

# ACTION FORUM

MAY 2014  
NUMBER 498

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA ■



A postcard of Rainham Library and the Police Station in Birling Avenue, probably from the 1960s, soon after they were completed. Both establishments had moved several times in the Station Road and High Street area as they gradually developed and enlarged, finally settling on this site just outside the centre of the village. The Library looks much the same today, over 50 years later, apart from the 'elegant' concrete flower pots which have finally been removed. However the Police Station, which was extended in the 1960s, became redundant when the central Medway Station opened in 2007 and has now been demolished to make way for a housing project. See the articles on Rainham Library and Rainham Police on page 9.

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## Editorial

What a difference a few sunny, warm days can make. Despite all the dire forecasts we have been treated to an exceptionally fine show of blossom this year. Apparently fruit trees need to lay dormant for several days with temperatures below freezing in order to stimulate the following spring growth. Well I do not remember de-icing or scraping frost off the car at all this winter but somehow the blossom has flourished. Now of course the fears are that a late frost will upset the developing fruit. Over the past couple of years the farm land around us at Meresborough has been transformed. We still have numerous horse paddocks, which was the growth industry of the last decade, but now many fields, which were arable, are being replanted as apple orchards. These are very different orchards from the ones which were grubbed twenty or so years ago. Then they were usually large trees well spaced with sheep typically grazing the grass beneath. A few such cherry orchards do still remain. The disadvantage is the need for tall ladders to pick the crop and in today's health and safety conscious world this is a very expensive way to harvest. So the modern way of cultivating fruit on dwarf trees in closely packed rows, which can be easily picked from ground level, is a much more economic way of producing the vast amounts demanded by the supermarkets. It is good to see that some farmers have faith in the British market.

The anniversary of the beginning of the first World War comes in August and your help is needed to mount an exhibition of any memorabilia you may have at St Margaret's Church, Rainham. A Commemoration and Vigil is planned for Monday August 4th. The organisers appreciate that items will have great sentimental value, if not monetary, and great care will be taken of everything whilst it is on display. If you have anything you think may be of interest please collect and return a Registration Form from either the Church Office or the Sunburst Bookshop, 21 Station Road so the display can be planned.

We include plenty of food for thought this month, Bredhurst has an Information Day so you can find out more that goes on in the village, Wigmore is planning another Arts Weekend in June and would welcome your participation, gardeners are welcome at the various plant sales to top up their own efforts and

replace any failures! We have Quizes, Pamper Evenings, an Art Exhibition, Sales and Fayres, Theatre productions and a Novelty Dog Show, not to mention the various walks organized by local rambling groups - so plenty to occupy you this month. Have a very good time and we will be with you again in June.

## Correspondence

'MAY DAY' SCHOOL FAYRE

Dear Editor,

I am writing on behalf of the Friends of Bredhurst School committee to inform your readers of a forthcoming event our 'May Day' School Fayre, on Saturday 17th May from 1.00 to 4.00pm.

This is a traditional event that dates back to Victorian times. The children will be in costume, and the street will be closed between 12.50 and 1.00pm for a parade led by the new May King and Queen!

There will be performances of traditional dancing around the May Pole, an Ice cream van, Bouncy Castle, BBQ, Cake Stall, Coconut Shy, Face Painting, Tombola, Raffle & lots more!

All at Bredhurst C E P School, we look forward to seeing you there.

Kind regards  
 Tracey Bond

(on behalf of Friends of Bredhurst School)

DUCK RACE NIGHT

Dear Editor

Medway Neighbourhood Watch Association are holding a 'Duck Race Night' on Friday 13th June. This is a fun event, in aid of the Association, which is open to all members of the public, you don't have to be a member of a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme to participate! It will take place at the United Services Club, 171 High Street, Rainham, ME8 8AY. Doors open at 7.00pm, with the first race at 7.30. Tickets are £5 per person, or two tickets for £8 (when purchased at the same time). Bring your own nibbles, but all drinks must be bought at the bar (Licensed bar 7.00 until 11.00pm).

The Duck Race Night will consist of 8 six runner races, with a 50p Tote, together with 'winning owner prizes' and a raffle to be drawn on the night.

To book tickets and for further information please telephone the Neighbourhood Watch Office on 01634 792131 or contact secretarymnhwa@outlook.com. Alternatively, tickets will be available on the night at the door while stocks last.

