

ACTION FORUM

JULY 2014

NUMBER **500**

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA ■

We are pleased to present the Five Hundredth edition of Action Forum.



For the first 10 years, from March 1969, the front page of Action Forum was either plain text, adverts or occasionally text plus a small photograph. Since 1979 we have usually used a postcard size picture frequently relating to a 'Memories of Rainham' article. Here we reproduce the pictures from our 200, 300 and 400 editions. Rainham High Street, Berengrave Lane and Lower Rainham all dating from before the First World War so over a hundred years ago.

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Next Issue August 2nd 2014
Copy Date: July 22nd Ads July 25th
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Editorial

As you can see from our front cover this is the five hundredth edition of Action Forum. In March 1969 Hamish was involved with 'Help the Needy' in Rainham and wanted a medium to advertise a particular event they were organising. He claims to have had the original idea of a free delivery newsletter paid for by local advertising – so you have him to blame for much of the clutter we get through our letterboxes 45 years later! Having organised the printing and delivery for one issue it seemed a waste not to continue and thus Action Forum was born. Having a family background in printing obviously helped and for the first few years W & J Mackay printed the copies, rather a change from their normal work of high class letterpress books. This was the era of rapid change in the printing industry and litho was the new kid on the block providing opportunities never before possible. After six months Hamish appealed for help and a small committee continued producing Action Forum whilst he went off for a year to do a post graduate course followed by a period with a printer in Oxford. The volunteers decided to do the whole process themselves and acquired a small printer. However it was a mammoth task, writing, editing, typesetting, printing, folding and delivering – even if it was only 10,000 copies needed to cover the whole of Rainham, Wigmore and Parkwood at the time. Inevitably the task began to prove too difficult and Hamish again became involved on his return. This was my introduction, first he recruited me to join the editorial team in November 1971 and then to help with the first Rainham Spectacular in May 1972 – we were married in December! AF gradually grew to 16 pages and a print run of 20,000 copies as the many new housing estates were completed. The advertising paid for printing and, for a short period, the distribution but all the editorial work was then as it is now undertaken by volunteers. Many hundreds of people have been involved, some for a few months some for years and years! Without these helpers AF would not continue, some of the original committee continued to assist for a long time and many door to door distributors have loyally delivered their copies whatever the weather for many years. Of course although we rely on you to contribute copy each month and our policy has always been to include items of local interest we need regular contributors to help fill the pages. Our particular thanks go to Joe Ennis who has written articles for

almost 400 editions of Action Forum, quite a record I am sure you will agree. For the last 14 years since we reverted to voluntary distribution we have also been able to donate the profit from our advertising revenue to charity. To date an amount in excess of £32,550 has been distributed to St Margaret's Church, Rainham, the Parish of South Gillingham and the Kajiado Project in Kenya, with a few gifts to other charities. With your continued help we now embark on our next 500 copies – producing our normal 11 issues a year that should take us to December 2059 I think – I rather doubt I shall see it! Incidentally I was asked recently if I had worked out the answer to the maths problem I mentioned in the April editorial (Four and a quarter yards of material at three shillings and eleven pence halfpenny a yard). I hadn't but I think it is 16 shillings and 10d plus a packet of hairpins in the change possibly, unless you know differently! Have a good month we will be here again as usual in August

Correspondence

MISS CHEESEMAN (Helena Thomas)
Dear Editor

I was saddened to learn of the passing of my former schoolteacher, "Miss Cheeseman" as I knew her. Miss Cheeseman was my very first teacher, when I started in the "Infants" at the Council School in Solomon Road, in April 1935. I seem to remember that her mother ran a small shoe shop with a tiny window in the front room of their house, which stood exactly where Hidsons now display their secondhand Citroen cars, in Rainham High Street.

As a five year old boy, I absolutely adored "Miss Cheeseman", by far the youngest teacher at the school, with her very fashionable bobbed 1930s hairstyle. "Miss Cheeseman" taught me to read. There was a waist-high dado rail running around the classroom wall, onto which was pinned a set of printed alphabet cards, each carrying upper and lower case letter and a picture. Every morning, "Miss C" went round the room, pointing to each letter / picture in turn, as the children chanted ... "AH is for Apple., Buh is for Bat ., and Caa is for Cat." All the children could read by the time we "Went Up" into Miss Hyde's class. We then moved on to Miss Madge, before going into the dreaded Miss Babbage's class!

