

# ACTION FORUM

JANUARY /  
FEBRUARY 2012  
NUMBER 473

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA ■

## *Coronation Day Party, June 23rd 1911*



To celebrate the Coronation of King George V a party was held for the people of Rainham on the field behind the National School which stood on land now occupied by Rainham Shopping Centre at the top of Station Road. All the village attended, as can be seen, dressed in their Sunday best. Races were held, for entertainment and prizes, and a grand tea provided. At the end of the proceedings each child was presented with a commemorative Coronation Mug. This is one of more than 140 pictures in 'A Third Picture Book of Rainham' (published February 2010) now available price £7.99 from Sunburst Books 21, Station Road, Rainham (£4 from each sale is donated to St Margaret's Church.) See the article on Jubilee Celebrations p9.

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## Editorial

Rather belatedly we wish you all a Very Happy New Year. After all the anticipation the parties and family gatherings are over and life is returning to normal. The contrast in weather from last year could hardly be bigger, sub zero temperatures and deep snow in 2010 became almost tropical days with plenty of rainfall in 2011. I suppose it is such variety that adds interest to life and gives us something to talk about but it would be good sometimes to know what to expect. Even if you have already broken all those well intentioned New Year Resolutions it is not too late to try again – particularly if as with a great proportion of the population they included the 'eat more healthily' and 'take more exercise' clauses. Both are difficult to establish in our busy modern lifestyles when jumping in the car and snacking from fast food outlets are the so easily available options. It takes will power and determination and all too often this only comes after a major medical scare. It is worth the effort however and help is at hand, so each time you relapse just think of it as a justifiable setback and begin the diet and fitness regime again – it is suggested that if you persevere long enough eventually your taste buds evolve to your new foods and you even begin to enjoy salads and vegetables and you feel sluggish without a daily 30 minute burst of activity, well that's the theory anyway. Why not see if you can prove it correct this year? Following my editorial in December I am delighted to report that the practice of collecting used postage stamps for charity is alive and very well. It seems that a great variety of charities are delighted to receive the stamps so presumably there is a flourishing market for resale to boost their funds. One reader advises that if you Google 'Used stamps for charity' you will find a large number of interested organisations. There are of course some sensible provisos - if posting to your chosen charity (some even issue a freepost address for this purpose) please bear in mind it costs quite a bit so you are enhancing your donation if you pay the postage cost. It needs to be a fairly weighty bundle for the value to exceed the postage charge. Obviously by far the most efficient method is to drop them into a central collecting point and we have managed to locate several in the area - but that of course restricts your choice of charity. Thank you everyone who got in touch with the many suggestions for donating stamps, we include a list of options on page 7.

Now the days are getting longer it will not be long before spring is in the air and we can look forward to summer so do have a very good month and we will be with you again in March.

## Correspondence

### CHANGE IN SCHOOL DAY TIMINGS

Dear Editor,

The Governors of St Margaret's C of E Junior School propose to alter the timings of the school day, from September 2012, as follows:

School gates to open at 8.30am (currently 8.45am)

School day to begin at 8.40am (currently 8.55am)

School day to end at 3.10pm (currently 3.30pm)

The Governors are holding consultation meetings on Wednesday February 22nd at 2.30pm and 7.30pm at School. Anyone who wishes to express a view on the proposed timings and who cannot attend either meeting can write to the Chair of Governors c/o the School at Orchard Street, ME8 9AE.