Yours sincerely,  
 Maria Jarvis  
 Vice Chairman

Medway Neighbourhood Watch Association

ART EXHIBITION

Paintings by Local Artists, Clive Bass, John Gilson & Ron Wiseman will be on show in Wigmore Library, 208 Fairview Avenue between 1st May & 31st May

THE MONDAY HUB

Dear Editor

I would like to invite all interested to The Monday Hub which meets at St Paul's Church in Parkwood, ME8 9PN, on the following Mondays: 12 & 19 May; 9 & 23 June; 7 & 21 July; 4, 11 & 18 Aug; 1, 15 & 29 Sep; 13 & 27 Oct; 10 & 24 Nov; 8 & 15 December.

The Hub, now in its fourth year, is open from 10am - 12.30pm with light refreshments, (tea, coffee and hot chocolate - all free), lively conversations about books we've read, the day's news, what we've been doing, etc. There's an ongoing jigsaw, table tennis, card and board games such as UNO, Rummikub, Scrabble and more. Some people drop in for a coffee and to read the paper, to contribute food items for the Medway Food Bank. Come and meet us - whether you are at home due to retirement or ill health, when you've dropped children or grandchildren off at school, before you go shopping in Parkwood or visit the health centre. Everyone is welcome.

It would be lovely to welcome as many of you as possible on any of the Mondays' listed above. If you would like to speak to somebody before your first visit to the Monday Hub, please phone Jill on 01634 230780. Come for a cuppa and make friends!

Yours sincerely

The Monday Hub Planning Team

CHATHAM MARITIME FESTIVAL

What do Dragons, Food and Drink and the Dunkirk Little Ships have in common?

Well they will all be at Basin 2 in Chatham Maritime over the May Bank Holiday and you could be part of the weekend's fun! As part of the three day Chatham Maritime Food and Drink Festival, Medway Sunlight Rotary Club are running a charity Dragon Boat Challenge on Sunday 25th May. Teams of up to 16 paddlers and a drummer beating the pace will be battling it out on the water for the prestigious trophy in a colourful and entertaining day of racing. All teams will race in 40 foot long Chinese war canoes and have at least 3 races, with the fastest boats going forward to the grand final. Teams can be from companies, organisations or just a group of friends - all you need is a sense of fun and the willingness to paddle as fast as you can. All equipment including full safety equipment is provided. Teams will be raising sponsorship for their efforts and we hope to raise a

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significant amount for Rotary Charities as well as having fun. An entry pack which gives all the relevant information can be obtained from Allan Smith [www.medwaysunlightrotary.org.uk](http://www.medwaysunlightrotary.org.uk). or 07956 4523311. Further information on the Chatham Maritime Food and Drink Festival can be found on [www.facebook.com/chathammaritimefestival](http://www.facebook.com/chathammaritimefestival)

PROMISE AUCTION

St Mary's Church Upchurch is having a Promise Auction on Saturday 28th June as part of Upchurch Village Fête in the Paddock.

Auction Lots can be seen online from 1st June at [www.upchurchpromise.eu.pn](http://www.upchurchpromise.eu.pn)

GAMES AFTERNOON

Every 1st Friday in the Month - until further notice Starting 2nd May then 6th June, 4th July etc

The Lower Halstow Memorial Hall Committee is holding the Games Afternoon from 2.00 to 4.00pm. The games will include: - Rummikub (numbers and word), Scrabble, Dominos, Cribbage, Trivial Pursuits and any other Card Games, except for Bridge as there may be too many interruptions etc.

No membership required, just £1.50 per afternoon, which will include a cup of tea/coffee with a biscuit and a very warm welcome for All.

SUMMER GIFT & CRAFT FAIR

Saturday July 19th, 9.30 - 2.30pm.

In aid of Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital. United Services Club, Rainham.

Pitches available - £10 each.

For further information ring 01634 373450

or 07897 007979. All welcome.

UpARA

Upchurch Active Retirement Association

We had a very successful launch to our new association in Upchurch, with 77 members signing up at the inaugural meeting, and now risen to over 100.

Our next meetings in the village hall are:-

Monthly Meetings (Members Free; Guests £2.00)

Friday 9th May & 13th June, 2.00pm

Coffee Mornings (Members £1.50; Guests £2.00)

Tuesday 27th May & 24th June, 9.30am

\*New members welcome\*

David Powell - Chairman

[davidrpowell15@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:davidrpowell15@hotmail.co.uk)

