

ACTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

DECEMBER 2011

NUMBER 472



We Wish You A Happy Christmas



A drawing of Rainham High Street by the famous author and illustrator Donald Maxwell. This was used on the cover of St Margaret's Church Magazine during the 1930s & 40s. Donald Maxwell, who was born in 1877 and died in 1936 of septicaemia brought on by a chill, lived at East Farleigh near Maidstone and as a friend of the then vicar of Rainham, Rev Hodgson, visited on several occasions. It is thought this drawing was specially commissioned for the magazine. Although he had moved to Goddington House, Harrietsham shortly before his death Maxwell was buried in East Farleigh churchyard.

Robert J. Kitney

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Editorial

For many years we used occasionally to include a drawing of a guide dog in Action Forum. The dog was divided into squares and we gradually filled these in as our readers donated bottle tops and aluminium foil to the Guide Dogs for the Blind charity. The solid black area of the dog represented how much of the animal we had managed to purchase in the quest to buy and train these valuable helpers for the blind. I was never too sure how the foil helped - presumably at that time there was sufficient money to be made by selling it as scrap for it to be an economic project for the charity. We also helped other charities by collecting used postage stamps, oddments of knitting wool, left over dressmaking material, and even for a short time plastic bottle tops and of course Christmas cards, paper and cardboard. Now the Council recycles so efficiently are the charities losing out?

Paper and card I know is still collected by volunteers. In Rainham 17th Gillingham Scout Group have a regular skip in the Cricketers car park one Sunday a month to receive waste paper and cardboard and similarly St Matthews Church, Wigmore also collect in their car park. There are other projects such as the printer toner and cartridge recycling box in Sunburst Books - reusable items are bought to be refilled so the church receives some money and the items are not contributing to our landfill problems. The Square Knits appreciate good quality knitting wool to turn into blankets and clothes, no money involved, but a valued club for the members practising their craft and the charity which receives the finished items. Of course books in good condition are welcomed at Sunburst Books, these are resold in the shop to provide a valuable contribution to St Margaret's Church funds. Many other good, clean, unbroken items are gratefully received by the charity shops in our towns. So it would seem that the way we help our charities has changed over the years but if you know of collecting points for anything which would otherwise be thrown away please do let us know, we would love to be able to pass on the information to all our readers. I was recently asked about used postage stamps—all carefully torn from their envelopes with the obligatory half inch border—but does anyone know of a charity who wants them, I could not think of one I am afraid.

Excitement is building towards Christmas Day and we include information this month about the annual Santa Sleigh Runs by The Lions and Rotary Clubs of

Gillingham. Their members are out on many evenings in December bringing Father Christmas to see you and collecting for their good causes. Please give generously if you see them - all the money is used locally. However we should not forget in all the excitement why we have all the festivities. To help you we also include times of local Church Services. There are celebrations for all age: Crib and Christingle Services for youngsters, traditional Carol Services (some candlelit) and Midnight Mass for adults - I am sure you will be able to find some you will enjoy so please read on through our pages. Until we see you again with our combined January/ February edition we wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and New Year, have a wonderful time.

Correspondence

LIONS CLUB OF GILLINGHAM ANNUAL SANTA'S SLEIGH RUNS WITH CAROLS

Dear Editor

The Lions Club of Gillingham will once again be bringing Father Christmas to an area near you during December. This is one of our major charity collection events and all donations are used for local causes - please give generously if you are lucky enough to see Santa. Listen for his bell between 6.00 and 8.15pm (when the reindeer go home to bed) in these areas:
 Monday 12th December - Hempstead
 Tuesday 13th December - Hempstead
 Wednesday 14th December - Fairview Avenue area
 Thursday 15th December - Parkwood
 Sunday 18th December - Parkwood
 Monday 19th December - Kenilworth Drive area
 Tuesday 20th December - Cheriton Road area
 Wednesday 21st December - Lower Beechings area
 Thursday 22nd December - Twydall
 Friday 23rd December - Twydall

