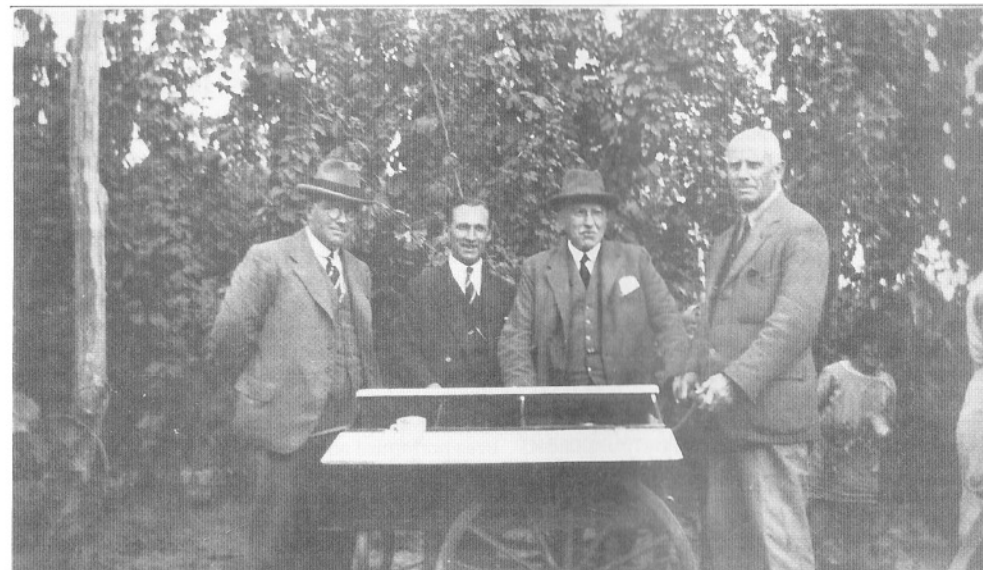


ACTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

OCTOBER
2019
NUMBER 558



September is the traditional Hop Picking season. Before the second world war Rainham schools had two weeks holiday so children could assist their mothers working in the hop gardens. Now Rainham has no hop gardens! I have found these two pictures of Hop Picking in Rainham but unfortunately have lost any accompanying captions. If anyone can name the farm, the gentlemen or any of the pickers I would be very pleased - email af@thenet.uk.net. See also 'A Century Worth Celebrating' on page 3.

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Next Issue November 2nd 2019
Copy Date: October 22nd

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

We are very pleased to include this month an article by Florence Classey, a friend of Ellen Stringer, celebrating Ellen's 100 birthday this month. Ellen was born and bred in Rainham but after travelling the world returned to her roots when she was needed to assist her parents. We have now reached the time when our centenarians were born after the end of the First World War but nevertheless had extremely difficult early lives as the country only slowly recovered but then slipped into depression, economic unrest and a second world war. Those celebrating a hundred years now must indeed have been very hardy souls. I wonder how many centenarians we have in the Rainham area and particularly how many were born and brought up here.

September is according to John Keats poem 'To Autumn' the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness. This year we could also add hot, sunny days as we basked in the sunshine. A prolonged Indian summer always sets us up to better endure the short, cold days ahead and nothing seems quite as bad if the sun shines. When Ellen was a child in Rainham, and indeed until the 1950s, September would have been the time when you loaded all the needs for the day on to any available wheeled handcart and with the neighbours and all the children the women walked to their nearest hop garden for the annual picking season. Although it was regarded as a holiday it was serious hard work as each picker was paid by quantity picked. The adults who were much quicker and more skilled stripped the largest clusters from the bine whilst the children were left with the small blooms at the tips which took much longer to produce any worthwhile quantities. When the weather was good it was an enjoyable, social occasion and the extra money was certainly very useful in many households. I remember as a child seeing our neighbours trudging home at the end of each day with black hands and bedraggled clothes as their reward for a hard days picking. From our Diary pages it would appear that October is Quiz time. You have a wide choice of charities to support if you enjoy pitting your wits against each other in friendly competition. We also start the build up to the Christmas season with several early Fairs and Bazaars but before that we have the annual Remembrance Day events and poppy selling. Local

organisers would appreciate your help manning the many British Legion Poppy Stalls we have in and around the area. If you have some spare time between October 28th, when the appeal launches, until November 9th please get in touch with either Barry Sprason 01634 308878 to help at Tesco, Gillingham or Sandra Colyer 01634 362863 for Hempstead Valley.

Plenty to do and many more clubs within our pages always open to welcome you so until next month, keep busy and enjoy what is left of the autumn sunshine, see you again in November.

Correspondence

'THE WITNESSES'

Dear Editor

Readers of Action Forum you will be welcome to experience a live performance of 'The Witnesses' The Parish of South Gillingham, with the Parish of St. Peter, Boughton Monchelsea will be performing The Witnesses, by Clive Sansom during November this year. More than 30 readers will take part, drawn from both parishes.