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# Diary 2014

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: 27th May

- May 1st – 31st - Art Exhibition, Local Artists Clive Bass, John Gilson & Ron Wiseman, Wigmore Library
- May 3rd – Beginners Birdwatching for adults, Riverside Country Park, 11.00am – 3.00pm, no experience necessary, £5 per person 01634 337432.
- May 4th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Chris 01634 360270, 10.00am Rainham Railway Station for 7.25 mile Linear railway walk to The Strand and over The Great Lines to Rochester Sweeps Festival
- May 4th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am, Meet Chris Morris 01634 374923 07847 828249  
Brenchley car park GR 674418, for a 6 mile moderate lovely walk through orchards and farmland, Dogs OK
- May 4th - Volunteer Task Day, Riverside Country Park, 10.00am – 2.00pm, Refreshments provided, meet Visitor Centre. Details 01634 337432
- May 5th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet John 07749 760788, 10.00am Ightham Mote car park (NT) for 11.5 mile circular walk. Bring picnic lunch
- May 6th – Floral Art Group United Reformed Church (rear hall) Balmoral Road, Gillingham, 7.30 – 9.00pm, Ikebana, for information contact Kaye 01634 232998.
- May 6th - Rainham Horticultural Society, 7.30 pm  
Rainham Cricket Club, Berengrave Lane, The Italian influences on the gardens of Kent – Dr Ann Kneif, New members welcome, ring 366276 for details.
- May 7th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Mike 10.00am, Hook and Hatchet Inn (use the far car park) Hucking for 7.5 mile walk around Bicknor and Wormshill Railway, Bring picnic lunch, pub at end.
- May 7th - All Saints Women's Fellowship, Hempstead Village Hall, 8.00pm, Guide AGM, details contact Rhonda Peck 07951 629444
- May 8th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Village Hall, behind All Saints Church. Tea, chat & games, 2.00 – 4.00pm, New members welcome. Phone 01634366907
- May 8th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Musical Entertainment from the Music Makers, St Matthew's Community Centre, 2.00pm, for over 50s, ring 01634 235507 for details.

- May 8th - Donn Barcott Band, 44Two Sports and Social Club, Featherby Road, Gillingham, 8.30 – 11.00pm, Admission £6, Details ring Jazz Line 01634 405037
- May 9th - Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group, Millennium Centre, Rainham, meets every Friday 9.45am – 12noon to help people who have lost a loved one, join us for a cuppa and chat ring Julie 01634 364309 for details.
- May 9th - UpARA Monthly Meeting, Upchurch Village Hall, 2.00pm, Members Free, Guests £2, New Members Welcome, details email Chairman David Powell davidrpowell5@hotmail.co.uk
- May 9th - Gillingham & Rainham Local History Society, Byron School, Byron Road, Gillingham, 7.15pm, AGM Visual Aids, information Ron Baker 01634 854982
- May 10th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am, meet Stephen Manning 07551 712438, The Chapter Arms, New Town Street CT4 7LT, Walking the North Downs Way Section 14, 11 miles, graded hard finishing at Woolage Village, No dogs
- May 10th - Bredhurst Information Day, 11.00am - 1pm, Bredhurst School, Over 20 stands and displays, Entrance Free, Refreshments, details email Wendy Kemp clerk@bredhurstpe.co.uk or call 07813 785940
- May 10th - Art and Craft Fair, Longford Court, Rainham, 12noon – 4.00pm, Tea, Coffee, Cakes, Books and Bric-a-Brac, All welcome
- May 10th - RAMASES, 2.30pm, Newington Village Hall, Charlotte Booth - 'What the Art of the Hyksos can teach us about their role in society' Members £6, Guests £8 at the door. ramasesnk@hotmail.com or 01795 472316 for more details
- May 10th - Medway Folk Dance Club, 7.30 – 10.00pm, United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham. New and experienced dancers welcome, with or without a partner, 01634 366189 or 388546.
- May 10th - Paranormal Investigations, Fort Amherst, Dock Road, Chatham. 8.00pm – 3.00am, Resident