Mr Hockey lived in Solomon Road, and he had the first Television (pre-war) in Rainham with a very tall bamboo mast in his front garden. Miss Bassadona was the next class teacher, before going into the "Top Class", taught by Mr Burrows. The Headmaster was Mr Pitcher. By then it was 1939, and World War II began in September. I was privately evacuated to Sussex, and the world changed forever. I have now had a long and varied career over many years, and I had all but forgotten Miss Cheeseman in the interim, until the Editorial in Action Forum No.

499 (June 2014) revived long forgotten memories. I am forever in her debt for starting me off so well in life, and I hope she rests in peace after living for 105 years.

Yours sincerely
Richard John Church
(born in Rainham) now aged 84 years.
Email: dickchurch@talktalk.net

MEMORIES OF RAINHAM

Dear Editor

I recently received the March, April and May issues of Action Forum from my sister-in-law Celia Henthorn, Orchard Street, and was very interested in the letters from Dick Grice and Pam Wanstall which jogged dormant memories. A pleasant surprise, too, to be remembered by Pam Wanstall after so many years. I remember her very well and her sister Lydia as they lived in Solomon Road near another friend Vic Nutting.

I remember the warehouse Dick Grice refers to beyond which in the Co-op yard was the Co-op dairy, Perc Payne being one of the Co-op milkmen. It may be a surprise that opposite the dairy and behind Mr Sampson's men's outfitting was a bakery that made bread and cakes for the High Street shop and rounds. The baker being a Mr Shilling who lived next door to the Co-op butchers in Station Road. Another of dad's colleagues in the Co-op football team was Harold Steadman a bread roundsman, who lived at Broad Walk.

When I left Senior School in 1943 two of my best mates who left with me were Ronald Golding and Ron Sims. Ron Golding became a delivery 'boy' and Ron Sims a 'warehouse boy' both at Rainham Co-op. Sadly Ron Golding the grandson of Sam Golding, Co-op coalyard weighman, died soon afterwards. Ron Sims, who lived in High Dewar Road, eventually lost contact when I was called up in 1950.

I don't recall my father being in the Co-op bowls team as well as football and snooker-billiards, but it is very probable as the staff and the Co-op children used to go to Belmont on Sunday afternoons where there was a bowling green and tennis courts. Syd Mattocks, Co-op secretary, was a very good tennis player.

Another memory is of the Co-op outings for staff and members on Wednesday afternoons (early closing) and sometimes Sundays. One was to an air show at Star Hill, Darland, where I understand the army camp

was later built. The show included static aircraft and flights over the Medway Towns. Another outing was to the sunken gardens between Westgate and Margate, then a popular attraction and surprisingly very little changed today. I have photos of one visit with my parents and Joy Waters parents George and Dolly Howland and her sister Chrissie. I also have the same photograph as used on the March Action Forum. I never did know why those five men were photographed together and assumed it must have been on a Co-op event somewhere. Thank you Dick Grice for solving the mystery.

Yours sincerely
Alan Major

41 Heaton Road, Canterbury CT1 3PY 01227 459246

WORLD CUP BIG STICKER SWAP - Reminder and Correction

Last month in Action Forum we announced that we would be holding a "Big Swap" for Collectors of Panini and Topps World Cup Stickers and cards at St Matthew's Church, Drewery Drive, Wigmore ME8 0NX, commencing at 10.00am on Saturday 12th July. A 25p entrance charge was indicated – we do apologise as this was incorrect, the charge is in fact 50p. We hope this does not put you off from coming – its great value, as all collectors will receive a free gift of a pack of Topps cards or Panini stickers (while stocks last)!

Paul Warren

DISTRIBUTION

Volunteer distributors of Action Forum are needed for:
Rainham

Lower Station Road (Railway to Bakers Field)

Parkwood

Foxburrow, Knavesacre, Stoneacre, Parkwood Green
Part of Long Catlis Road

Collett Walk, Moyle Close & Lubbock Walk

Hempstead

Barncroft & Old Carriageway
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 01634 310011 (please mention it is Action Forum you are phoning about) 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: 22nd July

July 1st – 31st - Art Exhibition botanical artist Wynne
Prescott latest works Rainham Library, (usual library
hours). Contact 01634 234734

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

July 5th – Litter Pick, 10.00 – 11.00am, meet Medway
Road entrance to Lower Lines Park, next to MidKent
College, bring gloves and a black bag. 07976 969912

July 5th - Family Fun Day, All welcome, 25 (Parkwood)
Squadron ATC, BBQ, Bouncy castle, Displays etc from
12.30pm, Deanwood School, Parkwood.

