring 01634 363738.

November 8th – Medway Ramblers Walk with Graham
Jenkinson. 07989 753278. 10.15am, 10.5 miles linear
walk starting at Tonbridge Town Lock TN9 1RE. Park
in Watlingtonbury rail station (free on Sundays) to catch
9.34am train to Tonbridge.

November 8th – Medway Towns Footpaths Group walk
Stephen Manning 01634 375821, 10.00am at Parkwood
Shops, Rainham, 6 mile walk, no dogs.

November 9th – Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group
for those still in employment 7.15 - 9.00pm,
Millennium Centre, Rainham, ring Julie on 01634
364309 for details.

November 9th – Rainham Wives meet 8.00pm Methodist
Church Hall, Wakeley Road, Rainham, Silent Auction
for our charity plus a quiz. New members of all ages

are very welcome. We have a variety of
speakers/activities etc. Subs £1.50 per meeting, this
includes coffee and biscuits, for more details contact
Sue 01634 230639.

November 10th – Fairview Frogs, Toddler Group, 10.00
- 11.30am each Tuesday in term time, Fairview
Community School, 01634 338710.

November 10th – Medway Antique & Collector's Club,
7.30 for 8.00pm, St George Hotel, New Road,
Chatham, Mr Timothy Cox 'Mad Bad and Dangerous
to Know; colourful characters of the late 18th and
early 19th centuries'. Ring 01474 823606.

November 11th – Rainham Poetry Group, 7.30pm, 40
Birling Avenue, all lovers of poetry welcome, ring
01634 260228 for details.

November 11th – Rainham Flower Club, 7.30pm,
Upchurch Village Hall. Demonstration by Nick
Grounds. Ring 01795 425700 or 01622 884657.

November 11th – Bredhurst W.I. 7.30pm, Village Hall,
Hurstwood Road. Mrs Glenda Godwin – Line
Dancing 'A taster', ring 232617 for details.

November 12th – Fairview Tadpoles Parent and Baby
Group, 1.15 – 2.45pm every Thursday term time only,
Fairview Community School, 01634 338710.

November 12th – Wigmore Thursday Club, The
Jewellery Trade by Jean Whittington, St Matthew's
Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore. For
people over the age of 50, ring 235507 for details.

November 12th – Hempstead Leisure Club, Village
Hall, Hempstead 2.00 – 4.00pm, Nature Talk.

November 12th – 14th - Wigmore MADS present 'We
found love & an exquisite set of porcelain figurines
aboard the 'S.S. Farnedale Avenue' by David
McGillivray & Walter Zerlin Jnr, 8pm in St Matthews
Community Centre, Wigmore. Tickets £6 & £5
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November 13th – Rainham Bereavement Friendship
Group, Millennium Centre, Rainham, every Friday
9.30am – 12noon to help people who have lost their
spouse or a close relative, join us for a cuppa and chat,
ring Julie on 01634 364309 for details.

November 13th – 'Jugglez' community juggling club, St
Margaret's Millennium Centre, 7.30 - 9.30pm £2
admission. For information contact Patric 01634
579561 or email jugglezclub@googlemail.com.

November 13th – Gillingham and Rainham Local
History Society, United Reformed Church, Balmoral
Road, Gillingham, 7.15pm, 'Jack the Ripper, Vic
Chidley'. Contact 01634 854982.

November 13th – MKAS meet at the Bredhurst Village
Hall on the second and last Friday in the month. For
Observing on other Friday's at the Victoria Hotel,
Canterbury. Paul Cheesman:- Astro Imaging.
07717678795 or www.midkentastro.org.uk/

November 15th – Medway Ramblers Walk with Sally
Starbuck. 07860243119. 10.00am, 5.5 miles. TN11
9PQ Meet in car park in Upper Green Road opposite
Shipbourne Church TN11 9PQ.

November 15th – Medway Towns Footpaths Group walk
with John Williams 01622 764821, meet 10.00am at
Trosley Country Park (car park charge) for a 6 mile
walk, no dogs.

