

ACTION FORUM

OCTOBER 2015
NUMBER 514

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA ■



The caption on the back of this postcard reads 'Top Rank Motorway Service M2 Farthing Corner Kent. Good Food, service and comfort with an unrivalled panoramic view of the Medway Estuary. Excellent parking with petrol station alongside Tel Rainham 83345.'

In 1970 this was considered fine dining and a destination in itself - hard to believe now. The services were renamed Medway in 1992 and are currently owned by Moto. The slip roads for the services, providing easy motorway access, contributed to the rapid development of Parkwood at this time. If you have any memorabilia of Parkwood from its beginnings nearly 50 years ago two local historians would love to hear from you, see page 3.

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AF

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Editorial: Barbara Mackay Miller
Advertising: Hamish Mackay Miller

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(above Sunburst Books)
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Editorial

I am beginning to have sympathy for my mother who during discussions often used to get her 'wars' muddled up! Having lived through both the first and second World Wars, during her later life they often merged and she had to think very hard to remember which she was describing. To her generation 'The War' meant The Great War 1914-18 the war to end all wars. To my contemporaries 'The War' is The Second World War 1939 - 45. These were the events fresh in the memory during our youth. To my children, however, and subsequent generations both wars are probably ancient history to be studied in history lessons on a par with The Spanish Armada or the six wives of Henry VIII.

During the last couple of years much has been done to try to keep the horror of the two World Wars alive in the hope that they will never be repeated and as a constant reminder that our life today would be very different if it were not for the sacrifice so many young people made for their country. We have recognised significant anniversaries with national events some, such as the poppies at the Tower of London, will I am sure stay with us forever. Most have been commemorating the progress of our army in the first year of war one hundred years ago. By now in 1915 it was coming home to the general population that far from being a quick triumph the fighting was set to drag on for years to come as stalemate faced the troops in the trenches. This month however we switch to the Second World War. We include Memories of World War II by Richard Church on page 9. Armistice Day 1945 with the recent end of fighting in both Europe and Japan must have been a particularly emotional occasion and The RaTS Revellers are preparing a Concert on November 6th & 7th to celebrate the 70th anniversary. This promises to be 'an evening of nostalgia, comedy and a good old fashioned sing song'. I am sure it will be in the spirit of the moral boosting concerts staged in the 1940s. See page 7 for more details.

Autumn so far has been very kind to us and, whisper it quietly, we are promised a few days of 'Indian Summer'. It certainly is glorious at the moment. Just the weather to get out for a brisk country walk before the paths become too muddy! A bumper fruit harvest means plenty of fat juicy blackberries just asking to be gathered from the hedgerows as Joe Ennis describes in

his Nature Notes on page 8.

Our pages are packed with plenty of indoor entertainment for you now the evenings are drawing in. Quiz Nights seem to be the most popular fund raiser at the moment but we also include Concerts Craft Markets, Magna Carta Lectures and of course the start of the Christmas Bazaar season. Do read on and also browse our Diary to see what appeals and until we are with you again in November have a very good month.

Correspondence

SHARPS GREEN

Dear Editor

Does anyone reading this have any pictures of the little Mission Hall ('tin chapel') at Sharps Green? If so, I would be very grateful to hear from you. My last request (for photos of Bloors Wharf) failed to find any pictures, but did produce some interesting memories of the area. So memories of the chapel would be welcome too. Contact me by e-mail

(rdellar283@gmail.com) or phone 01634 230324.

Yours sincerely,
Rosemary Dellar.

HAVE FUN WITH 1st RAINHAM BROWNIES

Dear Editor

1st Rainham Brownies celebrated its 94th birthday in July with a fantastic day out to Margate to gain our Growing Up Wild at the Seashore badge including finding sea creatures, paddling, making sand castles and eating chips and ice cream (not together though!) This term we are having a recycled fashion night, spooky night games, working on our Growing Up Wild Urban Areas badge and much more.