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- Medium Richard Ware, Tickets £35 over 18's only, to book tickets visit [www.fortamherst.com](http://www.fortamherst.com)
- May 10th – Instep Dancing, Rainham School for Girls, Derwent Way, 8.00 – 11.00pm, for Ballroom – Latin – Sequence Dancing, details 01634 363738  
s.collins02@btinternet.com
- May 11th - Wheels for Wisdom, Charity Bike Ride in aid of The Wisdom Hospice, Start and finish Royal Engineers Museum, Gillingham, 45km or 75km routes, for further details see [www.fowh.org.uk](http://www.fowh.org.uk)
- May 11th - Kent Wildlife Trust 10.00am meet Queendown Warren car park for a natural history guided walk, bring sturdy footwear, snack and drink, Booking essential [geofforton@hotmail.com](mailto:geofforton@hotmail.com) or 07788 102238 or details. Dogs on leads please
- May 11th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Arthur/Jan 01634 711734, 10.00am car park on Rye Road, Hawkhurst, east of Queens Head PH for 7 mile circular route. Bring picnic lunch, pub at end.
- May 11th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am, Meet Gill Smith 01622 710569, 07999858981 Charing, park School Road or car park, GR 952496 TN27 0JN for 5.5 mile easy mostly flat walk, some stiles, No dogs
- May 12th – Monday Hub, St Paul's Church, Parkwood, 10.00am – 12.30pm, light refreshments, conversation, games etc, All welcome, ring 01634 230780 for details.
- May 12th – Medway Scrabble Club, St Stephens Church Hall, Maidstone Road, Chatham, alternate Mondays 2.00 – 4.30pm, new members welcome, 01634 230500
- May 12th - Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group, Millennium Centre, Rainham, meets 2nd Monday evening of each month to help people still in employment who have lost a loved one, join us for a cuppa and chat ring Julie 01634 364309 for details
- May 12th - Medway Organ Club Concert, Parkwood Community Centre, 7.00 for 7.30pm, Organist - Darrell Harvey, ring Brian Leonard 01634 234694 for details.
- May 12th – Rainham Wives, Methodist Church Hall, Wakeley Road, Rainham 8.00pm, 'Experiences of a Bed & Breakfast Lady' talk by Amy Cocker, New members welcome, £1.50 per visit includes refreshments, for details ring Sue 01634 230639.
- May 13th – Gillingham & District Fuchsia & Pelargonium Society, 7.30pm Rainham School for Girls, Derwent Way, Pelargoniums Grown my Way Talk by Roger Butler. For more information ring 01634 852519.

- May 13th - Medway Antique and Collectors' Club, The Book of Kells- Imogen Corrigan, St George Hotel, New Road, Chatham, 7.30 for 8.00 pm all visitors welcome. [medwayantiquespublicity1@virginmedia.com](mailto:medwayantiquespublicity1@virginmedia.com)
- May 14th – Rainham Flower Club, 7.30pm Upchurch Village Hall, Demonstration 'The Fascination of Flowers' by Patricia Dibbens. For further information ring 01622 884657, 01795 472973 or 01634 863034
- May 14th – Bredhurst WI, 7.30pm Village Hall, Annual Meeting & Resolutions, visitors welcome, 389966
- May 15th, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24th - The Wilde in Wild West, A comedy by Sam Fish, Oasthouse Theatre, Rainham, Curtain up 8.00pm, Box Office 0844 8793224 or [www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk](http://www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk)
- May 15th - Rainham Women's Institute, Methodist Church Hall, Wakeley Road, Rainham, 1.45 – 4.00pm, General Meeting & Resolutions, Visitors welcome for small entry charge per visit. Ring 01634 366276
- May 15th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Talk "Being a Magistrate", (see 8th May).
- May 15th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Lord Haw Haw, Brian Joyce, (see 8th May).
- May 16th - BWAG AGM, 7.00pm, Bredhurst Village Hall, followed by a guest speaker, Members and non-members welcome, details call Vanessa Jones 07813 785940 or email [bwag@vanessajones.plus.com](mailto:bwag@vanessajones.plus.com)
- May 16th - Jazz Gig, Anchorians Rugby Club, Darland Avenue, Gillingham, 8.30pm, Tenor Madness Band. Admission £10, 01634 365352 or 07544 312743
- May 17th - Plant Sale, 10.00am – 1.00pm, St Matthews Church, Wigmore, reasonably priced garden plants and second hand garden tools, Teas, Coffees, Cakes and Lunches. Admission free, details 01634 387425.
- May 17th - 'May Day' Fayre, Friends of Bredhurst School, 1.00 – 4.00pm. Traditional dancing around the May Pole, Stalls, Tombola, Raffle & lots more!
- May 17th - Pamper Evening, 6.00 – 10.00pm at 25 (Parkwood) Squadron ATC, Deanwood School. Admission £3, Tickets from Heather 01634 328888.
- May 17th - Barnardo's Quiz Night, 7.30pm start, Twydall Church Hall, Tickets £5, Tables 6 – 8 Book 01634 233405 or 375486
- May 18th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Chris 01634 360270, 10.00am Sittingbourne Railway Station for 12 mile linear railway walk to Faversham Transport Weekend, Bring snack. Pubs, restaurants, cafes at end.

Continued on Page 11

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**BREDHURST INFORMATION DAY**

(Hosted by Bredhurst Parish Council)  
Saturday 10th May, 11.00am – 1.00pm  
Bredhurst School, Hurstwood Road,  
Come and discover what clubs and activities are  
available in Bredhurst from archaeology and  
astronomy to woodland management plus much  
more. Over 20 stands and displays.  
Entrance Free / Refreshments available  
For details please email Wendy Kemp  
clerk@bredhurstpc.co.uk or call 07813 785940

**THE WILDE IN WILD WEST.**

A comedy by Sam Fish  
Oasthouse Theatre, Rainham  
May 15th, 16th, 17th and 22nd, 23rd, 24th  
Curtain up at 8.00pm  
The Wilde in Wild West is a western comedy that is  
a rootin', tootin' slice of Americana served British  
style. Box Office on 0844 8793224 or on-line  
www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk

**BARNARDO'S QUIZ NIGHT**

Saturday 17th May, 7.30pm start  
Twydall Church Hall  
Tickets £5 each, Tables 6 – 8 Book in advance  
Phone 01634 233405 or 01634 375486  
Bring own drink and nibbles, Tea /Coffee available.