Yours sincerely  
Joe Ennis

A Governor of St Margaret's C of E Junior School

### RAINHAM RECREATION GROUND

Dear Editor,

Recent articles in Action Forum have reminded me of the various events I have attended on Rainham Recreation Ground. The usual annual flower show, the Coop Fete, school sports were among the regulars but one or two were more special. One in particular was the Peace Party on July 19th 1919 where I won a threading the Needle Race. The most special of all I suppose was the Keg Meg Fete of I think 1948 or 49. The Kent Messenger of those days (and maybe still does) ran a children's club called the Keg Megs. Each week half a sheet of the Messenger was devoted to subjects of interest to children and where they could find their own names and particulars on their birthdays. Until the outbreak of World War II a Keg Meg Fete was held in a different venue each year. This one, probably the first after the war, was to be held in Rainham Rec. It was widely advertised and after years of austerity was eagerly awaited. Although as a family we did not take the KM so our children were not Keg Megs it was apparently a free for all and I promised I would take them to the fete. Unfortunately on the day it was quite impossible to keep my promise and two little girls were very disappointed. My husband worked until midday on Saturday with the prospect of a free afternoon, he came home to find a very sick wife and two unhappy little daughters. He very nobly agreed to take my place and take the girls to the fete. By the time he had eaten his dinner and tidied both himself and the children time was getting on and I feared they were missing most of the fun. My fears were realised as it so happened that they missed all of it. After the long walk to the village they found they could not proceed down Station Road as it was

blocked by the enormous queue of people trying to get to the Rec. It was quite obvious that they were not going to reach the fete for a very long time, if at all, so they turned round and invited themselves to Daddy's sister for tea. This treat amply compensated the children for any disappointment they felt about missing the fete and when they came home at bedtime all they could tell me about was how Station Road was so congested. I do not remember hearing anything about the day and might never have thought of it again had not AF jogged my memory. Now I am curious to know what happened that day, surely with so many people still arriving at that late hour it must have been very busy. Maybe among the Action Forum readers someone may remember the occasion and can tell me something about it.

Yours sincerely  
Helena Thomas  
20 Pump Lane

### BARN DANCE

Dear Editor,

With reference to the Barn Dance which was held on December 3rd in aid of the Air Ambulance I would like to thank all those who supported the event helping to raise £500 (after expenses) by attending and giving generously towards the raffle and auction.

A special thank you to our local shops, Lloyds, Boots, Wilkinsons, Joy's Hairdressers, The Cricketers, Florists, Butchers, Cuts and Leeds and Hever Castles (who donated visitors passes).

The visit from our MP who assisted with the raffle was much appreciated and special thanks go to Olwen, Claire & David and Ben & Owen who all played their part in a very successful evening.

Yours sincerely  
Mary Robson  
01634 632415

### SPRING FAIR

Dear Editor

Macmillan Cancer Support are holding a Spring Fair in the Millennium Centre, Rainham, on Saturday 31st March, from 9.30am until 12.30pm. Tables are available at the cost of £10 each for the sale of home made goods, etc. To book a table or for more information please contact Jean Mardel on 01634 388111 or Jean Higgins on 01634 233930.

Yours sincerely  
Jean Mardel

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## WASTE PAPER COLLECTION

17th Gillingham Scout Group

Further to your editorial in the December edition of Action Forum, I am pleased to confirm that the group is still very actively collecting paper and cardboard. However, due to vandalism for several years now they do not have a skip in the Cricketers car park; instead every third Sunday they park their van in the Millennium Centre car park from 8.30am to 12.30pm for people to place any items for collection behind the van. This is followed by an established street collection for people who are unable to get to the hall. The group also operates a fortnightly street collection on a Saturday morning.

For many years these collections have been organised and carried out by Morton Jarvis and a small band of helpers; however recently Morton has expressed a wish to stand down for family reasons, which will leave us very short of helpers. The group would be very pleased to hear from anyone who could spare two or three hours on an occasional basis to help raise funds to maintain their headquarters and to assist in a wide range of Scouting activities.

For further information please contact the group chairman, Chris Powell on 01634 378080

## TELL ME A STORY!

Please can you help? We are aiming to put on an exhibition at the end of March to raise funds for the Air Ambulance. It will be called 'Flight of Fancy' and to interest a wide range of people will include short accounts of life in the R.A.F. and W.A.A.F., experiences with hot-air balloons, gliders or parachutes, and fascinating snippets about birds, bees and butterflies. If it flies we are interested! If you can assist or for more details please ring us on 01634 360227 or email pgrimmer@blueyonder.co.uk  
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# Diary 2012

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: 14th February

January 15th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Pete/Kate  
07751 879003 10.00am, 6.5 miles walk at Cliffe. Park  
in the RSPB Car Park at end of Salt Lane by Bretts  
Brickworks. A flat circular walk out to Cliffe Forts.