We currently have spaces for girls aged seven to 10 years old and meet once a week in the Millennium Centre on Tuesday. If your daughter is interested in becoming a Brownie, please in the first instance email firsttrainhambrownies@gmail.com

Yours sincerely
Amanda - Leader in Charge

MAGNA CARTA

To commemorate the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta, Friends of Medway Archives in conjunction with City of Rochester Society and Friends of Rochester Museums are holding 4 lectures at the Guildhall, Rochester High Street. Tickets £5 or £3 for members of the societies, inc refreshments. Space limited - booking essential. Contact Rochester Guildhall Museum, 17 High Street, 01634 332680 or www.guildhallmuseumrochester.co.uk Thursday 8th October - Sir Robert Worcester, KBE, DL. Chairman of the Magna Carta 800th Anniversary Commemoration Committee - 'After Magna Carta: Barons & Battlefields of Kent'

Thursday 15th October - Dr. Marc Morris. Medieval Historian, presenter TV series 'Castle' and biographer of King Edward I and King John - 'King John: Treachery, Tyranny and the Road To Magna Carta.'

Thursday 22nd October - Dr. Jeremy Clarke Education

Officer, Guildhall Museum 'History of Rochester Castle'. Thursday 12th November—Richard Dunn Director Royal Engineers Museum - Siege Warfare in the Middle Ages.

PARKWOOD OVER 50 YEARS.

Have you lived in Parkwood for a while? Could you help us with a scrapbook of memories regarding the history of Parkwood? Do you have photos, even from before 1966 when the first residents moved in? Did you work or help at playgroups, scouts, brownies, football clubs? Did you work in the first shops to open, what were they? Were you a bus driver picking up commuters? Anyone on the refuse collection teams, or anything else?

The aim is to create a scrapbook of memories to be held at Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre in Strood as part of their local history collection. Please contact us, we are a volunteer at the Studies Centre and a retired library assistant with an interest in local history.

Your thoughts, photos, reminiscences or anything else can be passed to us in the following ways
Doris Herlihy 25 Dixwell Close Rainham ME8 9TB
john.herlihy@btinternet.com or 01634 360175
or Hazel Thorn 47 Parkfield Road Rainham ME8 7SZ
haitchdt@blueyonder.co.uk

WET WET WET - Wettest Beer Festival 2015

Many thanks to the 500 or so Rainham folk who turned up to support our latest Beer Festival. Likewise to all club members and their families for the stoic hard work under difficult conditions. Well done one and all.

It's truly amazing what the English weather throws at us, but equally what we Brits can achieve! We did manage to hold a raffle and presented those who bought a ticket with our first magazine Howzat! (Howzat is a new annual venture, copies will be distributed as soon as possible.) The eventual raffle winner was a sponsor who gave back the cash prize to help our fund raising activities, many thanks Javed. The wet weather regrettably means our main fund raising event has not realised what was needed to finish off enabling works - car park and pavilion / ground improvements. We are to take stock and will update everyone after the end of season. Once again thank you all for your continued support. K Chambers

Development Fund Co-ordinator

CATS PROTECTION

Do you have a few hours to spare?

We have a brand new centre under construction and we need people to join the "Friends" team. We are looking for volunteers to join our Friends group at the Cats Protection Adoption Centre Bredhurst. Activities include sorting - helping to fund raise, sorting bric-a-brac, manning tables at events, assisting at open days, and much more
Contact Carol 07973 677390 to learn more

ART EXHIBITION

Paintings by Local Artists, Clive Bass, John Gilson & Ron Wiseman will be on show and For Sale in Rainham Library, Birling Avenue between 2nd & 30th November 2015

