

# ACTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

MAY 2018  
NUMBER 542



## **The Memorial to British Aviation - Eastchurch, Isle of Sheppey**

In 1909 the Royal Aero Club established a flying field, where the first flight by a British pilot in Britain was made (500 yards in a Voisin biplane) at Leysdown, and the Short Brothers started their aircraft factory at nearby Shellbeach. Both relocated in 1910, 2.5 miles away, to larger premises at Eastchurch. The airfield was offered to the Royal Navy for their use and on April 1st 1918 it was transferred to the newly formed Royal Air Force and was active throughout the inter-war years and World War II closing in 1946. HM Prison Stanford Hill currently occupies the site.

The memorial reads 'This Memorial Commemorates the First Home of British Aviation 1909 near this spot Leysdown - Eastchurch'. See page 3 for a letter from Alan Major 'RAF Centenary'

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AF

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## Editorial

Overnight we jumped from winter with the central heating at full blast to summer! Spring hardly got a look in. Let's hope we now stay on track and summer lasts for a good few months. The cold and wet has really upset the regular annual cycle, but marvellously nature manages to compensate and in a few weeks all will be back to normal. Meanwhile do enjoy the sudden rush of beautiful plants and flowers and the emerging variant greens of the bursting leaves on all our trees. At last we can get out in the garden and start all those jobs we meant to do during the last few months. Everything is growing apace, even with the ever lengthening light evenings there is no time to keep up with the sowing, planting and tidying not to mention the harvesting of an abundant purple sprouting crop. If you are short of bedding plants or vegetable plugs two local 'Plant Sales' take place on 12th May, one in Wigmore at St Matthews and the other in Rainham at Macklands House, Station Road so you know where to go.

Summer means lots of outdoor activities to enjoy. May Fairs start the season and a new Beer and Music Festival provides summer entertainment at the Oast Community Centre (next to Rainham Station) who are marking their 40th anniversary in June with a Festival showcasing local Kent ales, cider and food products, with live music. Save the date 22nd & 23rd June and help them celebrate.

Coincidentally this month Joe Ennis visits Elmley Nature Reserve on the Isle of Sheppey and we have a letter from Alan Major about two young men from Rainham who were very early members of the Royal Air Force, founded in 1918, which had its original base at Eastchurch also on the island. Hence our front cover picture of the Eastchurch Aviation Memorial. 1918 was quite a momentous year, in February the Representation of the People Act gave women over 30 years of age who met minimum property qualifications the right to vote, the Royal Air Force a new military command came into being in April and the Great War – the war to end all wars, finally reached an armistice in November. Certainly a year to remember even though in only a few short years the RAF was playing a deciding part in another world war and it was not until 1928 that all women over 21 years could vote giving them equal rights with men.

Please do read on to discover all the many activities in our pages and particularly the Diary. Have a very good

month and enjoy the sunshine, we will be with you again in June.

## Correspondence

### RAF CENTENARY

Dear Editor,

The recent 100th birthday Celebrations of the founding of the Royal Air Force, in April this year, brings to mind how many young men from Rainham were involved in the fledgling service. I know of two, but there may have been more.

Charles William Norton, son of Joseph and Alice Norton, born Gravesend 1904 was brother to my mother Annie Norton. Whilst living at 313 Station Road, Rainham he won a scholarship to Gillingham Technical School and as he completed his schooling the Headmaster held a meeting for all the boys about to leave and told them the new RAF service was seeking youths to join up to train as pilots, aircrew or in ground maintenance staff trades.

Charles went home excited to tell his mother who was not convinced it was a good idea, but father said 'Why not?' etc and agreed. Charles applied and was accepted as did his school pal Sydney Gulvin, whose parents ran the village shop in Bredhurst. Both boys were in the second entry to RAF Cranwell, the RAF Training College, in 1920 known as 'Trenchard's Brats'. Charles trained as an Air Mechanic and on passing his course was posted to Eastchurch. It was an exciting time as development activity with aircraft was still ongoing. The Short brothers were frequently there during the week. One of them, in his very large car, used to stop outside Rainham Post Office on each visit to send a telegram to Eastchurch saying 'Let them know I'm on my way', which the RAF duly did. After various UK postings including Hendon, with the aerobatic flight, Charles was discharged in the 1930s when the Government was 'economising' by reducing the service – a familiar story. He worked for Gillingham Council digging road trenches until in 1936 he was recalled, during re-armament, and after refresher courses was made a Flight Sergeant Instructor. At the start of the war he was posted to RCAF St Thomas, Ontario on the Empire Air Training Scheme to train Canadians as aircrew in RAF Europe. At the end of the war he returned to the UK and was demobbed but retained as a civilian instructor at RAF St Athan until he retired. He passed away in 1985. In the meantime his school pal, Sydney, had travelled a different route in the RAF ending as a Squadron Leader and on retirement being involved with the Shuttleworth Collection on a base where he had served during his early career.