Yours sincerely
 Elaine Cutting
 01634 856063

Lions Club of Gillingham Press Officer

ROTARY CLUB of GILLINGHAM Christmas Float

Father Christmas will be visiting many areas during December and collecting for various charities. All the routes are available in full on the club website www.rcgk.co.uk - we print an abridged version below. All tours begin at 6.00pm and finish by 8.30pm.
 Friday 9th December - Bettescombe - Lonsdale Broadview area.
 Saturday 10th - Outlet Centre 9.00am - 5.00pm
 Tuesday 13th - Tufton - Berengrave - Childscroft area
 Wednesday 14th - Yeoman Drive, Darland
 Saturday 17th - Rainham Precinct 9.00am - 1.00pm
 Thursday 22nd - Marshall - Durham - Edwin Road area

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

St Margaret's Church, Rainham welcomes visitors to these special Christmas Services
 December 4th, 10.30 - Christingle Service
 December 18th, 6.30pm - Carols by Candlelight
 December 24th, 1.30pm & 4pm - Crib Service
 11.30pm - Midnight Mass with carols from 11pm
 December 25th, 9.30am - Family Communion

CHRISTMAS SERVICES at Granary Evangelical Church, Oasthouse, Granary Close, Rainham
 December 17th - Christmas Carol Service 3.00pm, free coffee & mince pies. Ring 01634 310959
 December 18th - Christmas Carol Service 10.30am, free coffee & mince pies. Ring 01634 310959

CHRISTMAS SERVICES at St Peter's, Bredhurst Sunday 18th December

9.30am Holy Terrors
 11.00am Holy Communion
 3.30pm Service of Lessons and Carols
Saturday 24th December, CHRISTMAS EVE
 2.00pm Holy Terrors Crib Service
 3.00pm Crib Service (up to about 8 years)
 4.30pm Crib Service (over 8s)
 11.30pm Holy Communion
Sunday 25th December, CHRISTMAS DAY
 10.00am Bethany Service
Sunday 1st January
 11.00am Morning Service

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS CANDLELIT SERVICE

The Centre Mind, Body & Spirit
 Farthing Corner M2 Services
 December 18th - 6.30 - 9.00pm,
 £2 entrance with buffet and raffle, all welcome

CHRISTMAS EVE COMMUNION

Rainham Methodist Church
 Corner of Station Road/Wakeley Road
 Saturday 24th December, 2.00pm.
 Put aside the hustle and bustle of Christmas preparations to join us for a special service to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.
 All are most welcome.

INDOOR BOOT FAIR

Upchurch Village Hall First Tuesday of each month
 December 6th, 10.00am - 12noon
 Refreshments available
 Entrance fee 20p donated to the Stroke Society
 01795 428006 or 07968 792354

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CHILDRENS CHRISTMAS PARTY

Saturday 10th December 2.00 - 4.00pm
 Food and a gift from Father Christmas
 Children up to 10 years old
 Price £5
 The Centre, Farthing Corner Service Area
 For more information contact
 June 01634 235959

THE RAINHAM LADIES CHOIR

In Concert with the Chatham Citadel Band of the Salvation Army
 Saturday 17th December, 7.30pm
 At the Royal Historical Dockyard Church Chatham
 In aid of MacMillan Nurses
 Tickets £7 adults & £3 children under 10.
 Tickets are available: Ring 01634 365806
 or email secretary@rainhamladies.org.uk

'RING CHRISTMAS BELLS'

Wigmore MADS Annual Christmas Concert
 St Matthew's Community Centre,
 Drewery Drive, Wigmore
 Saturday 17th December at 8.00pm
 Tickets: £6 & £5 concessions
 available from Sue Burrows 01634 370639