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Diary 2015

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: October 27th

October 3rd & 4th - Parish of South Gillingham Gala
Flower Festival celebrating 90 Years of Worship in
Wigmore. Sat 10am - 5pm, Sun 11am - 5pm) Entry
free, refreshments available throughout each day.
October 3rd - Quiz, Village Hall, Hempstead Road,
7.30pm start. £5, bring your own drinks and nibbles.
October 3rd - Quiz Night, Friends of St. Mary Upchurch,
7.30pm, Holywell School. Teams up to 8, all ages
welcome. £4 pp Bring refreshments, book 361897
October 3rd - Medway Folk Dance Club, United
Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham
7.30 - 10.00pm, new and experienced dancers
welcome, with or without a partner, for more
information ring 366189 or 388546
October 4th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am meet
Heather 07887 750881, Leysdown Country and Coastal
Park car park. Free, Toilets TR045698 ME12 4RJ for
a 7 mile leisurely walk no hills, lots of birdlife so bring
binoculars! Bring picnic, Pubs and cafes at the end.
October 4th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am
Meet Harry Keane 01634 231533 07729 356835
Westwell Recreation Ground car park GR 989474
TN25 4LQ for a 4.75 mile moderate circular walk two
long steady ascents 3 stiles, facilities at end. No dogs
October 4th - Volunteer Task Day, Riverside Country
Park, 10.00am - 2.00pm, 01634 337432
October 4th - Sunday service with guest medium John
Shaw, 6.30pm, includes healing, meditation singing.
All welcome at The Centre, M2 Services (London side,
next to Travelodge) ME8 8PQ 07788 791677
October 6th - Rainbow Whist Drive, Bredhurst Village
Hall, 7.30pm, partner not needed, all whist players
welcome. Details 01634 610364
October 6th - GHS Floral Art Group, United Reformed
Church (rear hall) Balmoral Road, Gillingham, 7.30pm,
'Witches Brew' using a pumpkin as your container,
New members welcome, first visit free, no experience
needed, 01634 232998 or kayebuss@btinternet.com
October 6th - Rainham Horticultural Society, 7.30 pm
Rainham Cricket Club, Berengrave Lane, 'Witch

Hazels' - Chris Lane, New members welcome, ring
01634 366276 for details.
October 6th - Every Tuesday 7.30 - 9.00pm Wednesday
10 - 11.30am Reiki, Spiritual & Crystal healing, given
freely but donations welcomed. (see 4th Oct).
October 8th - Wigmore Thursday Club, St Matthew's
Community, 2.00pm, Musical Entertainment from
Kingfisher Singers for over 50s 01634 234712
October 8th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Outing to
Rowfont House, no local meeting.
October 8th - Magna Carta and the Rochester Connection
Lecture, 7.30pm, Guildhall, Rochester High Street, Sir
Robert Worcester, KBE, DL 'After Magna Carta:
Barons & Battlefields of Kent' Tickets £5 or £3 for
members, inc. refreshments. Booking essential 01634
332680 www.guildhallmuseumrochester.co.uk
October 8th - Donn Barcott's 'Five 5 Live', 44Two Sports
and Social Club, 8.30pmFeaturing Elaine Dyan and
Andrew Hawkes Magician, Admission £6 all welcome,
Details 01634 405037
October 9th - Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group,
Millennium Centre, Rainham, meets every Friday
9.45am - 12noon to help people who have lost a loved
one, join us for a cuppa and chat ring Julie 364309
October 9th - UpARA, Monthly Meeting, Upchurch
Village Hall, 2.00pm, Members Free, Guests £2, New
Members Welcome, for details email Chairman David
Powell davidrpowell5@hotmail.co.uk
October 9th - Gillingham and Rainham Local History
Society, 7.15pm, Byron Road School, 'History of
Clocks and Watches' - Mr J Peters, details Ron Baker
01634 854982.
October 9th - UpARA Quiz Night, 7.00pm, Tickets £5
(see 9th Oct).
October 9th - Friends of Berengrave Nature Reserve
meeting, Rainham Cricket Club, 7.30pm
October 9th & 10th - Memories - 50 Golden Years1965-
2015, 8.00pm St Matthews Community Centre,