**PAMPER EVENING**

Saturday 17th May, 6.00 – 10.00pm  
At 25 (Parkwood) Squadron ATC  
in the grounds of Deanwood School.  
Admission £3.00. Tickets are available from  
Heather on 01634 328888.

**HEMPSTEAD VILLAGE FAYRE 2014**

Sunday, 18th May at Hempstead Playing Fields  
(behind the Flying Saucer pub) 11.30am – 4.30pm  
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Rainham Ladies and our Musical Director Simon  
Tatnall would like to invite you to one of our "open  
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try joining in if you wish.  
We are a friendly bunch of 30+ local ladies of all  
ages who love to sing and would welcome new  
members. Forthcoming open rehearsal nights will be  
on Monday 19th May and 14th July, 7.30pm at St  
Thomas of Canterbury Junior School, Romany Road,  
Gillingham. For more information about us, please  
see our website at www.rainhamladieschoir.org.uk

**CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT**

in aid of Hands and Gillingham Volunteer Centre on  
Friday, 23rd May at Rainham Mark Social Club,  
7.00 for 7.30 pm. Tables of up to six people, £7 per  
person including a light supper. Bar available (club  
prices) so no "bring your own" please. Book your  
table now and join us for a fun evening – Ann on  
01634 815430 or Wendy on 07816 159668.

**MACKLANDS HOUSE - PLANT SALE**

Saturday 24th May, 11.00am – 2.00pm. Cake stall,  
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# Nature Notes

## NATURE NOTES FOR APRIL

"Oh, to be in England, Now that April's there," From the poem "Home Thoughts from Abroad", written by Robert Browning, in Italy, in 1845. In April, prompted by Browning's poem, my wife and I visited the grounds of Leeds Castle, near Maidstone. Described by Lord Conway as the loveliest castle in the world, it sits beside the diminutive River Len and is surrounded by woodland and parkland of the kind that Browning may well have had in mind when he longed to be in England in the April of 1845. As we stepped out of our car at the castle's car park, we could hear the constant "caws" of rooks coming from the rookery in the beech and horse chestnut trees dotted around the car park. The nests have spread, over recent years, from a long established rookery in trees alongside the adjoining A20 Folkestone Road. The rook is one of the most characteristic species of bird to be seen on and over English farmland and it would seem that its numbers are on the increase. The rooks' diet is varied but, during the breeding season, it consists mainly of worms and leatherjackets. At Leeds Castle the birds can be seen searching for these invertebrates on the extensive grassland areas within the castle grounds and, having got used to visitors, they can be surprisingly tame. Near the ticket box and main shop are some ancient sweet chestnut trees. They have developed exceptionally broad trunks for their height which, with age, have become deeply fissured and covered with bulges. Jackdaws nest in the holes in these trees as well as in holes in the ragstone walls of the castle buildings. Jackdaws are real characters and have a jaunty, confident walk. At Leeds, one can get a close up view of them as they scrounge scraps of food from and around picnic tables and raid rubbish bins. I myself hold jackdaws in great affection. Leaving the ticket box, we walked through a small copse dominated by tall oak trees before emerging by the course of the little River Len, which empties into the Medway at Maidstone. Walking up stream we came across primroses, bluebells, wood anemones, lesser celandines and ladies' smock, among other flowers.

