

ACTION FORUM

JUNE 2014
NUMBER 499

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA ■



A view of the Medway Estuary taken from Sharpes Green looking over Horrid Hill, Riverside Country Park to the industrial buildings of Motney Hill Sewage Works. This month the Nature Notes on page 8 take us to this area. Joe Ennis finds and describes much of the natural history which I for one can easily overlook whilst walking in the Country Park. Even without his keen eye and knowledge, with the tide up and the sun shining, it is a very pleasant place to spend a few hours.

Robert J. Kitney

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Next Issue July 5th 2014
Copy Date: June 24th Ads June 27th
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Editorial

Outdoor events are much in evidence this month and we are all hoping for the good weather to help make them a great success. Nevertheless much hard work has already been contributed by the organisers so the Fetes, Fairs and Arts Events will, I am sure, go ahead whatever the weather. Many of course will have a 'Plan B' lined up for the worst scenario but sunshine, blue skies and warmth are really the best medicine. The arts feature quite prominently this month in our Diary of local events. Rainham have 'Flames of Celebration' an arts and craft exhibition at St Margaret's Church early in the month, and an art exhibition by Wynne Prescott at Rainham Library throughout whilst 'The Big Wigmore Arts Event' is at the end of June. A new writers group is proposed for Hempstead – if you are interested email hempsteadwritersgroup@fmail.net to be in at the beginning. This is also the time for concerts as various choirs and orchestras conclude their preparations and want to perform their repertoire. Each Saturday through the month you have the chance to attend either or all productions from Harmony and The Medway Big Band in Rainham, The Old Barn Orchestra in Chatham or Midsummer Melodies featuring Rainham Ladies and Gillingham Male Voice Choir in Gravesend.

We are pleased to offer our congratulations to The Kentish Players who are celebrating their centenary this year – a wonderful achievement. As Medway's oldest amateur musical theatre society they are well known for their fantastic productions which have included 'Me and My Girl', 'Seven Brides for Seven Brothers', 'West Side Story' and even 'The Full Monty'! They are continuing the tradition this month with 'All Shook Up' which can be seen at the Hazlitt Theatre, Maidstone from 18th to 21st June. Of course if you prefer to be out in the fresh air we include the usual mix of walks led by members of our local walking groups, you are most welcome to join them on their ramblings. This month we also have details of The Medway Inter Faith Pilgrimage on Sunday 22nd June when members of many different Faiths will unite in visiting a few of our numerous places of worship in Medway. Everyone is very welcome to join them on their journey. So as usual we offer you a variety of interesting activities mostly run by volunteers. Next month sees the 500th edition of Action Forum, also run by

volunteers! If you would like to help we always need door to door distributors, see the list on page 3 for the current vacancies. We also have a couple of helpers who are willing to 'fill in' for holidays and unfilled vacancies and as you can imagine this is extremely useful so more flexible help would also be appreciated, email af@thenet.uk.net or ring 01634 310011 – but please mention that it is Action Forum you are enquiring about as this is The Net office and the staff can get confused! Have a very good month and we will be here again in July.

HELENA THOMAS

Sadly we have to report that my mother Helena Thomas (nee Cheeseman) died in Heather Dale Nursing Home, Hempstead on May 29th aged 105 years. Many people will remember her from her teaching days, initially at Solomon Road School from where she took the children to Wales during the wartime evacuation, and later from The Camp School, Byron Road, Upchurch and after she retired in 1969 from supply work at Newington, Hartlip and Lower Halstow. The funeral details will be available from St Margaret's Church, and the undertaker John Weir.

Correspondence

BREDHURST SUMMER FETE

Dear Editor,

I am writing on behalf of St Peter's Church, Bredhurst to advise you of additional attractions at our annual Summer Fete on 28th June. We are reviving the Tug of War Competition and invite all Tug of War Teams to enter. Please contact me, if you haven't got a team, why not start one?

We are pleased to announce that Applause Outdoors 2014 will be performing The Apple Cart, an unruly compendium of three dimensional games for families, people who like to laugh and people who'd like things to be a bit different. It sounds great fun. We are also holding a WW1 baking competition. The 3 selected recipes are available in the church and on the church website www.bredhurstchurch.org. All the usual attractions will be there so please join us from 2.00pm

Kind regards,
Diane Cooke

07749 919689 dianecooke14@gmail.com

BROWNIES 80th BIRTHDAY

Dear Editor

1st Wigmore Brownies are turning 80 in the summer and are celebrating by having a party in Rainham at the Millennium Centre on Saturday 28th June, 2.00 – 4.00pm. We would love as many former Brownies and Leaders to come and celebrate with us. We are also looking for any photos or cuttings about the unit to make a display on the day. If you can help with this or wish to find out more about the party please email 1stwigmorebrownies@gmail.com.