The Witnesses is Clive Sansom's best known collection of poems and tells the life of Jesus of Nazareth from the perspective of those who knew him during his time on earth. It was joint winner of the Festival of Britain poetry prize in 1950 and has been performed all over the world. Clive Sansom was a Quaker and a conscientious objector during the Second World War.

The performances will take place at St Peter's Church, Church Hill, Boughton Monchelsea, Maidstone ME17 4BU on Saturday 9th November and at St Matthew's Church, Drewery Drive, Wigmore, Rainham ME8 ONX on Saturday 16th November. Both performances commence at 7.00pm. Entry is free with a retiring collection for charity. Both churches have large car parks. You would be welcome to attend both performances if you wish experience the performance in fundamentally different environments. St Peter's: traditional with architecture from the 15th Century and St Matthew's current building: modern constructed in 1965. If you would like any further information regarding The Witnesses or the performances, please contact: Paul Warren - pawarren@hotmail.co.uk - 01622 744793 or Geoff Hufton - 01634 234712 or geoff.hufton@hotmail.co.uk

We look forward to welcoming you to our churches.

DROP-IN EVENING

Wigmore Community & Residents Association
Wednesday October 9th, 7.30 - 9.30pm
St Matthews Church Hall, Drewery Drive, ME8 0PD
Discuss traffic noise in the Wigmore area. Meet Local MP, Councillors, Council Officers and local Community Police (all subject to availability).
Open to all Wigmore residents

A CENTURY WORTH CELEBRATING

Ellen Mary Stringer is celebrating her 100th Birthday on 13th October 2019.

Ellen's parents belonged to 'The Farming Community of Rainham' where her father was manager of a fruit farm. Kent was then known as 'The Garden of England' because of its fertile soil and mild climate allowing orchards of fruit and hop gardens to be successful. Ellen enjoyed helping with the work. She remembers sitting on the bails of hops being carried by horse and cart to the Oast Houses in Rainham for drying. Hop picking in Rainham was primarily done by locals, the local schools had an annual two week 'hop picking' holiday in September so the children could help, but further afield in Kent London families were recruited for the work and to enjoy a holiday in the countryside in the process.

Ellen was christened and confirmed in St Margaret's Church, where her father was an active member. She had a brother, Frank, who worked in the Dockyard and a sister Florence, married to Arthur, who had a daughter Rosemary. Sadly all have died.

After graduating from the County Grammar School Ellen trained as a nurse at Hammersmith and West Middlesex Hospitals in London. She later completed a midwifery course at St Bart's Hospital. During the war years she remained in London, helping with nursing, midwifery and social needs following the devastation to health and housing during the Blitz. She was also allocated to the midlands to look after people affected there. Ellen then undertook a Teachers Training Course at High Wycombe College to prepare her for her next plan of action. She went to Canada where she worked in community care in rural areas with teaching and supervision and also working at Hamilton Maternity Unit.

Ellen returned to Kent owing to her father's illness and looked after both parents until the end of their lives. Her next move was to Sheppey General

Hospital, where she was in charge of the Midwifery Unit, she remained there for many years until her retirement. The consultants were Mr Smelts and later Mr Mathews. A colleague was Sheila Judge, a midwifery sister, farmer, horse woman and author. Sheila wrote a history of Sheppey dating back to Viking times - very interesting and available in Libraries. Later another book 'Tales of Old Sheppey' detailed changes she observed. Following retirement Ellen helped in the Rainham Community with care for neighbours, friends and members of St Margaret's congregation. While her health allowed she was very active in the church, she belonged to many organisations including: The Trefoil Guild, a group of ex Girl Guides who support local groups; NHS Fellowship for retired NHS staff; MMs for retired midwives.

Over the last few years Ellen has had to make significant changes to her life. Giving up driving, moving from her bungalow in Orchard Street to live in sheltered accommodation at Longford Court and then Newington Court where 24 hour help is possible. None of these decisions were easy for such an independent person but each became necessary. However she is grateful to God for the life she has had and the good family and friends along the way.