A pair of whooper swans (with wedge shaped yellow beaks) were nesting on an island in the water. Readers may have seen this species of swan, on the BBC TV "Spring Watch" programmes, arriving in this country from their breeding grounds in the Arctic. The pair at Leeds are feral and stay with us all year round. As we walked towards the castle we could hear the characteristic whistling call of a nuthatch, which can walk both up and down a tree trunk in search of grub and spiders. It has a blue-grey back. Upon reaching the castle, we were delighted to have our first sighting of incoming swallows and martins feeding low over the surface of the moat. The moat and the adjoining Great Water serve as feeding stations for swallows and house and sand martins entering or leaving the country via the Dungeness area. We came across a barnacle goose nesting on a ledge of land below the curtain wall of the castle. There is a resident flock of these geese at Leeds. They are handsome birds with black, white and grey plumage. They can often be seen flying overhead, giving out yapping calls like a pack of small dogs. In the wild, barnacle geese nest in the Arctic and spend their winters in Scotland, among other countries. Those who watched David Attenborough's film of some time ago, on the wildlife of the Arctic, may remember the scene of a white furred Arctic fox seeking to steal the eggs or young of ground nesting barnacle geese. Here at Leeds, the sitting mother is protected from our own red foxes by the moat and, at night, by a locked gatehouse door. We went via the walled Culpepper Garden, a typical English cottage garden, on our way for a cup of tea and a cake in the Fairfax Hall Restaurant. We noted, in the cottage garden, flowers of the spring such as euphorbia (yellowish-green bracts), pulmonaria (pink petals turning blue) and honesty (lilac petals). Just as we were leaving the garden we heard the unmistakable song of a chaffinch, a string of notes that gets faster and faster and ends with a rollicking finale. Had he been here, Robert Browning would have been delighted, for two of the lines in his poem "Home Thoughts from Abroad" are: "While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough, In England - now!" Joe Ennis

## RAINHAM LIBRARY

In 1869 Mrs Pearman, the Vicar's wife, opened a lending library in the Infants School room of the Church School at the top of Station Road. The Library was open on one afternoon a week. The 221 books were largely donated by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge which gives a clue to the type of book on offer. 'Conversion of St Paul', 'Outlines of English History', 'Christian Missions' and 'Life of God in the Soul' stood alongside titles such as 'Pennywise and Pound Foolish', 'Motherless Lads' and 'Travels in Asia'. Later a few novels were added including 'Swiss Family Robinson' and 'The Lamplighter'. Rule 1 in 1869 decreed that subscribers belonging to the working class should pay 1d per month or one shilling a year (no reduction for payment in advance in those days) while tradesmen and others should pay 2s 6d a year - this entitled borrowing of one volume a week.

By 1898 progress had been made, the 1908 edition of Kelly's Directory states 'The Parish Free Library and Reading Room was established about ten years ago, and is situated on the ground floor of the Temperance Hotel 80 Station Road (next to the Social Club) Rainham. The Reading Room is open daily, and is supplied with the principal daily papers and weekly journals. The Library is replete with nearly 2,000 modern volumes, comprising all classes of literature. There is also a Reference Library with all kinds of postal, county and commercial directories, encyclopedias etc. The Lending Library is open from 7.00pm to 9.00pm on Mondays.'

When Rainham moved from the jurisdiction of Milton Rural District to Gillingham in 1929 new premises were found for the Library in a vacant shop at 55 High Street, later the home of Kent Reliance. In 1957 Mr N Tomlinson, the Head Librarian, was in charge of the main Gillingham Library but also had 5 branches to oversee: Rainham, 8 Twydall Green, Grammar School, Third Avenue, (now Robert Napier School) Hempstead School and the Smallholders Club, Wigmore. Rainham Library remained in the High Street until 1961 when the new purpose built Library opened in Birling Avenue next to the Police Station.

## RAINHAM POLICE

In the early 1900s Rainham had no official Police Station for the sergeant and two constables, the houses

they lived in were unofficial offices and the kitchen of the White Horse Pub also took its turn. This was convenient as there was always a policeman on duty at the junction of Station Road and the High Street. This was not only to control traffic but also to provide a point of contact for the public and the opportunity to nip crime in the bud by an early warning to an offender or a word in the ear of a parent who would then keep the youngster on the straight and narrow. The 'long arm of the law' could see all from this vantage point. The White Horse kitchen was succeeded by a small hall close to Church Path, shared during the war with the ARP. Premises in the High Street were then used until completion of the building at the top of Berengrave Lane in the 1950s. Later an extension was added to the east side and as Rainham had good police cells the station became the main operating centre for Gillingham. In 2007 this was made redundant by the purpose built central headquarters for Medway in Lower Gillingham. After standing for several years in a state of disrepair the Berengrave Lane station was demolished to allow, according to their website, the building of 22 flats by Chartway Group, comprising a mix of affordable rent, shared ownership and specialist disabled units. These are due for completion in October 2014.

## WORLD WAR 1 CENTENARY

Commemoration and Vigil  
St Margaret's Church, Rainham  
Monday 4th August 2014

St Margaret's Church are planning to hold a day of commemoration which will include a display of WW1 memorabilia.

To enable us to do this we need your help so if anyone has any WW1 photographs, medals or any other items that they are willing to have displayed on this Special Day then please collect a Registration Form from either the Church Office or the Sunburst Bookshop. This form will contain full details of what you need to do. Your memorabilia will need to be brought to Church on the afternoon of Sunday 3rd August and collected after the Vigil on Monday 4th August. We intend having the Church open for a period during the day of the 4th August so that people can come and look at the display and again in the evening culminating in a short Prayer Vigil at 7.30pm.