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October 10th - Craft Market, St Margaret's Millennium
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carole@cdadswell.freeserve.co.uk or 07779 366054
October 10th - Quiz Night, Lower Halstow Memorial
Hall, 7.30pm, tables of 6. Ticket £5 each, includes
ploughman's supper, Bottle of wine for each winning
team member. Please bring your own drinks
October 10th - Knowledge & Nibbles Evening, Friends of
St Margaret's Church, Rainham, Millennium Centre,
7.30pm (prompt start) Food provided please bring your
own drinks & glasses, Tables of 8 - £6 pp Advance
booking essential, Kay 230430 or Lesley 379796
October 10th - Instep Dancing, social dances, Rainham
School for Girls, Derwent Way, ME8 0BX, Ballroom,
Latin, Sequence, 8.00 - 11.00pm enquiries 01634
363738 or email s.collins02@btinternet.com
October 11th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am meet
Peter/Ann 01634 718895, Cobham - Jeskyns Park car
park, (£1.50 fee) over fields and through orchards to
Cobham Church then back to a nice little café! Pub
nearby at end with lunches available.
October 11th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10am
Meet Mo Fleisig 07976 600393 Newington Village
Hall car park GR861649, 6 mile moderate mainly flat
walk, couple of undulations. No dogs
October 12th - Monday Hub, St Paul's Church, Parkwood,
ME8 9PN, 10.00am - 12.30pm all welcome
October 12th - Medway Scramble Club, St Stephens
Church Hall, Maidstone Road, Chatham, alternate
Mondays 2.00 - 4.30pm, new members welcome,
details 01634 230500
October 12th - Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group,
Millennium Centre, Rainham, meets 2nd Monday
evening of each month to help people still in
employment who have lost a loved one, join us for a
cuppa and chat ring Julie 01634 364309 for details
October 12th - Medway Organ & Keyboard Club
Concert, Parkwood Community Centre, Rainham, 7.30
- 10.00pm, Organist - Tony Stace, details ring Brian
Leonard 01634 234694
October 12th - Reiki Kyokai Led by Robert Jefford, 8.00
- 10.00pm, Ramada Encore Chatham Historic
Dockyard, £12 per person open to All, Booking
Essential. Contact kentreikishares@gmail.com

October 13th - Gillingham and District Fuchsia and
Pelargonium Society, 7.30pm, Rainham School for
Girls, Derwent Way, Small Autumn Show - a variety of
plants are exhibited and Table Quiz, 01634 852519
October 13th - Medway Antique & Collectors' Club, St
George Hotel, New Road, Chatham, 8.00pm, AGM
followed by a speaker on Toby Jugs, All visitors are
made most welcome. Enquiries
medwayantiquespublicity1@virginmedia.com
October 14th - Rainham Flower Club, Upchurch Village
Hall, 7.30pm, Competition 'Harvest' to be judged by
Sylvia Cheeseman, for details ring 01634 864572 or see
www.rainhamflowerclub.co.uk
October 14th - Bredhurst WI, 7.30pm Village Hall, Mr.
Brian Laver-Smith - Bovver on the Hover, visitors
welcome, For details ring 01634 389966
October 14th - All Saints Women's Fellowship,
Hempstead Village Hall, 8.00pm, Four Days at the
Nursery: Jacqueline Aviolet, for details contact Rhonda
Peck 07951 629444
October 15th - Rainham Women's Institute 1.45 - 4.00pm,
Speaker on "Life as a young mum in Nigeria", Wakeley
Hall, Oasthouse Community Centre, Granary Close,
Rainham, ME8 7SG. Visitors welcome for small entry
charge per visit. Ring 01634 366276 for details.
October 15th - Wigmore Thursday Club, 'My Jewish
Mother-in-Law', Ley Liberson (see 8th Oct).
October 15th - Magna Carta and the Rochester
Connection Lecture, 7.30pm Dr. Marc Morris Medieval
Historian, - King John: Treachery, Tyranny and the
Road to Magna Carta. (see 8th Oct).
October 15th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Kurling,
Bocchia, board games, tea and chat. Village Hall
behind the Church 2.00 - 4.00pm, New members
always welcome, 01634 366907
October 16th - UpARA Outing, Gurdwara Temple,
Gravesend, (see 9th Oct).
October 16th - Upara Village Walk, 10.00am, Meet car
park Upchurch Village Hall Good exercise, good fun,
good company The more the merrier!
October 16th - Jazz Gig, Anchorians Rugby Club,
Darland Avenue, Gillingham, 8.30pm, Kelvin
Christianne Quartet featuring Kelvin Christianne
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Continued on Page 11

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 or email lynnebunce3@gmail.com

AUTUMN FAIR

Wigmore RVS Darby & Joan Club

Monday 19th October Doors open 2.15pm

Howard Hall, Woodside, Wigmore.

Cakes, Preserves, Gifts, Christmas Goods, Craft
 Items, Clothing and a Tombola Stall. Admission
 25p. There will be raffles which will include a top
 cash prize of £10 Refreshments available. For more
 details about the Fair or how to join our club please
 ring 01634 362662 and have a friendly chat.

GRAND AUTUMN CHARITY BAZAAR

St Matthew's Community Centre Hall, Wigmore

Saturday 24th October, 10.30am - 12.30pm.

