

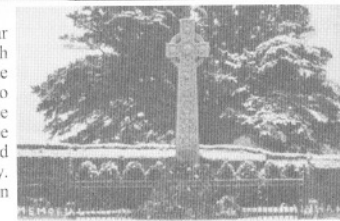
ACTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

NOVEMBER 2018
NUMBER 548



The dedication of Rainham War Memorial on Sunday December 12th 1920. Although already very ill the Rev J M Tamplin was determined to officiate - it was the last service he conducted before he died. The railings were sacrificed for the 2nd World War possibly unnecessarily. See page 9 for more information



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AF Next Issue December 1st 2018
Copy Date: November 20th
Editorial: Barbara Mackay Miller
Advertising: Hamish Mackay Miller
See top of page 14 for current prices.
Action Forum Office
4 Saracen Close, Gillingham Business Park
ME8 0QN Tel: 01634 310011 please mention
AF when ringing. Email: af@thenet.uk.net

Editorial

Sweeping up the autumn leaves is one of my least favourite jobs. Several reasons, if you leave it until they are mostly down it is a mammoth back breaking task but one you can never really finish for as fast as you collect them more fall to recover the ground. Often the peak of the leaf mountain coincides with cold, blowy weather and the whole job becomes impossible with wet heaps of slippery leaves glued to the ground making you feel guilty each time you glimpse them. The 'Fall' also means that winter is nearly here with short, cold days getting dark in the early afternoon once the clocks go back. So this year I have opted for small and often and so far, primarily, because of the superb autumn weather we have experienced it has almost been a pleasure collecting one barrowful every few days in warm, calm sunny weather! The second half of 2018 really has been exceptionally good in the south east weather wise. Autumn brings to mind happy hours gathering harvest from the hedgerows. For centuries it has been the accepted custom that berries and fruit from hedgerow trees, fungi from the woodland floor and sea weed and other plants from the shoreline are fair game for the thrifty forager as long as you purely gathered for yourself. A growing body of opinion now decries the habit mostly because of the few individuals who scavenge on an industrial scale. Surely common sense can prevail, children picking up a few chestnuts will not kill off the native wildlife for lack of food. Hedgehogs however for various reasons are under threat. These prickly animals generally come to mind as a favourite but they need our help. Numbers have declined dramatically over recent years. They are ferocious wanderers searching for food and walking a lot further each day than many humans do. When buildings, walls and fences impede their usual journeys, it makes their search for food, mates and places to nest harder or - in some cases - impossible. Creating small gaps at intervals at the base of your fences can make all the difference. Kent Wildlife Trust have a free guide about hedgehog habits, how to build your own hedgehog house and make your garden a hedgehog haven (see www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk) One of our correspondents has pointed out that although the Sava Centre undoubtedly created many new jobs as stated in the article last month, it came at

a price. An old man who owned land in the woods where he wanted to see out his days in a beautifully built log cabin, received a fraction of the worth of the land when a compulsory purchase order was issued forcing him out of his home by greedy developers. It does not seem possible but by next month we will be counting the days until Christmas! Do read on to discover all November has to offer. Have a good month, enjoy the sunshine, and we will be here again in December.

Correspondence

RINGING REMEMBERS

Dear Editor,

Remembrance Sunday this year is the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice at the end of World War I. This celebration of peace is officially endorsed and sponsored by H.M. Government for a) recruitment of new ringers and b) ringing bells open at 12.30pm on Sunday 11th November.

1400 bellringers lost their lives while serving their country during World War I. Ringing Remembers aims to recruit this number of new bellringers. At the latest count over 1800 people have volunteered. We have one ringer in Rainham who volunteered through Ringing Remembers.

Eight ringers from St Margaret's served their country during the conflict and thankfully all returned safely. It is the intention that all churches throughout the country ring their bells open at 12.30pm on this day. We will be ringing our eight bells. Any lapsed ringers are welcome to join us.

Tim Wraight

Vice Tower Captain Rainham St Margaret.

LOCAL GOVERNING BODY

Dear Editor

The Local Governing Body (LGB) of St Margaret's Church of England Junior School, in Orchard Street, is seeking another co-opted governor. The full LGB should consist of the Head Teacher (ex officio), one staff member, two parent members and six co-opted members. We are looking for someone who will be committed to helping the LGB to both challenge and support the School Leadership Team in its role of improving the quality of teaching and learning. At our recent OFSTED inspection in July of this year, we were very pleased to retain our 'Good' judgement. The LGB meets six times a year, in the school, sometimes spending the whole day in school. Training will be given, usually in school and on line. If anyone wishes to put their name forward, or would like further information, please ring me, Joe, on 235182, or Chrissy Hornby on 387348. We are looking forward to hearing from you!

Yours Sincerely,
Joe Ennis

a Governor at St Margaret's C of E Junior School

IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN!