January 15th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,  
10.00am, Meet Chris Morris 01634 374923, Upper  
Halling, 4.5 miles via Halling Common some steep  
hills, Dogs OK

January 16th - Rainham Wives, 8.00pm, Methodist  
Church Hall, Wakeley Road, Rainham, New Year  
Party, New members of all ages very welcome, subs  
£1.50 per meeting, details 01634 230639.

January 16th - Rainham Evening Women's Institute,  
7.30pm Millennium Centre, Rainham, Some Kent  
Ghosts - Mr Dennis Chambers, competition Snow  
Scene, ring 01634 372282 for more details.

January 17th - Gillingham Horticultural Society Floral  
Art Group, 7.30 - 9.00pm United Reformed Church  
(rear hall), Balmoral Road, Gillingham, Members  
Choice workshop with Carol Lane. Visitors welcome  
contact Kay Buss 01634 232998

January 17th - The RSPB Medway Local Group Talk,  
Parkwood Community Centre, 7.30 - 10.00pm, £3.00,  
Unwrapping Raptors - David Darrell-Lambert. For  
Walks see [www.medway-rspb.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk](http://www.medway-rspb.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk).

January 18th - Bredhurst Garden Club, Mr Wilf Lower -  
Illustrated Talk 'Medway Tales from the Dividing  
River', 7.30pm, Bredhurst Village Hall, 01634 233554,  
new members welcome.

January 19th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Entertainment by  
Kingfisher Singers, St Matthew's Community Centre,  
Drewery Drive, Wigmore, 2.00pm. For people over the  
age of 50, ring 235507 for details.

January 19th - 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

January 19th - Rainham Women's Institute 1.45 - 4.00pm  
Methodist Church Hall, Wakeley Road, Rainham.  
Speaker on Queen Victoria and the Royal Disease,

Visitors welcome for small entry charge per visit.  
Ring 01634 366276 for details

January 20th - Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group  
Millennium Centre every Friday 9.45 - noon to help  
people who have lost their spouse/partner, join us for  
a cuppa & chat, ring Julie on 364309 for details.

January 20th - Learn basic Guitar Chords, 7.30pm free  
lessons at Folk Club at The Oast, Station Road  
Community Centre, ring Bill 01634 363310.

January 21st - 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.

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. Meet and park in the free Car Park just  
south of Aylesford village. Route covers sand pits and  
chalk quarries, one steep climb, good views. Bring  
picnic lunch for midway break.

January 23rd - 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 01634360664.

January 23rd - Rainham Wives, Quiz & Bring & Buy  
for our charity, (see 16th Jan).

January 26th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Annual  
General Meeting, (see 19th Jan).

January 26th - Hempstead Leisure Club - Premium  
Travel Presentation, (see 19th Jan).

January 26th - Rainham & District Dolls' House and  
Miniaturist Group, AGM & Social evening, Howard  
Memorial Hall, Woodside, 7.30pm, ring 01634 312038  
or 366183 for details.

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January 27th - Medway Geographical Society, Adult  
Education Centre, Green Street, Gillingham, 7.30 -  
9.00pm 'A Trip to the Dolomites and Oberammergau'-  
Tony Mitchell, Everyone Welcome, For more  
information contact 01634 362683

January 27th - Mid-Kent Astronomical Society (MKAS)  
Bredhurst Village Hall, Hurstwood Road, Bredhurst,  
Doors open at 7.45pm - Peter Higley 'The Observatory  
as an Architectural object', followed by viewing in the  
field behind the hall after the lecture part of the BBC2  
Stargazing Live programme. Guests £2, details phone  
07717678795 any reasonable time or visit the web site  
<http://www.midkentastro.org.uk/>

January 27 & 28th - Pantomime, The Oasthouse Theatre,  
Rainham 'Jack & The Beanstalk' A family panto by  
Jack Homewood, Curtain up 8.00pm, matinees Sat  
2.00 & 5.00pm, Tickets 0844 8793224 or on line @  
[www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk](http://www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk)