SAMARITANS

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Diary 2011

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 8PP

Diary Copy Date: 3rd January

- December 4th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Tony/Ann 01634 406634 10.00am for 5.5 miles at Boughton Street outside the White Horse Inn. Bring snack for mid-way break. Pub at end with meals available.
- December 4th - St Margaret's Church, Rainham, 10.30am 'Christingle Service'
- December 4th - Capstone Farm Country Park, Trim Trail, 8.45 - 9.30am, £1 pp book in advance 01634 338191
- December 4th - Medway Towns Footpath Group walk, 10.00am, Meet Chris Morris 01634 374923, Upchurch Golf Club, Christmas Dinner Walk, 4 miles, no dogs
- December 4th - Medway Towns Footpath Group walk, 10.00am, Meet Stephen Manning 01634 375821, Parkwood Shops, 6 miles, undulating some lane / street walking via Queendown Warren, no dogs
- December 4th - Riverside Country Park, Tree Dressing, 11am - 1pm. For accompanied children aged 5 to 12-years-old. No need to book just turn up, £1 per child
- December 5th - The Monday Hub, St Paul's Church, Deanwood Drive, Parkwood 10.00am - 1.00pm, lively conversation, table tennis, scrabble and much more, details Jennie Spalding 01634 360664.
- December 5th - Rainham Wives, 8.00pm, Methodist Church Hall, Wakeley Road, Rainham, Christmas Meal, New members of all ages very welcome, subs £1.50 per meeting, details 01634 230639.
- December 6th - Fairview Frogs parent/carers and toddler group, every Tuesday in term time, 10.00 - 11.30am, Fairview Community Primary School. Messy and fun activities, £2 per family, 01634 338710 or 376270
- December 6th - Gillingham Horticultural Society Floral Art Group, 7.30 - 9.00pm United Reformed Church (rear hall), Balmoral Road, Gillingham, Christmas Do and planning the programme. Visitors welcome contact Kay Buss 01634 232998
- December 7th - Rainham Horticultural Society, AGM 7.30pm, Cricket Pavilion, Berengrave Lane, Rainham. New members welcome, ring 366276 for details.
- December 8th - Fairview Tadpoles parent/carers baby and toddler group, every Thursday in term time, 1.15 -

- 2.45pm, Fairview Community Primary School. Meet other mums for a chat and drink, £2 per family, ring 01634 338710 or 376270 for details.
- December 8th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Games, tea & chat, Hempstead Village Hall, behind All Saints Church, 169 Hempstead Road, 2.00 - 4.00pm. New members welcome, Phone 01634 366907
- December 8th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Pioneering Debutantes to present day WI Presidents - Barbara Stevens, St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore, 2.00pm. For people over the age of 50, ring 235507 for details.
- December 8th - BWAG Carol Concert, 7.30pm, St Peter's Church, Bredhurst, tickets £6 pp (under 16 free) only in advance from 07813 785940 or bwag@vanessajones.plus.com
- December 9th - Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group, Millennium Centre, Rainham, every Friday 9.45am - 12noon to help people who have lost their spouse or a close relative, join us for a cuppa and chat, ring Julie 01634 364309 for details.
- December 9th - Gillingham & Rainham Local History Society 7.15pm United Reformed Church, Balmoral Road, Gillingham, The Victorian Ropery, Mrs. P. Wood, details 01634 854982.
- December 9th - MKAS, Christmas meeting, Bredhurst Village Hall, Hurstwood Road second and last Friday in the month, 7.45pm. For observing we meet on other Fridays at the Victoria Hotel, Canterbury. More details phone Trev on 07717 678795
- December 9th - Rotary Club Christmas Float 6.00 - 8.30pm, Bettlescombe- Lonsdale Broadway area.
- December 10th - Rotary Club Christmas Float 9.00am - 5.00pm, Outlet Centre
- December 10th - Gillingham Methodist Church, Third Avenue, Christmas Tree Festival, 10.00am - 4.00pm with various stalls & refreshments, Free admission.
- December 10th - Children's Christmas Party, The

