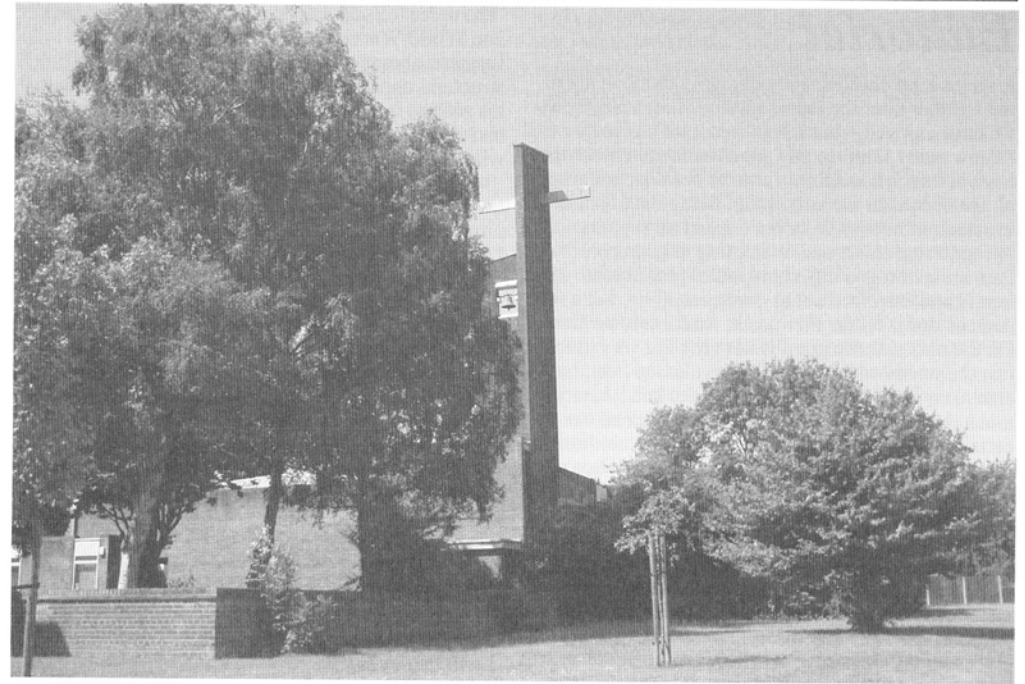


# ACTION FORUM

AUGUST 2014

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA ■

NUMBER 501



St Matthew's Church, Wigmore. The church will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of its consecration at Easter 1965 next year. In preparation for this event anyone who has memorabilia or has been involved in any way in the parish during the past half century is invited to get in touch with the organisers Ninon and John Tice 01634 360633 who will be delighted to hear from you. See page 9 for more information.

## Robert J. Kitney

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Next Issue September 6th 2014  
Copy Date: Aug 26th Ads Aug 29th  
Editorial: Barbara Mackay Miller  
Advertising: Hamish Mackay Miller  
Action Forum Office  
21 Station Rd, Rainham ME8 7RS  
(above Sunburst Books)  
Telephone: 01634 310011  
Email: af@thenet.uk.net

## Editorial

It seems a bit churlish and ungrateful to moan about the weather after the recent glorious hot, sunny spell we have enjoyed – but it has been a bit too hot for me! I know many families pay good money to ensure they have just such conditions for their holiday, enduring all the horrors at the airport and flying long distances in search of hot sunshine but I spend all my time trying to find shade and attempting to keep cool. I am assured it is a different kind of heat abroad – less humid and therefore not as energy sapping, but a few degrees down on the thermostat would suit me fine. On the plus side the grass is not growing very quickly, just the weeds which seem to thrive in the heat, but of course on the minus all the vegetables need watering much more. The few rain storms we have had certainly helped with this at least we have no threat of water rationing to worry about this year. I notice at least one of the 'lakes' that appeared during the exceptionally wet winter in the horse paddocks along the Lower Rainham Road is still in evidence, albeit shrinking in size on a daily basis but it shows the water table is still very high so our underground water resources are very healthy.

August is traditionally the holiday month and many clubs and societies have an annual break but in way of compensation the rangers at our local Country Parks spring into action providing a programme of activities for both children and the whole family to enjoy if you have decided to stay at home this year. Some require pre-booking but others are available all day for you to drop in and take part when it is convenient. Anything from birdwatching, making collages, big bugs and mini beasts to litter picking and bushcraft are on offer so if you want to forage for free food or learn how to fish now is your chance to have a go. The local ramblers associations also continue to offer a full programme of walks as do the Medway Walking for Health groups so if you have been promising yourself to get more exercise perhaps now is the time to take the plunge and join one of these activities, you will be assured of a warm welcome.