July 5th - Beer & Cider Festival, Star Meadow Sports
Club, 1.00 to 10pm. 40 Real Ales & Ciders, all day
BBQ, live music. Raising funds for Rotary Charities.
Tickets £10 to include 4 pints of ale or cider Medway
Rotary Club noelfrancis@hotmail.com, 07847 733992

July 6th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet John 07749
760788, 10.00am, Linton Church car park 13.5 mile
circular walk, visit Buttercups Goat Sanctuary some
hills. Bring snack for picnic lunch midway.

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

July 7th – Monday Hub, St Paul's Church, Parkwood,
10.00am – 12.30pm, light refreshments, conversation,
games etc, All welcome, ring 01634 230780 for details.

July 7th – Medway Scrabble Club, St Stephens Church
Hall, Maidstone Road, Chatham, alternate Mondays
2.00 – 4.30pm, new members welcome, 01634 230500

July 7th – Rainham Wives, Methodist Church Hall,
Wakeley Road, 8.00pm, 'Mayoral Experiences' talk by
Vaughan Hewitt, New members welcome, £1.50 per
visit includes refreshments, details Sue 01634 230639.

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

July 8th – Gillingham & District Fuchsia & Pelargonium
Society, 7.30pm Rainham School for Girls, Derwent
Way, Mini Competition – judging of Fuchsia and
Pelargonium cuttings, information ring 01634 852519.

July 8th - Medway Antique and Collectors' Club, Angels
in Art – Colin Lomas, St George Hotel, New Road,
Chatham, 7.30 for 8.00pm visitors welcome. Enquiries
medwayantiquespublicity1@virginmedia.com

July 9th – Bredhurst WI, 7.30pm Village Hall, Dennis
Chambers - The Magic of Mind Power, visitors
welcome, For details ring 01634 389966

July 9th – Rainham Flower Club, 7.30pm Upchurch
Village Hall, Demonstration 'Inspired By' by Kathy
Stanguard, For further information ring 01622 884657,
01795 472973 or 01634 863034

July 10th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Telecare, Clare
Saunders, St Matthew's Community Centre, 2.00pm,
for over 50s, ring 01634 235507 for details.

July 10th - Medway Inter Faith Action, Medway Council
Meeting Room, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham,
7.30pm all welcome, ring Hugh Hawkins 01634
843307 or email julihugh@tiscali.co.uk for details

July 10.11.12.17.18.19 - Oasthouse Theatre, Rainham,
Gods Favorite - A comedy by Neil Simon, 8.00pm, Box
Office 0844 8793224 or www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk

July 10th - Donn Barcott Band, 44Two Sports and Social
Club, Featherby Road, Gillingham, 8.30 – 11.00pm,
Admission £6, Details ring Jazz Line 01634 405037

July 11th - Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group,
Millennium Centre, Rainham, every Friday 9.45am –
12noon for people who have lost a loved one, join us
for a cuppa and chat details ring Julie 01634 364309

July 11th - UpARA Monthly Meeting, Upchurch Village
Hall, 2.00pm, Members Free, Guests £2, New Members
Welcome, details email Chairman David Powell
davidpowell15@hotmail.co.uk

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

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Bluebell Railway at Horsted Keynes Station contact
Chris Morris for times and car share, 7.5 mile moderate
walk. Train to East Grinstead walk back. No dogs

July 12th - Community & Family Fun Day at Wigmore
Evangelical Free Church Durham Road. 1.00 - 5.00pm
with activities for all ages.

July 12th - World Cup Big Swap - St Matthew's Church,
Drewery Drive, 10.00am - 1.00pm, complete World Cup
card and sticker sets, Ring 01634 372508 or e-mail
worldcupstickerswap@outlook.com for details.