Dear Editor,

It seems that although I was born in the neighbourhood of Rainham in 1929, living thereabouts until 1981 I have done so with a misconception in my mind. That is that Rainham Station Oasthouse was a hop oast when owned by Wakeley brothers. All those hours I spent as a child looking from my small bedroom window at 38 Tufton Road towards the oasthouse and it was not hops in the sacks being hauled up to the two wood shed-like lucarnes and into the top floor to be dried but various grains for animal and poultry feed as Wakeley Brothers were also agricultural merchants. What I believe confused me was that the building has two typical hop oast cowl on the roof from which would normally exit fumes from the drying hops but in Rainham it was presumably the aroma of drying grains and other products. In John Tipples article (AF April 2017) he states that bines from Wakeleys hop gardens were processed as 'Wakeleys Hop Manure' for gardens but I assume despite this reference it was never strictly a typical Kent hop oast house but is grouped with the other much older, unique oasts in Kent going back to their Dutch origins being used for malt production. Unless of course the building was a hop oasthouse before Wakeleys converted it to grain. The railway siding between the oast and platform 2 could have been used to transport hops to London Brewers, before the oast was built, 1895 has been suggested for the latter. Does anyone have any comments?

Alan Major

(Author 'Oasthouses - Their Life and Times' (2006)
41 Heaton Road Canterbury CT1 3PY
01227 459246

ART EXHIBITION

Paintings by Artists Clive Bass & John Gilson will be on show and For Sale in Rainham Library, Birling Avenue, between 1st & 30th November 2018.

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ONE BIG FAMILY - WE URGENTLY NEED YOUR HELP! Emergency Homeless Winter Refuge 2018/19- volunteers needed!

One Big Family are running an Emergency Homeless Winter Refuge (ER) this winter at Emmaus Christian Church, Clover Street, Chatham. From mid-November until end of March, the ER will provide a warm, safe place to sleep for those who are homeless and might otherwise have to sleep rough in

Medway. Last winter, the ER provided over 1,220 beds to those in need. As the number of people who are homeless in Medway increases, the need is likely to be even greater this year. The Emergency Refuge is run solely by volunteers. This winter, we need help for: Evening, Overnight and Morning Shifts.

Comprehensive training and support will be provided for all ER volunteers. If you are interested please contact Cadi at cadvide@gogglemail.com

RAINHAM COMMUNITY CHOIR are very keen to welcome new members who enjoy singing all sorts of great songs with the support and encouragement of our musical director, Olivia and our pianist, Eleanor every Monday between 7.00pm and 8.30pm. There are no auditions just come along and join in, the first two sessions are free. Current charges are £4 per session, payable half termly in advance. For details please see our Facebook page Rainham Community Choir or email inforainhamcommunitychoir@gmail.com.

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Upchurch - part Chaffes Lane
Wallbridge Lane, part of Oak Lane, Jubilee Terrace
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or ring 01634 310011 (please mention Action Forum)

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You sent the very person I needed, Carol, she could have been family!

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: November 20th 2018

November 1st – 30th – Art Exhibition by Artists Clive Bass & John Gilson will be on show and for sale in Rainham Library, Birling Avenue,
November 3rd – Upchurch Wives and WI Silent Auction, 10.00am – 12.30pm, Village Hall. All proceeds to Village Hall Fund, £2.50 entry incl Tea/ coffee & cake.
November 3rd – Medway Folk Dance Club, United Reformed Church hall, Balmoral Road, Gillingham, 7.30 – 9.30pm. New and experienced dancers welcome, with or without a partner, ring 366189 or 388546.
November 4th – Volunteer Conservation Task Day, Capstone Farm Country Park, 10.00am – 2.00pm. Meet volunteer block. Ring 01634 338191 for details.
November 4th – Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am Moderate circular walk 7 miles / 11.3km finish 2.00pm, Westminster Field car park off The Street, Horton Kirby, DA4 9GR, TQ559684 steady climb on outward leg, largely flat return. A visit to Eynsford Castle (free). Pub at end of walk. Contact: geoff.rambler@me.com
November 4th – Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am, meet Roger Norman 01634 232404 07941 965272 GR 936746 ME12 2BE Sheerness Barton's Point Coastal Park Car Park for 5 mile Sheerness canal, river and sea wall flat walk. No Dogs
November 5th – Medway Scrabble Club, 2.00 – 4.30pm, St Stephens Church Hall, Maidstone Road, Chatham, new members welcome, details 01634 230500
November 6th – Breast Cancer Support Group, 7.00 –