Of course some events do take place in August. The Demelza Charity Shop at Parkwood is celebrating its third birthday on Saturday 16th and the Dollshouse & Miniaturist Group have an open day and exhibition over the weekend of 23rd & 24th, at St Margaret's

School, Rainham – both would love to see you. Whatever you decide to do, sunbathing in the back garden or hiking round the countryside, have a very good month and we will be with you again in September – ready for the new academic year!

## Correspondence

A SECOND WORLD WAR MEMORY OF  
MANSTON AIRPORT

Dear Editor,

The recent closure of Manston Airport brings back 2nd World War memories to me of a stranded Lancaster bomber in 1944. It had sustained some structural damage over Germany. The pilot contacted his airbase in Lincolnshire, stating that he could not taxi on the ground because of no air pressure in the wheel brakes.

Being an airframe fitter I and an engine fitter were issued with travel warrants and told to go to Manston immediately and no 'dilly dallying' on the way. The Lancaster was needed for the big raids over German cities.

Next morning with the engine fitter (to run the engines) and the pilot I began work to solve the problem. In the cockpit and flight engineers seat were many pipelines. Most important were brake air pressure and oxygen colour coded pipes. With the pilot breathing down my neck it needed very careful observation to realise that two pipe line colours did not match. With a borrowed tool kit I was able to correctly reconnect the pipes. The engines were run and the aircraft was once again serviceable. The pilot was 'over-the-moon' telling the two of us to quickly get our kit, we were going in the Lancaster back to our Lincolnshire base.

The mystery is how had the oxygen and air-pressure pipes become wrongly connected?

I will end by saying 'Good Luck Manston'.

Yours sincerely  
H. O'Hare  
01634 362805

PRINCESS IRENE DISASTER

Dear Editor

I have several small splinters of wood, some horsehair stuffing probably from a chair, pieces of printed paper and cord. Not particularly interesting to look at, but there is a tragic story about them. Their origin was the Princess Irene that exploded in Saltpan Reach, Isle of Grain, on May 27th, 1915, 'like a volcano'. My maternal grandmother Alice Norton, at 313 Station Road heard the explosion and went into the back garden to investigate, thinking it was probably a bomb. As she stood there the sky seemed filled with thousands of items of all sizes passing over. Then the smaller fragments began to fall like a huge cloud of confetti on to paths, the garden and road. She picked up these items I have and kept them to see where they had come from but soon it became known locally about the disaster and loss of lives and she never felt

able to throw them away afterwards. I wonder if any other item's survive from that day. The point of my letter, however, is that next year has the centenary of the disaster and if there is any archives or organisation interested holding a commemoration in the area able to give a good home to these small items of history they are welcome to have them for preservation.

Yours sincerely  
Alan Major  
41 Heaton Road  
Canterbury CT1 3PY  
01227 459246

KINGFISHER SINGERS The Brian Tumour Charity  
Dear Editor

The next fundraising event for the charity will be September Songs on Saturday 13th September 2014 at St Margaret's Church, High Street, Rainham. Program Raffle and Elizabethan Void Ticket £8.50 (£7.50 if booked in advance)  
Contact Olwen 01634 263622

Please help the charity which supports research into brain tumours and provides help and care to sufferers of brain tumours.

Yours sincerely  
Olwen O'Dowd

(Fundraiser in Gillingham and Rainham)

WINE AND WISDOM

Dear Editor,

Save the date! On September 20th at 7.30pm, we will be holding our Wine and Wisdom event at St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, Wigmore ME8 0NX

Book your table, bring your own drinks and nibbles and get ready for an exciting and fun packed evening. Tables are for 6 - 8 people and cost £5 per person..... but hurry they will soon be gone!  
Phone: 01634 387793 or 01634 387425 for further details and tickets.

Yours sincerely,  
Hilary Lilley

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entertainment during the summer school holidays Activities include free treasure hunts, face painting, Sand Art workshops, plus seaside themed arts and crafts workshops. The sessions are suitable for all ages from toddlers to grandparents. Children must be supervised at all times.

BREDHURST PLAYScheme

Bredhurst Village Hall  
5th, 7th, 12th, 14th, 19th and 21st August  
10.00am – 3.00pm,

£10 per child per session. Lots of fun and activities, All children welcome from age 5 upwards. For more information contact Mary Gough on marygough6@hotmail.com or 07525 749802 or 01634 263929

WALKING FOR HEALTH

Medway Health Walks in support of the National Walking for Health Campaign - our regular local walks are for people who need to be more active and would enjoy getting out in the company of others at some of our interesting Medway locations. Our walk leaders are fully trained and enthusiastic volunteers who have all experienced the health benefits of walking and will encourage and support you to safely include walking as a regular and enjoyable part of your new healthy lifestyle just turn up and give it a try.