November 16th – Wigmore Darby & Joan Club meet for
bingo, a raffle, tea and biscuits, birthday tea for those
members born in Oct, Nov & Dec. 2.00 – 4.00pm,
Howard Hall, Woodside. A friendly club for the over
50s, for information 01634 362662.

November 16th – Rainham Wives, Audio Visual
Evening - Ian Jenkins (see 9th Nov)

November 16th – Rainham Evening Women's Institute,
7.30pm, Millennium Centre, Rainham. The World
Without Vision – Steve Pendleton, ring 364702.

November 17th – The RSPB Medway Local Group Talk,
Strood Library, 7.45 – 10pm £3.00. The Kingfisher -
David Boag.

November 17th – GHS Floral Art Group, 7.30 – 9.00pm
United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road,
Gillingham. 'Ask the Experts' 01634 234734.

November 18th – Bredhurst Garden Club, Jenny Keen
illustrated talk 'Work of the PDSA & Stall, 8.00pm

Bredhurst Village Hall, 01634 233554.

November 18th – Upchurch Derby & Joan Christmas
Bazaar, Village Hall 10.00am – 1.00pm, cakes, gifts,
craft and more.

November 19th – Hempstead Leisure Club, Games, (see
12th Nov)

November 19th – Wigmore Thursday Club,
Buckingham Palace Garden Party (see 12th Nov)

November 19th – Medway Film Makers 7.30pm Davis
Estate Community Centre, AGM. See
www.medwayfilmmakers.com for details.

November 19th – 7pm-10pm. Pamper evening, The St.
Georges Hall Scout Headquarters, Berengrave Lane.
Raffle, Refreshments in aid of funds for the 4th
Gillingham Sea Scout Group. Treatments £5. Tickets
£2pp (in advance) £3 on the door. Julie Clayton
01634 361061 julie206@blueyonder.co.uk

November 20th – Hempstead Infant School Autumn
Fair, 3.10 - 5.00pm tombola stalls, hook a duck raffle
and craft stalls.

November 20th – Barnardo's Christmas Evening,
8.00pm, Callaway Hall, Millennium Centre, Rainham.
Cards, Gifts, Bring & Buy, Tombola, Raffle, Quiz,
Carols, Christmas Buffet. Donations and Gifts much
appreciated. Tickets £3, children £1, refreshments
included 01634 375486 or 233405

November 21st – Traditional Crafts, Riverside Country
Park 10.00am – 12noon, book in advance, £2.50 per
person 01634 337432.

November 21st – 22nd Gillingham Scouts Bingo Night,
HQ Rear of Deanwood Primary School (Garages),
Hawbeck Road. Doors open 6.15pm, Eyes Down
7pm. Bingo Tickets £1.00 each person for two games.
parkwood22raven@yahoo.co.uk

November 21st – St. Margaret's Church, Lower
Halstow, 1.00am to 12.30pm. Christmas Produce
Sale, Home made produce, refreshments and crafts.
Thames Sailing Barge, the Edith May, also open.

November 21st – St Matthew's Concert, Kasai Masai –
Traditional sound from the remote equatorial villages
of Africa (Kasai – The River: Masai – The Tribe)
7.30pm tickets available £7.00 each from 01634
372508, mattconcerts@hotmail.co.uk

Continued on Page 11

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I run a stall at the Millennium Centre Market once a month in aid of the Samantha Dickson Brain Tumour Trust. If anyone has surplus music CDs they could donate to help raise funds for research into Brain cancer please contact me on 01634 263622
Many thanks Olwen O'Dowd

40th ANNIVERSARY CONCERT
City of Rochester Symphony Orchestra
Saturday 21st November, 7.30pm
Conductor: Peter Bassano, Soloist: Jeanine Thorpe
Elgar First Symphony, Walton Violin Concerto,
Britten Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra
Tickets (£9-13) from the Central Theatre in
Chatham on 01634 338338, www.crso.org.uk
UPCHURCH CHORAL SOCIETY
CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

A Seasonal Concert of Music and Readings
St Mary's Church, Upchurch
Saturday 28th November, 7.30pm
Admission by programme £6 includes refreshments
For further details contact Liz Walters 01634 361897
BINGO NIGHT

22nd Gillingham Scouts, HQ Rear of Deanwood
Primary School (Garages), Hawbeck Road,
Parkwood. November 21st Doors open 6.15pm,
Eyes Down 7pm. Please book your table early:
parkwood22raven@yahoo.co.uk

WRVS RAINHAM OVER 50s CLUB
We meet every Monday from 2.00 – 4.00pm at
Rainham Social Club in Station Road. New members
are very welcome, we also need helpers and a
Treasurer (training would be given). For more
information please ring 01634 363529 or 362667.