9.00pm, Medway Hospital, Level 2, Area 7. A talk on 'WW1' by Brenda a member of the group, details Angela Blackwell 01634 861802 or Mob 07761 853750
November 6th – Rainham Horticultural Society, 7.30pm, Cricket Club, Berengrave Lane, Nigel Gibson – Late Perennials. New members welcome, 01634 366276.
November 6th – GHS Floral Art Group, 7.30 – 9.00pm, United Reformed Church (rear hall) Balmoral Road, Gillingham, Workshop 4 – 'Diwali' a Crescent arrangement, New members welcome, first come and receive a friendly welcome. Parking available, details 01634 232998 or email kayebuss@btinternet.com
November 7th – Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, Moderate circular walk 7 miles / 11.3km finish 2.00pm, Queensdown Warren meet and park at the commuter car park just north of Bredhurst. ME8 0LU, TQ799629 Undulating walk. Contact: Mike, cycling39@aol.com
November 7th – Play and Chat. 1.30 – 3.00pm. Parents/ Carers and their pre-school children. Lots of toys for toddlers. £1.50 per family includes refreshments for all St Paul's Church, Parkwood, ME8 9PN. 01634 364388.
November 8th – Wigmore Thursday Club, St Matthew's Community Centre, 2.00pm, 'The Zeebrugge Ferry Disaster' - Colin Breed, for over 50s ring 01634 234712
November 8th – Play and Chat. 10.15 – 11.45am. Parents/ Carers and pre-school children. Lots of toys. £1.50 per family St Paul's Church, Parkwood, 01634 364388.
November 8th – Hempstead Leisure Club, 'Crossing America in a Covered Wagon' Talk Ann Catoor. All Saints Church, Hempstead Road 2.00 – 4.00pm. New members always welcome, phone 07583 343 782
November 9th – Rainham & Gillingham Local History Society, Twydall Evangelical Church, Goudhurst Road ME8 6LQ 2.30 – 4.30pm. Talk Friends of Chatham Traction. Richard Bourne and Richard Ratcliffe. Visitors £3. Details Val Barrand 07947 583327 email lupusrufus@sky.com

November 9th – 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.
November 9th & 10th – Oasthouse Theatre, Rainham 'In Flanders Fields'. Curtain up 8.00pm. Readings, poems and music to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of World War One. We will remember them, Box Office 0844 8793224 www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk
November 9th – 11th – Battles' Over, A Village's Tribute, Lower Halstow, see page 7 or thesix.org.uk for details.
November 10th – Craft Market, 9.00am – 12.30pm, Millennium Centre, Free entry, stalls £10 ring 07779 366054 or email cjdcraftmarkets@yahoo.com
November 10th – Flower Festival, St Michael and All Angels, Hartlip, Remembrance Weekend, 11.00am – 4.00pm, refreshments provided.
November 10th – Concert, Rainham Ladies Choir and Vocal Chords, to celebrate the ending of WW1, St Margaret's Church, Rainham, 7.00pm. Entrance free, wine/soft drink available, donations to Trussells and the Night Shelter. Optional 1918 dress, ring 01634 233866
November 11th – Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am, Doreen Maguire 01634 376230 Park Durham Road, Wigmore ME8 0JJ near East Hoath woods entrance for 5.5 mile sensible winters day walk over undulating terrain. No stiles and no steps. No Dogs
November 11th – Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, Leisurely circular walk 4 miles / 6.4km finish 12.15pm Capstone Farm Country Park, Park lower car park near lake. TQ781652 No stiles, just a few minor hills. Bring a snack for mid-way break. Dogs welcome. Contact: John, 07749 760788, billingsjc@blueyonder.co.uk
November 12th – Concert Medway Organ & Keyboard Club, Parkwood Community Centre, Rainham, ME8 9PN, 7.30pm, Organist - Kevin Grunill, details ring Brian Leonard 01634 234694
November 12th – Rainham Flower Club, 7.30pm, St Matthews Church Hall, Wigmore Demonstration 'Jingle All The Way' by Jacqui Arnold see website www.rainhamflowerclub.co.uk or ring 01634 863034
November 12th – 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.
November 13th – Caring for carers – Pop-In, St. Paul's