Every week we offer the following walks:

Mondays meet Peter at 10.15am outside the Ship and Trades for a 60 - 90 minute "maritime walk" around St Mary's Island, Chatham.

Tuesdays meet Rob at 10.15am outside the Visitors Centre for a 45 - 90 minute "nature walk" through Riverside Country Park.

Wednesdays meet Ron at 9.30am at the junction of Star Lane/Darland Avenue for a 45 - 60 minute "scenic walk" around Darland Banks, Gillingham.

Thursdays meet Barry and Barbara at 9.15am outside the surgery 13 Pump Lane, Rainham for a 45- 60 minute "wooded walk" around Cozenton Park and Bloors Lane.

Saturdays meet Julia at 1.45pm outside Twydall Library for a 1.5 - 2hrs (including a tea stop) "country lane walk" to Riverside and back with a refreshment break on route.

For more information and other Medway Health Walks contact Hazel Gallagher on 01634 331371

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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: 26th August

August 2nd – 4th - Reflections of Lower Halstow - 1914,  
in Words, Pictures, Flowers and Music, St. Margaret's  
Church, Lower Halstow, 10.00am – 4.00pm.

August 2nd - Summer Fair, 11.00am - 2.30pm, Charing  
House, (next to the Park) Canterbury Street, Fun,  
entertainment and games, Refreshments, free entry.

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 3rd - Volunteer Task Day, Capstone Farm  
Country Park, 10.00am – 2.00pm, come and help at the  
Country Park, learn about the management and meet  
new people, refreshments provided, 01634 338191.

August 4th – 17th - Free Children's Entertainment at  
Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre, 11.00am – 1.00pm  
& 2.00 – 4.00pm daily, Free Admission, Free Parking  
www.hempsteadvalley.com

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 view artefacts,  
medals, letters etc.. 7.30pm short Prayer Vigil.

August 4th – Monday Hub, St Paul's Church, Parkwood,  
10.00am – 12.30pm, light refreshments, conversation,  
games etc, All welcome, ring 01634 230780 for details.

August 4th – Medway Scrabble Club, St Stephens Church  
Hall, Maidstone Road, Chatham, alternate Mondays  
2.00 – 4.30pm, new members welcome, 01634 230500  
August 5th, 7th, 12th, 14th, 19th & 21st - Bredhurst  
Playscheme, Village Hall 10.00am – 3.00pm, £10 per  
child per session, all children welcome age 5 upwards.  
Information Mary Gough marygough6@hotmail.com  
or 07525 749802 or 01634 263929

August 5th – Under the Sea Collage, Riverside Country  
Park, 10.00am – 12noon either 10.00 or 11.00am start,  
suitable 4 to 12 years. £3 per child, 01634 337432

August 5th - Rainham Horticultural Society, 7.30pm  
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 Ship pub  
TQ669681 DA12 3BG for a 4 mile circular walk. After  
see Cobham Church, bring a picnic lunch. 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, suitable children aged 5 to 12  
years. £3 per child, 01634 3378191

August 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th - Beginners Fishing for  
Children, Capstone Farm Country Park, 10.00am –  
12noon or 1.00 – 3.00pm, suitable for children aged 8 –  
12 years, £11 per child, 01634 338191

August 7th, 14th & 21st - Wild Days Out, Ranscombe  
Farm Reserve, 10.00am, Fun mornings of activities for  
children and families, ranscombe@plantlife.org.uk

August 8th - Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group,  
Millennium Centre, Rainham, 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

August 8th - UpARA Monthly Meeting, Upchurch  
Village Hall, 2.00pm, Members Free, Guests £2, New  
Members Welcome, details email Chairman David  
Powell davidrpowell5@hotmail.co.uk

August 9th - Big Bug Afternoon, Ranscombe Farm  
Reserve, 1.00pm, Suitable for adults and older children,  
meet in the main car park on the A228, just south of the  
M2. Email ranscombe@plantlife.org.uk

August 9th - Magical Moths and other Creatures of the  
Night, Ranscombe Farm Reserve, 9.00pm, Follow the  
bug afternoon by exploring the night time world Email  
ranscombe@plantlife.org.uk

## WATERCOLOUR and CALLIGRAPHY

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September full, extra dates August 26th & 27th  
28th & 29th October

August 9th - Call My Bluff Night and BBQ, 7.00pm, 25  
(Parkwood) Sqn ATC, grounds of Deanwood School,  
Parkwood. Tickets £5pp includes burger, proceeds to  
Air Cadets. Phone Paula 01634 388713 for details.