Florence Classey
01634 364330

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Diary 2019

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 22nd 2019

October 1st – 31st - Art Exhibition, Rainham Library. An exhibition of original paintings for sale in a variety of media and styles by local artists from the Rainham Art Group, details email rainhamartgroup@gmail.com
October 6th - RSPB Medway Local Group Walk with Nature, Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory CT13 9PF, 8.00am, Please wear appropriate clothing and footwear. For more details visit www.rspb.org.uk/groups/medway www.facebook.com/The-RSPB-Medway-Local-Group-733548566806267/
October 6th - Sunday Service. Intuitive card readings with Kirstie (£5 donation) from 5.30pm. Service 6.30pm with guest medium Stephen Graves at The Centre Mind Body Spirit, next to Travelodge, M2 Services ME8 8PQ. Tea, coffee biscuits and healing available (donations appreciated). All welcome £4 entrance incl a raffle ticket. See our Facebook page for full and up to date information: The Centre-Mind Body Spirit.
October 6th - Indoor Boot Fair, 10.00am – 1.00pm, Twydale Community Centre, Beechings Way ME8 6ZP Tables £10, refreshments available, 50p entry. Contact Janet Duke 07809 892883 or pinkdukebox@aol.com
October 6th - Harvest Tea, Millennium Centre, Rainham, 3.30 pm ring 379062 Transport can be arranged.
October 8th - Rainham Horticultural Society meets first Tuesday each month 7.30pm, Rainham Cricket Club, Berengrave Lane. New members welcome. Details Ms Lynn Preston - 07931 337310 or 01634 360100.

October 8th - Fuchsia & Pelargonium Society Gillingham and District, 7.30pm start, Holy Trinity Church Hall, Twydale Lane, ME8 6JU, 'The Lost Empires' Wilf Lower, The Last Days of Music Hall and Variety in Medway. All welcome, Ring 01634852519 for details
October 8th - Medway Antique and Collectors' Club, 7.30 for 8.00pm, Clubhouse of the Rainham Cricket Club, Annual General Meeting, Memberships now open at £25, for further information Tel: 01634 851512 or simply just turn up.
October 8th - Reiki, rahanni, spiritual, crystal and Chi healing given freely, donations welcome, every Tuesday evening 7.30 - 9pm and every Wed 10.00 to 11.30am at The Centre, Mind Body Spirit, (see 6th Oct)
October 9th - East Medway U3A, Smallholders Club ME8 0JG, 2.00 – 4.00pm, Jim Preston - 'Rochester Airport', Details see eastmedwayu3a website or ring 07733 554719, new members welcome.
October 9th - Curry Night, Holding on Letting Go, Supporting bereaved children and their families, 7.00 – 10.30pm, Spice Fusion, Deanwood Drive. Great food, friendly company and musical entertainment. Tickets £25 pp from www.spicefusionkent.com/special-events
October 9th - Wigmore Community & Residents Association Drop-In Evening, 7.30 - 9.30pm, St Matthews Church Hall, ME8 0PD first 30 minutes on concerns regarding traffic noise, meet and discuss local issues. Open to all Wigmore residents.
October 9th - All Saints Women's Fellowship, Hempstead Village Hall, 8.00pm, Teddy Boys and Mini Skirts - Andrew Theobald, for details contact Rhonda Peck 07951 629444
October 10th - Wigmore WI Community Coffee Morning, 10am - 12 noon, St Matthews Community Centre, Drewery Drive.. Have a friendly chat with members whilst enjoying free coffee, tea and cakes. Everyone welcome! Contact Sue 07956 494740

October 10th - Wigmore Thursday Club, St Matthew's Community Centre, 2.00pm, Tony Mitchell, for over 50s ring 01634 234712 for details.
October 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.
October 11th - Gillingham & Rainham Local History Society, Twydale Evangelical Church, Goudhurst Road ME8 6LQ 2.00 - 4.00pm. North Kent Marshes - Ian Jackson & Keith Robinson, membership £20.Visitors £3 per meeting. Tea/Coffee before meeting for a small charge. For more information contact Val Barrand 07947 583327 or email lupusrufus@sky.com
October 11th - One Big Family, Helping the Homeless, Quiz Night, Tables of 8 - Start 7.00pm, Tickets £7 includes ploughmans, Bring own drinks. St Margaret's Millennium Centre, Rainham ME8 9BH Contact: 01634 362863 or sandracolyer@hotmail.co.uk
October 12th - Craft Market, 9.00am – 12.30pm, St Margaret's Millennium Centre, Rainham, Free entry, Refreshments available, To book a stall, £10 each, email cjdcraftmarkets@yahoo.com 07779 366054
October 12th - Annual Big Knit, Making Miracles, 10.00am – 1.00pm, Rochester Cathedral, Some wool provided but donations welcome. All welcome please email names to sally@makingmiracles.org.uk
October 12th - Rainham Evening WI Craft Fair, 10.00am – 2.00pm, St Paul's Church, Parkwood, refreshments, crafts, raffle, tombola, preserves, cakes, plants, jewellery and children's crafts. Free entry and free parking. Ring 01634 365303 for more details
October 12th - Autumn Quiz Night, Medway Asthma Self-Help (MASH), 7.30pm start, Roko Health Club, Watling Street, ME8 6BY. Tickets £5 each, teams up to eight, ring 01634 855844, email medwayasthmahelp@btconnect.com
October 12th - Alternate Shadows Murder Mystery, 7.30pm start, Newington Village Hall ME9 7JJ. Tickets £6 pp in advance, BYO drinks and nibbles, 01634 360906 or mikew16@blueyonder.co.uk
October 13th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am. Meet John Trebil 01634 244045 St Mary's Platt Church. On road limited parking. Park carefully. GR 623570 TN15 8NE for 5 mile walk undulating along some roads, across grass, and woods. Could be muddy. Dogs Allowed