WIGMORE FELLOWSHIP CARVE UP
All are welcome to this our major fund raising event.
Come and enjoy a 2 course meal, dance to music by
Geoff, BYOD&G.£12 per person with all profits
going to local Charities.

Rainham Bookshop
Christmas Shopping Evening
Thursday 19th November 6-8:30pm
Join us for wine, mince pies and local artist
Geoffrey Hall's "Impressions of Kent"
17-19 Station Road Tel: 01634 371591

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Saturday 28th November, 7pm for 7.30pm start at St
Matthew's Community Centre, Brewery Drive,
Wigmore. Tickets are available from:- David/Irene
372267, Rod/June 264290 or Bob/Linda 378769.

PAMPER EVENING
Thursday 19th November 7pm-10pm.
The St. Georges Hall Scout Headquarters,
Berengrave Lane, Rainham. We all need a bit of
pampering especially before the busy Christmas
period! So please come along to treat yourself and
help us raise much needed funds for the 4th
Gillingham Sea Scout Group. Treatments £5 each.
To book a table, at £10 each, please contact me asap.
Tickets £2pp (in advance) or £3 on the door.
01634 361061 julie206@blueyonder.co.uk

An Excellent Christmas Gift
The Diary of The Revd. John Woodruff
(The years 1851 - 1856)
John Woodruff was the vicar of Upchurch from 1834
until his death in 1869. He and his wife Frances had
ten children, only seven survived infancy. The diary
extracts give an interesting insight of those times.
£5.50. Available from Evelyn Veale
3 Horsham Lane, Upchurch 01634 234047

CHRISTMAS FAYRE
St. Peter's Bredhurst Christmas Fayre is to take place
on Saturday, 5th December, from 2 - 4pm, in the
village hall, Hurstwood Road. Adults 50p and
children free. Attractions include Father Christmas,
Grand Draw, Children's Activities, Games, Stalls,
and much more. The church charity shop next to the
hall will also be open from 1.30pm.

GHS FLORAL ART GROUP EXHIBITION
On 28th November GHS Floral Art Group will
display their skills in a Christmas Exhibition entitled
CHRISTMAS ETC Admission is free at the United
Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham
on Saturday 28th November at 2.30 - 4.30pm.
Presentation of a cheque for funds of Sheppey RNLI

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Nature Notes

NATURE NOTES FOR OCTOBER

This month's Nature Notes are based on a visit made to Knole Park, a National Trust property near Sevenoaks, in order to witness the rutting of the fallow deer. The park was originally created in the 15th century, at the same time as Knole House itself. It enabled the owners to indulge in a passion, popular among the nobility, for hunting. Largely unchanged since the 17th century, Knole is now the only remaining mediaeval deer park in Kent. Readers may remember that the town of Sevenoaks lost six out of its celebrated seven oaks in the Great Storm of October 1987. Seventy per cent of the trees in Knole Park were also lost. Since that time, however, 200,000 replacement trees have been planted. Despite the losses, Knole retains hundreds of ancient oak, beech, sycamore and sweet chestnut trees whose leaves were turning brown or yellow at the time of my visit.

The entrance to Knole Park is in Sevenoaks High Street, opposite St Nicholas Church. The drive crosses a dry valley and then winds through woodland, the under storey of which consists mainly of bracken or heather. One of the "stands" where fallow deer bucks and does congregate during the rutting season is on Echo Mount, which overlooks the car park and Knole House itself.