July 12th - Instep Dancing, Rainham School for Girls,
Derwent Way, 8.00 – 11.00pm, for Ballroom – Latin –
Sequence Dancing, details 01634 363738 or
s.collins02@btinternet.com

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

July 13th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,
meet Roger Danks 07866 971819, Boughton Street near
White Horse Inn GR056595, 5 mile moderate, dogs OK

July 13th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Tony/Ann
01634 406634, 10.00am, car park behind the
Community Hall, Kemsing 6.5 mile walk through St
Clare estate, two steep hills may be slippery. Numerous
stiles and gates. Not suitable for dogs unless on short
lead. Bring picnic lunch Pub at end with lunches

July 13th - Cherry Picnic, Friends of The Vines, 1.00 –
4.00pm in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support. Bring a
picnic, and enjoy the fun and games

July 13th - Volunteer Task Day, Riverside Country Park,
10.00am – 2.00pm, come and help at the Country Park,
learn about the management and meet new people,
refreshments provided, 01634 337432

July 14th - Medway Organ Club Concert, Parkwood
Community Centre, 7.30pm, Organist Michael
McAnany, details ring Brian Leonard 01634 234694

July 14th - 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

July 14th - Rainham Ladies Choir open rehearsal night.
Interested in singing? Come along 7.30pm, St Thomas
of Canterbury Junior School, Romany Road, Gill. All
Ladies welcome. For more information about us, please
see our website at www.rainhamladieschoir.org.uk

July 14th – Rainham Wives, Summer Meal, (see 7th Jul).
July 15th - The RSPB Medway Local Group Talk,
Parkwood Community Centre, 7.30 - 9.45pm £3,
Magical Majorca – Chris Ward. For Walks see
www.rspb.org.uk/groups/medway.

July 15th – Floral Art Group United Reformed Church
(rear hall) Balmoral Road, Gillingham, 7.30 – 9.00pm,
Leaf Manipulation Workshop, for more information
contact Kaye 01634 232998.

July 16th - Hempstead Active Retirement Association
(HempstARA), Scout Hall, Duke's Meadow Drive, 2pm
July 16th – Bredhurst Garden Club 7.30pm, Village Hall,
illustrated talk Bill Butcher 'People, Places, Plants,
Poisons and Harry Potter' African Violet and Sweet Pea
Show, new members welcome ring 233554 for details.

July 17th - Rainham Women's Institute, Methodist
Church Hall, Wakeley Road, Rainham, 1.45 - 4.00pm,
Members meeting, Visitors welcome for small entry
charge per visit. Ring 01634 366276 for details.

July 17th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Serbia on a
Shoestring, Lorna Bailey, (see 10th July).

July 18th - Jazz Gig, Anchorians Rugby Club, Darland
Avenue, Gillingham, 8.30pm, Martin Speake Quartet
play Charlie Parker, Admission £10, Enquiries 01634
365352 or 07544 312743

July 19th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, Meet Chris
Morris 01634 374923 07847 828249, part 2 Walk the
Bluebell Railway at Sheffield Park Station GR 404237
contact Chris Morris for times & car share, 7 mile walk.
Train to Horsted Keynes walk back. No dogs

July 19th - Summer Gift & Craft Fair for Great Ormond
Street Children's Hospital. United Services Club,
Rainham, 9.30am - 2.30pm. Pitches available - £10
each. Further information 01634 373450, 07910 396130
or 07897 007979. All welcome.

July 19th - Rainham South Councillors Surgery, 9.30am -
12 noon. Parkwood Community Centre, No
appointment needed.

July 19th - Newington Festival with Demelza Hospice
from noon, school field ME9 7LB family
entertainment, tug-of-war (entries welcome), live bands
until 9pm, plus stalls, games, dance displays, bar and
refreshments, sepr@hotmail.co.uk or 01795 842405.

July 19th – RAMASES 2.30pm Newington Village Hall,
Carol Andrews 'Pets or Power: animals in Ancient
Egypt' 01795 472316 or ramasesnk@hotmail.com

Continued on Page 11

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GODS FAVORITE
A comedy by Neil Simon
Oasthouse Theatre, Rainham
July 10.11.12.17.18.19 Curtain up at 8.00pm
Successful Long Island businessman Joe Benjamin is
a modern-day 'Job' with a demanding wife,
ungrateful children and wise-cracking household
employees. Just when it seems things couldn't get
any worse, he is visited by Sidney Lipton, a.k.a. A
Messenger from God (and compulsive film buff)
with a mission: test Joe's faith and report back to
"the Boss". The jokes and Tests of Faith fly fast and
furious as Neil Simon spins a contemporary morality
tale like no other in this hilarious comedy.
Box Office on 0844 8793224 or on-line
www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk

CHERRY PICNIC
The Friends of The Vines
Sunday 13th July 1.00 – 4.00pm
Join us for the annual Cherry Picnic, with a
fundraising tombola in aid of
Macmillan Cancer Support.
Bring a picnic, relax on the grass, enjoy Kentish
cherries fresh from the orchard, browse the stalls
and enjoy the fun and games