October 13th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, 5.5 miles/8.8 km – Leisurely Circular walk finishes 1.00pm. Meet Cobtree Manor Car Park off Forstal Road, toilets and café. £2 parking all day ME20 7AG, TQ743587 Fairly flat and no stiles, Mostly country footpaths, woods and orchards. Contact: John, 07749 760788, billingsjc@blueyonder.co.uk Dog friendly
October 13th - RSPB Medway Local Group Free Walk with Nature, Dungeness Sea and Shore TN29 9NE, 8.30am, (see 6th Oct).
October 13th - Volunteer Conservation Task Days, Riverside Country Park and every Thursday 10.00am – 2.00pm. Learn about the Country Park management and help with practical tasks. Register interest on 01634 337432 and meet at the Visitor Centre.
October 14th - Medway Scrabble Club, 2.00 – 4.30pm, St Stephens Church Hall, Maidstone Road, Chatham, new members welcome, details 07523 124668
October 14th - Concert, Medway Organ & Keyboard Club, 50th Anniversary year, Parkwood Community Centre, Rainham, ME8 9PN, 7.30pm, Organist – Dirk Ranzijn, details ring Brian Leonard 01634 234694
October 14th, Rainham Flower Club, 7.30pm, St Matthews Church Hall, Wigmore ME8 0NX, Demonstration by Tracy Griffin 'Blue Skies, Green Grass' Information see www.rainhamflowerclub.co.uk or ring 01634 863034 / 01634 373928 / 01795 843180
October 14th - Medway Sunlight Rotary Charity Fundraising Indian Meal, 7.30pm, Naz's Rasoi, 82 Frindsbury Road, Strood ME2 4HY. £20 for two course Indian meal. Raising funds for 'Holding on Letting Go' For more details or to reserve a place contact Grace Kelly 07870 636451 or Jane Loder 07930 826382
October 15th - RSPB Medway Local Group Talk, Parkwood Community Centre, ME8 9PM, 7.30 - 9.45pm £4. A Year in the life of a BTO Regional Rep – Penny Williams. For Field Trips: www.rspb.org.uk/groups/medway
October 15th - GHS Floral Art Group, 'Halloween' – arrangement in a pumpkin. New members welcome, first visit free, no experience needed, come for a friendly welcome. Parking available. Kaye Buss 01634 232998 or email kayebuss@btinternet.com
October 16th - RSPB Medway Local Group Free Walk with Nature, Conningbrook Lakes CP, Ashford TN24 9QX, 9.30am. (see 6th Oct).

Continued on Page 11

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CURRY NIGHT
Holding On Letting Go—Supporting bereaved
children and their families in Kent & Medway
Wednesday 9th October, 7.00 – 10.30pm
Spice Fusion, Deanwood Drive, Rainham ME8 9LH
Tickets £25 per person from
www.spicefusionkent.com/special-events

COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNING.
Wigmore WI

Thursday 10th October, 10.00am - 12 noon
St Matthews Community Centre, Drewery Drive,
Come and have a friendly chat with some of our
members whilst enjoying free coffee, tea and cakes.
Everyone welcome!
Contact Sue 07956 494740 for information

ONE BIG FAMILY - QUIZ NIGHT
Helping the Homeless
Friday 11th October – Start 7.00pm
Tables of 8, Tickets £7 includes ploughmans
Bring own drinks
St Margaret's Millennium Centre, Rainham
Contact: 01634 362863 sandracolyer@hotmail.co.uk

AUTUMN QUIZ NIGHT
Medway Asthma Self-Help (MASH)
Saturday 12th October, 7.30pm start
Roko Health Club, Watling Street, ME8 6BY.
Tickets £5 each, teams of up to eight.
All drinks must be bought at the bar. You are
welcome to bring snacks. Free parking.
Ring 01634 855844 to book or for more information
email medwayasthmaselfhelp@btconnect.com

CRAFT FAIR
Rainham Evening WI.
Saturday 12th October, 10.00am – 2.00pm
St Paul's Church, Parkwood
Refreshments, crafts, raffle, tombola, preserves,
cakes, plants, jewellery and children's crafts.
Free entry and free parking.
Ring 01634 365303 for more details