During the rutting the bucks size up their competitors by walking alongside each other. Rival males can gauge each other's strengths by the size of their antlers. So any fights normally take place between stags of similar stature. However, it is the does who decide with which bucks to mate. They choose those capable of producing a continuous belching sound which is deep and resonant, since this shows that they have the necessary stamina to mate successfully with a succession of does. The stand on Echo Mount is dominated by a massive lime tree sporting several large clumps of mistletoe. Around the tree are saucer shaped scrapes in the soil created by the bucks, with their hoofs, as an expression of assertive behaviour. At the time of my visit the herd consisted of three

fully grown bucks, two smaller, immature bucks and fourteen does. One of the mature bucks was asleep in a muddy depression and the other two were strutting about, making the occasional belching sound. They would make what appeared to be half hearted attempts to drive off the younger bucks and round up any does that attempted to wander off. After a while, since nothing exciting was happening, I myself wandered off. I decided to look out for fungi and other signs of autumn.

Knole Park has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest, specifically for its unimproved grassland and the invertebrates that can be found in dead wood. The grasses at Knole are generally low growing, partly because the underlying sandy soil is not very fertile and partly because they are under constant nibbling by rabbits and deer. I noticed that the many varieties of mosses and liverworts in the parkland stood out among the yellowing stalks of the grasses; they have an ever-fresh, bright green mantle in the cool dampness of autumn and winter.

The National Trust at Knole appears to have a policy of not removing dead branches or dead trees and leaving fallen branches and trees where they lie, unless they are causing an obstruction. Consequently, it is quite common to see birds such as green and great spotted woodpeckers and nuthatches, which rely on dead wood for nesting sites or as a source of invertebrates for food. Spectacular displays of fungi, such as beefsteak, bracket and honey fungi, can be found on the dead wood at Knole.

With few wildflowers in bloom, autumn is the time to search for plants and other organisms that tend to be overlooked at the height of summer. I therefore walked around the garden walls of Knole House which are built of Kentish ragstone and are pierced at intervals by fine wrought iron gates.

On the walls grow ferns such as wall rue and lichens. Some ferns, including bracken, die down in the autumn, but others are evergreen. Lichen are an indication of clean air; the most noticeable ones are those consisting of a bright orange crust and found on walls and gravestones.

Soon it was time for a cup of tea and a cake in the

Brewhouse Tearoom. I picked up a pamphlet on future events, including Lord Saville's Christmas Lecture and The Saville Children's Choir. It was a reminder that winter was not far off. Before leaving I paid a further visit to Echo Mount. The does did not appear to be impressed with all the strutting and posturing of the bucks. And neither was I. I was disappointed not to have witnessed sparing of the kind normally seen on BBC TV's Autumn Watch. Nevertheless, I thoroughly enjoyed my walk through Knole Park in all its Autumnal Splendour.

Joe Ennis

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Thanks to modern technology, the world is changing at an exponential rate. Computers are leading the way and it's not surprising that many senior members of the community are feeling left behind. A good deal of communication is carried out through computers, as mail is sent from one side of the world to another in a matter of moments. Families divided by oceans are able to see and talk to each other through web cameras and one can shop for almost anything from the comfort of one's own home.

St Margaret's C of E Junior School is opening up its two computer suites to senior members of the community. We have staff willing to take you by the hand and give you the confidence to use computers at home. If you are considering purchasing a computer, our technician can give you advice and guidance. So, if you are ready to get back to school, please pop into the front office in Orchard Street and pick up details. The first of our sessions will begin in November and, if these prove to be popular, we will be repeating the course in February.

If you don't have a computer at home, don't worry. These sessions will help you to decide if computers are for you.

C P Gabbett

Headteacher St Margaret's C of E Junior School

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

This year our coffee morning in September raised £625, so a big thank you to all who came along and those who worked so hard to make it possible.

Jean Mardel, Medway Macmillan Fund-raising Committee

BOUNDARY STONES

The correspondence about the stone in Hempstead Road reminded me that there was a similar stone on Chatham Hill. In 1994 I took part in a sponsored walk round the boundaries of Gillingham in aid of the Mayor's Benevolent Fund, which visited this and several other stones. It is still there, on the northern side a few yards below the footbridge, but it is currently half-hidden by trailing ivy. The markings are quite clear: at the top is the date, 1899, then No.16, and finally GP for Gillingham Parish. Another similar stone stood beside the footpath that runs steeply west from the top of Pear Tree Lane to emerge in Capstone Road by Whitewall Farm, near the Ski Centre, but I could not find it when I searched in July.