Church, Parkwood, 10.00 – 12noon, chat over tea/coffee & cake, information, Maureen Cannon 01634 235723
November 13th – Gillingham and District Fuchsia and Pelargonium Society, 7.30pm start Rainham School for Girls, Derwent Way, A Follow Up to the Recent 'Letterbox' Talk. All Welcome. Details 01634 852519
November 14th – Play and Chat (see 7th Nov)
November 14th – East Medway U3A Smallholders Club, Springvale ME8 0JG, 2.00 – 4.00pm, Andy Thomas - A Celebratory History of Christmas, New members welcome, no waiting list. Free to members, £2 for visitors. Ring 07816 159 668 or www.eastmedwayu3a
November 14th – Bredhurst Garden Club, Village Hall, 7.30pm, Sally Carter-Esdale 'The Leprosy Mission', New members always welcome ring 07791 781 910
November 14th – Bredhurst WI, Village Hall, 7.30pm, Sue Shaw - 'What to do with a Supermarket Bunch of Flowers' information Pam Ormiston 01634 365789
November 14th – Wigmore Community & Residents Association 'Drop-In Evening' – 7.30 – 9.00pm, Wigmore Library, Fairview Road, ME8 0PX. Open to all WCRA members and non-members. Refreshments.
November 14th – All Saints Women's Fellowship, Hempstead Village Hall, 8.00pm, Boots No 7 - Angela, for details contact Rhonda Peck 07951 629444
November 15th – Play and Chat (see 8th Nov)
November 15th – Hempstead Leisure Club, Whist, board games, tea and chat (see 8th Nov)
November 15th – Rainham Women's Institute, 1.45 – 4pm. Speaker on 'Crime Scene Investigations' Wakeley Hall, Oast House Community Centre, Granary Close Visitors welcome for small entry charge. Ring 01634 366276.
November 15th – Wigmore Thursday Club, Paul Warren 'The Galapagos and/or Machu Picchu', (see 8th Nov)
November 17th – Hempstead Valley Christmas Grotto opened by stars of Central Hall pantomime. £5 per child includes wrapped gift, no charge for adults.
November 17th Rainham South Councillors surgery at 3:16 Cafe Parkwood. 10.00am – 12 noon, no appointment necessary.
November 17th – Christmas Craft Fair, St Margaret's Church, Lower Halstow, 1.00 – 3.00pm, wide range of crafts. Light refreshments www.thesix.org.uk
November 17th – Annual Christmas Fete, Oast House Community Centre, Rainham, 10.00am – 1.00pm, See Facebook for more information

Continued on Page 11

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BATTLES' OVER - A VILLAGE'S TRIBUTE
Lower Halstow

Friday 9th Memorial Hall - 6.00pm Exhibition
7.00 - 9.00pm - Sing-a-long and Poems
Saturday 10th Memorial Hall, 12noon - 4.00pm
Trench Lunch (bring your own) Exhibition and
book signing Alan Swift - 'Abide With Me'.
7.00 - 10.00pm Homecoming Hop Dance,
entrance by ticket only, call 01795 842272

Sunday 11th 6.00am - Piper St Margaret's Church
6.05am Torchlight procession to Memorial Wood
6.15am Short Act of Remembrance, Memorial Wood
10.30am Service of Remembrance St Margaret's
6.55pm Lighting of the Village Beacon - Brickfield
7.00pm Ringing of Bells and Short Closing Service,
St Margaret's Church Information see Parish Council
website or the church website, thesix.org.uk.

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

Friday 9th & Saturday 10th November
Oasthouse Theatre, Rainham, Curtain up 8.00pm.
A special concert to commemorate the 100th
anniversary of the end of World War One featuring
readings, poems and music from the Great War.
Box Office on 0844 8793224 or on-line
www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk

FLOWER FESTIVAL Remembrance Weekend
St Michael and All Angels, Hartlip

To commemorate the centenary of the end of
World War One. Theme 'Peace and Joy'.
Saturday 10th November 11.00am - 4.00pm
Refreshments will be provided.

CONCERT - St Margaret's Church, Rainham
Rainham Ladies Choir and Vocal Chords
To celebrate the ending of WW1
Saturday 10th November, 7.00pm.
Entrance free but donations to Trussells and the
Medway Night Shelter will be very welcome.
We'd love you to come in dress circa 1918
For more information ring 01634 233866

DROP-IN EVENING
Wigmore Community & Residents Association
Wednesday November 14th, 7.30 - 9.00pm
Wigmore Library, 208 Fairview Road, ME8 0PX.
Meet and discuss local issues with invited guests:
MP, Councillors, Council Officers, Neighbourhood
Watch Coordinator and local Community Police.
Open to all Wigmore residents (WCRA members
and non-members). Refreshments will be available.

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CHRISTMAS FAYRE
Hempstead Village Fayre Group
in association with All Saints' Church
Saturday, 17th November, 11.30am - 3.30pm.
Father Christmas in his Grotto, lunches, cakes,
grand raffle, children's crafts, games
and many lovely Christmas gift stalls. Free entry.

CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR
St Margaret's Church, Lower Halstow
Saturday 17th November, 1.00pm - 3.00pm
Home made gifts, local honey, needlework, crochet,
pottery, greetings cards, jewellery and more.
Light refreshments available. **www.thesix.org.uk**

CHRISTMAS FUN at HEMPSTEAD VALLEY
From 12th November Christmas decorations and
lights on. Father Christmas arrives Saturday
17th November, 2.00pm and the Gift Fayre will fill
the malls for two weeks from 19th November. The
traditional Carol Concert is Sunday 9th Dec 4.45pm.
More details **www.hempsteadvalley.com**

CHRISTMAS CATS PROTECTION BAZAAR
Saturday 24th November, 10.30am - 2.30pm
Bredhurst Village Hall, Hurstwood Road
Craft stalls, Bric-a-Brac, Hand made goods,
Christmas decorations, Raffle, Refreshments,
Entrance 50p, Children go free! For information
please contact Cats Protection 01634 232471

OAST HOUSE COMMUNITY CENTRE
Annual Christmas Fete
Saturday 17th November, 10.00am - 1.00pm

Fundraising Concert
Saturday 24th November, 7.30pm
Fightmilk and Punching Swans
Granary Bar, Oasthouse, next to Rainham station
Admission £5 in advance, £7 on the door.
See **facebook.com/carefulnowpromotions**

CHRISTMAS FAYRE St Peter's, Bredhurst
Saturday 1st December, 12noon - 2pm, Entry Free
Father Christmas (at St Peter's Church) Grand Draw
Gift Stall, Cake Stall, Bulb Stall, Tombola, Games
and more! Refreshments (including Soup and Rolls)

THE FESTIVE HALL
Lower Halstow Memorial Hall
Saturday 1st December, 11.00am
The Beautiful Snow Queen from the South Pole
Fingers Crossed Father Christmas will be there too.
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Nature Notes

NATURE NOTES FOR OCTOBER

October is the time when the main crops in St Margaret's parish are generally harvested. They are apples, pears and maize, the latter of which is grown alongside the Lower Rainham Road and Lower Twydall Lane. Mr Michael Blee, who once owned Gore Farm, Upchurch told me that his resident badgers were very fond of the maize he grew. The badgers used to bend the stalks of maize right over so that they could get at the cobs. I have a suspicion that badgers have a sett in the Countryside Park and, if that is so, they will have made tracks in the late summer evenings to the maize fields along the Lower Road. When the crop was first grown in this country it was cut whilst still green and fed to cattle in June and July. These days it is left to become as ripe as possible and then harvested with a specialized machine that chops up the stalks, leaves and cobs, which mixture is then stored in silos for winter feed. In early October I visited the Rainham Community Orchard at the junction of Lower Bloors Lane and Lower Rainham Road. It is a traditional orchard of Cox and Russet apples. I was just too late: the crop had been picked and I was later told that the net income raised of £1,400 was to be donated to Kent Wildlife Trust. Volunteers are usually working at the orchard on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 10am to midday and they would welcome more help with pruning. Apple juice from this year's fruit will be on sale towards the end of November from Sunburst Books and Davey the Butcher in Station Road, Riverside Country Park and Snaffles in Upchurch. In July of last year, along with two or three other interested spectators, I watched a field of wheat being harvested. The crop was cut by a massive Massey Ferguson combine, in a field off Otterham Quay Lane. The gathering in of the harvest is a long-standing event not only in the agricultural calendar but also that of the Christian church and I was pleased that I witnessed what was likely to be the last event of its kind in the parish of St Margaret's. By the time that all of the standing wheat had been safely gathered in, we spectators had seen rabbits and rats fleeing for cover, along with the magnificent specimen of a fox, which trotted along in no obvious haste. Of more interest and excitement to me was the harvesting of the fields that

used to take place in the one-time corn fields between Spade Lane and Hartlip. Here I could see, if I was lucky, both the native grey partridge and the red legged or French partridge, as well as pheasants. Partridges usually see you long before you see them. Grey partridges tend to keep their heads down as they scuttle for safety. Most red legged partridges will have been hatched in an incubator and raised by hand for the shooting season. If disturbed, they will raise their heads so as to keep a lookout as they walk casually away.

Grey partridges, as well as skylarks, have been adversely affected by the massive revolution in arable farming methods since the Second World War. Furthermore, many of our once common corn field plants, such as corn camomile, corn flower, corn marigold and corn cockle, are among the country's rarest wild flowers. The main exception is the common poppy which, every now and again, will provide a dazzling display of thousands of scarlet petals among a cereal crop. I now write about Ranscombe Farm which is in Cuxton, on the west bank of the River Medway. It is a combined nature reserve and working farm and is part of a classic landscape of woodland, arable fields and grassland, with a rich diversity of wildlife. Its natural features have changed remarkable little since the 18th century. The farm gives visitors a glimpse into an era before modern agriculture. Of particular importance are fields that have remained relatively unaffected by intensive farming and have become home to some exceptionally rare plants. The farm is owned jointly by Medway Council and the charity Plantlife and is farmed by a tenant. A few years ago, a field (Kitchen Field) at the farm was deep ploughed in order to deal with a particularly troublesome weed, the result of which was that, quite unexpectedly, the field became covered in the rare but once common corn cockle. The field has become the sole remaining arable field in the UK containing the corn cockle as a wild species. The field continues to be sown with wheat or barley but, because no fertilisers and pesticides are now used, the value of the crop is poor and the tenant farmer is compensated for this. Apart from another field called Longhoses, the rest of the farm is farmed commercially, except that the field margins are managed for flowers and their associated wildlife. There is no need to sow wild flower seeds on the

margins. No fertilisers or pesticides are added and the soil is broken up regularly with a chisel plough followed by a disc harrow, with the result that long dormant seeds spring to life. Details of the reserve are on www.plantlife.org.uk/ranscombe. Readers are advised to take advantage of guided walks. The corn cockle is at its best between June and August.