As for me, I did two years RAF National Service, most of it not very exciting, at the Air Ministry Unit, West Drayton 1950 – 1952.

Alan Major  
41 Heaton Road Canterbury CT1 3PY  
01227 459246

### PLANT SALE

Dear Editor,

St Matthew's Church is holding a plant sale on 12th May outside the church in Brewery Drive, Wigmore ME8 0TG from 10.00am - 12 noon. In addition there will be cakes, and refreshments to enjoy and other garden items for sale. If it rains, this will be held in the Community Centre behind the church. For further details phone Paul Bellerby 01634 387328.

### SUCCESSFUL QUIZ NIGHT

Dear Editor,

The Inner Wheel Club of Gillingham held a very successful Quiz evening in April at Upchurch River Valley Restaurant. We would like to thank all those who attended, particularly those who bought tickets following the advertising in Action Forum and are delighted to announce that we made in excess of £700 for Porchlight, our Presidents chosen charity.

Many Thanks To You All.

Yours sincerely

Rosemarie Barnes. Club Secretary.

### REMEMBRANCE DAY POPPIES

I am the Poppy Organiser for Hempstead Valley and once again appeal to anyone who would like to help us make poppies, they can be either knitted, crocheted or made with any type of material. Last year we had over 400 gorgeous poppies donated by our lovely knitters which we sold to the public. We had a competition to find the prize poppy and the winner was Carole Ford from Chatham.

Last year with the help of our Veteran's, volunteers, local school children and Cadets, plus our knitted poppies, we made an amazing £17000+. Kent Poppy Appeal overall raised £1,630,320. For 2018 we hope to match the demand for the poppies from the generous people of Medway and aim to increase our contribution to the funds needed to provide lifelong support for our Armed Forces community - serving

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men and women, veterans, and their families.

If you require a knitting pattern for the poppy please contact Sandra Colyer on 01634 362863 or sandracolyer@hotmail.co.uk

### ART EXHIBITION

Paintings by Local Artists Clive Bass and John Gilson will be on show and For Sale in Wigmore Library, 208 Fairview Avenue between 1st & 31st May 2018.

### 90TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT

Old Barn Orchestra

Saturday 16th June, 7.30pm

Rainham School for Girls

Sibelius Symphony No 2 in D major

Shostakovich Festival Overture

Stanford Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra -

Soloist Margaret Archibald

Tickets: £14 (£12 for friends) from

oldbarn18.brownpapertickets.com

Members of the orchestra, 01634 376979

e-mail oldbarnos@gmail.com or on the door

### BEER & MUSIC FESTIVAL

Oast Community Centre, Rainham

Friday 22nd & Saturday 23rd June

12noon – 10.30pm

To celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Oast Centre, next to Rainham Station, opening and to generate funds for the ongoing restoration of the building forty casks of real ale solely from Kent breweries, Kentish cider and various Kentish food products together with live music will make this a unique event.

Tickets £4 on the door include your festival glass. We are currently seeking sponsorship for each cask from local businesses and producing a programme with advertising space available for businesses and individuals. More details at website

www.rainham-kent.co.uk

Facebook.com/oastfestival

or email beerfestival@rainham-kent.co.uk

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# Diary 2018

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: May 22nd 2018

May 1st – 31st – Art Exhibition Local Artists Clive Bass  
and John Gilson on show / For Sale Wigmore Library.

May 6th – Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,  
Meet Joan Weekes 01634 855522 07791 883982  
Teston Country Park, Car park fee, toilets ME18 5BX  
GR708532 for 5.5 mile Wild Garlic walk through  
woods. 2 slopes (no hills) 3 Stiles. Dogs Allowed

May 6th – Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, Moderate  
circular walk 6.5 miles / 10.5km, finish 1.00pm,  
Canterbury Coffee, Cake & 'Bring a friend', Park  
considerately Chartham village. Meet on the green near  
the toilets. CT4 7LA, TR106551, Level, no stiles, may  
be muddy. Contact: Tony/Ann, 01634 440663,  
vajra.faulkner@tesco.net

May 6th – Afternoon Tea, St Michael and all Angels  
Church, Hartlip, 3.00 – 5.00pm, tea and homemade  
cakes, all welcome.