Yours sincerely,
Yvonne Crawford, Unit Leader

COMMUNITY & FAMILY FUN DAY

Dear Editor,

On Saturday 12th July we would like to invite everyone to our Community & Family Fun Day at Wigmore Evangelical Free Church, Durham Road. There will be a hog roast, a bouncy castle and activities for the children, exhibitions, craft and cakes. This is not a fundraising event - most activities will be free or at low cost, we simply want to invite you to come and meet us and enjoy some family time. The event will run from 1pm until 5pm and we hope to welcome you!

Yours sincerely,

Susan Wood

On behalf of Wigmore EFC

WORLD CUP BIG SWAP - Saturday 12th July

Dear Editor,

There are lots of Panini and Topps World Cup card and sticker collectors out there collecting their Brazil 2014 sets and albums and by the time the final game comes along will be itching to get the sets completed. So, as a fun event to lead up to the World Cup Final, we are opening the Community Centre at St Matthew's Church, Drewery Drive ME8 0NX, on World Cup Final weekend so that all those collectors can get together and complete the sets before the Final Whistle! The Big Swap in 2010 attracted over 400 collectors and proved that adults and parents as well as children are avid collectors. We are particularly promoting this community event as we know that some schools have in the past experienced some disruption due to over eager swapping!

Entry is 25p per person and we hope that everyone who comes along will receive a free gift (whilst the stocks last) - refreshments will be available. Readers can give me a ring on 01634 372508 or e-mail to the worldcupstickerswap@outlook.com for more information about what will be going on. We hope readers can come and have a fun time on Saturday 12th July between 10.00am and 1.00pm to get World Cup Final Weekend off to a great start. Let's hope England get to the final!

Kind regards

Paul Warren

TRICKLE DOWN FROM THE TOP

Rainham Cricket Club and the sport of cricket is rich in history and there is the prospect of many treasures to be found.

One of the endearing features is that all details can be broken down and recorded for prosperity in a wealth of record books. One I recently purchased – a bargain at half price – contains a plethora of detailed information including many obscure names and places. It also highlights the fact that cricket has become one of the most popular team games that is played world wide. It comes in such a variety of rich formats: limited over, club cricket, county games, test matches, international and now the new entertaining kid on the block twenty/20. These are all played by professionals and at local level by men, women and youngsters in clubs.

All this activity brings concerns for the governing body in England. ECB have much to wrestle with. Obviously there is more money being guaranteed at the top and it is reported that extra funds from a broadcasting deal is to be spent by the ECB on the womens game, inter-city cricket and sustaining development within the first class counties. Will a trickle down effect come to the grass roots I wonder? Is there a glimmer of hope that KCC might assist our local club? Will the ECB, our governing body, stop hiding behind cutbacks and allow us a grant to support our new application to Sport England? Without this help our 2014 application is not assured. We are currently approaching all these bodies in the hope of making a stronger application to Sport England. With a level playing field we might succeed! K. E. Chambers - Fund Raiser and Trustee.

DISTRIBUTION

Volunteer distributors of Action Forum are needed for:

Rainham

Lower Station Road (Railway to Bakers Field)
Roberts Road & A2 (Maidstone Road to School)
High Dewar & Sunderland Roads

Parkwood

Foxburrow, Knavesacre, Stoneacre, Parkwood Green
Part of Long Catlis Road
Collett Walk, Moyle Close & Lubbock Walk
Woollaston, Warlingham, Wildman Closes

Hempstead

Wildwood, Black Rock, Stalham, Coppice Court
If you live near any of these roads or are able to travel to them and could help for about an hour or so during the first week of each month we would be very pleased to hear from you on 310011 or email af@thenet.uk.net

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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: 24th June

