

ACTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

NOVEMBER
2019

NUMBER 559



This area of Rainham, Station Road just above the railway, seems to hold particularly fond memories for our readers (see letters on page 2). The shops were primarily local provisions stores, long before the days of one stop shopping in a supermarket or the convenience of a home fridge and freezer to keep a weeks supply of food fresh. Housewives visited each shop on a daily basis to replenish their larders and so become well acquainted and often friends with the shop keepers. A close community resulted and it is this that our readers are remembering as they return with nostalgia to the days of their youth. However in reality it was far from a fairy tale existence. On the whole our warm, easily maintained homes with hot running water, luxury bathrooms and constant accessible entertainment seem preferable, I think!

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AF

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Editorial: Barbara Mackay Miller
Advertising: Hamish Mackay Miller
See top of page 14 for current prices.
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4 Saracen Close, Gillingham Business Park
ME8 0QN Tel: 01634 310011 please mention
AF when ringing. Email: af@thenet.uk.net

Editorial

Winter seems to have come with a rush this year almost completely squeezing autumn out of the way. The abundant rainfall played havoc with the fruit harvest and wherever heavy tractors emerged from orchards the country lanes were covered in mud despite the constant effort of the farms to clear them. Still the abundant crop of apples in our Community Orchard, despite each of the four 'Pick Your Own' weekends having mixed weather, raised over £4,000 double the previous best total, which will be donated to Kent Wildlife Trust and other conservation charities. A record number of 18 large bins have also been sent to Owllets for juicing. The juice sells at £3 per litre bottle with all profit going to charity. In Rainham juice is stocked at J W Farms, 189 Station Road, Sunburst Books 21 Station Road and Riverside Country Park. It is also available from the Orchard on Tuesday and Thursday from 10.00am until 12noon when the volunteers will be pruning trees and undertaking other tasks, weather permitting. Visitors and prospective volunteers are welcome at these times, entry is through the farm gate in Lower Bloors Lane 100 metres up from Lower Rainham Road ME8 7TR. The next few weeks are peak time for Christmas Fayres, Carol Concerts and fundraising Quizes not to mention other festive themed events the imaginative are inventing. Afternoon Teas for Remembrance Weekend in Hartlip, Sounds of the Season in Wigmore, Christmas Make and Do in Upchurch, Christmas Tree Festival in Rainham, Christmas Craft Fair at Lower Halstow, Father Christmas in St Peter's Church, Bredhurst, Family Fun at Hempstead, a Charity Evening at Parkwood and Christmas Traditions in Newington. You will be very welcome at any of these and of course all other events listed within our pages and Diary. This quarter of the year is always a busy time for all, particularly young families. If you are involved with any voluntary events do enjoy the occasion and make the most of the community spirit generated by helping and attending festive, fayres, plays, pantomimes and services. All too soon winter will really be upon us with short, cold days and we will be here with the December issue, have a good month until we see you then.

Correspondence

JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH

Dear Editor

The Rats Youth project (youth section of the Rainham Thatrical Society) will be performing 'James and the Giant Peach' adapted by David Wood at Oasthouse Theatre, Rainham on 15th & 16th November, curtain up at 8pm. There will also be a matinee at 4.00pm on Saturday This classic childrens tale focuses on a young English orphan boy who enters a gigantic, magical peach, and has a wild and surreal cross-world adventure with seven magically-altered garden bugs he meets. A great show for all the family.
Book Now Box Office 0844 8793224 or online at www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk

Yours sincerely
Dean Caston

RAINHAM SOCIAL CLUB

Dear Editor,

With reference to the letters concerning Rainham Social Club premises. I lived as a boy at 38, Tufton Road, then as a youth at 21 Tufton Road. My memories of Station Road from Solomon Road to Hothfield Road are thus: Two grocers shops at the Solomon Road/ Station Road junction. (One sold tins of Russian salmon during the war – it was delicious.) Next door was a cycle / hardware shop then a residential house, the home of Bertha Chapman. Adjoining her house was the social club premises which I am pretty sure also acted as the Rainham Library until the premises in the High Street were ready. Beside this was a wood paling fence which later became a very large advertising hoarding and next open ground used as allotments, accessed from an alleyway off Solomon Road. Further up was a semi-detached property and on the Hothfield side of this was Copsey – Butchers who later, on his retirement, moved to Webster Road when Bill Dennis took over these premises also as a butcher. Next came an open area of land later built on by Mr Miles who was the proprietor of the mineral water company and coal yard in Hothfield Road. On the corner of Hothfield Road and Station Road junction was the shop of the London Central Meat Company followed by Arnolds green grocers.