May 8th – Caring for Carers, Pop-In, 10.00am – 12noon,  
St. Paul's Church, Parkwood, If you are caring for  
someone, young or old and need a break, come and join  
us, All welcome.

May 8th – Gillingham & District Fuchsia & Pelargonium  
Society. Brian Carline talk 'Tripe and Trotters'.  
7.30pm, Rainham School for Girls, Derwent Way, ME8  
0BX details 01634 852519.

May 8th – Medway Antique & Collectors' Club, 7.30 for  
8.00pm, St. George Hotel, New Road, Chatham.  
Exhibition of 'Teddies and Talk, 'And So To Bed,  
History of Teddies and Other Bears' (Powerpoint) -  
Mrs. Melanie Gibson-Barton, For further information  
ring 01634 851512 or just turn up

May 9th – East Medway U3A Smallholders Club,  
Springvale ME8 0JG, 2.00 – 4.00pm, Barbara Stevens -  
Stories from a Journalist Year, Non-members  
welcome. Free to members, £2 visitors. Every second  
Wednesday of the month. Ring 07816 159 668 or see  
www.eastmedwayu3a

May 9th – All Saints Women's Fellowship, Hempstead  
Village Hall, 8.00pm, AGM, for details contact Rhonda  
Peck 07951 629444

May 10th – Wigmore Thursday Club, St Matthew's  
Community Centre, 2.00pm, 'Has this ever happened to  
you?' Mel Rees, for over 50s 01634 234712 for details.

May 10th – Hempstead Leisure Club, Talk on Gardening  
and Plant Sale. Speaker Jackie Aviolet. All Saints  
Church, Hempstead Road 2.00 – 4.00pm. New members  
always welcome, phone 07583 343 782

May 11th – Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group,  
Millennium Centre, Rainham every Friday 9.45am to  
help those who have lost a loved one. Join us for a  
cuppa and chat, ring Julie 01634 364309.

May 11th – Games Evening, Lower Halstow Village Hall,  
7.00 – 9.00pm. GamEuchre, Rummy, Chess  
(medium standard), Skip Bow, Whist and others £2  
Adult, £1 child includes Tea/coffee, Squash & biscuits.

May 11th – Local History Society, Byron Primary School,  
Gillingham, 7.15pm, AGM, Membership £20, Visitors  
£3. Tea and before meeting for a small charge, details  
Val Barrand 07947 583327 or see www.grlhs.org

May 12th – Craft Market, 9.00am – 12.30pm, Millennium  
Centre, Rainham. Free entry, Refreshments, To book a  
stall (£10 each) ring 07779 366054 or email  
cjdcraftmarkets@yahoo.com

May 12th – Annual Plant Sale, Macklands House, Station  
Road, Rainham, 10.00am, cake stall selling homemade  
cakes plus refreshments

May 12th – Plant Sale St Matthew's Church, Wigmore  
ME8 0TG 10.00am – 12noon. Cakes, refreshments and  
garden items for sale. If wet in Community Centre.

May 12th – Christian Aid Coffee Morning, 10.00am –  
12noon, Gillingham Methodist Church, Third Avenue,  
50p entry includes refreshments. Cakes and books sale

May 12th – Tea and Cake Lindy Hop Dance, Lower  
Halstow Memorial/Village Hall 7.30 – 10.00pm, Hot  
Rod's Lindy Hop Music, Tickets £7 includes Tea/  
Coffee and piece of Cake, bring your own supper and  
beverage. Tickets 01795 844408 prior to the Dance

May 12th – 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, details ring 366189 or 388546.