June 7th - Quiz Night, 7.30pm, Bobbing Village Hall,
BYO drinks & nibbles, £5pp call Mike 01634 360906.
June 7th - Medway Folk Dance Club, 7.30 - 10.00pm,
United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gill
New and experienced dancers welcome, with or without
a partner, for details ring 01634 366189 or 388546.
June 7th - Instep Dancing, Rainham School for Girls,
Derwent Way, Summer Ball ticket only, 7.30 -
11.00pm, for Ballroom - Latin - Sequence Dancing,
details 01634 363738 s.collins02@btinternet.com
June 7th & 8th - Flames of Celebration, Art & Craft
Exhibition, St Margaret's Church, Millennium Centre,
Sat 9.00am - 4.30pm, Sun 10.00am - 3.00pm
June 8th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Pete/Kate
07751 879003, 10.00am, car park behind Birling church
for a 5.5 mile walk, Pub at end with lunches available.
June 8th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,
Meet Chris Morris 01634 374923 07847 828249
Gangers Hill, South Hawke car park CR3 7AD for a 5
mile hard great walk in the Surrey Hills, dogs allowed
June 9th - Monday Hub, St Paul's Church, Parkwood,
10.00am - 12.30pm, light refreshments, conversation,
games etc, all welcome, ring 01634 230780 for details.
June 9th - Medway Scrabble Club, St Stephens Church
Hall, Maidstone Road, Chatham, alternate Mondays
2.00 - 4.30pm, new members welcome, 01634 230500
June 9th - Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group,
Millennium Centre, Rainham, meets 2nd Monday
evening each month to help people still in employment
join us for a cuppa and chat ring Julie 01634 364309
June 9th - Medway Organ Club Concert, Parkwood
Community Centre, 7.00 for 7.30pm, Organist -
Chris Powell, ring Brian Leonard 01634 234694
June 9th - Rainham Wives, Methodist Church Hall,
Wakeley Road, 8.00pm, 'Gardening for Wildlife' talk
by Dr Mick Lynn, New members welcome, £1.50 per
visit includes refreshments, ring Sue 01634 230639
June 10th - MTFG, 6.30pm, Meet Stephen Manning
07551 712438, Shorne Woods Country Park GR
683699, for 4 mile woodland wander, No dogs.

June 10th - Medway Antique and Collectors' Club,
Miniature Art - Linda Kracht, St George Hotel, New
Road, Chatham, 7.30 for 8.00 pm all visitors welcome.
medwayantiquespublicity1@virginmedia.com
June 10th - Gillingham & District Fuchsia &
Pelargonium Society, 7.30pm Rainham School for
Girls, Derwent Way, Summer in the Garden with
Questions and Answers, Talk by Steve Bradley, Radio
Kent Garden Presenter, information ring 01634 852519.
June 11th - Rainham Flower Club, 7.30pm Upchurch
Village Hall, Informal Competition, information ring
01622 884657, 01795 472973 or 01634 863034
June 11th - Bredhurst WI, 7.30pm Village Hall, Christine
Etheridge - Pearl Stringing, visitors welcome, For
details ring 01634 389966
June 11th - All Saints Women's Fellowship, Hempstead
Village Hall, 8.00pm, Glitz and Big Business -
Maureen Clayton, details Rhonda Peck 07951 629444
June 12th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Village Hall behind
All Saints Church. Talk "Kent Village Signs", 2.00 -
4.00pm, new members welcome. Phone 01634 366907
June 12th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Strawberry Tea
with entertainment from The Lyre Group, St Matthew's
Community Centre, 2.00pm, for over 50s, ring 235507
June 12th - Medway Inter Faith Action, Medway Council
Meeting Room, Gun Wharf, Chatham, 7.30pm all
welcome, 01634 843307 or juliuhugh@tiscali.co.uk
June 12th - Donn Barcott Band, 44Two Sports and Social
Club, Featherby Road, Gillingham, 8.30 - 11.00pm,
Admission £6, Details ring Jazz Line 01634 405037
June 13th - UpARA Monthly Meeting, Upchurch Village
Hall, 2.00pm, Members Free, Guests £2, New Members
Welcome, details email Chairman David Powell
davidrpowell15@hotmail.co.uk
June 13th - 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 01634 364309