David Noakes - Churchwarden

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## Diary 2014

May 18th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,

Meet John Williams 01622 764821 07977614033

Hucking Estate GR 847581 ME17 1QT, for 5 mile  
moderate walk, dogs allowed

May 18th - Hempstead Village Fayre, Playing Fields  
(behind the Flying Saucer pub) 11.30am to 4.30pm. All  
welcome, a fun-filled family day, over 60 stalls, crafts,  
arena events, attractions, games and refreshments.

May 19th - Monday Hub, (see 12th May).

May 19th - Rainham Evening WI, 7.30pm, Millennium  
Centre, AGM & Resolutions Competition - Notebook,  
ring 01634 262577 for details.

May 19th - Rainham Ladies Choir open rehearsal night.  
Interested in singing? Come along 7.30pm, St Thomas  
of Canterbury Junior School, Romany Road. All Ladies  
welcome. see www.rainhamladieschoir.org.uk

May 19th - Rainham Wives, 'History of Bluetown' talk  
by Jenny Hurkett, (see 12th May).

May 20th - The RSPB Medway Local Group Talk,  
Parkwood Community Centre, 7.30 - 9.45pm £3,  
Farming, Birds and the Countryside - Abi Bunker. For  
Walks see www.rspb.org.uk/groups/medway.

May 20th - Floral Art Group, Basic Shapes Workshop 3,  
(see 6th May).

May 21st - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Mike 10.00am  
church car park in Ulcombe (voluntary fee) for 9 mile  
walk Short pub stop or bring a picnic lunch

May 21st - Bredhurst Garden Club 7.30pm, Village Hall,  
illustrated talk Ms Jude Lawton 'Work of Plant  
Heritage and the national Collections in Kent', new  
members welcome ring 233554 for details.

May 22nd - Wigmore Thursday Club, History of the  
Central Hall, Rosemary Clemence, (see 8th May).

May 22nd - Hempstead Leisure Club, Tea, chat and  
games, (see 8th May).

May 22nd - Gillingham Horticultural Society talk 'Dig  
For Victory', 7.30pm, Star Meadow Sports Club,  
Darland Avenue, Gillingham, Members £2 Guests £3.

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May 23rd - Medway Geographical Society, Byron  
Primary School, Gillingham, 7.30 - 9.00pm, AGM  
followed by 'The Island of Madagascar' - Tony  
Mitchell Everyone welcome, Please come on the  
evening or contact Pat Meredith 01634 362683

May 23rd - Charity Quiz Night in aid of Hands and  
Gillingham Volunteer Centre, Rainham Mark Social  
Club, 7.30 pm. Tables up to six people, £7 pp includes  
light supper. Bar available (so no "bring your own").  
Book Ann 01634 815430 or Wendy 07816 159668.

May 24th - Plant Sale, 11.00am until 2.00pm, Macklands  
House, Station Rd, Cake stall, Cards and refreshments.

May 24th - City of Rochester Symphony Orchestra,  
7.30pm, Central Theatre, Marking the 450th  
anniversary of William Shakespeare, Tickets from £10  
(Adults), £1 (Under 18s). Box office:  
www.medwayticketslive.co.uk or 01634 338338.

May 24th - Medway Folk Dance Club, (see 10th May).

May 25th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Tony/Ann  
01634 406634, 10.00am, Hollingbourne Station Car  
park for 6 mile walk Bring picnic lunch. Pub at end.

May 25th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,  
Meet John Trebill, Higham Station car park GR 715726  
for 6.5 mile moderate road and fields walk mainly flat  
but 1 steep climb. No dogs.

May 26th - Family Birdwatching, Capstone Farm Country  
Park, 10.00am - 12noon, A bird watching experience  
for the whole family, Suitable for adults and  
accompanied children, £3 per child, 01634 338191

May 26th - Medway Scrabble Club, (see 12th May).

May 27th - UpARA, Coffee Morning, Upchurch Village  
Hall, 9.30am, £1.50, Guests £2, New Members  
Welcome, details davidpowell5@hotmail.co.uk

May 27th - Mini-Beast Hunt, Pond Dipping and Sweep  
Netting, Riverside Country Park, 10.00am - 12noon or  
1.00 - 3.00pm, Suitable for accompanied children aged  
5 - 12 years £3 per child, Book 01634 337432

May 28th - Things with Wings, Riverside Country Park,  
10.00 or 11.00am start, create your winged animal at  
this arts & craft session, £3 per child, 01634 337432.