May 13th – Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,  
Meet David Brown 07815 106791 Newnham, The  
Street near the George Inn, park in the road GR955576  
for 6 mile circular walk, woodland, open farmland and  
roads and tracks with hilly sections. Dogs Allowed

May 13th – Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, Leisurely  
circular walk 7 miles / 11.3km, finish 2.00pm,  
Wickhambreaux please park considerably in village,  
meet at The Rose public house, good Sunday lunch  
booking advisable. CT3 1RQ, TR220587 bring picnic,  
flat walk, two short flights of steps. Contact: Len,  
01634 319391, lenbeadle@blueyonder.co.uk

May 14th – Medway Scrabble Club, 2.00 – 4.30pm, St  
Stephens Church Hall, Maidstone Road, Chatham, new  
members welcome, details 01634 230500

May 14th – Rainham Flower Club, 7.30pm, St Matthews  
Church Hall, Wigmore ME8 0NX Practical Evening -  
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May 14th – Rainham Evening Bereavement Friendship  
Group, Millennium Centre, Rainham, 2nd Monday each  
month to help those still in employment who have lost a  
loved one. Join us for a cuppa and chat, ring Julie  
01634 364309.

May 14th – Concert Medway Organ & Keyboard Club,  
Parkwood Community Centre, Rainham, ME8 9PN,  
7.30pm, Organist - Mark Thompson, details ring Brian  
Leonard 01634 234694

May 15th – RSPB Medway Local Group Illustrated Talk,  
Parkwood Community Centre, 7.30 – 9.45pm £4. Birds  
of The Medway Estuary – Edward Towne, For Field  
Trips: www.rspb.org.uk/groups/medway.

May 15th – GHS Floral Art Group, 7.30 – 9.00pm, United  
Reformed Church Balmoral Road, Gillingham, 'Look  
what I've done' – an arrangement in a home-made  
unusual container, New members welcome, first visit  
free, no experience needed. Just come for a friendly  
welcome. Parking available. For details contact Kaye  
Buss 01634 232998 or email kayebuss@btinternet.com

May 16th – Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, Leisurely  
circular walk 5 miles / 8.1km finish 12.45pm. Meet  
Camer Park, free Car Park, café and toilets. DA13 0XT,  
TQ649669, stroll to Meopham Green and windmill.  
One stile, graham.jenkinson@blueyonder.co.uk

May 16th – Wigmore Ladies Club, Howard Hall,  
Woodside, Wigmore 2.00 – 4.00pm, new members  
welcome to this cheerful group, just come along or ring  
01634 388912 for more information

May 16th – Bredhurst Garden Club, Village Hall, 7.30pm,  
Christopher Wade Title: An Illustrated Walk Around  
the Saxon Shoreway – Part 2, New members always  
welcome ring 07791 781 910 for details

May 17th – Hempstead Leisure Club, Whist, Scrabble,  
Board games, tea and chat (see 10th May)

May 17th – Wigmore Thursday Club, 'China' – Tony  
Mitchell, (see 10th May)

May 17th – Rainham Women's Institute, 1.45 – 4.00pm.  
Annual Meeting Wakeley Hall, Oast House Community  
Centre, visitors welcome for small entry charge per  
visit. Ring 01634 366276 for details.

May 18th – Ladies Pamper Evening, Gillingham Golf  
Club, 6.00 – 10.30pm, in aid of Rivermead School,  
Tickets £5 each, range of treatments and therapies,  
Pitches £15 enquiries to Wendy Palmer  
wendypalmer67@gmail.com 07806 779 671

May 18th – Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 6.30pm,  
Meet Stephen Manning 07551 712438 Bluebell Hill  
view point park, Common Road ME5 9RH GR743622  
for 4 mile Walderslade loop through Impton / Firth  
Wood. 1 gradual incline. Dogs Allowed

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Tuesday 8th May, 10.00am – 12noon  
St. Paul's Church, Parkwood

If you are caring for someone, young or old  
and need a break, come and join us.  
All welcome

**ANNUAL PLANT SALE**  
Macklands House, Station Road, Rainham  
Saturday 12th May, 10.00am  
There will also be a cake stall selling homemade  
cakes plus refreshments.

**CHRISTIAN AID COFFEE MORNING**  
Saturday 12th May, 10.00am – 12noon  
Gillingham Methodist Church,  
Third Avenue, Gillingham  
50p entry includes refreshments  
Cakes and books for sale

**TEA AND CAKE LINDY HOP DANCE**  
Lower Halstow Memorial/Village Hall  
Saturday 12th May, 7.30 - 10.00pm  
Hot Rod's Lindy Hop Music  
Tickets £7 per person which includes Tea/Coffee  
and a piece of Cake. Please feel free to bring you  
own supper and beverage.  
For Tickets please call Kay 01795 844408 prior to  
the Dance – This is only to make sure everyone has a  
piece of these delicious cakes.  
Looking forwards to a great evening.  
See you there.