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June 13th - Duck Race Night, United Services Club,
Rainham, 7.30pm. Tickets £5, two for £8, bring own
nibbles, drinks from the bar, details 01634 792131 or
secretarymnhwa@outlook.com Tickets at the door
June 13th - Gillingham & Rainham Local History
Society, Byron School, Gillingham, 7.15pm, Members
Evening, further information Ron Baker 01634 854982
June 14th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, Meet
Stephen Manning 07551 712438 Woolage Village,
Nethersole Road CT4 6SJ, for 11 miles hard walk
Walking the North Downs Way Section 15, Finish
Albany Place, Dover car park £3 per day, No dogs.
June 14th - Beginners Birdwatching for adults (summer)
Riverside Country Park, 11.00am - 3.00pm am -
classroom, pm - field based, £5 pp, 01634 337432
June 14th - Village Fete, 12noon - 4.00pm, St Thomas of
Canterbury RCP School, Romany Road, Adults £1,
Children 50p, Details 07706 662643
June 14th & 15th - Model Railway Show, Chatham &
District Club www.chathamshow.co.uk 10.00am -
5.00pm (Sun 4.00pm) Medway Leisure Centre, Mill
Road, Gillingham, Entrance £7 Under 14 Free when
accompanied by an adult On site and street parking
June 14th - Concert, local vocal harmony group Harmony
(www.harmonykent.com), Rainham School for Girls,
Derwent Way, 7.30pm, Raffle in aid of Medway
Maritime Hospital, Intensive Care Unit, Tickets £8 -
(Buffet included, please bring your own drinks) from
Wendy 07816 159668, Lynne 07979 693205, or Brenda
07788 998443 or email harmonykent@hotmail.co.uk
June 15th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,
Meet Brian Gevaux 01634 235883 Scotney Castle car
park GR 684354, for a 5.5 mile moderate walk, 3 stiles
with gates and 1 steep climb, No dogs
June 15th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Ade 01634
306405, 10.00am, Headcorn High Street car park next
to Sainsburys for 7 mile flat walk, Not suitable for
dogs. Bring picnic lunch. Pub at end with lunches.
June 16th, 23rd and 30th - Baby Massage Course, 10.00 -
11.00am, All Saints Church, Hempstead, £5 for entire
course To enrol contact Elaine Wheeler 01634 379360
email babymassage@the139club.co.uk
June 16th - Rainham Evening WI, 7.30pm, Millennium
Centre, Mrs Virginec Daniall 'Perfume' Competition -
Perfume Bottle, ring 01634 262577 for details.
June 16th - Rainham Wives, The Boys' Brigade talk by
Paul Warren, (see 9th June).

June 17th - The RSPB Medway Local Group Talk,
Parkwood Community Centre, 7.30 - 9.45 pm £3, Two
weeks in South West Ireland - and no rain! - Brian
Gallop. For Walks www.rspb.org.uk/groups/medway.
June 17th - Floral Art Group United Reformed Church
(rear hall) Balmoral Road, Gill 7.30 - 9.00pm, Bridal
Bouquets, information contact Kaye 01634 232998.
June 17th & 18th - Sun in the Wood, One Day Courses in
Watercolour and Calligraphy ring 01622 861983 or see
suninthewoodcraftdays.co.uk
June 18th - HempstARA AGM, Scout Hall, Duke's
Meadow Drive, 2.00pm
June 18th-21st - Kentish Players 'All Shook Up' Hazlitt
Theatre, Maidstone, 7.30pm, Tickets £13 / £15 from
01622 758611 or see www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk
June 19th - Rainham Women's Institute, Methodist
Church Hall, Wakeley Road, Rainham, 1.45 - 4.00pm,
Speaker on "Life of Hats", Visitors welcome for small
entry charge per visit. Ring 01634 366276 for details.
June 19th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Coping with my
Stammer, Mike Chantry, (see 12th June).
June 19th - Hempstead Leisure Club, chat & games, (12th
June 21st - Rainham South Councillors surgery Parkwood
Community Centre, 9.30am - 12 noon. No appointment
June 21st - RAMASES, 2.30pm, Newington Village Hall,
Aidan Dodson - 'Ay and Horemheb' Members £6.00,
Guests £8.00 at the door. John Dewey 01795 472316
June 21st - Concert: 'Midsummer Melodies', 7.00pm, The
Woodville, Gravesend, Rainham Ladies & Gillingham
Male Voice Choirs, Raffle and collection in aid of the
Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance Tickets, £13
(child £5) from 01474 337774 or www.woodville.co.uk
June 21st - Friends of St Margaret's Church, Concert
featuring Medway Big Band, St Margaret's Church
Rainham, 7.30 - 10.00pm, Tickets £6 in advance or £7
on the night (including drinks & nibbles) from the
Church Office during office hours (Mon-Fri 9.30am-12
noon), or contact 01634 230430 or 230183
June 21st - Medway Folk Dance Club, (see 7th June).
June 22nd - Medway Inter Faith Pilgrimage, All
welcome! all or part of the day, Starts 9.30am Quaker
House, Rochester, 01634 843307 juliuhugh@tiscali.co.uk
June 22nd - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,
meet John Williams 01622 764821 07977 614033
Cranbrook public car park off The Hill GR 778359 for
a 6 mile moderate figure of 8 walk, dogs allowed