A MURDER MYSTERY - Alternate Shadows
Saturday 12th October, 7.00 for 7.30pm start
Newington Village Hall ME9 7JJ
Tickets £6 pp purchased in advance
BYO Drinks and Nibbles. Net proceeds for
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The Central Theatre, Chatham
Wednesday 16th - Friday 18th October, 7.30pm;
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Gillingham Dramatic Society
Band A Tickets from £17, concessions from £15.50
Band B tickets from £15, concessions from £13.50.
Not recommended for under twelve years of age.
Ring 01634 338338 or see
boxoffice@medway.gov.uk for tickets

PETER'S PLACE QUIZ
Friday 18th October, 7.00 – 10.00pm
The Oast, Granary Close, Rainham, ME8 7SG
Bar available. £5 per person. Food included.
6 people per team. To book a table please ring
01634 570443 or 01634 578879

KNOWLEDGE & NIBBLES EVENING
The Friends of St Margaret's Church Rainham
The Millennium Centre
Saturday 19th October, 7.30pm (prompt start).
Nibbles provided bring own drinks & glasses.
Tables of 8 - £6 per person. Advance booking
essential. Contact Kay 230430 or Lesley 379796.

THE WRIGHT MURDER
An Improbable Murder Mystery by Heather Cornally
Hempstead Players - Community Theatre Group
Friday 25th October, 7.30pm and
Saturday 26th October, 2.30pm & 7.30pm
All Saints & Hempstead Village Hall,
Tickets £8 available from: 07421 817158
Web - www.thehempsteadplayers.co.uk
Email - info@thehempsteadplayers.co.uk

BARNARDO'S CHARITY QUIZ NIGHT
Saturday 26th October, 7pm for 7.30pm start
Twydall Church Hall, Gillingham
Tickets £5 each, Tables of 6-8, Book in advance
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'PARTY NIGHT'
Bredhurst Village Hall
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Nature Notes

NATURE NOTES FOR SEPTEMBER

Once upon a time, in the northernmost part of the ancient county of Kent, there was a chalk stream with clear, cool water, fed from underground chalk aquifers in the North Downs. It ran from its source at Orpington, through the mediaeval villages of St Mary Cray; St Pauls Cray; Fooks Cray; North Cray and Bexley to a little way beyond Crayford, on the Roman Watling Street, where it joined with the River Darent on its way to the Thames. The stream was full of brown trout and white clawed crayfish, both native to this country. It is likely that the crayfish was named after the watercourse in which the crustacean was first found, namely, of course, the Cray. By the time of the Domesday Book, the waters of the Cray were being used to power a total of six water mills. I shall say no more about the history of the chalk stream, as I move forward to my first visit to the Cray in early September. Firstly, I should explain that, in order to give them more protection under the law, the Department of the Environment has designated all worthy chalk stream Rivers. The River Cray, as I shall now call it, has been adversely affected by the outwards spread of the London Borough of Bromley into the upstream half of the river. In particular, the Cray has been largely hidden away by surrounding houses and commercial development. In places the river runs in concrete channels or underground culverts. It has, however, largely escaped intrusion into its middle reaches at Fooks Cray Meadows, North Cray and the extensive grounds of Hall Place, all of which are in the London Borough of Bexley. In 1965, the River Cray, along with the communities by the side of the river, including the four villages collectively known as 'The Crays', were absorbed into the new London Boroughs of either Bromley or Bexley. Thus they were no longer in the ancient county of Kent.

In 2013, Bexley Council made a report on its Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation. The River Cray was described as one of London's finest chalk streams with some excellent wildlife habitats, including the species - rich, damp pastures of Fooks Cray Meadows and the North Cray ancient wood. The river was also described as one of the Thames' clearest tributaries which still possesses a natural profile. Concrete

channels and underground culverts do not constitute a natural profile but, to be fair to Bexley, these structures appear to be mostly upstream in Bromley. In 2014 the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) made a report on the state of England's chalk streams. On the River Cray, it reported that, in the 1970s, wild brown trout became extinct there. This was due, firstly, to over-extraction of underground water in the North Downs by Thames Water. Secondly, heavy industrialisation by, at one period in time, fourteen water mills which milled flour, produced paper and sawed timber, amongst other operations. Thirdly, urban pollution. The report noted, however, that the Cray was still the home of dace and pike, among other course fish, and eels. Sadly, the WWF noted that today's generation of children may be the last to find a native crayfish in the Cray because of diseases carried by the imported signal cray fish.