**LADIES PAMPER EVENING**  
Gillingham Golf Club  
Friday 18th May, 6.00 - 10.30pm  
A range of treatments and therapies  
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‘Meet up with the mums’  
‘Pamper your princess’  
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Pitches are £15 All enquiries to Wendy Palmer  
wendypalmer67@gmail.com 07806 779 671

**'MAY WE ENTERTAIN YOU'**  
Wigmore Voices present an evening of music  
Saturday 19th May, 8.00pm  
St Matthews Community Centre,  
Drewery Drive, Wigmore.  
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**HEMPSTEAD VILLAGE FAYRE 2018**  
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programme of dance, zumba, singing, kung fu,  
marching band, children's sports,  
gymnastics and dogs flyball.

**THE OAST AGM**  
The Oast, Community Centre, Rainham,  
Wednesday 23rd May, 7.30pm  
To join or for information about various  
memberships email membership@oastcentre.org.  
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# Nature Notes

## NATURE NOTES FOR APRIL

In early April I motored over the Old Kingsferry Road/Rail Bridge and visited Elmley National Nature Reserve in search of the brown hare. I drove very slowly along the track over the grazing marshes. As usual, there were lots of birds to be seen there, but I have no space to write about them in these Notes. After about two miles, the marshes come to an end upon my reaching the high ground on which sits Kings Hill Farm. The family trust that now owns and farms the Isle of Elmley had set aside a small strip of land around the base of the high ground which had been planted with sun flowers and other flowering plants that had produced seed for finches and other seed eating birds during the winter. I was attracted to a flock of small brown birds feeding on seeds on the ground. I pulled up behind a white car whose driver was apparently taking photos of them. I noticed faint traces of red feathers on the heads and breasts of some of the birds and concluded that it was a flock of linnets I used to see these birds in the fields along Spade Lane, at the eastern end of Rainham, devoted to the growing of flax. The linnets would fly continuously down to the flowers heads from overhead electricity cables and then fly back up again. It was quite some time before I noticed two hares, immediately in front of me, resting in the sunshine, with a row of dead flowers giving them some protection from the wind. The man in the white car was clearly photographing the hares and not the less interesting linnets. One of the hares was lying on her side (clearly a female being guarded by a male) with the white fur of her belly exposed to the sun, her four legs outstretched and her head resting on her fore paws. Her eyes were closed. The male was sitting up with his ears at the alert. He would occasionally scratch behind his ears with his hind leg and clean his face with his fore paws. His eyelids would sometimes close, but tired that he may have been at a time of the day when he would normally be asleep, he had to remain alert against competitive males. The large, yellow eyes of the male had a very glossy quality about them. What was amazing was that a third car joined us. Car windows

were opened and binoculars and cameras were poked through, but the two hares, only about twenty yards away, remained relaxed. A little later, a third hare crossed over the track and into a scrubby area of land. The hare stopped and looked at me in my car and then loped unconcernedly away. Finally, a little way along the track, I noted as many as five hares resting in the short grass on the slope of the hill. Conventional wisdom is that a hare rests in a 'form' such that, in a field of short wheat or grass, when its head is down and its ears are flat on its back, it cannot be seen above the vegetation by a predator such as a fox. Three of the five hares were apparently alert, with their ears upright, and the two which had their ears down seemed to be having a snooze. All five were visible with the naked eye and had made no attempt to get under cover. I think that the explanation is that the Trust controls foxes in order to stop them plundering the eggs of ground nesting birds which it describes in its brochure as 'predator management'. The hares may have never seen a fox on the reserve and have got used to the cars that move slowly along the track on every day of the year. Outside the breeding season, brown hares are predominantly solitary and nocturnal, but can be seen feeding in the early morning and at dusk. The female comes into breeding condition in late winter or early spring, as a result of which hares are seen more regularly during the day. In the breeding season hares lose most of their customary caution and come together in pairs and small groups. Male hares can sometimes be seen following each other around so as not to miss out if they come across a female. The more extreme antics are the origin of the saying 'Mad March Hares'. These antics include a string of males chasing after a female in a chaotic free-for-all; competing males squaring up to each other on their hind legs and sparring with each other with their forepaws; and an unreceptive female warding off an over-passionate male either with her forepaws or, if she gets very irritable with the male, her teeth. Unfortunately, I was not at the reserve early enough in the morning to witness any of these antics. It should be borne in mind that 'Mad March Hares' are up to their antics throughout the summer breeding season but once mowing grass, cereal plants