RAMASES
(Rainham and Medway and Swale Egypt Society)
Saturday July 19th, 2.30pm
Newington Village Hall
Carol Andrews
'Pets or Power: animals in Ancient Egypt'
Members £6.00 Guests £8.00
Tickets can be requested in advance from
Mrs B Peterken 10, Sydney Avenue,
Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1XX
or on the day at the door.
Contact ramasesnk@hotmail.com or
John Dewey 01795 472316 for more details

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wood work, needle work, cards and honey.
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NEWINGTON FESTIVAL
in conjunction with Demelza Hospice for Children
Saturday July 19th, from noon on the school field,
School Lane, Newington ME9 7LB
Lots of family entertainment, tug-of-war (entries
welcome), live bands until 9.00pm, plus stalls,
games, dance displays, bar and refreshments.
Contact sepr@hotmail.co.uk or 01795 842405.

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,
07910 396130 or 07897 007979. All welcome.

A SUMMER SERENADE
Rivervoice Community Choir
Saturday July 26th, 3.00 – 5.00pm
St Georges Church, Chatham Dockyard
Beautiful Music and Song followed by Light
Refreshments, Raffle and Cake Auction
Free Entry, Donations Welcome

ANNUAL SHOW
Gillingham and District Fuchsia and Pelargonium
Society will be holding their Annual Show of
Fuchsias and Pelargoniums on Saturday 26th July at
2pm. This takes place at the Rainham School for
Girls, Derwent Way, Rainham, Kent. ME8 0BX.
There will also be Plant Sales, Raffle and
Refreshments. £1 entry. Under 16's free. For more
information contact 01634 852519.

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Nature Notes

NATURE NOTES FOR JUNE

According to the Environment Agency, there are 161 chalk rivers and streams across England, more than any other country. With their clear, cool water fed from underground chalk aquifers and their unique array of animal and plant life, they are like no other natural habitat. Great drifts of water crowfoot, whose white flowers float on the surface of the water, are a characteristic sign of chalk rivers and streams. Fish such as trout, grayling and salmon spawn in the beds of pebbles and gravel of these chalk water courses. Nymphs of mayflies, among other flies, grow fat under the same pebbles, prior to their brief nuptial flight. In late spring or early summer the fully grown nymphs float top the surface of the water, where they are taken by trout and other species of fish. Those that escape the jaws of a predator moult, in due course, to become glistening, long-tailed, adult mayflies. As adults, they live only for a few days, during which time they mate, in swarms, over the water, usually in the afternoon or early evening. After sunset the female lays her eggs in the river bed. The most famous of England's chalk rivers, where fly fishing rights cost a fortune, are the Avon, the Test and the Itchen in Hampshire, all of which empty into the Solent. Kent's chalk rivers and streams include the Nailbourne and stretches of the Great Stour.

In May, a couple of years ago, I walked the Great Stour Way between Chartham and Canterbury. Chartham is dominated by the large buildings of a paper mill. The village has an impressive 13th century parish church and an 1888 South Eastern Railway signal box from which the signalman emerges to close, by hand, the level crossing gates on the Ashford to Canterbury railway line. The 19th century gates sit somewhat incongruously with the 21st century High Speed Train which dashes through the station on its way to St Pancras. During the first half of my journey the Great Stour was lined with a string of flooded gravel pits surrounded by bulrushes, among other aquatic plants. Herons, cormorants, great crested grebes, mute swans and coots could be seen on the lakes. Overlooking the Great Stour from the west was

the high ground around Chartham Hatch, topped with woodland. Apple and pear trees were growing on the sunny slopes leading down to the river which is lined with water – loving trees such as alder, grey poplar, crack willow and white willow. The leaves of the latter flash silver in the wind and the sunshine. Sheep graze in a number of the fields alongside the river. A little over half way to Canterbury I passed by the parish church of Thanington Without. The parish's somewhat strange name refers to the fact that it is without the old city walls of Canterbury, as distinct from being within. It was at that point in my journey that I spotted a large shoal of brown trout facing upstream and keeping their positions in the water above a stretch of flinty gravel on the river bottom. It was heartening to see that the water was very clear. Anchored on the bed of the river and wafting in the flow of the water were drifts of water crowfoot, lesser spearwort and floating sweet grass. Purple loosestrife, meadow sweet, yellow flag and hemlock were growing on the river bank. Throughout my journey I came across mallard and their ducklings and water hens and their chicks feeding among the plants in the river. I caught sight of the flashing blue shape of a king fisher. Chalk rivers are a favourite haunt of otters. According to the Environment Agency, Kent's rivers contain good quality water and high levels of fish but the county's extensive networks of busy roads and railways are obstacles for otters attempting to spread from the west.