On my second visit to the Cray, in mid-September, Mrs Ennis accompanied me to Hall Place in Bexley where there are extensive gardens and parkland through which the river flows. The estate is owned by the Borough of Bexley and entrance to the grounds is free. There are a number of small, well-tended gardens of flowers, vegetables and soft and top fruit. There are also large flower gardens around the Manor House as well as some magnificent London plane trees, holm oaks and common limes. After visiting the gardens we had a coffee in the riverside café, listening to the sound of water splashing over a weir. We had sat on decking overlooking the site of a water mill which was mentioned in the Domesday Book. I noticed, upstream, a water hen nervously crossing the river and a male grey wagtail, sporting a bright yellow breast and bobbing up and down on a post. There was no sign of the kingfisher that visitors are encouraged to look out for but we did spot a small red dragonfly and a banded demoiselle damselfly. It was good to see meadow sweet still in bloom, with its creamy, delicate flowers. Coffee finished, we came across a man fishing with a rectangular net in the deep water below the weir. One of the two young ladies with him said that they were from the Environment Agency and were searching for young eels (elvers). She showed us two that had been caught. They would have come from the eels' spawning grounds in the Sargasso Sea and would have taken about three years to cross the Atlantic to get here. We then walked downstream of

the Cray, with the extensive parkland on our right. The river is lined on one or both banks with alder, willow, and whitebeam trees, among others. Here the Cray really does have a rural atmosphere about it. As we walked along, I was pleased to see that the water was very clear. But whether I was really walking along a chalk stream was nagging me. The reasons for my doubts were, firstly, that, in summer, the chalk spring at Orpington regularly stops flowing as a result of a low water table. Secondly, when the spring is flowing it is diluted as it enters into and passes through three flooded gravel pits abandoned in relatively recent times. Finally, it is further diluted when it merges with the River Shuttle, which is not another chalk stream, near Hall Place. I decided not to let it worry me. The London Borough of Bexley is clearly happy with its inheritance and I am grateful to them for giving Mrs Ennis and me an enjoyable and free day out.

Joe Ennis

SMELLS AND SOUNDS OF RAINHAM PAST

Part Two continued from August 2019

If you walked across the fields between St Margaret's Church and Wigmore you must have heard the shrill song of many larks as they soared above you, and the plaintive call of the cuckoo who welcomed the spring. You did not need to leave your bed to hear the full dawn chorus of many different birds as they greeted the day. True this has been replaced by the mournful call of the collared dove. If you have never heard that indescribable greeting to the day you will have to seek it somewhere beyond today's Rainham but fortunately we are surrounded by rural villages that may still enjoy the many country sounds that are lost to us. Before the Second World War we heard the hooters from farms and the cement factory calling time to the workers and a whistle or bell for 'cover the bricks' when rain was expected. The telegraph boy was summoned by whistle and the Council School bell hailed its pupils twice daily. Part time firemen were called up by a maroon and the clanging bell announced the coming of both fire engine and ambulance.

We always looked up to see a passing aeroplane and especially when it was manoeuvring with loop the loop and sky diving as they often did making much more engine noise. Guy Fawkes Day had its traditional singing and collecting but there was much

less fireworks noise.

The war produced new sounds. The siren warning us of imminent raids and the welcome all clear. Sometimes gun fire practised from Shoeburyness echoed over the village and we ceased to look up for every plane. Air Raid Wardens took over the friendly street cries with their 'Take cover' and 'Put out that light' reminders.

Since the war Rainham has become a town with more noise and bustle and haste and without the former village smells and sounds we used to know.

Helena Thomas

ANNUAL CRAFT / GIFT FAYRE

In aid of Great Ormond Street Hospital.
Saturday 26th October, 10.30am - 12.30pm.
St Matthews Church Hall, Drewery Drive
Free entry and everyone welcome.
Further details from Paula 07930 595856

DANNY LA RUE

Costume & Memorabilia Exhibition
Oasthouse Theatre, Rainham
Friday 25th & Saturday 26th October, 2.00pm
A unique opportunity to see costumes worn by Danny La Rue in a career spanning over 45 years, commemorate the 10th anniversary of Danny's passing which will also include items of memorabilia from his personal collection.
Dean Caston will interview Annie Galbraith (Danny's Dresser and Personal Assistant for over 30 years) about Danny's career and his shows in the West End and tours across the UK, Canada and Australia.
Clips of Danny's performances will be shown.
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Home 01634 308878 (Leave a message)
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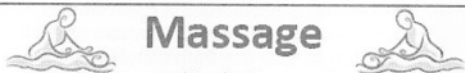
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Diary 2019

October 16th - Wigmore Ladies, Howard Hall, Woodside,
Wigmore 2.00 - 4.00pm, new members welcome to this
cheerful group, just come along or ring 01634 388912.

October 16th - Bredhurst Garden Club, 7.30pm, Village
Hall, Jeannie Robinson, Thinking Outside the Box,
Bring & Buy Stall, Details John Fridd 01634 388028

October 16th - 18th - 'The Wedding Singer', Central
Theatre, Chatham, 7.30pm; Sat 19th, 2.30pm &
7.30pm, Gillingham Dramatic Society, Band A Tickets
from £17, conc £15.50, Band B from £15, conc £13.50,
parental discretion advised, not recommended under 12

October 17th - Rainham Women's Institute meet 1.45 -
4.00pm, Wakeley Hall, Oast House Community Centre,
Granary Close. Visitors welcome for a small entry
charge per visit. Contact Lynne 01634 234997 details.