Yours sincerely
Alan Major

41 Heaton Road, Canterbury CT1 3 PY

MEMORIES OF RAINHAM

Dear Editor,

I have lived in Rainham most of my life give or take a few years when I moved to the Isle of Sheppey. I lived with my Nan in Station Road till I was three years old then we moved to Suffolk Avenue. I remember that area very well. On the corner of Webster Road there was an ironmongers called Wilkinsons who sold

everything you ever needed from nails to fires. My Nan used to send me over to him for wood for her fire which I collected every Saturday and in return she gave me some loose change to buy myself a comic. I was into Beano and Dandy comics in those days, they made me laugh and secretly my dad liked them too but he never let on. The newspaper was a dear old lady who had comics and newspapers all over the floor, to me it looked like a mess but she knew where everything was which amazed me. Next door to her was the chemist, Mr Coats, who made up prescriptions for Rainham people. My Nan was a good customer of Mr Coats she always bought 'horse ointment' for her knees - I can see her now putting the bottle on the mantel piece and leaving it there to get warm over the fire, then she would rub it all over her knees and legs. It's funny how these small memories stay in your mind. My Nan's house in Station Road had a cellar and as a kid I loved going down there. It had a distinctive smell, I know my grandad made potato wine which he stored in the cellar to keep cool so perhaps it was this that lingered.

Yours sincerely
Denise Hazelden
daisymay1016731@gmail.com

Editor: Denise has sent us a series of anecdotes about growing up in Rainham. If you have memories you would like to share please email them to af@thenet.uk.net

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - Making Miracles

Bucket Collections at: London Charing Cross Station on 12th December 3.00pm - 7.00pm
London Victoria Station 19th Dec 3.00pm - 7.00pm
Please note we will cover the cost of train fares. If you can spare any time on either days please email sally@makingmiracles.org.uk
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MEDWAY VOLUNTARY ACTION

Are you interested in improving health and wellbeing in Medway? Would you like to help people get heard? Do you know a keen Medway resident who would like to learn new skills?

Medway Voluntary Action is recruiting to expand their team of volunteer Community Health Researchers to help make sure the voices and experiences of local people are listened to in health planning.

Community Health Researchers are part of the Involving Medway programme – a partnership between community organisations and NHS Medway Clinical Commissioning Group.

We have an exciting programme of work coming up in Medway including Medway Time Credits and a small grant scheme.

For further information take a look at the role description or contact Medway Voluntary Action on involvingmedway@mva.org.uk or 01634 812850.

Ray Kemsley

Chair -Patient Participation Group
Maidstone Road & Upchurch Surgeries

PAMPER EVENING

Medway Asthma Self-Help (MASH)

Friday 8th November, 6.00pm start

Gillingham Golf Club. Free Parking.

Tickets £3 in advance, £4 on the door.

Pampering treatments including massage, reflexology and manicure from £5 per treatment (pay direct to stall holders) and help raise money for asthma charity.

To pre-book tickets or to book a stall email
medwayasthmaselfhelp@btconnect.com

Please call 01634 855844 or www.medwayasthmaselfhelp.co.uk.

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Diary 2019

No charge is made for Diary entries
Copy should be in writing either by email to
af@thetnet.uk.net or 5 Meresborough Cottages,
Meresborough, Gillingham, Kent ME8 8PP