August 10th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,  
10.00am, meet Pearl Stevens 07724 602929, New Ash  
Green park in North Square GR 605656 DA3 8QT, 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 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

August 11th – Monday Hub, (see 4th Aug)

August 11th - 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

August 11th - Medway Organ Club Concert, Parkwood  
Community Centre, 7.00 for 7.30pm, Organist - Mark  
Thompson, ring Brian Leonard 01634 234694

August 12th - Flying Fish (4 – 12 years) Riverside  
Country Park, 10.00 or 11.00am, Design and create  
your own flying fish. £3 per child, 01634 337432

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

August 12th – Gillingham & District Fuchsia &  
Pelargonium Society, 7.30pm Rainham School for  
Girls, Derwent Way, Conservatory and Patio Gardening  
Talk by David Fioton, information ring 01634 852519.

August 12th - Medway Antique and Collectors' Club,  
Frost, Freezes & Fairs – Ian Currie, St George Hotel,  
New Road, Chatham, 8.00pm visitors most welcome.  
medwayantiquespublicity1@virginmedia.com

August 13th - Medway Ramblers Walk meet Mike,  
10.00am just north of Wrotham village TQ611597  
TN15 7DD 5 mile short gradual uphill walk to Stansted  
through woods and fields. Pubs with food at end.

August 13th - UpARA Outing, Brighton - Day Trip, New  
Members Welcome, For details email Chairman David  
Powell davidrpowell5@hotmail.co.uk

August 13th - Family Birdwatching, Riverside Country  
Park, 11.00am for the whole family. No experience  
necessary, suitable for adults and accompanied  
children. £3 per person, 01634 337432

August 13th & 27th - Family Bushcraft Day, Capstone  
Farm Country Park, 10.00am., No experience  
necessary, suitable for adults and accompanied  
children. £11 per person 01634 338191

August 13th – Bredhurst WI, 7.30pm Village Hall, Jenny  
Hurkett - The History of Blue Town, visitors welcome,  
details ring 01634 389966

August 13th – Rainham Flower Club, 7.30pm Upchurch  
Village Hall, Workshop 'Stemi-end Basket' tutored by  
Barbara Mallard, further information ring 01622  
884657, 01795 472973 or 01634 863034

August 14th - Donn Barcott Band, 44Two Sports and  
Social Club, Featherby Road, Gill, 8.30 – 11.00pm,  
Admission £6, Details ring Jazz Line 01634 405037

August 15th - Jazz Gig, Anchorians Rugby Club, Darland  
Avenue, Gillingham, 8.30pm, Don Weller/ John  
Donaldson Quartet, Admission £10, Enquiries 01634  
365352 or 07544 312743

August 16th – Demelza Parkwood Shop, 3rd Birthday,  
Help us celebrate all day, 9.00am – 4.00pm. Free  
Birthday Gift for children 01634 232655 for details.

August 16th, Rainham South Councillors Surgery,  
9.30am - 12 noon, Parkwood Community Centre, No  
appointment necessary.

August 16th – Instep Dancing, Rainham School for Girls,  
Derwent Way, 8.00 – 11.00pm, for Ballroom – Latin –  
Sequence Dancing, details 01634 363738  
s.collins02@btinternet.com

August 17th - Medway Ramblers Walk, meet Geoff  
07525 161766, 10.00am, Chequers Inn, The Street,  
Doddington. TQ935572 ME9 0BG for a 7 mile walk to  
Lady Margaret Manor returning via Otterden Place. Pub  
at end with lunches available.

August 17th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,  
10.00am, meet David Brown 01634 373833, Cranbrook  
Jockey Lane car park GR 776362 TN17 3JT, 6.5 mile  
easy circular walk to Cranbrook and Sissinghurst castle,  
generally flat may be muddy.. No dogs

August 17th - The History of Brompton Walk, 11.00am –  
12.30pm, meet outside the Lampard Centre, Sally Port  
Gardens, Brompton, Tickets £3, booking essential  
01634 351834 or email witch21@blueyonder.co.uk

Continued on Page 11

## P. Gillard

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**MEDWAY LUNCHEON CLUB**  
 The Medway Luncheon Club meets on the third  
 Wednesday every month at The King Charles Hotel,  
 Gillingham from 12noon for a 3 course silver service  
 luncheon - the cost is £12, annual subs are £20.  
 Theatre Trips, outings, short breaks and holidays are  
 arranged throughout the year. For more information  
 please ring Mrs L. Peaurt 01634 326387, new  
 members are very welcome.