Joe Ennis

Rainham and the Aftermath of War 1918-1920

With the end of the conflict on November 11th 1918 everything slowly reverted back to normal in Rainham while servicemen returned home, some recovering from wounds.

As Christmas approached influenza remained a problem in the area and a coal shortage made matters worse, but food and tea could be bought without restrictions and rations were doubled. A Christmas turkey could be bought without coupons, eggs for 5/6d a dozen plus an additional 1/4 pound of sugar.

A public meeting held in the Church hall chaired by Dr Penfold in January discussed a war memorial for Rainham. Suggestions included cottage homes, a cottage hospital, an extension to the library, baths, a public hall, a stained glass window, a memorial tablet in the church and an illuminated church clock tower. Eventually, the committee decided on a cross with the names of fallen Rainham men inscribed and to erect it outside the church wall facing Station Road.

In June a public meeting in the Church hall welcomed about 250 returning servicemen to the parish. A decision was made to hold a dinner and concert at the Church of England school in Station Road on July 5th which about 200 men attended and local MP Major Granville-Wheeler and Sergeant Pack gave speeches. Peace celebrations held on July 19th began with an assembly of children at the top of Station Road headed by the band of the Chatham Salvation Army and a bugle band of the Boy Scouts. They marched to Rainham Recreation Ground for an open air thanksgiving service. A full sports programme followed with amusements and entertainment. Over 1,000 children had tea in the afternoon while widows and over 60s were served dinner at the Council School. A fete also took place which over 2,000 people attended then a firework display and a torchlight procession ended the day at midnight. A sports day at Rainham Recreation Ground followed this later in July. The Rainham and District Branch of

the National Federation of Discharged and Demobilised Soldiers and Sailors organised the event in aid of a new social club for Rainham.

Frank Marchant RN from Henry Street became the first Rainham resident awarded an OBE for war time achievements. He had served in the Dardanelles and as warrant officer at the RN barracks in Chatham. Special constables who had patrolled Rainham during the war were later awarded certificates and medals for their services.

After preparation of the ground for the war memorial in November, the dedication and unveiling of the monument took place on Sunday December 12th 1920. The memorial cross, a replica of the Cross of Iona from the Isle of Iona in Scotland stands 18 1/2 feet high with 100 names of fallen Rainham servicemen inscribed on it. Rainham Congregational Church and the cement works also had their own smaller memorials in the form of wooden wall tablets inscribed with names of the war dead.

With the ending of the war high unemployment and economic downturn made life tough for many Rainham residents who had difficulty making ends meet, the price paid for a long and costly conflict.

David Wood

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Upchurch Choral Society, St Mary's Church, Saturday 1st December, 7.30pm

'Gloria in Excelsis' including Vivaldi's 'Gloria'.

Entry is £5 each at the door or in advance from Sue Rossiter, Secretary 01634 234780

CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT BWAG

The Cantium Singers, 50 strong choir from Rochester, Thursday 6th December, 7.30pm

St Peter's Church, Hurstwood Road & afterwards a short walk to Green Court, The Street, Bredhurst for mulled wine, mince pies and grand Christmas raffle. Tickets - £8 per person, u16s free (incl refreshments). Only in advance - 07813 785940 (eve/weekends), email bwag@vanessajones.plus.com or buy on line

WINTER WONDERLAND, WIGMORE

Saturday 8th December 11.00am - 2.00pm
St Matthew's Church, Wigmore. Admission free.
There will be a children's maze and activities, Father Christmas, many stalls of all kinds, Lunches and mince pies

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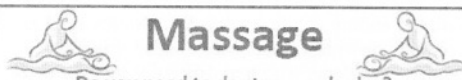
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Diary 2018

November 17th - Hempstead Village Fayre with All
Saints' Church, 11.30am - 3.30pm. Father Christmas,
Lunches, Cakes, Grand Raffle, Children's Crafts,
Games and lovely Christmas gift stalls. Free entry.

November 17th - 60's Night at the Coffee Bar, Lower
Halstow Memorial Hall, 7.00pm, Dancing to 'The
Runaways' Tickets £10 include Burger, Chips and
Coffee/Tea, bring Nibbles and Beverage Ring 01795
844408 or kayhelen2017@outlook.com for details.