Continued on Page 11

P. Gillard
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THE MEDWAY INTER FAITH PILGRIMAGE
Sunday, 22nd June 2014
Members of many different Faiths will unite in
travelling to a very few of our numerous places of
worship in Medway. All are welcome! Come for all
or part of the day. Just look at the programme and
jump in at a suitable point. Enquiries ring Hugh
Hawkins 01634 843307 or julihugh@tiscali.co.uk.
9.30am - Quaker Meeting House, Northgate,
Rochester, ME1 1LS.
10.20am - St Margaret's Church, St Margaret's
Street, Rochester ME1 1UF.
11.00am - Unitarian Church, Hamond Hill,
Chatham, ME4 6AP.
11.45am - Victoria Gardens, Fort Pitt Hill, Chatham,
ME4 6TJ, for open air prayers.
12.30pm - St Michael's Church, 1 Hills Terrace,
Chatham, ME4 6PU.
1.15pm - Gillingham Mosque, 114 Canterbury
Street, Gillingham, ME7 5UH.
3.00pm - Hindu Sabha Mandir, 361 Canterbury
Street, Gillingham, ME7 1NY.
4.00pm - Nasir (Ahmadiyya) Mosque, 242 Medway
Road, Gillingham, ME7 1NY.
4.30pm - Sunlight Centre, 105 Richmond Road,
Gillingham, ME7 1LX.
5.00pm - Evening event at the Sunlight Centre
8.00pm - Finish

MARIE CURIE
I am sure your readers will have heard of the Marie
Curie Charity but did you know that there is now a
Marie Curie Shop at 12A Rainham Precinct
(opposite the Dry Cleaners)?
Whilst the shop can accept any donated items apart
from electrical goods what is really needed is
Volunteers!
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the shop which is open 7 days a week or telephone
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HEMPSTEAD WRITERS' GROUP
A local female author is setting up a group for like-
minded female writers. It will meet once a month
(times to be decided) for discussion and support.
Anyone interested should email:
hempssteadwritersgroup@fsmail.net

VILLAGE FETE
Saturday 14 June, 12noon – 4.00pm
St Thomas of Canterbury RCP School, Romany
Road, Rainham
Entry - Adults £1; Children 50p
Plenty of games and entertainment for the whole
family.
Food and drink as well as other goodies will be on
sale. For more information ring 07706 662643.

MODEL RAILWAY SHOW
Chatham & District Club www.chathamshow.co.uk
Saturday June 14th, 10.00am – 5.00pm
Sunday June 15th, 10.00am – 4.00pm
Medway Leisure Centre, Mill Road, Gillingham
Entrance £7 Under 14 Free accompanied by an adult

BABY MASSAGE COURSE
June 16th, 23rd and 30th, 10.00 – 11.00am
All Saints Church, Hempstead, £5 for entire course
To enrol contact Elaine Wheeler
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Nature Notes

NATURE NOTES FOR MAY

In early May I visited the most northern part of the parish of St Margaret's, Rainham. I headed for Motney Hill Road and, having parked my car, joined the embankment that runs along the western edge of the road. The characteristic estuary smell of mud, seaweed and salt pervaded the air. In one direction I had a view towards the River Medway and the dominating presence of Kingsnorth Power Station. Black headed gulls, oyster catchers and shelduck stood out prominently as they fed on the mudflats of the estuary. Not so readily noticeable, because of their brown plumage, were redshanks. However, one particular nearby redshank, surprised at my sudden appearance, drew attention to itself with an explosion of shrill alarm notes. In the other direction from where I stood were large areas of scrub, mostly of hawthorn and bramble, and one of the most extensive reed beds in south east England. The reed warblers, sedge warblers and reed buntings that nest in the reeds attract the attention of cuckoos. The reed beds owe their existence to the presence of artesian wells, the water in which has permeated down through the chalk of the North Downs. This water eventually flows under Motney Hill Road and along a channel which empties into Rainham Creek. Ducks, geese, waders and gulls can often be seen along the channel, either bathing in or drinking the fresh water. I continued along the embankment, passed some houses on Motney Hill, turned right at the entrance to the sewage works and eventually came to the sea wall overlooking Otterham Creek. I could see, on the opposite bank, the "candle snuffer" shaped, shingle spire of St Mary's Upchurch. A small flock of Brent geese, not yet returned to their breeding grounds in the Arctic, were feeding on aquatic vegetation growing in the mud of the creek. It was a warm and sunny day and the air was heavy with the bitter sweet smell of hawthorn blossom. I could hear the rich warble of a blackcap and the scratchy songs of lesser whitethroats in the extensive scrub that lay in front of me. Some of the songsters revealed themselves at their perches. I listened in vain for the soft, purring notes of a turtle