Diary Copy Date: November 26th 2019

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, meet car park of Pluckley railway station, road,
track, footpaths. Contact: geoff.rambler@me.com
November 3rd - Indoor Boot Fair, Twydale Community
Centre, ME8 6PZ, 10.00am - 1.00pm, Tables £10,
Refreshments, 50p entry, Janet Duke 07809 892883
November 3rd - Sunday Service. Intuitive card readings
 (£5 donation) from 5.30pm. Service 6.30pm, guest
medium Robin Hodson The Centre, Mind Body Spirit,
Next to Travelodge, M2 Services. See Facebook page
for up to date information: The Centre-Mind Body
Spirit. Tea, coffee biscuits and healing afterwards
(donations appreciated). All welcome £4 entrance.
November 5th - Rainham Horticultural Society meets first
Tuesday in month (not Jan), 7.30pm, Rainham Cricket
Club, Berengrave Lane. New members welcome. Ms
Lynn Preston - 07931 337310 or 01634 360100.
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 5th - GHS Floral Art Group, 7.30 - 9.00pm,
United Reformed Church (rear hall) Balmoral Road,
Gillingham, 'Guy Fawkes' - a vertical arrangement,
New members welcome, first visit free, no experience
needed, come and receive a friendly welcome. Parking
available For details contact Kaye Buss 01634 232998
or email kayebuss@btinternet.com
November 5th - Reiki, rahanni, spiritual, crystal and Chi
healing given freely, donations welcome, 7.30 - 9pm
every Tuesday evening and every Wed 10 - 11.30am at
The Centre, Mind Body Spirit, (see 3rd Nov)
November 7th - 30th - Art Exhibition, paintings by local
artists Clive Bass & John Gilson will be on show and
for sale in Rainham Library, Birling Avenue,
November 7th - Wigmore Thursday Club, St Matthew's
Community Centre, 2.00pm, Kingfisher Singers, for
over 50s ring 01634 234712 for details.
November 8th - 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 8th - Gillingham & Rainham Local History
Society, Twydale Evangelical Church, Goudhurst Road
ME8 6LQ, 2.00 - 4.00pm. Railways of the Peninsular -
Ken Reynolds, Membership £20, Visitors £3 per
meeting. Tea/Coffee for a small charge. Information
Val Barrard 07947 583327 email lupusrufus@sky.com
November 8th - Pamper Evening, Medway Asthma Self-
Help, 6.00pm Gillingham Golf Club. Free Parking.
Tickets £3 in advance, £4 on door, treatments from £5
(pay stall holder) Contact 01634 855844, email
medwayasthmaelfhelp@btconnect.com or buy tickets
via our website: www.medwayasthmaelfhelp.co.uk.
November 9th - Craft Market, 9.00am - 12.30pm, St
Margaret's Millennium Centre, Rainham, Free entry,
Refreshments available, To book a stall, £10 each,
email cjdraftmarkets@yahoo.com or 07779 366054

November 9th - Afternoon Teas, St Michael and All
Angels, Hartlip as part of our Remembrance weekend,
2.00 - 4.00pm. All money raised will be going to
SSAFA Armed Forces Charity.
November 9th - Charity Quiz Night, 7.00pm. Holy Trinity
Church Hall, Twydale Lane ME8 6JU, in aid of Hands
& Gillingham Volunteer Centre. Teams up to eight
people, or come and make up a team. £8 per person,
including a ploughman's supper (bring own drinks). To
book, ring 07816 159668 or Office 01634 577984
November 9th - City of Rochester Symphony Orchestra
Concert, 7.30pm, Central Theatre, Chatham. Box
Office 01634 338338. Please see www.crso.org.uk or
www.medwayticketslive/application/event/185973
November 10th - RSPB Medway Local Group Free walk
with Nature, Conyer Creek ME9 9HR 8.30am, 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/
November 10th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, 6
miles/ 9.7 km - Moderate Circular walk finish approx.
1.15pm. Shoppers Car Park off Cranbrook High Street.
Free parking. TN17 3DP, TQ774359 a lovely gentle
walk ideal for anyone interested in joining. Contact:
Ade, 07505895784, adeballard@yahoo.co.uk
November 10th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,
10.00am. Meet John Williams 01622 764821, 07977
614033 Manor Park West Mall (Carpark Charge)
GR 678571 ME19 6PE for 5.5 mile undulating walk
across fields, grassland through woods and along
tracks / roads. No Stiles. 3 Steps. Dogs Allowed
November 11th - Medway Scrabble Club, 2.00 - 4.30pm,
St Stephens Church Hall, Maidstone Road, Chatham,
new members welcome, details 07523 124668
November 11th, Rainham Flower Club, 7.30pm, St
Matthews Church Hall, Wigmore ME8 0NX, Practical
Evening 'Garlands' see www.rainhamflowerclub.co.uk
or ring 01634 863034 / 01634 373928 / 01795 843180
November 11th - Concert, Medway Organ & Keyboard
Club, 50th Anniversary year, Parkwood Community
Centre, Rainham, ME8 9PN, 7.30pm, Organist - Byron
Jones, details ring Brian Leonard 01634 234694
November 12th - Carer's Coffee Morning, 10.00am -
12noon, Dobbies Restaurant, Courtney Road,
Gillingham further information contact Maureen
Cannon 01634 235723