November 17th - Medway Folk Dance Club, (3rd Nov)
November 18th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 9.45am

Moderate linear walk 10 miles / 16.1km, finish 3.15pm,
meet promptly Watlington public car park off Bow
Road near traffic lights for 9.54am bus to Tonbridge.
The perfect walk for those who hate hills 'downhill all
the way' alongside the Medway. Bring picnic lunch.

07989 753278, graham.jenkinson@blueyonder.co.uk

November 18th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,
10.00am meet Andy Boorman 07881 933358 GR
107552 CT4 7JA Chartham Village Hall Car Park for
4.5 mile relatively easy walk with 2 moderate climbs
including Bigbury Hill. Pub at the end. Dogs Allowed

November 19th - Medway Scrabble Club, (see 5th Nov)

November 19th - Wigmore WI, St Matthews Community
Centre, Drewery Drive, 7.30 - 9.30pm, various speakers
& events. Visitors Welcome, contact Chris Ellson
01634 372976 or Barbara Strachan 01634 268611

November 19th - Rainham Evening Women's Institute, St
Paul's Church, Parkwood, 7.30pm, The Story of
English Country Cheese, Mr Derek March, All
welcome, ring Kate Archer 01634 360797.

November 20th - GHS Floral Art Group, 'Anything but
flowers!' - an arrangement using flower substitutes,
(see 6th Nov)

November 20th - RSPB Medway Local Group Illustrated
Talk, Parkwood Community Centre, Gill, ME8 9PN.

7.30 - 9.45pm, £4 'Dormice in Kent' - Alison Ruyter,
for Field Trips: www.rspb.org.uk/groups/medway.

November 21st - Play and Chat (see 7th Nov)

November 21st - Wigmore Ladies Club, Howard Hall,
Woodside, 2.00 - 4.00pm, new members welcome to
this cheerful group, just come along or ring 01634
388912 for more information

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November 22nd - Wigmore Thursday Club, A Talk by
Tony Mitchell, (see 8th Nov)

November 22nd - Play and Chat (see 8th Nov)

November 22nd - Hempstead Leisure Club 'Metal

Detecting' talk Alan Bradshaw (see 8th Nov)

November 23rd - Medway Geographical Society, Holy
Trinity Church, Twydall Lane, Gillingham ME8 6TN,
7.30 - 9.00pm, 'Wandering on the Somme' - Melanie
Gibson-Barton, contact Lorna Bailey 01634 572139

November 24th - Christmas Cats Protection Bazaar,
10.30am - 2.30pm, Bredhurst Village Hall, Craft stalls,
Bric-a-Brac, Hand made goods, decorations, Raffle,
Refreshments, Entry 50p, Children free. 01634 232471
November 24th - Quiz Night, 7.30pm, Carmel Hall, Upton
Lane, Sittingbourne ME10 1JB, Tables 6 - 8, £5 pp
BYO Food, Drinks and Glasses, Contact - Mike 01634
360906 email - mikew16@blueyonder.co.uk

November 24th - Fundraising Concert, Granary Bar,
Community Oast House, Rainham, next to station,
7.30pm, Fightmilk and Punching Swans, £5 in advance,
£7 on the door, facebook.com/carefulnowpromotions

November 24th - Medway Folk Dance Club, (3rd Nov)

November 25th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,
10.00am, meet Lindsay Floyd 07743 702049 GR

607621 TN15 7PR Stansted, Timberfield Road, The
Blackhorse PH car park for 4 mile walk on top of North
Downs, undulating route includes one quite steep
climb, lots of stiles (some quite tall). Dogs Allowed

November 25th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am,
Leisurely circular walk 5.5 miles / 8.8km finish

1.00pm, Meet Village Stores, Badsell Road, Five Oak
Green, Tonbridge, TN12 6RB. Parking free recreation
ground. TQ648453 coffee stop as this is a short walk.

Tony/Ann, 01634 406634, faulkner075@gmail.com

November 25th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, easy
circular walk 3.5 miles / 5.6km, finish 12noon, Amble
around Greenwich Park. Free Parking outside park on
single yellow lines on Sunday, Toilets available. Meet

Blackheath Gates. TQ392767 coffee stop part way
round. Paved paths around the park.