October 17th - Wigmore Thursday Club, 'A Boy and a
Mountain' - Brian Laverick Smith, (see 10th Oct).

October 18th - Evenings of mediumship at The Centre
Mind Body Spirit, with Sam Baxter. £5 entrance doors
open 7.00pm. (see 6th Oct)

October 18th - Peter's Place Quiz, 7.00 - 10.00pm, The
Oast, Granary Close, Rainham, ME8 7SG, Bar
available. £5 per person. Food included. 6 people per
team to ring 01634 570443 or 01634 578879

October 19th - Upchurch Horticultural Society Show in
the Barn, rear of Chaffes Lane, Exhibits to be displayed
by 11.00am, Ample Parking, Refreshments and Cake,
Raffle, 50p Stall, Auction of Exhibits, Toilets.

October 19th - Charity Fundraising Quiz, Twydall
Community Centre, Beechings Way, ME8 6ZP,
7.00pm. Teams up to 6, Tickets £7.50 per person
includes Sausage or Veggie Burger & Chips Supper,
bring your own drinks and nibbles. To book call Janet
Duke 07809 892883 or e-mail: pinkdukebox@aol.com

October 19th - Knowledge & Nibbles Evening, Friends of
St Margaret's Church Rainham, Millennium Centre,
7.30pm (prompt start). Nibbles provided bring your
own drinks & glasses. Tables of 8 - £6 pp Advance
booking essential. Kay 230430 or Lesley 379796.

October 20th - Harvest Tea, Millennium Centre,
Rainham, 3.30 - 6.00pm. Lions Club invite all elderly
or lonely people of the area to apply for an invitation,
ring 379062 or 373840. Transport can be arranged.

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October 20th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,
10.00am, Meet Lindsay Floyd 07743 702049 01634
235427 The Swan, Little Chart Parking at pub (with
landlord's permission) for 6.5 mile walk through lovely
countryside. Around 14 Stiles, Dogs Allowed

October 20th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am 5
miles/8.1 km - Leisurely Circular walk finishes
12.45pm. Hosmondon, park considerably in the
village. TN12 8HT, TQ700405. Good views. Some
hills including a steep but short climb. Contact: Tony/
Ann, 07478337787, vajra.faulkner@gmail.com

October 21st - Rainham Evening Women's Institute, St
Paul's Church Parkwood, Rainham, 7.30pm. No
speaker - 'Chomp and Chat' All Welcome. For further
details contact Chris Holder 01634 360823.

October 22nd - Pumpkin Carving, Capstone Farm
Country Park and Riverside Country Park, 10.00 -
11.00am, 11.00am -12noon, 1.00 - 2.00pm, 2.00 -
3.00pm. £5 per pumpkin. Book 01634 338191
Capstone or 0134 337432 Riverside

October 23rd - Rainham Historical Society, Millennium
Hall, Rainham, 7.00 for 7.30pm 'Aviation on the
Medway' - James Preston, All welcome, Visitors £2,
Contact Olwen O'Dowd 01634 263622 for details.

October 23rd - All Saints Women's Fellowship, Table
Tennis - Peter Camrass, (see 9th Oct).

October 24th - Halloween Scare Fest, Riverside Country
Park, 11.00am - 12.30pm, 2.00 - 3.30pm, Suitable for
accompanied children aged 6 - 10 years. £5 per child
Book 01634 337432

October 24th - Wigmore Thursday Club, 'Edith Cavell' -
Melanie Gibson Barton, (see 10th Oct).

October 25th - Harvest Coffee Morning, 10am - 1.00pm,
Wisdom Hospice, £3 for hot drink and cake for more
details ring 01634 831163 emmadengate@fowh.org.uk

October 25th & 26th - Danny La Rue Costume &
Memabilia Exhibition, Oasthouse Theatre, Rainham,
2.00pm, Tickets £12, www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk or
Box Office 0844 8793224

October 25th & 26th - Hempstead Players Community
Theatre Group, The Wright Murder, An Improbable
Murder Mystery by Heather Cornally, Fri 7.30pm and
Sat 2.30pm & 7.30pm, All Saints & Hempstead Village
Hall, Tickets £8 from www.thehempsteadplayers.co.uk
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Diary 2019