Having passed under the A2 bypass of Canterbury, I emerged onto Hambrooke Marshes which are periodically flooded or water logged by fresh water. Under the Stour Valley Project the marshes are being fenced to enable them to be grazed by cattle, as they were in the past. The hope is that snipe will be encouraged to nest there. During my visit ragged robin, red clover and common fleabane (yellow, button-like flowers) were in bloom on the marshes. From the latter I had a view of the Bell Harry Tower of Canterbury Cathedral. A number of paintings exist of the same view in Victorian times, including one by Thomas Sidney Cooper RA, who was born in Canterbury. This painting is not as well known as the famous view of Salisbury Cathedral from Harnham

water meadows by John Constable! In due course I crossed the boundary line of the old city wall and entered into Westgate Gardens, the path through which has the Great Stour on one side and colourful flower beds on the other. I finished my journey at Westgate Tower, the sole survivor of the city's mediaeval gates of the 14th century. My walk had been one of complete contrasts, from sheep grazing silently in water meadows to excitable French school children let loose in the centre of Canterbury.

Joe Ennis

REFLECTIONS OF LOWER HALSTOW

1914, in Words, Pictures, Flowers and Music.

August 2nd, 3rd, 4th

St. Margaret's Church, Lower Halstow
Please join us in church as we explore life in the village in August 1914.

We will have a display giving a brief history of the young, brave lads who volunteered from Lower Halstow. The church will be decorated with floral arrangements inspired by poetry and music written by those affected and with photos from the era. There will be a series of events in the church to mark the weekend.

The church will be open at the following times with daily events:

Saturday 2nd August 10am to 4pm.

At 2pm Michael Mills will present a talk on the First World War, the talk will be aimed to suit children, so every one is welcome.

Sunday 3rd August 1pm to 4pm.

At 2pm there will be singing by two lovely ladies known locally as 'Those Women', they will be singing popular songs from the First World War. Afternoon Tea will be served afterwards, every one is welcome.

Monday 2pm to 6.30pm.

The Thames Sailing barge, Edith May, will be joining us in the parish dock. Our reflections will end with a short service at 6.30pm, concluding with Fred Slade playing 'Sunset' on the trumpet.

After the service please stay for a glass of wine to reminisce, every one is welcome.

There will be tea, coffee and cake available during all three days to welcome visitors and to enjoy the ambience of the church.

Please do come and join us as we mark the Centenary of the outbreak of the First World War in this simple but beautiful way.

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FIRST WORLD WAR ANNIVERSARY

St Margaret's Church, Rainham will be open on 4th August, the 100th Anniversary of the beginning of the First World War, from 10.00am until 4.00pm and from 6.00pm until 7.30pm for people to come and see the personal family artefacts, medals, letters etc. on display and then at 7.30pm there will be a short Prayer Vigil.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Medway League of Friends needs volunteers to help in our busy shops, especially evenings and weekends. If you have some time to spare and would like to make a difference please contact Margaret Gilham at Medway Maritime Hospital on 01634 830000 x 3695.

LINE DANCING CLASS

Absolute beginners Line dance class at United Services Club, Rainham 10.15 -11.30am Thursday mornings. For information ring Carol 07973 677390

OAST COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Oast Community Centre (next to Station) is available for regular group or one off hire. It offers a number of sized rooms including kitchen facilities, bar, free parking, cafe area, outside space, large upper hall from as little as £20 for a 4 hour session. To find out more and to book, call Lyn on 01634 370327 or email graham.g.anstee@btopenworld.com

ART EXHIBITION

Local botanical artist Wynne Prescott exhibits her latest works at Rainham Library, Birling Avenue during July. Works will include spring flowers, roses and others - the ideal present for that special person, at very reasonable prices. Contact 01634 234734

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC - St Matthew's, Wigmore
Our church is looking to develop our creative musical and choral tradition. We seek a leader for our musical ministry with good people skills, sensitive to liturgy and various musical styles.

The choir sing on most Sundays at 9.30am at Eucharistic services and Songs of Praise but on a 1st Sunday at Sung Evensong at 5pm. Music group play on a 1st Sunday at Family service 9.30am.