November 12th - Fuchsia & Pelargonium Society
Gillingham and District, side doors open 7pm for
7.30pm start, Holy Trinity Church Hall, Twydale Lane,
ME8 6JU, 'Yalding Floods' - Peter Camrass. All
welcome, Ring 01634852519 for details
November 12th - Medway Antique and Collectors' Club,
7.30 for 8.00pm, The Clubhouse, Rainham Cricket
Club, 'Saucy Seaside Postcards'. Memberships now
open £25, for information 01634 851512 or just turn up.
November 13th - RSPB Medway Local Group Free Walk
with Nature, Mote Park ME15 7SU, 9.30am, (10th Nov)
November 13th - East Medway U3A, Smallholders
Club ME8 0JG, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Guy Bartlett - 'The
Red Arrows', Details see eastmedwayu3a website or
ring 07733 554719, new members welcome.
November 13th - Bredhurst WI, Village Hall, 7.30pm
speaker Mr I Porter - the story of The Real Downton
Abbey, information from Pam Ormiston 01634 365789
November 13th - All Saints Women's Fellowship,
Hempstead Village Hall, 8.00pm, Christmas Bazaar, for
details contact Rhonda Peck 07951 629444
November 14th - Wigmore Thursday Club, St Matthew's
Community Centre, 2.00pm, Paul Warren, for over 50s
ring 01634 234712 for details.
November 15th - Evenings of Mediumship at The Centre
Mind Body Spirit with Jose & Trudy. £5 entrance doors
open 7.00pm. Tea, coffee and biscuits (see 3rd Nov)
November 15th - Late Autumn Quiz, Holy Trinity Church
Hall, Twydale, ME8 6JU, 7.00 - 10.30pm, £8.50 pp,
Tables of 6 or 8, Fish & chip Supper included. Bring
own drinks. Car park to the rear. Contact Gina Druker
01634 373840 or gina.z@tiscali.co.uk to book a table.
In aid of Twinning and International Relations Fund
November 15th & 16th - James and the Giant Peach.
Adapted by David Wood, Oasthouse Theatre, Rainham
Curtain up 8pm. Saturday Matinee 4pm, The Rats
Youth project. A great show for all the family. Box
Office 0844 8793224 or www.oasthousetheatre.co.uk
November 16th - Hempstead Village Christmas Fayre in
co-operation with All Saints' Church in Church and
Hempstead Village Hall, 11.30am to 3.30pm. All are
welcome, Santa's Grotto, lunch, stalls, grand prize
draw. Free entry.
November 16th - Craft Fair, 2.00 - 4.00pm, Nye Bevan
Memorial Hall, Twydale Lane Celebrating the crafts
and talent of Twydale, Proceeds to charity. Free Entry

Continued on Page 11

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ART EXHIBITION

Paintings by Local Artists Clive Bass &
John Gilson will be on show

and For Sale in Rainham Library, Birling Avenue,
between 7th and 30th November 2019

'THE WITNESSES' by Clive Sansom

The Parish of South Gillingham, with the Parish of
St. Peter, Boughton Monchelsea. A collection of
poems tells the life of Jesus of Nazareth from the
perspective of those who knew him during his time
on earth. Performances St Peter's Church, Church
Hill, Boughton Monchelsea, Maidstone ME17 4BU
Saturday 9th November, 7.00pm
St Matthew's Church, Drewery Drive, Wigmore,
Saturday 16th November, 7.00pm
Entry free with a retiring collection for charity.
Details please contact: Paul Warren 01622 744793
pawarren@hotmail.co.uk - or Geoff Hufton

HEMPSTEAD CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Saturday 16th November, 11.30am - 3.30pm

Hempstead Village Fayre Group in
co-operation with All Saints' Church
All Saints' Church & Hempstead Village Hall
Visit Santa's Grotto, have lunch and browse
the craft and gift stalls, take part in
children's activities, or buy delicious cakes.
Children's roundabout and grand prize draw.

All are welcome. Free entry.

CREAM TEA AND ART EXHIBITION

Sunday November 17th, 2.30 - 6.30pm

Original Art and prints for sale

To celebrate 15 years of Smile Malawi

Upchurch Village Hall ME9 7EU

Cream Tea - £10, Child - £5

Exhibition entry £2. All proceeds to Smile Malawi
email enquiries@Smilemalawi.com to reserve teas

Smile Malawi is a registered charity set up by
Elspeth Baecke, a local lady from Upchurch, who
started a children's centre in Blantyre Malawi 15
years ago, it is now a home to 44 orphaned children
aged 6 - 23 years old.

CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR

St Margaret's Church, Lower Halstow

Saturday, 23rd November 1.00 - 3.00pm

Come to one of Kent's most beautiful churches

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We look forward to seeing you there!

www.thesix.org.uk

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CONCERT - The Old Barn Orchestra

Saturday 23rd November, 7.30pm

Rainham School for Girls

Derwent Way, Rainham ME8 0BX

Smetana: 'Vltava' from Má Vlast

Bruch: Violin Concerto No.1

Brahms: Symphony No.1.

Tickets: £12 each (children £1)

Phone 01634 376979

CHARITY EVENING

Dance the Night Away

to the DJ sounds of Motown

Parkwood Community Centre ME8 9PR

For Macmillan Cancer Relief

Saturday November 23rd, 8.00 - 11.45pm

Classic Tunes with a dash of Northern Soul and

Reggae. Admission £5 on the door

Everyone welcome

RAINHAM CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Rainham Shopping Centre

Friday 29th November, Fun starts at 3.45pm

Lights on around 5.00pm

Join the carol singing and enjoy family
entertainment with KMFM presenter Andy Walker.