October 25th - Medway Geographical Society, Holy Trinity Church, Twydall Lane, 7.30 - 9.00pm. Tony Mitchell - The Silk Road - Turkmenistan, Everyone Welcome, Students and children free, Free parking. Come on the evening or contact **01634 572139**
October 26th - Annual Craft / Gift Fayre in aid of Great Ormond Street Hospital, 10.30am - 12.30pm, St Matthews Church Hall, Drewery Drive. Free entry, everyone welcome. Further details Paula **07930 595856**
October 26th - 'Party Night', Bredhurst Village Hall, 7.30pm start. Donna D'Sylva brings you 60's - 90's Rock n Roll, Soul, Motown, Swing and Pop. Tickets £10 in advance from Ray trsurrudge@tiscali.co.uk or **01634 268998**, Fully licenced bar until 11.30pm.
October 26th - Barnardo's Charity Quiz Night, 7.30pm start, Twydall Church Hall, Gillingham, Tickets £5 Tables of 6-8, Book in advance. Bring your own drink and nibbles, Free Tea, Coffee and Biscuits. Plenty of free parking. Phone **01634 233405** or **01634 375486**
October 27th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, 6.5 miles/10.5 km - Leisurly Circular walk finishes 2.00pm. Meet Lullingstone Park visitor centre (fee) Castle Rd, Eynsford. DA4 0JF, **TQ526638** Bring picnic lunch. Contact: Heather, **07887 750881**
October 27th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am, Meet Frank / Mim Ewen Benenden Village Green. Park near village green for 6.5 mile. Mainly kissing gates, picnic break. Pub at end. Stiles. No Dogs
October 27th - RSPB Medway Local Group Free Walk with Nature, Shellness/Capel Fleet ME12 4RJ 8.30am, (see 6th Oct).
October 27th - Bird Walk, Riverside Country Park, 10.00am - 12noon. adults only, £4 per adult Book **01634 337432**. Meet at the Visitor Centre.
October 28th - November 9th - Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, Help needed at stall in Tesco Gillingham contact Barry Sprason **07934 206237** or barry.sprason@sky.com
October 28th - Medway Scrabble Club, (see 14th Oct).

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October 31st - Wigmore Thursday Club, Social Meeting - Bingo, (see 10th Oct).
November 1st - Games Afternoon, Lower Halstow Memorial Hall, 2.00 - 4.00pm Games include Euchre, Whist, RummiKub, Domino's and more table games, £1.50 includes tea/coffee, biscuits and a warm welcome
November 1st - Charity Bingo in aid of Alzheimer's Society, 2.30 - 4.30pm, Atlas Café, St Mary's Island £1 per Bingo sheet. Cash prizes, refreshments, book at sunlightrotarybingo.eventbrite.com. **07944 861537**
November 2nd - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, 1.5 miles/2.4 km - Leisurly Circular walk finishes 11.15am Meet St. Mary's Church, Court Road, Burham. ME1 3XY a short walk, primarily for people with no previous walking experience Contact: Ade, **07505895784**, adeballard@yahoo.co.uk
November 3rd - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am, Meet Andy Boorman **07881 933358** St Mary's Church, Hunton, West Street, Village Hall Carpark (Opposite Church) **GR723498** ME15 0RR for 5 mile easy mainly flat walk. Dogs Allowed
November 3rd - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, 7 miles/11.3 km - Moderate Circular walk finishes 2.00pm. Park Pluckley railway station (fee) **TN27 0RT**, **TQ921433**. Contact: Geoff, geoff.rambler@me.com
November 5th - Breast Cancer Support Group, Medway Maritime Hospital Area 7, Level 2, 7.00 - 9.00pm, Dr Abson will give a talk and answers questions on 'Oncology'. New members welcome, for details contact Angela Blackwell **01634 861802**, or **07761 853750**
November 8th - Pamper Evening, Medway Asthma Self-Help, 6.00pm start Gillingham Golf Club. Tickets £3 in advance, £4 on the door, treatments from £5 pay at stall **01634 855844**, medwayasthmaelfhelp@btconnect.com
November 9th - Craft Market, 9am - 12.30pm, (12th Oct)
November 9th - Afternoon Teas, St Michael and All Angels, Hartlip as part of our Remembrance weekend, 2.00 - 4.00pm. All money to SSAFA.
November 9th - Charity Quiz Night, 7.00pm. Holy Trinity Church Hall, in aid of Hands & Gillingham Volunteer Centre Teams of up to 8, £8 per person, including a ploughman's supper (bring your own drinks). To book, ring **07816 159668** or the Hands Office **01634 577984**
November 10th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, 6 miles/ 9.7 km - Moderate Circular walk finishes 1.15pm approx. Shoppers Car Park off Cranbrook High Street. Free parking **TN17 3DP**, **TQ774359** Contact: Ade, **07505895784**, adeballard@yahoo.co.uk
November 10th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group, 10.00am. Meet John Williams **01622 764821**, Manor Park West Malling (Carpark Charge) **GR 678571** ME19 6PE for 5.5 mile walk No Stiles. 3 Steps. Dogs Allowed

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