Beating the bounds was an important ceremony ensuring that boundaries were clearly marked and familiar to the local inhabitants, for in the days before the welfare state parishes made sure that they only cared for their own poor. There is in the Archives at Strood a handwritten record of beating the bounds of Rainham in about 1840, and many of the places the party stopped at en route can still be recognised. On the western side of the parish their task was simplified because Gillingham Parish had erected stones at crucial points. One of these, in a back garden in Edwin Road, remains. Much older and more weathered than that on Chatham Hill, it has a 3-line inscription - G, then 16, then 1800. Perhaps when Ordnance Survey maps showing parish and other boundaries were published it was not found necessary to have so many markers, so new, renumbered, stones were erected only at strategic points. This would explain the number 16 at two completely different locations.

There is another older stone set into a gatepost on London Road (between Edwin Road and Tesco), but the inscription is now indecipherable. The owner of the house believes this to be the original 'Rainham Mark', and it lies on what the late Freddie Cooper believed to be the boundary between East and West Kent.

Rosemary Dellar

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Diary 2009

November 21st – Tea at Millennium Ritz, SDBTT,
1.30pm to 3.30pm, Homemade Cakes, Freshly cut
sandwiches, Tea/Coffee. £5.00 per person. Call Olwen
01634 263622 for entry ticket

November 21st – Monthly Indoor Craft and Produce
Fair, Millennium Centre, 9.00am 12.30pm. Enquiries
01634 371941.

November 21st – Instep Dancing, (see 7th Nov).

November 21st – Medway Folk Dance Club, (see 7th
Nov).

November 21st – The Friends of Bredhurst Kent Cat
Adoption Centre and Medway local group of the
RSPB, Grand Christmas Bazaar, St. Matthew's
Community Centre, Wigmore from 11am-1pm.

November 21st – 7.30pm, City of Rochester Symphony
Orchestra 40th Anniversary Concert. Conductor: Peter
Bassano, Soloist: Jeanine Thorpe. Elgar First
Symphony, Walton Violin Concerto, Britten Young
Person's Guide to the Orchestra Tickets (£9-13) from
the Central Theatre, Chatham 01634 338338.

www.crs.org.uk

November 21st & 22nd – Christmas Open Studios at the
Old Reed Bed, Lower Halstow, 11am – 4pm each day,
Ceramics by Jean Lowe, Pam Dodds, Alison Swan and
Jola Spytowska, Jewellery by Olivia Schlevogt,
Textiles by Alison Blackburn, Paintings by Elizabeth
Akehurst, www.oldreedbedstudios.co.uk 01795
842481.

November 22nd – Medway Ramblers Walk with Geoff
Ettridge 07526161766. 10.00am 8.5 miles. Meet in
front of the Dover Castle Inn, Teynham (20 London
Road) on the A2.

November 22nd – Medway Towns Footpaths Group
walk with Chris Morris 01634 374923, meet 10.00am
at Hoo St Werburgh Public Car Park, Stoke Road, for
a 5 mile walk, dogs allowed.

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November 23rd – Wigmore Darby & Joan Club (see
16th Nov).

November 23rd – Rainham Wives, 'Body Shop' a
fundraising evening, (see 9th Nov)

November 25th – Rainham Poetry Group, 5.45 –
8.15pm, Sunlight Centre, Richmond Road,
Gillingham, all lovers of poetry welcome, ring
01634 260228 for details.

November 26th – Wigmore Thursday Club, Service &
Beetle, (see 12th Nov).

November 26th – Rainham & District Dolls' House
and Miniaturist Group, 7.30pm, The Howard
Memorial Hall, Woodside, Wigmore, contact 01634
312038 for details.

November 27th – "Jugglez" juggling, (see 13th Nov).

November 27th – Medway Geographical Society,
Adult Education Centre, Green Street, Gillingham
7.30 – 9.00pm. New Orleans – John Whitehorn.
Ring 01634 362683 for details.