**ROOTS MUSIC CLUB** (Rainham Oast Old Time  
 Sessions) play, dance & sing, to live American old  
 time music 8.00pm – late 1st & 3rd Wednesday  
 every month, bar of Rainham Oast Community  
 Centre, Granary Close ME8 7SG. (Next to Rainham  
 train station). Contact Graham 01634 260281  
 graham.g.anstee@btopenworld.com

**CALL MY BLUFF NIGHT and BBQ**  
 Saturday 9th August, 7.00pm  
 25 (Parkwood) Sqn ATC in the grounds of  
 Deanwood School, Parkwood.  
 Tickets are £5 per person and include a burger or hot  
 dog from the BBQ. All proceeds will go towards  
 supporting the activities of the Air Cadets. Phone  
 Paula on 01634 388713 for tickets/ information.

**THIRD BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**  
 Demelza Parkwood Charity Shop  
 Saturday August 16th, 9.00am – 4.00pm.  
 Help us celebrate all day  
 Free Birthday Gift for Children.  
 Ring 01634 232655 for more information.

**THE HISTORY OF BROMPTON WALK**  
 Sunday 17th August, 11.00am – 12.30pm  
 Join the Brompton History Research Group for a  
 guided historical walk around the village of  
 Brompton. Meet outside the Lampard Centre, Sally  
 Port Gardens, Brompton, ME7 5BS  
 Tickets £3, Booking essential please call 01634  
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 Dollshouse & Miniaturist Group  
 St Margaret's C of E Junior School  
 Orchard Street, Rainham  
 Saturday August 23rd, 10.00am – 4.00pm  
 Sunday August 24th, 10.00am – 3.00pm  
 (Last admission half an hour before closing)  
 For further information contact  
 Sylvia 01634 312038 www.rainhamdhg.co.uk  
 Admission Free

**QUIZ NIGHT & BBQ**  
 Saturday 30th August, 7.00pm  
 25 (Parkwood) Sqn ATC in the grounds of  
 Deanwood School, Parkwood.  
 Tickets are £5 per person and include a burger or hot  
 dog from the BBQ. All proceeds will go towards  
 supporting the activities of the Air Cadets. Phone  
 Paula on 01634 388713 for tickets/ information.

**OPEN MEETING**  
 Friends of Berengrave  
 Talk by Alison Ruyter  
 of The Kent Wildlife Trust  
 "The Medway Living Land"  
 Tuesday 2nd September, 7.00pm  
 The Methodist Church Hall, Station Road, Rainham.  
 Refreshments, Members Free.  
 £2 non members.

**SUMMER FETE**  
 Bredhurst Cats Adoption Centre  
 Matts Hill Road, ME9 7XA  
 Sunday 7th September, 11.00am – 4.00pm  
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 day, hot and cold refreshments, Craft stalls,  
 children's corner, bric-a-brac, books,  
 cat related items and much more  
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 Contact Carol 07973 677390 for more details

**AFTERNOON DANCE,**  
 Tuesday September 9th, 2.00 – 4.00pm  
 Tesco's Retirement Staff in aid of Alzheimer Society,  
 44 Two Club (Featherby Road)  
 £3 at the door, drinks available from the bar  
 More information from 01634 388053

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# Nature Notes

## NATURE NOTES FOR JULY

At high tide, sea water inundates most of what is left of the salt marshes of the Medway estuary. This is a relatively recent occurrence. In Roman times the Medway was less than a mile wide and extensive salt marshes lined the banks of the river. Furthermore, these marshes would have been reasonably dry because Roman pottery kilns, jewellery, coins and burials have been found throughout the estuary. The Romans almost certainly grazed livestock on the marshes. Other salt marshes in Kent were saved from the incursion of the sea, by the building of embankments from mediaeval times onwards, and are now prime agricultural land. Perhaps the most well known example is Romney Marsh, but there are other examples along the north Kent coast. Apart from losses due to the action of the sea, an estimated three square miles or more of saltings in the Medway were dug away in the 19th and early 20th centuries for the clay that was used in the making of bricks and cement. The estuary has subsequently become a huge tidal basin characterised by fragmented salt marsh islands, a maze of creeks and extensive inter-tidal mud. This development has been good for the birds; the molluscs, crustaceans and worms found in the mud are food for many species.

This month's Nature Notes are about Greenborough Marshes to the north of Lower Halstow. They were the last salt marshes on the estuary to have been farmed, on a large scale, for both crops and livestock. They were first enclosed, by means of embankments, in the 14th century, by Benedictine monks from Canterbury Cathedral. Mr G A Webb was the last person in the centuries old battle to keep out the sea. In the 1870s, at enormous expense, he enclosed marshes he owned with brick walls to a total length of two miles. On the 250 acres at Greenborough Marshes he grew oats, wheat and mowing grass and grazed sheep and cattle. A house for a shepherd had been built there and connected to the mainland at Shoregate Wharf, Upchurch by means of a "strayway" or "hard" across the Ham Saltings. It was capable of bearing a loaded farm cart and was almost one and a half miles long. In

1897 Greenborough and other marshes were flooded and many sheep were drowned. In the summer of 1904 a hay rick on Greenborough was burnt down. The last straw soon followed, on 31st December 1904, when an exceptionally high tide came over the top of all the marsh embankments, including the brick walls around Greenborough and, once again, livestock was lost. By 1920 all of the one-time enclosed salt marshes in Upchurch Parish had been abandoned for the last time and left, forever, to salt tolerant plants and the sea birds.