November 28th - Play and Chat (see 7th Nov)

November 28th - Gillingham Horticultural Society,
7.15pm, Annual Prize Giving and Presentation Evening

Christmas Refreshments United Reformed Church Hall,
Balmoral Road, Gillingham ME7 4PU, £2 Members £3

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Diary 2018

November 28th - Rainham Historical Society, 7.30pm
start, Millennium Centre, Rainham, 'Textus Roffensis
- Rochester's Ancient Manuscript' - Lisa Johnson,
Visitors welcome £2 per visit, Contact Mrs Olwen
O'Dowd 01634 263622 for more information
November 28th - All Saints Women's Fellowship, Xmas
Meal Upchurch Golf Club 7.30pm - music Nick
Bosworth, details contact Rhonda Peck 07951 629444
November 29th - Play and Chat (see 8th Nov)
November 29th - Hempstead Leisure Club, 'Work of a
Registrar' talk Janet Whiffen (see 8th Nov)
November 29th - Wigmore Thursday Club, Social, (see
8th Nov)
November 30th - Rainham Christmas Lights, Fun starts
3.45pm lights 5pm See www.medway.gov.uk/christmas
December 1st - 29th - Art Exhibition, Wigmore Library
original paintings for sale by Rainham Art Group,
details email: rainhamartgroup@gmail.com
December 1st - St Peter's Bredhurst, Christmas Fayre,
12noon - 2.00pm, Father Christmas (St Peter's Church)
Grand Draw, Gift Stall, Cake Stall, Tombola, Bulb
Stall, Games and more! Refreshments (including Soup
and Rolls), Entry Free
December 1st - Lower Halstow Memorial Hall The
Beautiful Snow Queen from the South Pole opens The
Festive Hall, 11.00am, Fingers Crossed Father
Christmas will be there too. Ring 01795 844408
December 1st - Christmas Fair, St Michael and All
Angels, Hartlip, 12noon - 3.00pm, Village Hall,
Homemade Soups with bread, Tea and Coffee, variety
of stalls and Grand Raffle.
December 1st - Pantomime 'Cast in A Spell Panto land',
Centre, Mind, Body, Spirit, M2 services, 3 & 6.00pm
£7 adult, £5 child, proceeds The Street Angels. Tickets
01634 376507 or www.thecentremindbodyspirit.co.uk
December 1st - Upchurch Choral Society, Christmas
Concert, 7.30pm, St Mary's Church, Upchurch. 'Gloria
in Excelsis' includes Vivaldi's 'Gloria'. Entry £5 each.
Details contact Sue Rossiter 01634 234780.

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December 2nd - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,
10.00am, meet Stephen Manning 07551 712438 GR
838666 ME9 7AY River Valley Upchurch Golf Course
for 3.5 mile easy local walk before Christmas lunch -
Must be booked in advance with Joan Week. No Dogs
December 3rd - Medway Scrabble Club, (see 5th Nov)
December 4th - Breast Cancer Support Group, Christmas
Social, (see 6th Nov)
December 4th - Rainham Horticultural Society, Annual
General Meeting, (see 6th Nov)
December 4th - GHS Floral Art Group, 'Xmas is coming'
- double ended table arrangement, pew end or swag,
(see 6th Nov)
December 5th - Play and Chat, (see 7th Nov)
December 6th - Play and Chat, (see 8th Nov)
December 6th - Hempstead Leisure Club, Outing for
Christmas Lunch, no local meeting, 07583 343782
December 6th - Wigmore Thursday Club, A Dickens of a
Christmas - Mick Lynn, (see 8th Nov)
December 6th - Christmas Carol Concert, BWAG St
Peter's Church, Bredhurst & Green Court, The Street,
ME7 3JY, 7.30pm, Tickets - £8, u16s free (includes
refreshments). No tickets available on the night. 07813
785940 (eve), email bwag@vanessajones.plus.com
December 7th - Games Afternoon Lower Halstow
Memorial Hall, 2.00 - 4.00pm Euchre, Whist,
Rummikub, Domino's and more. £1.50 includes tea/
coffee, biscuits and a warm welcome (no joining fee)
December 8th - Craft Market, (see 10th Nov)
December 8th - Winter Wonderland, St Matthew's
Church, Wigmore 11.00am - 2.00pm.
December 9th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,
10.00am, meet Harry Keane 01634 231533 07729
356835 GR 716726 ME3 7JQ Higham Station Carpark
(Free) for 6.5 mile nice mainly level walk, No Dogs
December 9th - Hempstead Valley Carol Concert 4.45pm
December 10th - Rainham Flower Club, Christmas Party
'The Swinging Sixties' (see 12th Nov)
December 12th - Play and Chat, Christmas Party,
Booking essential (see 7th Nov)
December 12th - Rainham Historical Society, 'A
Celebratory History of Christmas' - Andy Thomas, (see
28th Nov)
December 12th - All Saints Women's Fellowship,
Christmas at Home, (see 14th Nov)
December 12th - Concert Medway Organ & Keyboard
Club, Organist - Andrew Nix, (see 12th Nov)
December 13th - Free Films at St. Mary's St. Mary
Magdalene Church, Gillingham Green, 2.00pm, free
entry & refreshments. No need to book. 01634 324783
December 15th - Newington Christmas Craft Fair, 10am -
2pm, Village Hall, To book a stall, Jayne 07799 137548

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