January 28th - RAMASES Lecture, 2.30pm, Newington  
Village Hall - Rosalind Janssen 'Lager louts of the  
New Kingdom' - tickets Members £6.00 Guests £8.00  
on the door, more details [ramasesnk@hotmail.com](mailto:ramasesnk@hotmail.com) or  
from John Dewey 01795 472316

January 29th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Mike  
10.00am for 8 miles walk at Teston. Meet and park  
Teston Bridge Picnic Site Car Park (fee payable).  
Gradual climb through woods and fields, views of the  
river. Bring picnic lunch for midway break, Pub at end

January 29th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,  
10.00am, Meet John Trebill 01634 244045, Hadlow  
town square, 4.5 miles fairly flat easy walk, No Dogs  
January 30th - Rainham Wives, Your Local Travel  
Agent - talk by Kim, (see 16th Jan).

February 1st - Rainham Horticultural Society, 7.30 pm  
Cricket Pavilion, Berengrave Lane, Rainham, Ideas for  
Improved Vegetable Growing - Malcolm Withnall,  
New members welcome, ring 366276 for details

February 2nd - Hempstead Leisure Club - Games, tea &  
chat, (see 19th Jan).

February 2nd - Wigmore Thursday Club, Table Games,  
(see 19th Jan).

February 3rd - Learn basic Guitar Chords, (20th Jan).

February 4th - Medway Folk Dance Club, (see 21st Jan).

February 5th - Medway Towns Footpath Group walk,  
10.00am, Meet Stephen Manning 01634 375821  
Cuxton White Horse Pub (free parking Station Road),  
5 miles, undulating, may be muddy, no dogs

February 5th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Geoff  
07525 161766 10.00am for 4 mile walk at Sandling.  
Meet and park in the Car Park beyond the Yew Tree  
PH, Sandling. Walk is mainly flat to Boxley a mixture  
of woodland and farmland and Boxley Abbey. Pub at  
end, Sunday lunch possible book 01622 752882

February 6th - Rainham Wives, Gardening for Bees -  
talk by Dr Mick Lynn, (see 16th Jan).

February 7th - Indoor Boot Fair, Upchurch Village  
Hall - Tables, £6, refreshments available, details  
07531 264470 or 01795 428006

February 7th - Gillingham Horticultural Society Floral  
Art Group, Valentine 'cushion' (see 17th Jan).

February 8th - Bredhurst WI, 7.30pm Bredhurst Village  
Hall, Mr Nic Fulcher - Ladies of Leeds Castle, ring  
01634 389966 for more details

February 8th - Medway League of Friends A.G.M.,  
7.30pm, Out Patient Department, Medway Maritime  
Hospital details [medwayleagueoffriends@aol.co.uk](mailto:medwayleagueoffriends@aol.co.uk)  
February 9th - Hempstead Leisure Club - 'Fun at the  
Factory', (see 19th Jan).

February 10th - Gillingham & Rainham Local History  
Society 7.15pm United Reformed Church, Balmoral  
Road, Gillingham, Medway Tales, Mr. Lower, details  
01634 854982.

February 10th - Learn basic Guitar Chords, (20th Jan).  
February 11th - Instep Dancing, Rainham School for  
Girls, Derwent Way, 8.00 - 11.00pm. Enquiries  
01634 363738 email [s.collins02@btinternet.com](mailto:s.collins02@btinternet.com)

February 11th - Concert @ GMC, Rainham Ladies  
Choir, Gillingham Methodist Church, Third Avenue,  
Gillingham. 7.30pm, Tickets £5.00 on the door or  
Telephone Office 01634 575139

February 11th - Wine & Wisdom Evening, St.  
Margaret's Heritage Fund, 7.30pm Sausage & Chip  
supper provided but bring your own drinks. Tables of  
6 or 8 £7.00 per person Advance booking essential  
Contact Annie on 372680

February 12th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Sally  
10.00am for 6 mile walk outside George Inn at  
Newnham near Doddington. Route to Sharsted Court,  
Kingsdown Church and Doddington Place, an  
undulating walk through farmland, woodland and  
open countryside, one steep ascent, carpets of  
snowdrops if we are lucky. Pub at end, lunch  
available.