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- Centre (by M2 Service Area) 2.00 - 4.00pm for children up to 10 years old, food and a gift from Father Christmas price £5, information June 01634 235959.
- December 10th - Medway Folk Dance Club, Christmas Dance, 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.
- December 10th - Gillingham Methodist Church, Third Avenue, 'Big Christmas Sing' & Concert, 7.30pm for Christian Aid, Tickets £5 01634 575139 or on the door
- December 10th - Paranormal Investigation, Fort Amherst, Dock Road, Chatham, Activities start 9.00pm Finish 3.00am approx Medium Richard Ware Tickets £35 Book on line, over 18's only 01634 847747 or see www.fortamherst.com
- December 11th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Arthur/Jan 01634 711734, 10.00 am for 8 miles at Boughton Lees. Bring picnic lunch.
- December 11th - Capstone Farm Country Park, Memories of Capstone, 10.00am - 12noon a walk with history of the surrounding area from 1900 onward, £1 per person, book in advance 01634 338191.
- December 12th - Lions Club Santa's Sleigh Run, 6.00 - 8.15pm, Hempstead
- December 12th - Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group for those still in employment, Millennium Centre, Rainham, 7.15 - 9.00pm to help people who have lost their spouse or a close relative, join us for a cuppa and chat, ring Julie 01634 364309 for details.
- December 12th - Rainham Wives, Fairy Tale Bingo plus Mince Pies, (see 5th Dec).
- December 13th - Lions Club Santa's Sleigh Run, 6.00 - 8.15pm, Hempstead
- December 13th - Rotary Club Christmas Float 6.00 - 8.30pm, Tufton- Berengrave - Childscroft area
- December 13th - Medway Antique & Collector's Club, 7.30 for 8.00pm, St George Hotel, New Road, Chatham, Christmas Dinner, Visitors most welcome, ring 01474 823606 for details.
- December 14th - Lions Club Santa's Sleigh Run, 6.00 - 8.15pm, Fairview Avenue
- December 14th - Rainham Flower Club, 7.30pm, Upchurch Village Hall, Christmas Party, information ring 01795 425700 www.rainhamflowerclub.uk.com
- December 14th - Rainham Poetry Group meet second Wednesday each month, 40 Birling Avenue Rainham,

- 7.30 - 9.30pm. All are welcome to listen or read poetry. Ring 01634 260228 for details.
- December 14th - Bredhurst WI, 7.30pm Bredhurst Village Hall, Entertainment by Bredhurst WI Members, ring 01634 389966 for more details.
- December 15th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Carols with children from Fairview School and presentation of charity cheque, (see 8th Dec).
- December 15th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Music Makers at Christmas, (see 8th Dec).
- December 15th - Rainham Women Institute 1.45 - 4.00pm Methodist Church Hall, Wakeley Road, Christmas Party. Visitors welcome for small entry charge per visit, Ring 01634 366276 for details.
- December 15th - Lions Club Santa's Sleigh Run, 6.00 - 8.15pm, Parkwood
- December 15th - Medway Film Makers, 7.30pm, Davis Estate Community Centre - Christmas Social, ring 01634 360401 or see www.medwayfilmmakers.com
- December 17th - Craft Sale, Millennium Centre, Rainham, 9.30am - 12.30pm, Free entry to public.
- December 17th - Wigmore MADS, Christmas Concert 'Ring Christmas Bells', St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore 8.00pm, Tickets £6 (£5 concessions), 01634 370639
- December 17th - Rainham Ladies Choir in Concert with Chatham Citadel Band of the Salvation Army, 7.30pm Royal Historical Dockyard Church, Chatham In aid of Macmillan Nurses, £7 adults, £3 under 10, 01634 365806 email secretary@rainhamladies.org.uk
- December 17th - Granary Evangelical Church, Oasthouse, Granary Close, Rainham - Christmas Carol Service 3pm, free coffee & mince pies 01634 310959
- December 17th - Rotary Club Christmas Float 9.00am - 5.00pm, Rainham Precinct
- December 17th - Medway Folk Dance Club, Christmas Ceilidh, (see 10th Dec).
- December 17th - Instep Dancing, Rainham School for Girls, Derwent Way. Christmas Dance - ticket only 7.30 - 11.00pm. Enquiries 01634 363738 email s.collins02@btinternet.com
- December 18th - Capstone Farm Country Park, Mountain Bike Trail, 8.45 - 9.30am, ride the trail to better your lap times. A short trail with some big hills and ramps, £1 per person, book 01643 338191.

Continued on Page 11

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PANTOMIME
 The Oasthouse Theatre
 Rainham Theatrical Society
 Stratford Lane, Off High Street, Rainham
 Jack & The Beanstalk
 A family panto by Jack Homewood
 January 6th.7.13.14.19.20.21.27 & 28th
 Curtain up at 8.00pm with matinees every
 Saturday at 2.00pm & 5.00pm
 Tickets available on 0844 8793224 or on line
 www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk

This traditional family pantomime is packed full of
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 Hubbard find the rent money to pay the Squire or
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 overcome the wicked Giant to marry the princess?
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UPCHURCH HAND BELL RINGERS
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 We meet every Tuesday evening 7.30pm
 For more details call Pete Boakes on 01634 230805.