Between 1945 and 1952, Brian Beach, who lived in Milton Regis, made a number of sketches and paintings of the abandoned buildings of the marshes and these were later published by Kent County Council. He first saw the deserted shepherd's house on Greenborough Marshes in 1946, from the viewpoint of Tiptree Hill, near Lower Halstow, and he wrote that, the tide being up, the old house seemed to be in the midst of the sea. He was told that it was called Jacob's House after an old shepherd who once lived there. In the summer of 1946 he and two local eel catchers left Shoregate Wharf and, at low tide, proceeded along the stony, slippery hard across the mud and through the salt marsh, which was rich in sea lavender and the tenacious growth of sea purslane. After a long walk through the muddy wilderness they at last reached Jacob's House. It was found to be in a ruinous condition with most of the roof caved in. Only one small room was accessible; it had a little fireplace set along one side and, in a corner, a bricked-in copper for boiling water. Outside, where there would presumably have been a vegetable garden, nothing was to be found but marsh grass, mud and rough stones. Brian felt that there was something hauntingly primeval about the sprawling, oozing expanse of mud and the tufty, random patches of salt marsh.

Almost 70 years after Brian Beach walked to Greenborough Marshes I sat, in July, on the embankment at Shoregate Wharf from where he and his two companions had left dry land. Swallows were twittering away on an overhead line. Black headed gulls were calling from the marshes with their familiar harsh cries. Sea lavender and golden samphire were in bloom on the higher and drier parts of the salt

marshes. The calls of the gulls reminded me that, in the days of Jacob the shepherd, the natural resources of the marshes would have been fully exploited. Eels would have been trapped in the brackish water in the ditches that divided up the fields on Greenborough Marshes. On Slayhills Marshes there was a duck decoy which consisted of a pond with several water filled arms covered with netting. Sharfleet Creek had the best oyster grounds in the Medway. The eggs of plovers and black headed gulls would have been collected. There was, however, a price to be paid for living on or visiting the marshes and that was the risk of catching malaria. Ironically, the stagnant water that became trapped by the embankment walls that were so vital for the protection of the marshes was a breeding ground for mosquitoes.

Joe Ennis

## INSPIRE BUDDING ENTREPRENEURS

This is a plea to local businesspeople to help 16-17 year-olds gain real business experience and improve their business understanding. I'm a volunteer Business Advisor with Young Enterprise. From its beginnings in Chatham in 1963, Young Enterprise is now the UK's largest business and enterprise education charity. Every year 250,000 young people aged between 4 and 25 learn about business and the world of work in schools, colleges and universities. In Young Enterprise's flagship Company Programme, 30,000 15-19 year olds run their own companies for a year. They 'learn by doing', under the guidance of a network of Business Advisors. Many of the scheme's alumni have gone on to outstanding business success. Each Business Advisor works with a single company (with 6-25 participants but usually averaging about 10-12) to provide the knowledge and skills of how business works – but without getting in the way of letting the participants learn by doing it themselves, and by making mistakes. It can often be demanding, and sometimes frustrating, but is always rewarding. The growth of Young Enterprise in the Medway area means we need more Business Advisors. The role suits both recent retirees with business management experience, and business managers looking to add a new dimension to their experience. There's more information at [www.young-enterprise.org.uk/support-us/volunteer/what-volunteering-involves/](http://www.young-enterprise.org.uk/support-us/volunteer/what-volunteering-involves/) If you think this might suit you, or you know of anyone (retired or working) who might be interested in

volunteering for this sort of role, please contact me on 01634 389079 for more information.

David Kirk

Business Advisor Liaison, Mid Kent and Medway

## EASTER 2015 - What, already!?

It may seem a bit early, but already St. Matthew's is talking about Easter 2015. If you are new to the Parish, or have worshipped in one of the other Churches in South Gillingham, you may be interested to learn that St. Matthew's Church was consecrated at Easter in 1965 - 50 years next year. Naturally such a "Golden" occasion cannot be ignored, and we have already started to make contact with past parishioners and friends who were in the area at that time. There will be great rejoicing at Easter 2015, and at other times during the year, not only for St. Matthew's, but for the whole Parish. At this special time in the Church calendar we hope to be able to greet and welcome anyone who was connected with St. Matthew's back in the '60s. Those of us who were involved in the planning, fund-raising, and every other aspect of the building of a new Church will endeavour to make next Easter an unforgettable time, so if you, or any members of your family have memories of those days, or if you can recall anyone else who was here then, please get in touch, and of course any memorabilia, photographs etc. would be most welcome. Do give us a call, thank you.