Continued on Page 11

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Thank you to the readers who have supplied the  
following information.

Stamps should be cut/torn from the envelope with a  
good margin all round (at least half a centimetre),  
both British and Foreign stamps are acceptable — it is  
helpful to separate these and clearly mark packets  
'foreign stamps only' as they are more valuable.  
The following charities are some of the many who  
accept stamps — those with local collection points  
have been listed first:

**GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND** - Riverside  
Primary School & Children's Centre, St Edmunds  
Way, Rainham 01634 338700 the collection box is  
in the School/Children's Centre reception area.  
Access is year round weekdays 8.30am - 4.30pm and  
some Saturdays.

**RNLI** - Rainham Library, Birling Avenue, Rainham  
**LEPROSY MISSION** - Sunburst Books 21, Station  
Road, Rainham

**BAPTIST UNION** stamps may be left at 272,  
Lonsdale Drive, Rainham

**WISDOM HOSPICE** 01634 831163 leave at the  
Hospice or post to High Bank, Rochester, ME1 2NU  
**KAB** Kent Association for the Blind - Stamps may  
be sent free of charge to Freepost 616 72 College  
Road, Maidstone ME14 6BR

**BRANSBY HOME OF REST FOR HORSES**  
(DM10) Saxilby, Lincoln, LN1 2PH

**CATS PROTECTION**, National Centre, Chelwood  
Gate, Haywards Heath, Sussex, RH17 7TT.

**RSPB** raise money from stamps — whether they are  
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stamps and £12.50 per kg for foreign stamps. Please  
note though — if you're sending small amounts of  
stamps it will pay to save them up to 2 kilos or more  
before you send them otherwise it could cost more to  
post them than we can raise from them. Post to  
R.S.P.B, PO Box 6198, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 9XT

**WINE & WISDOM EVENING**

St. Margaret's Heritage Fund

Saturday, 11th February, 7.30pm

Sausage & Chip supper provided  
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Tables of 6 or 8 @ £7.00 per person

Advance booking essential

Contact Annie on 372680



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**HEMPSTEAD VILLAGE FAYRE GROUP**

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Hempstead Village Hall, February 15th, 2.00pm.

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# Nature Notes

## NATURE NOTES FOR DECEMBER

In December 2010 I joined a group of friends on a train trip around Kent, hauled by two steam engines. Our compartment was bedecked with Christmas decorations and the ticket price included mulled wine, mince pies and coffee. Sitting next to the window gave me an opportunity to keep an eye on the countryside, which was deep in snow.

The train had set out from Victoria and it was not until we had passed Orpington that we left behind the conurbation of Greater London. The sight of beech trees was an indication that we were by then travelling through the North Downs. In due course we entered a long tunnel, emerging at the base of the escarpment of the Downs, on the edge of the valley of the River Darent. Sheep in the water meadows alongside the river were being fed on hay. Under a leaden sky that had blocked out the sun, the dark and forbidding image of the woods on the North Downs above Kemsing contrasted sharply with the white of the snow in the adjoining fields. We subsequently passed through Sevenoaks and the high land of the Ragstone Hills, before descending to the valley of the River Medway at Tonbridge.

The train then entered onto the 25 miles of straight and level track to Ashford, through the Vale of Kent, much of which is drained by the Medway and its main tributaries the Teise and the Beult. The steams and minor rivers that we passed by were lined with alder trees and the water in them was of a muddy brown colour. In the vicinity of Marden, which is at the heart of what remains of the mid Kent hop and fruit belt, I noticed a number of actively managed apple and pear orchards, but only one hop field. Through the carriage window I spotted pheasants, wood pigeons, rooks and carrion crows, some of which had been attracted to supplementary feed left out for horses, cattle or sheep, but no small birds. As for mammals, I had a brief glimpse of a small group of roe deer in a copse and saw a hare, having been disturbed by the train, bounding away from us. Additionally, whilst halted at a signal stop, I spotted the footprints of rabbits and a fox in the snow alongside the railway track.