May 28th - All Saints Women's Fellowship, Four days at  
the Nursery, Jacqueline Aviolet, (see 7th May).

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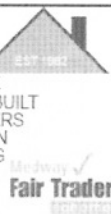
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## Diary 2014

May 29th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Trip to Lathe Barn  
(see 8th May).

May 29th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Service followed by  
Wisdom Hospice, Martyn Reeves, (see 8th May).

May 29th - Rainham & District Dolls' House and  
Miniaturist Group, Howard Memorial Hall, Woodside,  
7.30pm, ring Sylvia Wildridge 01634 312038

May 30th & 31st - Wigmore MADS present 'Can I have  
some help over here', 8.00pm, St Matthew's Centre,  
Drewery Drive, £6 & £5 cons 01634 370639, Bar

May 30th - Jazz Night, Lower Halstow Memorial Hall,  
7.30pm, featuring Vimala and the Baker Boys, Tickets  
£9 adult, £6 Child, call 01795 844408 or 01795 843681

May 31st - Annual Novelty Dog Show, judging 10.00am,  
Lower Halstow Memorial Hall, Entry forms from Best  
One Village Shop, Three Tuns Pub or call Kay 01795

844408 money raised for Over 60's Christmas Lunch

May 31st - Concert, Medway Neighbourhood Watch  
Association, 'The Magic of the Musicals, and more...'  
Royal Dockyard Church, 7.30pm, Tickets £8, 01634

792131 or email secretarymnhwa@outlook.com

June 1st - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,  
Meet Lindsay Floyd 07743 702049 Spa Valley

Railway Station, Tunbridge Wells West GR 579386  
TN2 5QY, for 7.5 mile walk returning by rail on Spa  
Valley Heritage train, price £6, Lunch The Huntsman,

Eridge must be booked 01892 864258, dogs allowed

June 1st - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Ade 01634  
306405, 10.00am, Yalding village War Memorial for  
6.2 mile walk via Greensand Way, Bring picnic lunch,

Pub at end with lunches.

June 1st - Spring Fair at the Cats Adoption Centre, Matts  
Hill Road, ME9 7XA, 11.00am - 4.00 pm, Parking  
close by, large Craft fair, children's corner, bric-a-brac,

books and lots more, Contact Carol 0797 3677390

June 2nd - Rainham Wives, 'Hands' talk by John telling  
about the work of our charity for the year, (12th May).

June 3rd - Rainham Horticultural Society, The Plant  
Hunters - Steve Harmer, (see 6th May).

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June 3rd - Floral Art Group, Sympathy Tributes  
workshop, (see 6th May).

June 4th - Medway Ramblers Walk, Graham 07989  
753278 10.00am, Otford village car park for 6.5 mile  
Linear walk. Returning 2pm bus from Farningham..

Bring picnic lunch. Pub at end with lunches.

June 4th - Medway Towns Footpath Group AGM

7.30pm, 442 Sports & Social Club, Featherby Road

June 5th - Wigmore Thursday Club, RAF Bomber  
Command, Rupert Matthews, (see 8th May).

June 5th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Tea, chat & games,  
(see 8th May).

June 6th - Pamper Evening, Parkwood Community  
Centre, 6.30 - 9.30pm, Entrance £2, Treatments from  
£5, Refreshments, Raffle, all proceeds to Demelza

Hospice. Tables, £10 contact Margaret Lewis 01634  
236898, 07930 213718 e.mail feb1636@sky.com

June 6th - Friends of Berengrave, AGM, Talk - 'In the  
Beginning' by Brian Baker, 7.00pm, Methodist Church  
Hall, Station Road, Members Free Non-members £2

June 6th - Ghost tours at Fort Amherst, Dock Road,  
Chatham, 8.00 & 9.00pm, approx. 1 hour, Tickets £10  
pp not suitable under 8 years, for more information or

to book tickets visit www.fortamherst.com

June 7th - Quiz Night, Bobbing Village Hall, BYO  
drinks and nibbles, Tables of 6, £5 per person Call -  
Mike 01634 360906, Woodpeckers Bowls Club

June 7th - Medway Folk Dance Club, (see 10th May).

June 7th - Instep Dancing, (see 10th May).

June 8th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Pete/Kate  
07751 879003, 10.00am, car park behind Birling church  
for 5.5 mile walk. Pub at end with lunches.

June 8th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,  
Meet Chris Morris 01634 374923 07847 828249

Gangers Hill, South Hawke car park GR 373541 CR3  
7AD for 5 mile hard walk in the Surrey Hills, dogs OK

June 14th - Concert, Harmony (www.harmonykent.com),  
Rainham School for Girls, 7.30pm, Raffle in aid of

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Small Ads are also available. See page 14.



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