Ninon and John Tice 01634 360633

## APPALACHIAN DANCE CLUB,

All are welcome to learn and take part in Appalachian percussive dance, all steps broken down and taught with live music. Looks and sounds impressive, keep fit, have fun on Monday's from 10.00am to 12noon in the top hall of Rainham Oast Community Centre, Granary Close ME8 7SG (next to Rainham train station). Please wear comfortable clothes, hard sole or tap shoes. (Some spare shoes available) Ring Josie 01634 260281 [janstee23@gmail.com](mailto:janstee23@gmail.com) for details.

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## Diary 2014

August 18th - Monday Hub, (see 4th Aug)  
August 18th - Medway Scrabble Club, (see 4th Aug)  
August 18th - Rainham Evening WI, 7.30pm,  
Millennium Centre, Members Meeting Competition -  
Decorative Bra, ring 01634 262577 for details.  
August 19th - Things with Wings, Riverside Country  
Park, 10.00 & 11.00am, arts and craft activity session.  
£3 per child, 01634 337432  
August 20th - Orienteering Family Fun, (see 6th Aug)  
August 20th - Hempstead Active Retirement Association  
(HempstARA), Scout Hall, Duke's Meadow Drive, 2pm  
August 20th - Bredhurst Garden Club 7.30pm, Village  
Hall, illustrated talk Daniel Denness 'Basic Orchid  
Care' Geranium Show, new members welcome 233554  
August 23rd & 24th - Open Day & Exhibition, Rainham  
& District Dollshouse & Miniaturist Group, St  
Margaret's C of E Junior School, Rainham, 10.00am -  
4.00pm (3.00pm Sunday) Admission Free, contact  
Sylvia 01634 312038 or see www.rainhamdhg.co.uk,  
August 23rd - Garden Party in aid of Peter's Place, 3.00 -  
6.00pm Community Halls and Gardens, Third Avenue,  
Gillingham, £2 entrance Craft, Bric a brac, Plant, and  
Cake stalls. Refreshments available  
August 24th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,  
meet Mo Fleisig 01634 788148 07976 600393, Horton  
Kirby sports field car park GR 561684 DA4 9GR 5  
mile easy riverside walk, no toilets, No dogs  
August 24th - Medway Ramblers Walk meet Mandy  
07758 232871, 10.00am Penenden Heath car park  
TQ772573 ME14 2DQ, 9.5 mile walk though Vinters  
Valley nature reserve, Pub at end.  
August 26th - UpARA, Coffee Morning, Upchurch  
Village Hall, 9.30am, Members £1.50, Guests £2, New  
Members Welcome, details email Chairman David  
Powell davidpowell5@hotmail.co.uk  
August 26th - Creative Clay Creatures, Riverside Country  
Park, 10.00 or 11.00am, suitable for accompanied  
children aged 5 to 12 years. £3 per child 01634 337432

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August 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 to 12 years. £3 per child, 01634 337432  
August 27th - Medway Ramblers Walk meet Graham  
07989 753278, 10.00am, St Mary's church near  
Burham - down near the river TQ716620 ME1 3XY,  
8.5 mile walk with an early climb up Bluebell Hill. Pub  
at end, church open before and after walk  
August 27th - Gillingham Horticultural Society, United  
Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham,  
talk on "Making the Most of your Foliage and  
Flowers", 7.30pm. Members £2, visitors £3, includes  
tea/coffee, details 01634 852519.  
August 28th - Rainham & District Dolls' House and  
Miniaturist Group, Howard Memorial Hall, Woodside,  
7.30pm, ring Sylvia Wildridge 01634 312038  
August 30th - Batty about Bats, The Vines, Rochester,  
8.00pm, Listen and watch for the bats that live in The  
Vines. Details email friendsofthevines@hotmail.com  
August 30th - Quiz Night and BBQ, 7.00pm, 25  
(Parkwood) Sqn ATC, grounds of Deanwood School,  
Parkwood. Tickets £5pp includes burger. All proceeds  
to Air Cadets. Phone Paula on 01634 388713  
August 31st - Medway Ramblers Walk meet Simon,  
10.00am RSPB car park at Cliffe Pools. TQ723761  
ME3 7SU, 6 mile walk flat with excellent views of the  
bird reserve and the River Thames. Bring picnic lunch.  
August 31st - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,  
meet Steve Giddins 07720 628511, Otford Village car  
park GR 524594 TN14 5PQ, 6 mile moderate/hard  
walk around Darenth Valley, No dogs  
September 1st - Monday Hub, (see 4th Aug).  
September 1st - Medway Scrabble Club, (see 4th Aug).  
September 2nd - Friends of Berengrave Open Meeting,  
Talk by Alison Ruyter of The Kent Wildlife Trust "The  
Medway Living Land", 7.00pm, Methodist Church  
Hall, Station Road, Rainham. Refreshments, Members  
Free. £2 non members  
September 2nd - Floral Art Group United Reformed  
Church (rear hall) Balmoral Road, Gillingham, 7.30 -  
9.00pm, "Techniques", details Kaye 01634 232998.