Having steamed through Ashford, the train followed the course of the East Stour River, which flows below the escarpment of the North Downs. As we approached Folkestone we had our first view, on our right, of the cold, grey waters of the English Channel. Above us, on our left, stood the steep, bare hills of the Downs, looking impressive and quite Alpine under a deep cover of snow. The railway track leading to Dover crosses The Warren, being the remains of an ancient landslide of the chalk face. It is covered in scrub and serves as a landfall for thousands of birds that migrate to this country in the Spring. Emerging from a tunnel under Shakespeare Cliff, we had a view of the Western Docks, the dominating and impressive outline of Dover Castle and the White Cliffs of Dover. It was at this point in our journey that the two steam engines were really needed, as they hauled the thirteen coach train up a steep incline, from sea level to the plateau at the top of the White Cliffs.

Having passed Deal and Sandwich the track runs alongside the River Stour, on both sides of which are fresh water grazing marshes intersected by dykes. These marshes are the habitat of over-wintering waders such as golden plover and ducks such as widgeon and teal. In the air above the marshes was a flock of lapwings with their characteristically slow, floppy flight; they appeared to be heading towards Pegwell Bay. Salmon, trout and perch can be found in the River Stour itself and small numbers of otters have been attracted by these fish. Upon reaching Minster and the high ground of the Isle of Thanet the track follows the course of the Great Stour upstream to Canterbury.

On the approach to the city we passed through a stretch of the Stour Valley that comprises one of the few remaining freshwater wetland areas in Kent. Swans, geese and ducks can normally be seen there but, at the time of our visit, the lakes were frozen over and there was no sign of bird life. I did however see a mixed flock of redwings and fieldfares over the Canterbury suburbs, doubtless on the lookout for berries in parks and gardens.

As the train left Canterbury I had a view of the Great Harry Tower of the cathedral, with the water

meadows outside the city walls in the foreground. The train continued to hug the Great Stour as it cuts through the North Downs towards its meeting with the East Stour at Ashford. Initially, apple and pear trees of the East Kent fruit belt lined the track but, for the most part, the scenery was one of a mixture of arable fields and ancient woodland. From Ashford onwards we were retracing our steps back to Victoria, so I was able to spend less time looking out of the window and be more sociable with my fellow railway enthusiasts.

Joe Ennis

PS For those who would like to know, the engines were ex LMS "Black Five" 44932 and ex SR "Merchant Navy" 35028.

## JUBILEE

Plans for celebrating the 2012 Olympics are well under way, and Gillingham has a new £11 million Sports Park where some of the Olympic teams will practise. But 2012 is also the year of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee - I wonder how this will be commemorated locally?

Gillingham's grand plans for Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee began in February 1887, when the Court Leet finally decided to build a long-delayed bridge over the railway cutting to link the upper and lower parts of New Brompton, a project first mooted in 1880. Unfortunately nothing happened until July 1890, when work was begun, and the new bridge was finally opened on May 18th 1892.

Rainham, meanwhile, had celebrated in style on 21st June 1887, with a procession of about 1000 people, a public free lunch for all residents over 55, and tea for about 900 children. It was estimated that some 2000 people were present in the field at Berengrave where there were music, festivities and fireworks.

Gillingham 'gathered all the schoolchildren of the area for a big demonstration on the Lines' rather belatedly in September of Jubilee year, but there is no mention of tea. A year later, in October 1888, Rainham Parish Council also provided a permanent memorial, the 'Jubilee' recreation ground in Wakeley Road, which is still in regular use.

## Coronation Celebrations

The coronation of Queen Elizabeth in 1953 was celebrated in Rainham by the erection of the clock above Barclays Bank in the High Street. I was very pleased to see that through the efforts of our local

Councillors it has been restored to full working order in good time for her Jubilee.

King George V was crowned on Friday 23rd June 1911, although celebrations began slightly earlier. In Gillingham there were entertainments and concerts in the park, tea for old folks, a baby show, dancing, fireworks, and a large bonfire. On Coronation Day itself 8000 schoolchildren paraded to the park where they took part in a programme of sports and were afterwards given tea. Children in Twydall received commemorative medals, and 'tea for 80 adults was provided in Mr Chambers' orchard opposite the church in Rainham'.