and root and other crops have grown tall the hares are less noticeable. It is thought that the antics of the males enable a receptive female to decide which suitor shall be the father of her young. The female will chose the fastest and strongest suitor for her mate, because her offspring will need to rely on their speed and athleticism to outrun foxes and dogs. During the breeding season a female may have up to four litters, each of up to four leverets. The young are born in the open, with their eyes open and covered in fur. They are initially hidden together. They are suckled during the night and the mother leaves immediately the leverets are fed so as to minimise the scent she leaves behind. Within a few days the young will be moved to separate forms, to avoid the risk of a predator finding all of them. At Elmley, the leverets are safe from badgers, foxes and farm machinery but can be subject to predation by stoats, buzzards and marsh harriers. **Joe Ennis** website: [www.joennis.jimdo.com](http://www.joennis.jimdo.com).

## RAINHAM FIFTY YEARS AGO in 1968

The year began with a serious flu epidemic that affected thousands of people in the Medway area causing high levels of absenteeism from work and school. Blizzard conditions and heavy snow followed causing train cancellations, massive traffic jams, power cuts and severed telephone lines. It wasn't all bad news as Rainham Theatrical Society had staged a successful production of the pantomime 'Robinson Crusoe' to packed audiences at the Oast House Theatre, while Rainham Social Club thrived with tag wrestling matches and regular live bands. Rainham Ladies Choir also did well and at the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod in Wales they finished sixth out of 24 participating choirs. With expansion of the Parkwood Housing Estate and a rise in the local population, modern facilities were increasingly demanded. This led to the former Church of England School in Station Road being earmarked for demolition followed by the construction of Rainham Shopping Centre with a pedestrian precinct and car park as part of a redevelopment plan for central Rainham. Plans were also drawn up to redevelop Rainham Mark with more space for shopping. In June Gillingham Council bought the marsh near Motney Hill from the Rugby Portland Cement Company for development. A new school known as the Howard School was constructed at Derwent Way and the teachers and

pupils from Rainham Secondary Modern School in Orchard Street were transferred there in September. Pupils from the girl's school followed later after the construction of Rainham School for Girls on the same site. With the closure of the Church of England School in Station Road and the transfer of pupils to Orchard Street, the vacant building, which dated back to 1846, was bought by Gillingham Council and temporarily leased to the Rainham and Wigmore Community Association who organised social and recreational evenings at the premises. Local traders contributed 400 items of household furniture for use in the building.

In sporting affairs Rainham Cricketers FC won the Medway Area Sunday League Premier Division Championship and reached the final of the Kent Sunday Premier Cup but were defeated 4-0 by Catford United in the final. Rainham Youth won the Medway Minor League Championship while Rainham Football Club First XI finished fifth in the New Brompton League.

During the summer Rainham Cricket Club had an average season while girls from the Rainham Secondary School Athletic Club performed well. At the Faversham Gala Sports Meeting in June Jill Wesson won the 100 yards event and Carol Hooper won the Junior 100 yards. The junior relay team also finished first. Later, at the Bexley Sports Meeting Carol Hooper won three races while Jackie Mudge won the 220 yards event.

In October Rainham held its first ever trade fair which took place at Rainham Social Club attended by an estimated 4,500 people. Opened by the Mayor of Gillingham it proved highly successful. Films were shown, advice given on painting and decorating with dancing, hairdressing and butchery demonstrations and a fashion show.

The year ended with news that farmers Wakeley Brothers were planning to attract young men into farming by providing them with modern four bedroom houses in Rainham. The old nineteenth century cottages which housed Wakeley Brothers workers lacked modern amenities with outside toilets and no bathrooms. By December 1968 twelve new houses were constructed for the farm workers and six of these were situated in Otterham Quay Lane. This ended an important year in the history and development of Rainham.

**David Wood.**

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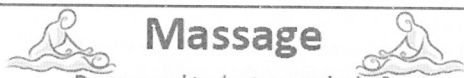
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## Diary 2018

May 19th - Rainham South Councillors Surgery, 3:16  
Café, Parkwood, 10.00am - 12 noon. No appointment  
necessary.

May 19th - Quiz Night Medway Ramblers, 7.30pm,  
Newington Scout Hut signposted from the A2 next to  
the hand carwash in the centre of Newington ME9 7JJ  
All welcome, join in the fun!