The lights will be turned on by the Mayor of
Medway and everyone's favourite character Shrek
will be there too. Don't miss the opportunity to meet
Shrek at 2.00pm in Rainham Library, Free but

booking essential 01634 337799. Discover more at
www.medway.gov.uk/christmas

'WHAT SWEETER MUSIC'

Upchurch Choral Society

Saturday 30th November, 7.30pm

St Mary's Church, Upchurch

A concert of varied music and readings for the end
of the year, including audience participation and
refreshments. Tickets £10 on the door, children free
or contact Sue Rossiter 01634 234780 for details.

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR Cats Protect Fair

Saturday 30th November, 10.30am - 2.30pm

Bredhurst Village Hall, Hurstwood Road, ME7 3JZ

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Nature Notes

NATURE NOTES FOR OCTOBER

The North Downs are about the same height as the South Downs and are composed of the same bed of chalk. But they are very different in character. From a distance, the North Downs are largely seen as a long escarpment covered in trees. By contrast, the South Downs are viewed as a long line of mostly bare hills. The latter Downs have relatively few woods and this is because, from Neolithic times onwards, the chalky and well drained soils of the southernmost downs were cleared of trees and other vegetation in order to grow crops and, above all, graze sheep. Over the centuries, this grazing has helped to create and maintain the characteristic, springy, chalk downland turf of the South Downs, which is full of sweet and aromatic herbs. The Neolithic and the later Bronze Age settlers generally avoided the heavily wooded dip slopes of the North Downs, that is, the slopes leading up to the escarpment. They favoured the chalk soil of the Isle of Thanet and the river valleys through the North Downs, such as the valley of the River Medway, as well as other favourable areas. But, once the best land had been occupied, clearances were made of the waste and woodlands of the dip slopes of the North Downs. The heavy clay soils with flints, which overlap the chalk of the dip slopes, were either put down to permanent pasture or the woodland was kept in order to obtain a renewable supply of coppiced wood. Arable crops were mainly confined to the dry valleys. As a result of these piece-meal enclosures of the North Downs, most of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has a characteristic pattern of small, irregular fields, mostly hedged. The late Dr Oliver Rackham, a distinguished Cambridge botanist, defined Ancient Countryside as a landscape whose fields, woods and winding lanes dated predominantly before the year 1700. Ancient Countryside was also characterised by a pattern of settlement which features a number of isolated farms, hamlets and small villages. Rackham took the view that counties such as Kent and Devon had Ancient Countrysides and that the hedges therein were mediaeval in origin. In October I visited that part of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is south of Sittingbourne. Soon after the built-up area, I picked up Bottom Pond Road which would take me to my destination, Wormshill,

on the top of the Downs. The road is an ancient one, evidenced by the fact that it forms, in part, a parish boundary which would have been drawn up in Anglo-Saxon times. It is a single lane of three miles in length. So it is best traversed on a quiet, early Sunday morning. In due course I reached the site of the Bottom Pond, at the bottom of a now dry valley. My map shows that the boundaries of four parishes, Wormshill, Frinsted, Bredgar and Milsted meet in the middle of the site of the Pond. The boundaries would have been agreed, before the Norman Conquest, to allow each parish a share of the Pond's water for their livestock. There is now no trace of it, but my map shows the existence of two unused wells on one side of the Road and there is a well, with winding gear above it, in the garden of a cottage on the other side. So the water table has clearly fallen over the years. I continued my journey and came to a halt in Wormshill, opposite to the entrance to Yew Tree Farm, from where emanated the constant lowing of calves. 'Kirkland Jersey Herd. Young Stock Unit' stated a notice board. Here I had some coffee from my flask and brought my notes up-to-date. I had passed through a countryside of woodland, much of which appeared to be ancient and semi-natural, of oak and beech standards, and with sweet chestnut coppice. Between the scattered woods were fields of chalky soil, some still containing corn stubble and others having been tilled and sown with next year's crop. Sheep and horses were grazing on some of the pasture land. A herd of pedigree red Sussex cattle could be seen at Manor Farm, Wormshill, behind a roadside hedgerow. I noted down the main plant species in the hedges of Bottom Pond Road, as I drove slowly and carefully by. In rough order of magnitude, they were hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple, ash, holly and dogwood. Rackham and other botanists have accepted that where five or more of tree or shrub species are to be found in a 30-yard stretch of a clearly old hedge, it is most likely to be an ancient one. I would like to think that my list of just the six main plant species in the hedgerows along Bottom Pond Road shows that they are ancient, but I have to confess that I was not inclined to stop constantly in a narrow and winding lane and strictly follow the 30-yard rule. The flora that attracted my particular attention, during my visit, were the yellow and brown leaves of the beech trees; the masses of red holly and whitebeam