Christmas bargains! Entrance 20p. Refreshments

For details contact Linda 01634 377267

or email lindaligarten@hotmail.co.uk

HEMPSTEAD VILLAGE HALL

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ST MARGARET'S AUTUMN BAZAAR

Saturday 31st October, 10.00am - 2.30pm

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have changed over the years but the feeling of fun,
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 throughout the parish. Do drop in and join us, we
 would love to see you there!

Margaret Meinertzhagen 01795 475907

WINTER WONDERLAND

St Matthew's Church, Wigmore

Saturday 7th November, 11.00am - 2.00pm

Visit Father Christmas in his alpine grotto and meet
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Hot dogs and mince pies, cakes, craft and fun for the
 children. An early Christmas event for all the family
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BARNARDO'S CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT

Saturday 7th November, 7pm for 7.30pm

Twydall Church Hall, Gillingham

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Nature Notes

NATURE NOTES FOR SEPTEMBER

"Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness" From the poem "To Autumn" by John Keats 1795-1821 Keats had in mind domestic apples, among other fruits, when he penned his well-known poem, because he refers to apples on moss covered trees in cottage gardens. He would also have been aware of the less romantic scene of the increasing varieties of apples being sold off costermongers' barrows in his native London. The poet's life straddled the 18th and 19th centuries which have been described as the golden age of apples. During those centuries desert varieties such as Cox's Orange Pippin, Blenheim Orange and Laxton's Superb (and the cooking apple Bramley Seedling) were first introduced. There is no better local event at which to see the mellow fruitfulness of domestic gardens and allotments than the annual Bredhurst Show. Mrs Ennis and I visited this year's show, in early September. Desert apples and pears, cooking apples, plums and raspberries were on show. Also exhibited were jars of raspberry, black current and gooseberry jam.

A little later in the month, I revisited Bredhurst, as I set off in search of the last signs of summer and the mellow fruitfulness of autumn, in the local countryside. I set off down Bredhurst Road in the direction of Bredhurst Wood. I picked up a leaflet on the wood, published by Bredhurst Wood Action Group, at the Group's notice board. I soon stopped at a metal swing gate. Immediately in front of me was Day Valley and, looming above it, the long line of Bredhurst Wood. The leaves of the field maple, hazel, hornbeam and beech trees would soon be turning yellow. Those of the oak, ash and sweet chestnut trees would remain various shades of green for longer. The valley contains a chalk grassland hay meadow and, among the last flowers of summer in the meadow, were greater knapweed, field scabious, marjoram, birds' foot trefoil and meadow vetchling. I also noted flowers that bloom well into autumn, namely, feltwort (or autumn gentian) and harebell. The latter is one of the most beautiful of all Britain's common wild flowers. Its delicate, paper thin, sky blue bells shake

slightly on their thin stalks. Even though the day of my visit was warm and sunny, I saw no butterflies or other insects on the flowers. I did however come across a red admiral feeding on fallen, over-ripe damsons.

I entered Bredhurst Wood, which was relatively quiet now that the breeding season was over; male pheasants and jays were no longer emitting their raucous calls and male great spotted woodpeckers had ceased drumming on tree trunks. Mellow fruitfulness was evident in the form of sweet chestnuts (which were not yet ripe), hazel nuts and acorns. Among other mammals and birds, badgers, grey squirrels and pheasants would be seeking out the mature sweet chestnuts; dormice, bank voles, nuthatches, great spotted woodpeckers and great tits would be in competition for the hazel nuts; and wood mice, wood pigeons and jays would be searching for the fallen acorns.

I left the wood at Strawberry Bank, where I came to a row of magnificent beech trees which miraculously survived the great storm of October 1987 and which line a short stretch of the boundary between Bredhurst and Detling parishes. The trees were festooned in beech masts which would be food for chaffinches and bramblings once they had ripened and fallen. I took the footpath to Kemsley Street which leads down Strawberry Bank and across a valley full of millions of the long stalks and seed heads of grasses, bleached by the sun and waving in the breeze. They were reminiscent of the prairies of mid-west America. Just before reaching Kemsley Street I passed a long line of hawthorn bushes laden with red berries which would doubtless attract the attention of redwings and fieldfares later in the year. I cut across two hayfields to the church and thence to my car. During my walk I had come across wild fruits which, in the past, were widely gathered for human consumption, namely, blackberries, elderberries and sloes. Blackberries can be made into pies, jellies, jam, vinegar and syrup; elderberries make excellent, full-bodied wine; and sloes can be added, along with sugar, to gin. So they can. But I doubt whether, these days, many people go to the trouble of picking autumn's mellow fruitfulness.