ACCORDION CLUB
 The nearest accordion clubs I can find are
 Canterbury in one direction and Bromley in the
 other. As there is an accordion teacher in Rainham I
 am assuming there will be some budding players of
 all ages and abilities in this local area. I would like to
 start a Medway Accordion Club to be based in the
 Rainham area with a practice initially once a month
 at a local venue (to be arranged).
 The only criteria for joining will be an interest in
 playing and improving ones ability on the accordion.
 To find out more details please contact Alan via
 email on picsound777@blueyonder.co.uk or call
 07851 533944

WINTER SOLSTICE
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 21st December, 7.30pm
 The Centre, M2 Medway Motorway Service Area
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FOLK CLUB IN RAINHAM
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 January 6th – February 17th, 7.30pm
 Call Bill for more information 01634 363310
 Donations to Folk Clubs at Station Road Oast House

HEMPSTEAD VALLEY CAROL CONCERT
 Sunday 11th December, from 4.45pm
 Sing your favourite carols with school children from
 local schools and members of local churches,
 accompanied by the Medway Band.
 We welcomes all ages and faiths to this traditional
 carol concert. Please note that the centre is open for
 the carol concert, all stores closed during the event.
 Last year a record number of over 300 people filled
 the mall outside M&S in the shopping centre to sing
 a programme of traditional favourites. Parents,
 relatives and guests will be welcomed by Rev Allan
 Smith of New Life Community Church, Gillingham.
 The Medway Band will be playing outside the centre
 (close to Argos main entrance) throughout the day
 on Sunday 11th December.

THE RSPB MEDWAY LOCAL GROUP TALK,
 December 20th, 7.30 - 10.00pm, Admission £3.00.
 Parkwood Community Centre, Gillingham,
 Grumpy Birding - Bo Boelens
 www.medway-rspb.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk.

PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS
 Fort Amherst, Dock Road, Chatham
 Saturday 10th December
 Arrive 8.30pm Activities start 9.00pm
 Finish 3.00am approx
 Medium Richard Ware Are YOU Brave Enough?
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Nature Notes

NATURE NOTES FOR NOVEMBER

In the autumn, as the days shorten and temperatures fall, deciduous trees begin to shed their leaves. They do this because, once the ground becomes frozen, they would continue to lose water by evaporation from their broad leaves but would not be able to replace that water from the ground. Trees standing on their own tend to lose their leaves sooner than trees in woods, where there is some shelter from the blustery autumn winds and where the climate is a little warmer. In November I visited four local woods in order to witness the remaining signs of autumn. They were Ambley, East Hoath, Fox Burrow and South Woods, all owned by Medway Council. All four woods are growing on clay soils with flint, on a deep bed of chalk, and the flora and fauna of each wood are therefore much the same.

All deciduous woods generally consist of four layers, namely, the ground layer, the herb layer, the shrub layer and the tree layer. The ground layer of each of the four woods I visited is mainly covered by dead leaves, among which live beetles, earthworms, woodlice, centipedes and millipedes. Fallen branches, cut timber and tree stumps, all slowly rotting away into the ground, are covered in moss, lichens or fungi. The latter includes crumble cap, which is often seen growing on rotten stumps. Two fungi found on the ground, especially under beech trees, are cep or penny bun and the yellow coloured Chanterelle.

The herb layer of a deciduous wood is represented by flowers and ferns. By the winter, the woodland flowers may have lost all of their above-ground growth and survive the coldest season as subterranean bulbs or tubers. Some flowers leave no vegetative structure at all and persist through the winter months only as seeds. Dogs mercury, wood anemones and bluebells can be seen growing in all four woods in the spring. These three plants indicate that the four woods are of ancient origin. Butchers' broom, a prickly evergreen shrub, which was once used to sweep out butchers' shops, can also be seen in the four woods throughout the year and this plant is another reliable indicator of ancient woodland. Many ferns, too, are

evergreen and remain standing in the shelter of woods in the winter. Those that do die down, such as bracken, provide a thick warm shelter for numerous small animals, whether hibernating or not.