Negotiable remuneration with the opportunity for 'occasional office' fees and further opportunities within the local community.

For a job description and further details please contact Church Warden, Jean Penney on 01634 387379 or e-mail penneymejl@aol.com

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Diary 2014

July 19th - Produce Sale and Crafts, 2.00 - 4.00pm, St Margaret's Church, Lower Halstow, home grown and home made produce and crafts. Refreshments available and warm welcome guaranteed! www.thisix.org.uk

July 20th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Geoff 07525 161766, 10.00am, car park of Ightham Mote (NT) for a 6.5 mile walk along the Greensand Way to Old Soar Manor. Pub at end with lunches available.

July 20th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am, meet Graham Starkey 01634 371948, Bekesbourne Station, GR 189561 CT4 5EP for a 5.5 mile moderate walk, dogs allowed

July 20th - Volunteer Task Day, Capstone Farm Country Park, 10.00am - 2.00pm, come and help and meet new people, refreshments provided, 01634 338191.

July 21st - Monday Hub, (see 7th July).

July 21st - Medway Scrabble Club, (see 7th July).

July 21st - Rainham Evening WI, 7.30pm, Millennium Centre, Ms Christine Pope 'Poetry', Competition - Limerick, ring 01634 262577 for details.

July 22nd - UpARA, Coffee Morning, Upchurch Village Hall, 9.30am, Members £1.50, Guests £2, New Members Welcome, For details email Chairman David Powell davidpowell5@hotmail.co.uk

July 24th - UpARA Outing, Oliver - Marlow Theatre, Canterbury, (see 22nd July)

July 24th - Wigmore Thursday Club, River Thames & Sea Towage, Brian Biggs, (see 10th Jul).

July 24th - Gillingham Horticultural Society talk "Hints from our Judges on Showing your Produce" 7.30pm Star Meadow Sports Club, Darland Avenue, Members £2, Visitors £3 includes Coffee/Tea 01634 852519.

July 26th - Gillingham and District Fuchsia and Pelargonium Society, Annual Show 2.00pm, Rainham School for Girls, Plant Sales, Raffle and Refreshments. £1 entry, Under 16's free, 01634 852519.

July 26th - Quiz Night, Holy Trinity Church, Twydall, 7.15pm, Teams up to 10, £5 each, Bring your own

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July 27th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am, meet Roger Norman 01634 232404 07941 965272, Dryhill Nature Reserve near road GR 497552 TN14 6AA, 5 mile moderate walk (no toilets at start) No dogs

July 27th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Ade 01634 306405, 10.00am, free public car park High Street, East Malling, for 6 mile easy flattish walk, Bring picnic lunch. Pub at end.

July 27th - Beer Festival. Rainham Cricket Club. Berengrave Lane, ME8 7NA. 30 real ales and 10 ciders, live music, all day BBQ, fun and games for all the family. 12noon - 10.00pm. Raising funds for our new Cricket club community pavilion.

July 29th - Creative Clay Creatures, Riverside Country Park, 10.00am - 12noon select either 10.00 or 11.00am start, it may get messy, suitable for accompanied children aged 4 to 12 years. £3 per child, 01634 337432

July 30th - 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 to 12 years. £3 per child, 01634 337432

July 30th - Beginners Fishing for children, Capstone Farm Country Park, 10.00am - 12noon or 1.00 - 3.00pm learn the basics of fishing, all equipment and bait supplied, suitable for accompanied children aged 8 - 12 years £11 per child, 01634 338191

July 31st - Family Birdwatching, Capstone Farm Country Park, 10.00am - 12noon a birdwatching experience for the whole family, £3 per person, 01634 338191

July 31st - Rainham & District Dolls' House and Miniaturist Group, Howard Memorial Hall, Woodside, 7.30pm, ring Sylvia Wildridge 01634 312038

August 1st - Ghost Tours at Fort Amherst, Dock Road, Chatham, 8.00 & 9.00pm, approx. 1 hour, Tickets £10, not suitable under 8 years, book www.fortamherst.com

August 2nd - 4th - Reflections of Lower Halstow - 1914, in Words, Pictures, Flowers and Music, St. Margaret's Church, Lower Halstow, 10.00am - 4.00pm. Saturday 2.00pm Michael Mills talk First World War aimed at children, Sunday 2.00pm singing popular songs from the First World War, Monday 6.30pm short service

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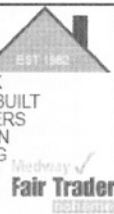
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Diary 2014

August 3rd - Capstone Volunteer Task Day, (see 20th).