'Rainham always does things well' the report in the Chatham News continued. 'The whole population of Rainham united for the occasion. There was an 8.00 a.m. salute of 21 guns (rifles) from the church tower, and the vicar Rev John Mainwaring Tamplin sounded the Royal Salute on a bugle. Soon after noon all schoolchildren of 7 years and upwards assembled in Station Road and together with the Friendly Society and the Fire Brigade marched to the Parish Church for Divine Service. A sports afternoon followed in the meadow behind the National Schools. A torchlight procession was made through the principal streets and when the procession reached Bredhurst Lane [now Maidstone Road] a huge bonfire was lit.'

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## Diary 2012

February 12th - Medway Towns Footpath Group walk, 10.00am, Meet Gill Smith 01622 710569, Otford free parking opposite The Bull PH, 5.5 miles, hilly in places, 9 stiles, no dogs  
February 14th - Medway Antique And Collectors' Club, British Calendar Customs St George Hotel, New Road, Chatham, 7.30 for 8.00 pm All visitors are made most welcome. Enquiries Miss E Boyes 01474 823606  
February 15th - Hempstead Village Fayre Group, Old Thyme Music Hall, Hempstead Village Hall, 2.00 pm, Entertainment by Memory Lane (tea and cakes included). Tickets priced £3, Ring 01634 230214  
February 15th - Bredhurst Garden Club, Sue Marshall - 'English Love Affair with iris Plants', (see 18th Jan).  
February 16th - Hempstead Leisure Club - Games, tea & chat, (see 19th Jan).  
February 16th - Wigmore Thursday Club, The Churches of Romney Marsh - David Carder, (see 19th Jan).  
February 16th - Rainham Women's - The Work of the Marie Curie Cancer Care, (see 19th Jan).  
February 16 - 18th - Disney's Beauty and the Beast, St Paul's Drama Group, Community Hall, Third Avenue, Gillingham, 7.30pm, Friday & Saturday Matinee 2.30pm, Adults £8, cons £7, Children £6, Box Office and information 01634 852712  
February 17th - Learn basic Guitar Chords, (20th Jan).  
February 18th - Medway Folk Dance Club, (21st Jan).  
February 19th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Mike 07855 929404 10.00am, 9 mile walk from Hollingbourne Rail Station (free parking). Challenging walk via North Downs Way to Detling and back. Wonderful views and good hills to climb bring picnic for lunch stop in a castle, Pub at end.  
February 19th - Medway Towns Footpath Group walk, 10.00am, Meet Mo Fleisig 01634 362743, Otford free parking opposite The Bull PH, 6 miles, fantastic views worth the steep climb, no dogs  
February 20th - Rainham Wives, Beetle Drive, (16th).

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February 20th - Rainham Evening Women's Institute, 7.30pm Millennium Centre, Rainham, Birthday Party, competition Favourite Keepsake, ring 01634 372282 for more details.  
February 21st - Gillingham Horticultural Society Floral Art Group, Easter egg shells. (see 17th Jan).  
February 21st - RSPB Medway Local Group Talk, Swift Conservation - Edward Mayer. (see 17th Jan).  
February 23rd - Wigmore Thursday Club, Service followed by a Quiz, (see 19th Jan).  
February 23rd - Hempstead Leisure Club - 'Royal Wedding Cake', (see 19th Jan).  
February 23rd - Rainham & District Dolls' House and Miniaturist Group, (see 26th Jan).  
February 24th - Medway Geographical Society 'Great Lines Heritage Park' - Joanne Cable, (see 27th Jan).  
February 25th - Come and Sing Handel's Messiah, St Matthew's Church, Wigmore, 3.00pm, Concert 7.30pm, details 01634 379139 Email: [aap@livings.eclipse.co.uk](mailto:aap@livings.eclipse.co.uk) raising funds for Rotary.  
February 26th - Medway Towns Footpath Group walk, 10.00am, Meet Gill Smith 01622 710569, Ightham Mote, National Trust car park, 5 miles, via Ivy Hatch, undulating, dogs allowed  
February 26th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Graham 07989 753278 10.00am for 5 mile walk at Sole Street. Meet in Camer Park for a fairly flat walk. Pub at end with lunches.  
February 26th - Rainham Wives, I am a Tulip, What are You? - talk by Jacqueline Aviolet, (16th Jan).  
February 29th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Bob/Kath 10.00am for 4 mile walk at West Malling public Car Park rear of High Street, Circular walk through Stubbersdown Wood, St Leonards Tower and Manor Country Park. Pub at end  
February 29th - Medway Towns Footpath Group walk, 10.00am, Chatham Waterfront Bus Station (The Paddock), 5miles, via Borstal and Rochester riverside almost no mud but undulating, no dogs  
March 1st - Hempstead Leisure Club - Games, tea & chat, (see 19th Jan).