Joe Ennis

MEMORIES OF WORLD WAR II

by Richard Church

Orchard Street School was partitioned off to create an Emergency Dressing Station, in effect a mini hospital, staffed by several nurses working 12 hour shifts, overruled by Mrs Armstrong, the Matron. The school Assembly Hall was turned into a hospital ward, with rows of beds. It was not used much until a flying bomb fell onto the Ramsgate train as it crossed the bridge over Oak Lane, in 1944, when suddenly it became very busy indeed, with ambulances arriving with badly injured people every few seconds. During the Battle of Britain, several aircraft, both allied and enemy, crashed in the fields and orchards roundabout. My pals and I immediately got onto our bicycles and pedalled off to see the wreckage, and I remember two in particular:-

The Messerschmitt Me 109 that crashed into the east corner of Hartlip church: Mrs Rainey had its duck-egg blue tail fin, with prominent black swastika, hung on the wall behind the counter in her shop which was directly opposite the church's lych gate. (today it is a private house).

Another, which crashed in a cherry orchard in Gore Farm: As the stricken Heinkel 111 careered along between a row of trees, its wings were sheared off and it caught fire. Brass cartridge cases and equipment were scattered around in the grass, and I think the crew were all killed in the crash.

In 1940, the immediate neighbourhood was alive with military traffic and soldiers were everywhere. They did foot drill and marched up and down in the residential streets in Rainham. Although houses in London Road were requisitioned for accommodation by the army, huddled Army Camps mostly equipped with sandbagged anti-aircraft guns and searchlights, were built in the fields and woods. They were not slow to open fire when German aircraft flew up the river, scattering murderous shards of shrapnel into the streets, roof tiles, and gardens of Rainham. The noise was unbelievable, and their searchlights probed the sky after dark. Rainham's Air Raid Siren was on the roof of a building on the corner of Holding Street, and its wailing notes sent us into our Anderson shelters most nights.

Orchard Street school virtually closed for the first year of the war. Our 'lessons' were "Gardening", "Games", "Singing", and listening to read - out stories!

Nearly all the Rainham children were evacuated to Llanharan, in Glamorgan, (South Wales), or elsewhere. When they returned, many had acquired strong Welsh accents!

Then came the Blitz. I well remember looking at a dark blood red glow in the pitch black night sky, and hearing some grown-up say "Cor!! London's really copping it tonight" Incendiary bombs dropped all around, in Century Road, and Roberts Road, and Mr Milburn demonstrated to villagers how to deal with them, using a stirrup pump, shovel, and sand.

There was an Air Raid Wardens Post, almost buried in the grass verge by the Main Road, between Roberts Road and Berengrave Lane. It was permanently manned, and its telephone never stopped ringing.

We boys cycled out to Detling Aerodrome one afternoon and were delighted to see Hawker Hurricanes parked within touching distance along the lane, but vigilant RAF sentries kept us moving on. Unknown to us they had recently been bombed, with great loss of life. The skies were full of aircraft, often doing battle overhead. You could see bombs falling out of the aircraft, and watch white parachutes opening high up in the blue sky. Overnight, all boys changed their minds: They now wanted to be fighter pilots, dreams of being cowboys vanished.

At school all the younger male teachers disappeared into the armed forces, to be replaced by tired, elderly men recalled from retirement. Then soon after, women teachers appeared, most of them unable to keep order! Everybody's education became sadly lacking, to the point of non existence.

Home from Sea in 1942, my Royal Navy father was horrified when he learned about my schooling, and promptly arranged for me to be properly educated by the Royal Navy, (The Royal Hospital School, Holbrook). My neglected 'Rainham' education was restored there but I had to work very hard to catch up, but it was the best thing that could have happened to me. And so I left Rainham in early 1943, and I did not return until 1945, just as the war ended, when I passed the Civil Service Entrance Exam., and entered H.M.Dockyard as an apprentice marine engineer. NB The opinions and facts related in this article are my own personal views. Everything written is accurate to the best of my knowledge, but allowance must be made for the fallibility of memory with the passage of time.