berries which will be an attraction for over-wintering redwings and fieldfares; the brilliant orange seeds of spindle trees; and billows of the feathery seed heads of old man's beard adorning overgrown bushes. Noticeable fauna included a kestrel hovering above a hedgerow, with a view to pouncing on any wood mouse, vole or shrew emerging from the bottom of the hedge. Also two or three flocks of chaffinches and blue tits feeding on the kernels of beech mast squashed by traffic. I had had an enjoyable trip through the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on a beautiful, autumnal, Sunday morning.

Joe Ennis

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Sunday 1st December, Doors open 7.00pm

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CHRISTMAS CAROL CONCERT

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Friday 6th December, 7.30pm

Rochester Cathedral's renowned choir returns for our popular Christmas Carol Concert suitable for the whole family. Performances by the Rochester Cathedral Choristers and the Rochester Cathedral Children's Choir. Tickets available from Rochester Cathedral website or in person from our shop

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

St Peter's Bredhurst

Saturday 7th December, 12noon - 2.00pm

Father Christmas (at St Peter's Church) Grand Draw

Gift Stall, Cake Stall, Bulb Stall,

Childrens' Sweet Tombola and Lucky Dip,

Games and more! Entry Free

Refreshments (including Soup and Rolls)

HEMPSTEAD VALLEY CAROL CONCERT

Sunday 15th December, 4.45pm

Stores will be closed to provide people with a chance to sing their favourite carols.

CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

St Mary the Virgin,

Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne

Saturdays December 7th & 14th, 11am - 5.00pm

A Festive event celebrating Christmas traditions including: Christmas Trees, Wreaths, Crackers and Cards, Nativity Scenes, Advent Candles

and Table Decorations. Refreshments available.

A fun event for all the family

CAROL CONCERT with The Medway Singers

The Union of Catholic Mothers

Saturday 7th December, 7.45pm

St Augustine's Church

Deanwood Drive, Parkwood, Rainham.

All proceeds for our charity which this year is 'Mary's Meals'. Coffee/tea and mince pies in the interval.

Tickets from Mrs Janet Nastaly 01634 371897

or Mrs Alma Payne 01634 362896.

FREE WALK WITH NATURE

RSPB Medway Local Group

Lower Halstow ME9 7DZ Park end of Lapwing Drive.

Wednesday 11th December 9.30am

Possibility of red-breasted merganser and other sea ducks. A short walk along the creek and back through the scrub area. Please wear appropriate clothing and footwear. No need to book. For more details visit

www.rspb.org.uk/groups/medway

www.facebook.com/The-RSPB-Medway-Local-Group

'SOUNDS OF THE SEASON'

Saturday 14th December, 8.00pm

St Matthew's Community Centre,

Drewery Drive, Wigmore.

Wigmore Voices present an evening of wonderful Christmas music.

Tickets £7.50

Available from Sue 01634 370639

CHRISTMAS MAKE AND DO

Sunday 15th December, 2.30 - 4.30pm

Upchurch Village Hall (Behind Crown Pub)

Run on behalf of 'The Six', a group of 6 parishes under the guidance of Rev Julian Staniforth.

Children have fun making Christmas decorations, cards, tags and yummy treats while grown-ups enjoy a drink and a slice of cake at our Christmas Café

A free, community event run by Uplift but please book your place - email xmas.make.and.do@gmail.com.

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Diary 2019

November 16th - Father Christmas grotto Hempstead
Valley Shopping Centre, opens 2.00pm. Entrance to
visit Father Christmas £5 per child (includes wrapped
gift). No charge for accompanying adults.

November 16th - 'The Witnesses' by Clive Sansom St
Matthew's Church, Drewery Drive, 7.00pm, Entry free
collection for charity. pawarren@hotmail.co.uk - 01622
744793 geoff.hufton@hotmail.co.uk - 01634 234712

November 16th - Quiz Night, 7.00 for 7.30pm
start, Carmel Hall, Ufton Lane, Sittingbourne ME10
1JB, Tables 6 - 8, £5 pp BYO Food, Drinks & Glasses
Mike 01634 360906 or mikew16@blueyonder.co.uk

November 17th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,
10.00am. Meet John / Lesley Fielding 07801 537317
Aylesford Priory Carpark (Donation) GR 724590 ME20
5BX Toilets start and end, 5 mile circular almost flat
walk with a small climb up to the vineyards. No Dogs