May 19th - Music Quiz Night, 7.00pm, Holy Trinity  
Church, Twydall, Raising money for the Blind Veterans  
(formerly St Dunstan's). £5 per person, tables of 6-8.  
Please text Nikki Bailey 07779 600121

May 19th - Wigmore Voices 'May We Entertain You' an  
evening of music, 8.00pm, St Matthews Community  
Centre, Drewery Drive, Tickets £7, Sue 01634 370639

May 20th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,  
Meet Mo Fleisig 07976 600393, Bishopsbourne, The  
Street near Mermaid Inn park in the road CT4 5HX  
GR188526 for 6 mile walk via Pett Bottom across  
fields. Some stiles (2 are high). No Dogs

May 20th - Hempstead Village Fayre, Harrow Road  
Playing Fields (behind the Flying Saucer Pub), 11.30am  
- 4.30pm. Food, games, raffles, classic vehicles,  
inflatables, rides, crafts, stalls, dance, zumba, singing,  
kung fu, marching band, children's sports, gymnastics  
and dogs flyball. Free entry.

May 20th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, Moderate  
circular walk 7 miles / 11.3km, finish 2.00pm, Meet  
Benenden Village Green TN17 4EF, TQ808328 hilly  
and undulating, ascent 637 feet and some lane walking  
at start, midway picnic break. Pub at end.

May 21st - Medway Scrabble Club, (see 14th May)

May 21st - Wigmore WI, 7.30 - 9.30pm, St Matthews  
Community Centre, Drewery Drive, speakers & events.  
Visitors Welcome, interested contact Chris Ellison  
01634 372976 or Barbara Strachan 01634 268611

May 21st - Rainham Evening Women's Institute, St Paul's  
Church, Parkwood, 7.30pm, Annual General Meeting,  
All welcome, ring Kate Archer 01634 360797.

May 23rd - The Oast, Community Centre, Rainham's  
AGM, 7.30pm, Wakeley Hall. To join or for  
information about various membership types email  
membership@oastcentre.org. For details regarding  
nomination of officers, see Twitter@theoastrainham

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May 24th - Wigmore Thursday Club, 'In Harmony' -  
Doreen Hulm, (see 10th May)

May 24th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Talk 'Your very  
own Barnards' Speaker Irina Fridman (see 10th May)

May 25th - Medway Geographical Society, 7.30, AGM  
followed by an illustrated talk Holy Trinity Church,  
Twydall Lane, ME8 6TN, all welcome, just come or  
ring Lorna Bailey 01634 572139

May 25th - Jazz Gig, Anchorians Rugby Club, 8.00pm,  
Gilad Atzmon Quartet in Tribute to John Coltrane,  
Admission £12, Enquiries 01634 354352 or 07544  
312743, Website coljazz.webs.com

May 26th - Medway Folk Dance Club (see 12th May)

May 27th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, Leisurely  
circular walk 5 miles / 8.1km, finish 12.45pm, Meet at  
East Malling Station Car Park - ME19 6AJ, TQ701569,  
Some stiles and may be muddy. No steep climbs, pubs  
in East Malling. Bring a picnic lunch. Contact: Tony/  
Ann, 01634 406634, vajra.faulkner@tesco.net

May 27th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,  
Meet Stephen Manning 07551 712438, Cannon Road  
car park, Ramsgate CT11 9SG GR378652 for 6.5 mile  
coastal walk between Ramsgate and Broadstairs. Return  
by bus (or walk) - Bring your Bus Pass. Dogs Allowed  
May 30th - Gillingham Horticultural Society, 7.00 for  
7.15pm, Gardeners Question Time - Our panel of  
experts will answer your questions on how to grow and  
how to show, United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral  
Road ME7 4PU, £2 Members £3 Non Members, details  
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May 31st - Hempstead Leisure Club, Whist, Scrabble,  
board games, tea and chat (see 10th May)

May 31st - Wigmore Thursday Club, Social Meeting,  
(see 10th May)

June 1st - Rainham Bereavement Friendship Group, (see  
11th May)

June 3rd - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, Leisurely  
circular walk 6 miles / 9.7km finish 1.15pm,  
Sissinghurst Castle, car park £2 non-members, café and  
toilet facilities. TN17 2AB, TQ803375, Nice flat walk  
Contact 01634 319391, lenbeadle@blueyonder.co.uk

June 3rd - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,  
Meet Margaret Poll 01634 376080, Tankerton Marine  
Parade near café, CT5 2BW GR118673 for 8 mile walk  
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## Diary 2018