August 3rd - Medway Ramblers Walk meet Mike,
10.00am, Hook and Hatchet (use far car park) Hucking
TQ837582 ME17 1QS for a 5 mile walk in the Hucking
Estate, no roads one stile. Bring snack pub at end.

August 3rd - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,
meet Gill Smith 01622 710569 07999 858981, Paddock
Wood Station car park (£1 fee) GR 671453 TN12 6ER,
For a 5.5 mile easy flat walk. No dogs

August 4th - 100th Anniversary of the beginning of the
First World War, St Margaret's Church Rainham open
10.00am - 4.00pm and 6.00pm - 7.30pm to view the
personal family artefacts, medals, letters etc. on display.
7.30pm short Prayer Vigil.

August 4th - Monday Hub, (see 7th July).

August 4th - Medway Scrabble Club, (see 7th July).

August 5th - Under The Sea Collage, Riverside Country
Park, 10.00am - 12noon select either 10.00 or 11.00am
start, learn what lives under the water, for accompanied
children aged 4 to 12 years. £3 per child, 01634 337432

August 5th - Rainham Horticultural Society, 7.30 pm
Rainham Cricket Club, Berengrave Lane, Competition
Night, New members welcome, ring 366276 for details.

August 6th - Medway Ramblers Walk meet Peter/Ann
01634 718895, 10.00am public car park on the right as
you go into Cobham from Strood after the Ship pub
TQ669681 DA12 3BG for a 4 mile circular walk. After
the walk a tour of Cobham Church, bring a picnic lunch
to have before we go into the Church. Pub at end.

August 6th - Orienteering Family Fun, Riverside Country
Park, 10.00am - 12noon, suitable for families and
groups after adventure. £2 per person, 01634 337432

August 6th - Mini-Beast Hunt (Pond Dipping and Sweep
Netting), Capstone Farm Country Park, 10.00am -
12noon or 1.00 - 3.00pm, for accompanied children
aged 5 to 12 years. £3 per child, 01634 3378191

August 7th - Beginners Fishing for children, (see 30th).

August 8th - UpARA Monthly Meeting, (see 11th July).

August 10th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,

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10.00am, meet Pearl Stevens 07724 602929, New Ash
Green park in North Square GR 605656 DA3 8QT, For
a 5 mile moderate undulating walk. No dogs

August 10th - Medway Ramblers Walk meet Geoff 07525
161766, 10.00am Sevenoaks Library, Buckhurst Lane
TQ533545 TN13 1LQ for a 3.5 mile fun family walk
suitable for children in Knole park. Pub at end.

August 10th - Volunteer Task Day, Riverside (see 13th).

August 11th - Monday Hub, (see 7th July).

August 11th - Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group,
(see 14th July).

August 11th - Medway Organ Club Concert, (see 14th).

August 12th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 6.30pm,
meet Stephen Manning 07551 712438, Trosley Country
park (charges apply) GR 632610, 4 mile moderate
woodland wander, terrain may be challenging. No dogs

August 12th - Gillingham & District Fuchsia &
Pelargonium Society, Conservatory and Patio
Gardening Talk by David Fioton. (see 8th July).

August 12th - Medway Antique and Collectors' Club,
Frost, Freezes & Fairs - Ian Currie, (see 8th July).

August 13th - Medway Ramblers Walk meet Mike,
10.00am just north of Wrotham village TQ611597
TN15 7DD for a 5 mile short gradual uphill walk.
Choice of 3 pubs with food at end.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED to run a Community Apple Orchard in Lower Rainham

Zammit Roofing have generously offered five acres of
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This year the fruit will be sold through well publicised
"Pick Your Own" days, ideally 7 days a week when the
fruit is ripe. The number of days depend on the number of
volunteers willing to supervise car parking, take the
money etc.

For the project to be viable longer term we need a
volunteer management board willing to take responsibility
for the project as a whole. Many more volunteers will be
needed to cover different tasks through the seasons. These
include mowing the grass, picking the fruit, staffing "Pick
Your Own" days and pruning. If you would like to help in
any way please email your contact details to
hamish@thenet.uk.net or call 01634 310011 between 9am
and 5pm Monday to Friday.

All volunteers will be entitled to some fruit for their own
consumption but the main objects of the project are to
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