The shrub layer in each of the four woods consist of hazel, bramble, holly, hawthorn and great sallow, among other shrubs. The yellow catkins of the many great sallow or pussy willow trees in Fox Burrow Wood are very noticeable in March as one travels Deanwood Drive. The shrub layer is where birds such as warblers nest in spring. The tree layer in the four local woods consists mainly of oak, horn beam, beech, cherry, ash and sweet chestnut. The large and prominent fungus called beefsteak can be seen growing on these deciduous trees. South Wood (which lies between Hempstead and Capstone Roads) contains the most cherry trees which, during my November visit, were still draped in autumnal splendour - leaves of red and yellow. In the past, the four woods were commercially managed for their timber. Oak was used for the building of ships and timber framed houses, beech for furniture, coppiced sweet chestnut for hop and fencing poles and coppiced hornbeam for charcoal. These days, large scale clearance takes place only in East Hoath Wood where overgrown coppiced sweet chestnut and hornbeam trees are cut down in order to bring light and plant life to the woodland floor. There is apparently little demand for felled coppiced timber.

During my autumnal visit to the four woods I came across just one species of wild mammal, the grey squirrel. Wood pigeons were plentiful in all of the woods but I also saw or heard wrens, robins and blackbirds and, particularly in Fox Burrow Wood, jays. In East Hoath Wood I noted an old nuthatch nesting hole in an oak tree. The birds had used mud to reduce the diameter of the hole to just their own size. Woods in the autumn (and winter) can appear lifeless and silent but one can occasionally meet, as I did in Ambley Wood, a feeding party of long tailed, blue and great tits, keeping in touch which each other by means of constant calls. Very soon the flock moves on and one is left, once again, in the quietness of the wood in autumn.

Joe Ennis

RECREATION GROUND part 2

Continued from November 2011

Rainham Cricket Club first played at the Rainham Recreation Ground in 1890, and other cricket clubs, including Rainham Ladies, the Rainham Brotherhood and Rainham F.C.'s cricket team used the ground during the 1920s. At this period there was considerable trouble with the cesspools in Rainham, with that at the Rec. attracting particular comment. It had an area of twelve square feet and was four feet deep, but was obviously inadequate. A correspondent wrote that 'Although recently emptied it has rapidly refilled so that liquid runs down the adjacent roadway, with deposits floating on it... And since the wooden cover was neither water nor airtight, 'a stench permeates the whole vicinity'. The letter was written in August, and in October the Parish council was considering the erection of a new Public Lavatory at the Rec. at a cost of £60.

Local football teams regularly held matches at the Rec., but Rainham Juniors F.C. were granted special permission to play there on Christmas morning in 1918 in order to raise money for St Bartholomew's Hospital. Unfortunately an account of the match is not available, for by 1918 wartime austerities had restricted the East Kent Gazette to only a few pages. The Sports reports had to be omitted. Councillors had been made aware in 1902 that gambling had taken place at the Rainham Cycling Club's Sports some years earlier, and a special clause had subsequently been inserted into letting agreements which forbade it. Permission was even required from the Parish Council for the sale of 'Flanders poppies' by the Ivy Leaf Club at the Rec. on Saturday 10th November 1923.

The large open space also provided the venue for Hospital Fetes. In August 1926 St Bartholomew's was the beneficiary of the proceeds of an event organised in association with The Macklands Arms P.H. The Mayor of Rochester opened the proceedings, of which the highlight was perhaps the Webb Cup Competition for local fire brigades. Rainham was about to receive its new fire engine, and it was thought that the demonstrations by numerous Kent brigades would 'ginger up the young men of Rainham' and persuade them to volunteer to join the local team. The weather was fine, and a thousand people attended, although the reporter remarked that

numbers were slightly lower than had been hoped because of an important football match at Gillingham.

Early the following year at a Parish Council meeting Chief Fire Officer Keutenius asked that keys to both the Fire Station and the gate of the Recreation Ground be given to the Police to be kept at the Police house in Station Road. They were often notified of a fire 10-15 minutes before the firemen reached their station in Webster Road, so could minimise delay by opening the doors. It is not clear why the key to the Rec. was needed, unless the pump was still kept there (as it had been prior to 1920).