dove. From distant reed beds, owned by The Kent Wildfowling and Conservation Association, emanated the familiar sound of a cuckoo, which later flew by me. I recognised its slim body, pointed wings and a long tail. Feeding on the long grasses adjoining the reed beds was a herd of beef cattle. The sun was shining in the rag stone tower of St Margaret's Parish Church, about a mile and a half away. On the horizon were the North Downs. According to the RSPB, we have lost six out of ten visiting cuckoos and nine out of ten visiting turtle doves since 1970. The cuckoo has a highly specialised diet feeding almost exclusively on caterpillars, many of which are hairy and sometimes toxic. One toxic caterpillar is that of the cinnabar moth. It has yellow and black bands around its body, which is full of deadly poison from the ragwort that it feeds on. It is not clear whether a lack of caterpillars is adversely affecting the cuckoo. As for turtle doves, their plight may be attributed to their being shot or trapped migrating through Europe and to the use of herbicides on the short lived weeds, such as fumitory, on which they feed whilst in this country. Turtle doves can still be found at the Countryside Park and so, on another sunny day in early May, I headed for the Lower Rainham Road. I was told by a warden in the visitor centre that a number of nightingales were in song on Eastcourt Meadows but, so far, no turtle doves had been seen or heard. For hundreds of years the meadows consisted of grazing land but, until some years ago, they were used as a municipal rubbish dump. They are now covered in trees and scrub (the latter being mostly of hawthorn and bramble) and are the breeding ground of many species of birds such as dunno, chaffinch, song thrush, lesser whitethroat and nightingale. As I had been led to believe by the warden, I did indeed hear the song (or part song) of nightingales. Three of them confined themselves to characteristic "choc" "choc" bubbling notes and only one of them went on to give the complete, rich, loud warble, with repetitions, that comprises the males' song. Quite unexpectedly, as I was walking up a grass ride set out for horse riders, I noticed what at first I assumed to be a collared dove feeding on the low vegetation of the ride. Through my binoculars I could

see the bird's pinkish breast and throat and the orange and buff chequered pattern on its wings. It was a turtle dove. It flew into a grey poplar tree from which came the unmistakable call of a turtle dove, a soft, soporific purring sound which is quite distinct from the cooing calls of the collared dove. I was able to announce to the warden, before I left, that I had both seen and heard my first turtle dove of the season.

Joe Ennis

THE KENTISH PLAYERS CELEBRATE 100 YEARS!

On the 26th April the Kentish Players held their first event in their centenary celebration year with a centenary party at Commissioners House in Chatham, which saw hundreds of past and present members gather together to celebrate Medway's oldest amateur musical theatre society. The Kentish Players were formed in 1914 though after the inaugural production of The Gondoliers the company was interrupted by World War 1. The company continued to perform during this period by performing concert parties to keep people entertained. Once hostilities were over they took up where they left off and produced many musicals including Rose Marie, Me and My Girl, Seven Brides for Seven Brothers, West Side Story and even The Full Monty! Since then the Kentish Players or KP's as they are affectionately known has produced at least one major musical annually along with countless concerts and revues. The history of their productions serves as a snapshot of the development of musical theatre as they transitioned from Gilbert and Sullivan through Rogers and Hammerstein to the modern juke box musical seen so frequently in the West End today. The centenary production at the Hazlitt Theatre Maidstone from 18th to the 21st of June is a classic example of this genre of musical. All Shook Up is the hip-swivelling, lip-curling musical inspired by and featuring the songs of Elvis Presley. This show will have you jumping out of your blue suede shoes with such classic Elvis hits as "Jailhouse Rock", "A Little Less Conversation" and "Heartbreak Hotel", as it follows a guitar-playing motorbike-riding roustabout as he turns a small town on its head and changes everything and everyone he meets. As Medway's oldest amateur musical theatre society the company still conduct all their rehearsals in the Medway Towns but often appear in Maidstone for productions. But as a Medway society who have

performed in most of Medway's historical theatre venues including The Theatre Royal, The Empire and the Royal Hippodrome, the company was eager to celebrate their centenary within Medway and so will also be hosting 'An evening with the Kentish Players' on Saturday November 1st at the Central Theatre in Chatham. The evening will be a fantastic trip down memory lane for supporters of KPs and lovers of musical theatre alike.