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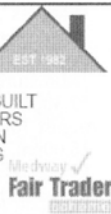
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## Diary 2014

September 2nd - Rainham Horticultural Society, 7.30pm  
Rainham Cricket Club, Berengrave Lane, Bredhurst  
Woodland Action Group - Vanessa Jones, New  
members welcome, ring 366276 for details.

September 4th - Wigmore Thursday Club, The History of  
Morris Dancing, Sandra Sharp, St Matthew's  
Community Centre, 2.00pm, for over 50s, ring 01634  
235507 for details.

September 5th - 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

September 6th - Beginners Bushcraft for Adults, Capstone  
Farm Country Park, 10.00am, £11 pp 01634 338191

September 6th - Rainham Horticultural Society Show  
Day, Methodist Church Hall, Wakeley Road, 2 - 4pm  
September 6th - Bredhurst Garden Club, Village Show,  
2.30pm, ring 233554 for details.

September 6th - Medway Folk Dance Club, United  
Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gill, 7.30 -  
10.00pm, new and experienced dancers welcome, with  
or without a partner, details 01634 366189 or 388546  
September 7th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am meet  
Tony/Ann 01634 406634, Lullington Country Park.,  
Parking Fee. TQ526637 DA4 0JF for 6.5 mile walk via  
Cockerhurst, Bring picnic lunch.

September 7th - Volunteer Task Day, Riverside Country  
Park (see 10th Aug).

September 7th - Summer Fete, Bredhurst Cats Adoption  
Centre, Matts Hill Road, ME9 7XA, 11.00am - 4pm,  
Parking close by, Entertainment, refreshments, stalls,  
children's corner, Contact Carol 07973 677390

September 8th - Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group,  
(see 11th Aug).

September 8th - Medway Organ Club Concert, Organist -  
David Last, (see 11th Aug).

September 9th - Afternoon Dance, Tesco's Retirement  
Staff in aid of Alzheimer Society, 2.00 - 4.00pm, 44  
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September 9th - Gillingham & District Fuchsia &  
Pelargonium Society, 7.30pm Rainham School for  
Girls, Derwent Way, Fuchsias Our Way Entertaining  
talk by John Hitchcock and Dave Abbott 01634 852519  
September 9th - Medway Antique and Collectors' Club,  
London - the dark side of the City - Stuart Robinson,  
(see 12th Aug).

September 10th - Bredhurst WI, Mel Rees - My Family  
and other Setbacks, (see 13th Aug).

September 10th - Rainham Flower Club, Demonstration  
'Seasonal Splendour' by John Chennel, (see 13th Aug).

September 10th - All Saints Women's Fellowship,  
Hempstead Village Hall, 8.00pm, My Year as a Mayor  
- Cllr Josie Iles, details Rhonda Peck 07951 629444

September 11th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Lighthearted  
Look at the 40s, Shirley Goodhew, (see 4th Sept).

September 11th - Medway Inter Faith Action, Medway  
Council Meeting Room, Gun Wharf, Dock Road,  
Chatham, 7.30pm all welcome, ring Hugh Hawkins  
01634 843307 email julihugh@tiscali.co.uk for details

September 11th - Donn Barcott Band, (see 14th Aug).

September 12th - UpARA Meeting, (see 8th Aug).

September 12th - Gillingham & Rainham Local History  
Society, Byron Road Primary School, Gillingham,  
7.15pm, 'German U Boats Construction & operations' -  
Frank Turner, Visitors welcome small charge, details  
Ron Baker 01634 854982 r.baker1234@btinternet.com

September 13th - September Songs, Kingfisher Singers  
The Brian Tumour Charity, 7.30 - 10.00pm, St  
Margaret's Church High Street Rainham, Ticket £8.50  
(£7.50 in advance). Contact Olwen 01634 263622

September 13th - Instep Dancing, (see 16th Aug).

September 13th - Paranormal Investigations at Fort  
Amherst, Dock Road, Chatham. 8.00pm - 3.00am,  
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September 14th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am meet  
Bob/Kath, Loose Hill, near the Chequers Pub.  
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September 14th - Volunteer Task Day, Capstone (3rd Aug)

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