November 17th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, 7
miles/ 11.3 km - Moderate Circular walk finishes
2.00pm approx. Meet Charing Station Car Park. TN27
0HZ, TQ949491 Bring picnic lunch. Contact: Ade,
07505 895784, adeballard@yahoo.co.uk

November 17th - Cream Tea and Art Exhibition, 2.30 -
6.30pm. Original Art and prints for sale to celebrate 15
years of Smile Malawi, Upchurch Village Hall ME9
7EU Cream Tea - £10, Child - £5 Exhibition entry £2,
email enquiries@Smilemalawi.com to reserve tea,

November 18th - Dec 23rd - Christmas Gift Fayre,
Hempstead Valley, speciality stalls, local producers
selling handmade items, plus food and drink.

November 18th - Rainham Evening Women's Institute, St
Paul's Church, Parkwood, 7.30pm. 'Dickens and
Christmas' All Welcome. For further details contact
Chris Holder 01634 360823.

November 19th - RSPB Medway Local Group Talk,
Parkwood Community Centre, ME8 9PM. 7.30 -
9.45pm £4. Eastern Indonesian Birds and Other
Wildlife - Graham Ekins. For Field Trips:

www.rspb.org.uk/groups/medway.
November 19th - GHS Floral Art Group, 7.30 - 9.00pm,
'Topiary Tree', (see 5th Nov).

November 20th - Bredhurst Garden Club, 7.30pm, Village
Hall, Bring and Buy, Details John Fridd 01634 388028

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November 20th - Wigmore Ladies, Howard Hall,
Woodside, Wigmore 2.00 - 4.00pm, new members
welcome to this cheerful group, just come along or ring
01634 388912.

November 21st - Rainham Women's Institute meet 1.45 -
4.00pm, Wakeley Hall, Oast House Community Centre,
Granary Close Visitors welcome for a small charge per
visit. Contact Lynne 01634 234997 for more details.

November 21st - Wigmore Thursday Club, St Matthew's
Community Centre, 2.00pm, 'In Harmony' - Doreen
Hulm, for over 50s ring 01634 234712 for details.

November 22nd - Medway Geographical Society, Holy
Trinity Church, Twydall Lane, ME8 6TN, 7.30 - 9pm.
Martin Harris - A Trip Round The Sudety Mountains,
Everyone Welcome, Students and children free, Free
parking. Come on evening or contact 01634 572139

November 23rd - Christmas Fayre, The Wisdom Hospice,
Rochester, 11.00am - 3.00pm, Food, Gifts, Festivities.
park St Williams Way, Entry by Donation

November 23rd - Christmas Craft Fair, St Margaret's
Church, Lower Halstow, 1.00 - 3pm www.thesix.org.uk
November 23rd - Concert, The Old Barn Orchestra,
7.30pm, Rainham School for Girls, Derwent Way ME8
0BX, Tickets: £12 each (children £1) 01634 376979

November 23rd - Quiz Mindbender Night, 7.30pm, Holy
Trinity Church, Twydall, £5 per person, Bring your
own drinks and nibbles, Ring Ann 01634 923991

November 23rd - Charity Evening, Dance the Night
Away to the DJ sounds of Motown, Parkwood
Community Centre ME8 9PR. For Macmillan Cancer
Support, 8.00 - 11.45pm. Admission £5 on the door.
Everyone welcome

November 24th - RSPB Medway Local Group Free Walk
with Nature, Dungeness RSPB Reserve TN29 9PN
10.00am (see 10th Nov)

November 24th - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,
10.00am. Meet Roger Norman 01634 232404, 07941
965272 East Malling Village Field Car Park near
Railway Station (Free). GR 702567 ME19 6AJ for 5.5
mile walk. No Stiles or Steps. Only muddy if very wet.

No Toilets. No Dogs
November 24th - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, 5.5
miles/ 8.8 km - Leisurely Circular walk finishes
12.15pm. Meet Barnyard Restaurant, Gore Farm, Oak
Lane, Upchurch. ME97EZ TQ839660. Meals 1.00pm at
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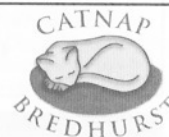
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Diary 2019