Other events during the year include quizzes (centenary themed of course), beach trips and a dinner and dance which will provide further opportunities for members, family and friends to celebrate together in this special year. There is even a book being produced to celebrate this event with contributions from many current and former members.

If you have had an association with the Kentish Players in the past we would gladly hear from you and welcome you to one of the many events that have been arranged for this year, we can be contacted initially through our website or Facebook page. info@kentishplayers.com www.kentishplayers.com

HUGE ARTS EVENT IN WIGMORE 28th & 29th June

The Wigmore Arts Weekend takes place on Saturday 28th June and Sunday 29th June, at St Matthew's Church and Community Centre, Drewery Drive. This ambitious event features demonstrations of various art forms. As well as creative media, there will be some crafts, stalls, plenty of activities for children performance arts showcases and workshops for all sorts of media. All free to the general public. A central feature of the weekend is an Art Show and over 40 artists will be displaying their works, some of which will be for sale. All artists and participants have offered a proportion of their proceeds to support future events. The opening times of the Arts Weekend are: Saturday - 10.30am to 4.30pm, Sunday 11.00am to 4.00pm with the opportunity to come along to a "Music of Praise" church service for all of the family at 9.30am. A full Programme of Events, details of workshops (and how to book them) and tickets for the Variety Show are available from Paul Warren, by e-mail wigmorearts@outlook, telephone 01634 372508, or by writing with sae please to 332 Maidstone Road, Gillingham, ME8 0HS.

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Diary 2014

June 22nd - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet John 07749 760788, 10.00am, Bluebell Hill car park, for 11.5 mile circular walk. Expect some hills. Bring snack.

June 23rd - Monday Hub, (see 9th June).

June 23rd - Medway Scrabble Club, (see 9th June).

June 23rd - Rainham Wives, Evening of slides with Mr Coe, (see 9th June).

June 24th - UpARA, Coffee Morning, Upchurch Village Hall, 9.30am, New Members Welcome, Members

£1.50, Guests £2, details davidrpowell5@hotmail.co.uk

June 25th - All Saints Women's Fellowship, Walk, (11th)

June 26th - Hempstead Leisure Club, AGM (see 12th Jun)

June 26th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Service followed by Quiz, (see 12th June).

June 26th - Rainham & District Dolls' House and Miniaturist Group, Howard Memorial Hall, Woodside, 7.30pm, ring Sylvia Wildridge 01634 312038

June 27th - Charity Barn Dance, Hands & Gillingham

Volunteer Centre, 7.30pm, Parkwood Community

Centre, Tickets £8.50 includes sausage and chips supper. Bar available at club prices. For tickets call Wendy 07816 159668 or Ann 01634 815430.

June 28th - Craft and Produce Market, Millennium Centre, Rainham, 9.00am - 12.30pm, Free entry, Refreshments available. In aid of St. Margaret's Church, contact Tony Andrews 01634 371941

June 28th - June Fair, Fairview Community Primary School, 1.30pm, Admission 50p, (30p children (pre-school free) Great fun for all the family, 01634 302961

June 28th - Beginners Bushcraft for adults, Capstone Farm Country Park, 10.00am - 2.00pm, an introduction to bushcraft skills, £11 per person 01634 338191

June 28th - Tree Listening, Gillingham Park, 11.00am - 4.00pm, be amazed at the sounds headphones.

June 28th - St. Peter's Church, Bredhurst, Summer Fete, 2.00 - 4.30pm, Playing Field & Hall, World War I

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June 28th - 1st Wigmore Brownies 80th Birthday Party, Millennium Centre, Rainham 2.00 - 4.00pm. All former brownies and leaders very welcome. Photos for display email 1stwigmorebrownies@gmail.com

June 28th - Promise Auction, St Mary's Church Upchurch part of Village Fête in the Paddock. Auction Lots online from 1st June www.upchurchpromise.eu.pn

June 28th - Old Barn Orchestral Concert, St George's Centre, Chatham, 7.30pm. Tickets £10 in advance £12 on the door from 01634 376979 or 10795 843228.

June 28th & 29th - Wigmore Arts Weekend, St Matthew's Church, Wigmore, Painting, craft, music, performing arts etc, details e-mail wigmorearts@outlook.com

June 29th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Chris 01634 360270, 10.00am Woodland Trust free car park, Church Road, Hucking Estate, not Hook and Hatchet (same postcode) TQ848581 ME7 1QT for 8.7 mile circular walk, one climb. Bring snack. Pub near end.