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Diary 2015

- October 17th - Rainham South Councillors surgery at Parkwood Community Centre 10.00am - 12 noon. No appointment necessary.
- October 17th - Hospital Radio Medway, Quiz Night, Medway Hospital Social Club, 7.30pm, Bring your own food, licensed bar. Tables of 6, £5 pp book ring 01634 365300 or email mail@davidandunice.com.
- October 17th - Rainham Ladies Choir Concert, Methodist Church, Third Avenue, Gillingham 7.30pm Tickets Adults £10 - Con £8 under 10 free, Supporting 'Peter's Place' Charity Ring 07816 159668, 07979 693205 or email lynneunice3@gmail.com
- October 17th - Medway Folk Dance Club, (see 3rd Oct).
- October 18th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am Meet Chris Morris 01634 374923 07847 828249 Charing, School Road car park GR952495 TN27 0JN for a 5.5 mile easy walk No dogs
- October 18th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am meet Geoff 07525 161766 geoff.ramblers@me.com Sevenoaks Library, Buckhurst Lane, TQ53545 TN13 1LQ for a 6.5 mile moderate walk, Pub at end
- October 19th - Wigmore RVS Darby & Joan Autumn Fair, Howard Hall, Woodside, Wigmore 2.15pm, admission 25p. Refreshments details 01634 362662.
- October 19th - Wigmore WI, An evening of Magic with Chris the Magician, St. Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive, 7.30pm. Anyone interested ring Sue McGrath 01634 365369 or Mags Beard 01634 234000
- October 20th - Rainbow Whist Drive, (see 6th Oct).
- October 20th - The RSPB Medway Local Group Talk, Parkwood Community Centre, Gillingham, 7.30 - 9.45pm £3.50. Ethiopia - Barry Wright. For Walks see: www.rspb.org.uk/groups/medway.
- October 20th - GHS Floral Art Group, AGM and Programme Planning for 2016, (see 6th Oct).
- October 21st - Hempstead Active Retirement Association, Scout Hall, Dukes Meadow Drive, 2.00pm, Contact 01634 364440 for details.

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October 21st - RainARA, 442 Club, Featherby Road, Rainham. Talk on "Days in Broadcasting" by Richard E. King. Members only, Details 01634 373596 or kentsofken@tiscali.co.uk

October 21st - Bredhurst Garden Club, 7.30pm, Bredhurst Village Hall, Hilary Newman - Illustrated Talk - 'Vertical Gardening (Climbing and Wall Shrubs)' New Members Welcome, Ring 01634 233554 for details

October 22nd - Wigmore Thursday Club, 'Rationed Fashion: Clothes of the 1940s', Lee Ault, (see 8th Oct).

October 22nd - Hempstead Leisure Club, talk "History of Kentish Seaside" by Dr Ann Knief (see 15th Oct)

October 22nd - 7.00pm, Make your own Dreamcatcher, beautiful Native American webs to catch bad dreams. £8, boking essential (see 4th Oct).

October 22nd - Magna Carta and the Rochester Connection Lecture, Dr. Jeremy Clarke - History of Rochester Castle. (see 8th Oct)

October 23rd - An Evening of Clairvoyance with Angela Brigenshaw, 7.30pm - 9.00pm, £5. (see 4th Oct)

October 23rd - Medway Geographical Society, Byron Road Primary School, Gillingham ME7 5XX 7.30 - 9.00pm, 'Ship towing and Salvage on the Thames and at sea' - Brian Briggs, Everyone welcome please come on the evening or ring Lorna Bailey 01634 572139

October 24th - Grand Autumn Charities Bazaar, 10.30am - 12.30pm St Matthew's Community Centre Drewery Drive, Many stalls, Refreshments available, free parking, entrance 20p, details from Linda 01634 377267 or email lindaligarten@hotmail.co.uk

October 24th - Pre-loved, baby & children's clothes, etc sale, 10am-2pm, Hempstead Village Hall, Tea and cake stall, Craft corner, natalie.jarvis@hotmail.com

October 24th - Barn Dance in aid of the Air Ambulance, contact 01634 362415 donations welcome.