November 25th - Medway Scrabble Club, (see 11th Nov).
November 27th - All Saints Women's Fellowship,
Christmas Meal Upchurch Golf Club, 7 for 7.30pm -
music Nick Bosworth, Rhonda Peck 07951 629444
November 27th - Rainham Historical Society, Millennium
Hall, Rainham, 7.30pm 'Pocahontas' - Christopher
Bull, All welcome, Visitors £2, Contact secretary
Olwen O'Dowd 01634 263622 for more details.
November 27th - Gillingham Horticultural Society,
7.15pm. United Reformed Church Hall, Balmoral Road,
Gillingham. Presentation Evening & Christmas Fayre,
Members Free, Non Members £5, information email
social@gillinghamhs.co.uk
November 28th - Wigmore Thursday Club, St Matthew's
Community Centre, 2.00pm, Social - Beetle Drive, for
over 50s ring 01634 234712 for details.
November 29th - Rainham Christmas Lights, Shopping
Centre, Fun starts 3.45pm Lights on around 5.00pm,
carol singing and entertainment with KMFM presenter
Andy Walker. www.medway.gov.uk/christmas
November 30th - Christmas Bazaar, Cats Adoption Centre
10.30am - 2.30pm, Bredhurst Village Hall, Hurstwood
Road, ME7 3JZ, Entrance 50p, Children free! Details
Cats Protection 01634 232471
November 30th - 'What Sweeter Music' Upchurch Choral
Society, 7.30pm, St Mary's Church, varied music and
readings for the end of the year, audience participation
and refreshments. Tickets £10 on the door, children free
or contact Sue Rossiter 01634 234780 for more details.
December 1st - RSPB Medway Free Walk with Nature,
Stodmarsh/Grove Ferry CT3 4BE 9.00am (10th Nov)
December 1st - Indoor Boot Fair, 10.00am - 1.00pm,
Twydall Community Centre Tables £10, (see 3rd Nov)
December 1st - Medway Ramblers Walk, 10.00am, 9
miles/ 14.5 km - Leisurely Circular walk finishes
3.00pm. Meet Grain Beach Car Park entrance ME3 0BS
TQ887767 Very flat, couple of stiles and one gate to
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753278, graham.jenkinson@blueyonder.co.uk

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December 1st - Medway Towns Footpaths Group,
10.00am. Meet Chris Morris 01634 374923 07847
828249, River Valley Upchurch Golf Course GR
838666 ME9 7AY for 4 mile Christmas Lunch, booked
in advance, easy local walk. No Dogs
December 1st - Applause Rural Touring Theatre,
Bredhurst Village Hall, 7.00pm, Two Sherlock Holmes
stories 'The Blue Carbuncle' and 'Curse of the
Mummy' Tickets £10 from Ann Keeble 01634 361263.
December 3rd - Rainham Horticultural Society Rainham
Cricket Club, Berengrave Lane, Rainham, (5th Nov)
December 3rd - Breast Cancer Support Group, Medway
Maritime Hospital Area 7, Level 2, 7.00 - 9.00pm,
Christmas Social. New members welcome, (5th Nov).
December 5th - Wigmore Thursday Club, St Matthew's
Community Centre, 2.00pm, Carols and readings with
Fairview School, for over 50s ring 01634 234712.
December 6th - Games Afternoon, Lower Halstow
Memorial Hall, 2.00 - 4.00pm Games include Euchre,
Whist, RummiKub, Domino's and more, £1.50 includes
tea/coffee, biscuits and warm welcome (no joining fee).
December 6th - Christmas Carol Concert, Rochester
Cathedral, 7.30pm, Tickets from Rochester Cathedral
website or our shop, suitable for the whole family.
December 7th & 14th - Celebration of Christmas, St Mary
the Virgin, Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne,
11.00am - 5.00pm A Festive event celebrating
Christmas traditions. Refreshments available.
December 7th - Christmas Fayre, St Peter's Bredhurst,
12noon - 2.00pm, Father Christmas (at St Peter's
Church) Grand Draw, Stalls, Games and more!
Refreshments (including Soup and Rolls) Entry Free
December 7th - The Union of Catholic Mothers Carol
Concert featuring The Medway Singers, 7.45pm, St
Augustine's Church, Deanwood Drive. All proceeds for
'Mary's Meals' Coffee/tea & mince pies. Tickets Mrs
Nastaly 01634 371897 Mrs Payne 01634 362896.
December 12th - Free Films at St. Mary Magdalene
Church, Gillingham Green, 2.00pm, Free entry and
refreshments, No need to book. 01634 324783
December 14th - Macmillan Christmas Quiz, 7.30 start,
Bligh Primary School Bligh Way, Strood, ME2 2 XJ
Tickets £5 teams up to 8, Bring own snacks and drinks.
email macmillanmedway@gmail.com or 07958 491607
December 14th - 'Sounds of The Season', Wigmore
Voices evening of wonderful Christmas music, 8.00pm,
St Matthew's Community Centre, Drewery Drive,
Wigmore. Tickets £7.50 from Sue 01634 370639
December 15th - Christmas Make and Do, 2.30 - 4.30pm,
Upchurch Village Hall, free, community event run by
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