RAD

BROMPTON RESEARCH OPEN DAY

The Brompton Research Study Group - led by local volunteers - is looking for memories of Brompton. If you visited, worked or lived in Brompton, near Chatham, in the '40s, '50s or '60s (or earlier) please come along to a drop-in session on 13th January 2012, between 1.30 and 3.30pm, at the Royal Engineers Museum, Library and Archive, Prince Arthur Road, Chatham. Or, if you know anyone who fits the bill, please encourage them to attend - there's no need to book, and refreshments will be provided. This session is part of a bigger project exploring what it was like to live in Brompton from the age of sail onwards. For more information on the open session or the project as a whole, please contact Nicola Moy on 01634 334319 or chathamworldheritage@medway.gov.uk.

MEDWAY FESTIVAL

of Music Speech and Drama has published its syllabus for the 2012 Festival, to be held on March 31st at Fort Pitt Grammar School. Special classes available to commemorate the bi-centenary of the birth of Charles Dickens, and the Olympic Games. Closing date for entries 31st January 2012. Syllabus available from The Secretary, Margaret Holby 01634 844122 www.medwayfestival.co.uk. Email: medwayfestivalofmsd@hotmail.co.uk

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Diary 2011 & 2012

December 18th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Graham 07989 753278 10.00am for 8.5 miles at St Mary's Church near Burham. Bring picnic lunch, Pub at end.
December 18th - Granary Evangelical Church, Oasthouse, Granary Close, - Christmas Carol Service 10.30am, free coffee & mince pies. 01634 310959
December 18th - Lions Club Santa's Sleigh Run, 6.00 – 8.15pm, Parkwood
December 18th - Special Christmas Candlelit Service, The Centre Mind, Body & Spirit, Farthing Corner M2 Services, 6.30 – 9.00pm, £2 entrance with buffet and raffle, all welcome.
December 18th - St Margaret's Church, Rainham, 6.30pm 'Carols by Candlelight'
December 18th - St Peter's, Bredhurst, 3.30pm Service of Lessons and Carols
December 19th - The Monday Hub (see 5th Dec).
December 19th - Lions Club Santa's Sleigh Run, 6.00 – 8.15pm, Kenilworth Drive
December 19th - Rainham Evening Women's Institute, 7.30pm, Millennium Centre, Rainham, Christmas Party, competition Brocade, ring 372282
December 20th - Riverside Country Park, Santa at the Park, 1 - 4pm. every child who meets Santa will get a small prize. Book in advance 01634 337432 before 11th December, £2.50 per child.
December 20th - Lions Club Santa's Sleigh Run, 6.00 – 8.15pm, Cheriton Road
December 20th - RSPB Medway Local Group Talk, Parkwood Community Centre, 7.30 - 10.00pm, £3.00, Grumpy Birding - Bo Boelens
December 21st - Capstone Farm Country Park, Santa at the Park, (see 20th Dec Riverside 01634 338191).
December 21st - Lions Club Santa's Sleigh Run, 6.00 – 8.15pm, Lower Beechings
December 21st - A Magical Winter Solstice Celebration with candles, evergreens, mulled wine, music and an ancient Mummies play "The Oak King