October 25th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am Meet Pat Wells and Anne Bond 07804 837155 07778 302866 Brogdale Farm car park GR005596 for a 6 mile moderate walk, some road, stiles and 2 steep gradients Book Farm café 01795 530013 No dogs

October 25th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am meet Tony vajra.faulkner@btinternet.com 01634 406634 Dene Park car park Puttenden Road, near Shipbourne TQ606510 TN11 9RJ for a 5 mile leisurely walk

October 26th - Monday Hub, (see 12th Oct).

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

October 27th - Wildlife in the Woods (5+) Capstone Farm Country Park, 9.30 - 11.30am, £3 pp 01634 338191

October 27th - UpARA, Coffee Morning, Upchurch Village Hall, 9.30am, Members £1.50, Guests £2, New Members Welcome, (see 9th Oct).

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Diary 2015

October 28th - Wildlife Along the Estuary (5+) Riverside
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October 28th - Gillingham Horticultural Society,
Malcolm Withnall talk 'Pruning Shrubs and Trees
including Fruit Trees and Fruit Bushes'. United
Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham,
7.15pm £2 members, £3 non members includes
refreshments. All welcome, details 01634 852519.
October 28th - All Saints Women's Fellowship, Sapper
Ernest Franks RE: Elaine Gardner, (see 14th Oct).
October 29th - Halloween Masks (3 – 12years) Riverside
Country Park, 9.30 – 11.30am Create your own
Halloween masks using natural materials the park has
to offer £3 per child 01634 337432
October 29th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Whist, board
games, tea and chat (see 15th Oct)
October 29th - Wigmore Thursday Club, 'Service
followed by Singalong', (see 8th Oct).
October 29th - 31st - Sunset Boulevard, Three Towns
Theatre Company, Brook Theatre, Chatham, 7.30pm
(mat 2.30pm Saturday). Tickets £13 each, £11 cons
enquiries@threetownstheatrecompany.co.uk
October 29th - Rainham & District Dolls' House and
Miniaturist Group, 7.30pm, Howard Memorial Hall,
Woodside, Sylvia Wildridge 01634 312038 for details.
October 31st - St Margaret's Autumn Bazaar. 10.00am –
2.30pm, Millennium Centre, Rainham many stalls
Ploughman's Lunch, Grand Draw 01795 475907
October 31st - Medway Folk Dance Club, (see 3rd Oct).
November 1st - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am meet
Graham graham.jenkinson@blueyonder.co.uk 07989
753278, Aylesford Ferryfield car park south of the
railway TQ728588 ME20 7UF for a moderate 7 mile
walk via Eccles, Kit's Coty and Pratling Street, we do
NOT climb Blue Bell Hill. Bring picnic lunch for
midway break. Pub at end with lunches available
November 1st - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,
10.00am Meet David Brown 01634 373833 Penenden
Heath car park GR 773574 ME14 2DQ For a 6 mile
moderate circular walk, some hills, muddy, No dogs
November 1st - Volunteer Task Day, Riverside Country
Park, (see 4th Oct).
2nd – 30th November - Art Exhibition, Local Artists,
Clive Bass, John Gilson & Ron Wiseman on show and
For Sale Rainham Library, Birling Avenue

November 3rd - Rainham Horticultural Society, 7.30 pm
Rainham Cricket Club, Berengrave Lane, 'The Weather
in Kent' - Bob Ogley, New members welcome, ring
01634 366276 for details.

November 3rd - GHS Floral Art Group, Wool badges/
circles, bows, pom-poms etc, (see 6th Oct).

November 3rd - Rainbow Whist Drive, (see 6th Oct).

November 5th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Talk 'Mystery
Animals of Kent' by Neil Arnold (see 15th Oct)

November 6th - Medway Asthma Self-Help Ladies
Pamper Evening, 6.00 – 10.00pm. Gillingham Golf
Club, Woodlands Road, ME7 2AP, £4 on door (£3 in
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pre-book entry medwayasthmaselfhelp@btconnect.com
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November 6th & 7th - Oast House Theatre Celebrating
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November 7th - Pamper Day, Medway & Swale (West)
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November 7th - Winter Wonderland St Matthew's
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November 7th - Barnardo's Charity Quiz Night, 7pm for
7.30pm, Twydale Church Hall, Gillingham, Tickets £5
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November 9th - St A's Parent Support Group (ADHD),
7.00 - 9.00pm St Augustine's Church room, Rock
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