June 29th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am, meet Anne Bond & Pat Wells 07778 302866 07804 837155, Linton Church car park GR 755502 for 5 mile moderate mainly flat walk, 5 stiles, 1 climb, No dogs

June 30th - Rainham Wives, Beetle Drive, (see 9th June).

July 1st - 31st - Art Exhibition Local botanical artist Wynne Prescott will be exhibiting her latest works at Rainham Library, (usual library hours) 01634 234734

July 1st - Rainham Horticultural Society, 7.30pm Rainham Cricket Club, Berengrave Lane, Preparing for a Show - Home Economics - Julia Davies, New members welcome, ring 366276 for details.

July 1st - Floral Art Group, Birth/Christening gift arrangements, (see 17th June).

July 3rd - Wigmore Thursday Club, Military Medals, Glen Jones, (see Jun 12th)

July 4th - Deanwood Primary School, Summer Fayre, 3.15 - 5.30pm, Entrance Adults 50p, Children 30p, Pre-School Free, To book a stall or more details email t.kington@btinternet.com

July 4th - Medway Asthma Self-Help Ladies Pamper Evening, 6.00pm, Gillingham Golf Club, entry £4 (£3 in advance). Therapies from £5 (pay therapists). Tickets 01634 855844 medwayasthamselfhelp@btconnect.com.

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July 4th - Ghost Tours at Fort Amherst, Dock Road,
Chatham, 8.00 & 9.00pm, approx. 1 hour, Tickets £10
per person, not suitable under 8 years, information or to
book tickets visit www.fortamherst.com

July 5th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Geoff 07525
161766, 10.00am car park St Nicholas Church, Leeds
for 20 mile walk, bring water, food and sunscreen, for
up to 10 hours. Possible pub stops en route and at end.

July 6th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet John 07749
760788, 10.00am, Linton Church car park for 13.5
mile circular walk, some hills, bring snack.

July 6th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,
meet David Brown 01634 373833, Shellness Road car
park GR 045697 ME12 4RH for easy 6.5 mile circular
walk, generally flat but may be muddy, No dogs

July 7th - Monday Hub, (see 9th June).

July 7th - Medway Scrabble Club, (see 9th June).

July 7th - Rainham Wives, 'Mayoral Experiences' talk by
Vaughan Hewitt, (see 9th June).

July 8th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 6.30pm,
meet Stephen Manning 07551 712438 Bredhurst,
Hurstwood Road for 4 mile moderate woodland
wander, terrain may be challenging, No dogs

July 8th - Gillingham & District Fuchsia & Pelargonium
Society, Mini Competition - judging of Fuchsia and
Pelargonium cuttings, (see 10th June).

July 8th - Medway Antique and Collectors' Club, Angels
in Art - Colin Lomas, (see 10th June).

July 9th - Bredhurst WI, Dennis Chambers - The Magic
of Mind Power, (see 11th June).

July 9th - Rainham Flower Club, Demonstration
'Inspired By' by Kathy Stanguard, (see 11th June).

July 10th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Telecare, Clare
Saunders, (see Jun 12th)

July 10th - Medway Inter Faith Action, (see 12th June)

July 10th - Donn Barcott Band, (see 12th June).

July 11th - UpARA Monthly Meeting, (see 13th June).

July 12th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, Meet Chris
Morris 01634 374923 07847 828249, part 1 Walk the

Bluebell Railway at Horsted Keynes Station, ring for
times and car share, 7.5 mile moderate walk No dogs
July 12th - World Cup Big Swap - St Matthew's Church,
Drewery Drive, 10.00am - 1.00pm, collectors get
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July 12th - Community & Family Fun Day at Wigmore
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with activities for all ages.

July 12th - Instep Dancing, (see 7th June).

July 12th - Paranormal Investigations, Fort Amherst,
Dock Road, Chatham. 8.00pm - 3.00am, Medium
Richard Ware, Tickets £35 over 18's only, information
or to book visit www.fortamherst.com

July 13th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,
meet Roger Danks 07866 971819, Boughton Street near
White Horse Inn The Street, GR 056595 for a 5 mile
moderate walk, dogs allowed

July 13th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Tony/Ann
01634 406634, 10.00am, car park behind the
Community Hall, Kemsing for 6.5 mile walk via
Heaversham, through the St Clare estate, two steep hills
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July 13th - Cherry Picnic, Friends of The Vines, 1.00 -
4.00pm in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support. Bring a
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July 14th - Rainham Ladies Choir open rehearsal night.
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