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## Diary 2012

March 3rd - An evening of music and dancing with The Merisi Brothers, In aid of Leukaemia research, 7.00pm, Parkwood Centre, enquiries and tickets in advance from Dot 01634 864642 or Steve info@brunelce.co.uk or 07792 706610

March 3rd - City of Rochester Symphony Orchestra Concert, 7.30pm, Central Theatre, Chatham, Programme of English Music, Tickets £9-15, £1 children, 01634 338338 See www.crso.org.uk.

March 4th - Medway Towns Footpath Group walk, 10.00am, Meet Kevin Nicholas 07515 330276, Hadlow Park College car park, 5.5 miles, flat could be muddy if wet, dogs allowed

March 4th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Tony/Ann 01634 406634 10.00am for 6.5 mile walk at Chilham. Meet and park just off A252, a few stiles, good views, three short stairs, bring picnic, Pub at end with lunches.

March 4th - A Gentle Service for The Bereaved, Rainham Methodist Church corner of Station Rd/Wakeley Rd, 4.00pm/refreshment included. If you would like the name of a loved one(s) included contact Denise Bryant on 01634 374231 or nisenut@hotmail.com

March 5th - Rainham Wives Tools with a Mission - talk by Trevor Cox, (see 16th Jan).

March 7th - Rainham Horticultural Society, Designing Your Garden - Russell Williams, (see 1st Feb).

March 9th - Gillingham & Rainham Local History Society Smuggling, Mr. C. Baldwin, (see 10th Feb).

March 10th - Instep Dancing, (see 11th Feb).

March 10th - RAMASES Lecture, Peggy Dewey Memorial Lecture, John Dewey 'The Princes' Tombs in the Valley of the Queens' (see 28th Jan).

March 11th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Mike 10.00am for 7.5 mile walk at Higham Rail Station (free parking.) Walk from Higham to Church Street across the marshes to the Thames, lots of wildlife around Cliffe Pools, Pub at end

March 11th - Medway Towns Footpath Group walk, 10.00am, Meet Otford Railway Station (charges) for Otford Solar system walk plus a loop round the valley Walk, 5 miles, no dogs

March 12th - Rainham Wives, Flowers for Emma - talk and slides wit Sue & John Pearce, (see 16th Jan).

March 13th - Medway Antique and Collectors' Club, History of Maritime Painting (see 14th Feb).

March 14th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Frank/Mim 10.00am for 7.75 mile walk meet in Goudhurst by the village pond. Circular walk to Lamberhurst, undulating fields and Teise riverside (could be muddy). Bring Picnic lunch, Pub at end.

March 18th - Medway Towns Footpath Group walk, 10.00am, Meet John Williams 01622 764821, Perry Wood, 4 miles, dogs allowed

March 18th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Bob/Kath 10.00am for 5.5 mile walk near Cock Horse PH, Detling. Pub at end.

March 18th - SDBTT Songs and Sandwiches Afternoon Tea, 3.30 - 6.00pm, Lower Hall, Millennium Centre, Rainham, Ticket, £5, An afternoon tea with songs from local singer Trevor Styles, Contact Olwen 01634 263622 for tickets

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