June 3rd - Spring Fair, Cats Protection Adoption Centre,  
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Adults £1, Children Free, Details 01634 232471

June 3rd - Afternoon Tea, St Michael and all Angels  
Church, Hartlip, (see 6th May)

June 4th - Medway Scrabble Club, (see 14th May)

June 5th - Breast Cancer Support Group, Medway  
Hospital, Level 2, Area 7, 7.00 - 9.00pm. Penny  
Auction, to raise money for our own charity, bring  
small change, details 01634 861802 or 07761 853750

June 5th - Rainham Horticultural Society, 7.30pm,  
Rainham Cricket Club, Berengrave Lane, Russell  
Bowes - The Arts of the Folly. New members  
welcome, details from 01634 366276.

June 5th - GHS Floral Art Group, Workshop with Viv  
O'Sullivan with a contemporary twist (layering), (see  
15th May)

June 6th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, Leisurely  
circular walk 8 miles / 12.9km, finish 2.30pm. Meet  
outside church, St Nicholas-at-Wade CT7 0NG,  
TR264667 across country to Reculver Towers. No  
stiles, hills or mud. Bring snacks for breaks - two pubs  
near the start/finish point. Contact: Graham, 07989  
753278, graham.jenkinson@blueyonder.co.uk

June 6th - Fish & Chip Night, Upchurch Horticultural  
Society, 97 Chaffes Lane 7.30pm email  
sean@totamail.com for details

June 7th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Talk 'Wrinkles don't  
matter' Speaker Helen Tobias (see 10th May)

June 7th - Wigmore Thursday Club, 'Canterbury City' -  
Lenny Clark, (see 10th May)

June 7th - Talk from Frankie Seeds on Preserving  
Produce, Stockbury Cottage Gardeners, Stockbury  
Village Hall, 8.00pm email sean@totamail.com

June 8th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 6.30pm,  
Meet Stephen Manning 07551 712438, Mote Park  
Maidstone car park charges apply ME15 7SU  
GR773553 for 4 mile Evening walk around the Park  
including a section of the River Lea. Dogs Allowed

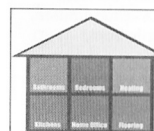
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June 8th - Local History Society, Members Evening, (see  
11th May)

June 9th - Craft Market, 9.00am - 12.30pm, Millennium  
Centre, (see 12th May)

June 9th - Quiz Night, 7.30pm start, Carmel Hall, Upton  
Lane, Sittingbourne ME10 1JB, Tables 6 - 8, £5 per  
person, BYO Food, Drinks and Glasses, Contact Mike  
01634 360906, mikew16@blueyonder.co.uk

June 9th - Medway Folk Dance Club, (see 12th May)

June 10th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, Easy  
circular walk 4 miles / 6.4km finish 12.15pm, Boughton  
to Herne Hill, park and meet as close as possible to the  
corner of The Street and Bounds Lane. ME13 9BE,  
TR062592, Contact: Sally and Dave, 01634 574552,  
smithgaul@aol.com

June 10th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am,  
Meet Anne Bond 07778 302866 Pat Wells 07804  
837155, Ryarsh Village Hall car park ME19 5LS  
GR671600 for 5.25 mile walk past neolithic burial  
Coldrum Stones site then a gradual walk up to North  
Downs with good views. Some stiles. No Dogs

June 11th - Rainham Flower Club, Diamond Anniversary  
Celebration Event. (see 14th May)

June 11th - Concert Medway Organ & Keyboard Club,  
Organist - David Ingley, (see 14th May)

June 11th - Rainham Evening Bereavement Friendship  
Group, (see 14th May)

June 12th - Medway Antique & Collectors' Club, (see 8th  
May)

June 13th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, Moderate  
circular walk 8.5 miles / 13.7km, finish 2.30pm. Meet  
and park Linton Church car park - (main A229 road),  
ME17 4AW, TQ754501, Mostly established footpaths,  
farmland with a little road walking - some hills. Bring  
picnic lunch. Contact: John, 07749 760788,  
billingsjc@blueyonder.co.uk Dog friendly

June 13th - East Medway U3A Delia Taylor - ENSA  
(Entertainments National Services Association) or  
Every Night Something Awful, (see 9th May)

June 14th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Strawberry Tea -  
Margaret Springett and the Phoenix Singers, (see 10th  
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