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and The Holly King", 7.30pm, The Centre, Medway Motorway Services, 01634 366944
December 21st - Wigmore WI, 7.30pm, St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Christmas party, 2nd birthday party and entertainment, Visitors welcome ring 01634 263405 for details.
December 21st - Bredhurst Garden Club, Christmas Dinner 7.00pm, ring 01634 233554 for details.
December 22nd - Wigmore Thursday Club, Informal Meeting, (see 8th Dec).
December 22nd - Rotary Club Christmas Float 6.00 – 8.30pm, Marshall – Durham – Edwin Road area
December 24th - St Peter's, Bredhurst, Christmas Eve, 2.00pm Holy Terrors Crib Service, 3.00pm Crib Service (up to about 8 years), 4.30pm Crib Service (over 8s), 11.30pm Holy Communion
December 24th - St Margaret's Church, Rainham, 1.30pm & 4.00pm 'Crib Service' 11.30pm 'Midnight Mass' with carols from 11.00pm
December 24th - Christmas Eve Communion Rainham Methodist Church, Corner of Station Road/Wakeley Road, 2.00pm. All are most welcome.
December 25th - St Margaret's Church, Rainham, 9.30am 'Family Communion'
December 25th - St Peter's, Bredhurst, Christmas Day, 10.00am Bethany Service
December 28th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Mike 9.30am for 8 miles Bredhurst commuter Car Park for a linear bus pass walk to Maidstone
December 31st - Instep Dancing, Rainham School for Girls, Derwent Way. New Years Eve Dance – ticket only 7.30pm – 12.30am. Enquiries 01634 363738 email s.collins02@btinternet.com
January 1st - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Geoff 07525 161766, 11.00am for 3.5 miles New Years Day walk at Otford for a Family Cruise around the Solar System. Meet and park in the free Car Park opposite The Bull PH Otford.
January 5th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Bingo, (see 8th Dec).
January 5th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Games, tea & chat, (see 8th Dec).

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Diary 2012

January 6th - Learn basic Guitar Chords, 7.30pm free
lessons at Folk Club at The Oast, Station Road
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January 6.7.13.14.19.20.21.27 & 28th - Oasthouse
Theatre, Rainham 'Jack & The Beanstalk' A family
panto by Jack Homewood, Curtain up 8.00pm, matinees
every Saturday 2.00 & 5.00pm, Tickets 0844 8793224
or on line @ www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk
January 7th - Medway Folk Dance Club, New Year
Dance, (see 10th Dec).
January 8th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Mike
10.00am for 6 miles Meet and park commuter Car Park
just north of Bredhurst. Walk via Bredhurst Hurst,
Scragged Oak Road and Monkdown Wood. Pub at end.
January 8th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,
Meet Chris Morris 01634 374923, Sharnal Street, 6
miles via High Halstow and Cooling, fairly flat but two
easy hills, lovely views, Dogs OK
January 9th - The Monday Hub, (see 5th Dec).
January 10th - Medway Antique and Collectors' Club,
Nelson, Hero and Man (see 13th Dec).
January 11th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Arthur/Jan
01634 711734 10.00am for 6 miles walk, meet at
Mereworth Church. Walk through Hurst Wood, Gover
Hill and West Peckham. Pub at end
January 11th - Bredhurst WI, Ms Lucy Allen - Titanic to
Harry Potter (see 14th Dec).
January 12th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Journalism at the
BBC - Clive Lawrence, (see 8th Dec).

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January 13th - Gillingham & Rainham Local History
Soc Rochester Bridge, The Bridge Wardens (see 9th)
January 13th - Learn basic Guitar Chords, (see 6th Jan)
January 15th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet
Pete/Kate 07751 879003 10.00am for 6.5 miles walk
at Cliffe. Meet and park in the RSPB Car Park at end
of Salt Lane by Bretts Brickworks.
January 15th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,
10.00am, Meet Chris Morris 01634 374923, Upper
Halling, 4.5 miles some steep hills, Dogs OK
January 16th - Rainham Wives, New Year Party, (5th
January 17th - GHS Floral Art Group, Members
Choice workshop with Carol Lane. (see 6th Dec).
January 18th - Bredhurst Garden Club, Mr Wilf Lower
- Illustrated Talk 'Medway Tales from the Dividing
River' (see 21st Dec).
January 19th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Entertainment
by Kingfisher Singers, (see 8th Dec).
January 20th - Learn basic Guitar Chords, (see 6th Jan)
January 21st - Medway Folk Dance Club, (see 10th).
January 22nd - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,
10.00am, Meet Roger Norman 01634 232404, South
Park, Armstrong Road, Maidstone, 5 miles varied
terrain along Loose Valley, Dogs OK
January 22nd - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Mike
07855 929404 10.00am for 8.2 miles walk at
Aylesford. Bring picnic lunch for midway break,
January 27th - Medway Geographical Society, Adult
Education Centre, Green Street, Gillingham, 7.30 -
9.00pm 'A Trip to the Dolomites and
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