November 27th – MKAS Peter Parish - Constellation
(Cassiopeia and Perseus). (see 13th Nov).

November 28th – Wigmore Fellowship 'CarveUp', 2
course meal, dance to music by Geoff, BYOD&G.
£12 per person, all profits to local Charities. 7pm
for 7.30pm. St Matthew's Community Centre,
Wigmore. Tickets from David/Irene 372267,
Rod/June 264290, Bob/Linda 378769.

November 28th – Christmas Bazaar, Fairview
Community Primary School, Drewery Drive,
Wigmore. Doors open 1.30pm, Admission 30p (pre-
school free). Come and visit Father Christmas in his
grotto, plus games, tombolas, craft and much, much
more! Further details 01634 302961

November 28th – GHS Floral Art Group, United
Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham,
2.30 – 4.30pm. Christmas Exhibition, admission
free, ring 01634 234734 for details.

Continued on Page 13

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Diary 2009

November 28th - Tree Dressing, Riverside Country Park
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12 years, no need to book £1 per child.

November 28th - Gospel Choir Concerts, The Central
Theatre, Chatham, 3.00 & 7.00pm Box Office 338338
November 28th - Upchurch Choral Society, 'Christmas is
Coming! A Seasonal Concert of Music and Readings,
St Mary's Church, Upchurch. 7.30pm £6 includes
refreshments, details contact Liz Walters 01634 361897
November 28th & 29th - Christmas Open Studios, Old
Reed Bed, (see 21st Nov).

November 29th - Medway Ramblers Walk with
Bob/Kath Dyson. 10.00am, 6.5 miles. Park and meet in
Jockey Lane Car Park in Cranbrook (behind Church).

November 29th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group walk
with John Howard 01732 841433, meet 2.00pm at
South Park, Maidstone along Armstrong Road for a 3 to
4 mile walk, no dogs.

November 30th - Wigmore Darby & Joan Club (see 16th
November 30th - Rainham Wives, 'The How & Why of
Downe Dames Calendar' talk by Barbara Stevens, (see
9th Nov)

December 1st - GHS Floral Art Group, Programme
discussion 2010, (see 13th Nov).

December 2nd - Rainham Horticultural Society, 7.30pm,
Cricket Pavilion, Berengrave Lane, AGM & Christmas
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December 3rd - Wigmore Thursday Club, Start a
Family History, Helen Allinson, (see 12th Nov).
December 3rd - Medway Film Makers 7.30pm Davis
Estate Community Centre, Five minute Competition.
See www.medwayfilmmakers.com.

December 4th - Ghost Tours at Fort Amherst, first
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December 5th - St. Matthew's Wigmore, St Nicholas
Festival & Christmas Bazaar, 2pm. Raffle, Games
Tombola, Father Christmas, Elves' Workshop,
Refreshments. Adults 50p, Children Free.

December 5th - 2pm, St. Peter's Christmas Fayre.
Bredhurst Village Hall, Hurstwood Road.

December 5th - Platters Farm Lodge, Christmas
Bazaar, 10.00am - 3.00pm Homemade Toys &
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December 6th - Winter Visitors, Riverside Country
Park 10.00am suitable for over 12 years, book in
advance £2 per person, 01634 337432.

December 6th - Christmas Fair, 2pm-4pm, Holywell
School, Upchurch. Admission Adults 50p, Children
free. Raffle, Tombola, Home made cakes and stalls.

December 7th - Wigmore Darby & Joan Christmas
Lunch, members & guests, (see 16th Nov).

December 7th - Rainham Wives, Christmas Meal, (see
9th Nov)

December 8th - Medway Antique & Collector's Club,
Christmas Dinner, (see 10th Nov).

December 9th - Bredhurst W.I. Peter Shearan - Bah!
Humbug (Christmas), (see 11th Nov).

December 11th - Gillingham and Rainham Local
History Society, 'Kentish Crafts, Richard Filmer'
(see 13th Nov).

December 12th - Christmas Dance, "Dance Junction"
Maidstone Road, Rochester. In aid of Demelza
Hospice. Tickets £14.00 each (£13.00 groups of 8 or
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