

# ACTION FORUM

AN INDEPENDENT MONTHLY FOR RAINHAM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

NOV 2020  
NUMBER 564



Remembrance Sunday c.2007

St Margaret's Church was packed for Remembrance Day Services at this time. After the service the whole congregation gathered on the A2 (all traffic was stopped) for the two minute silence and the laying of wreaths. This year the major event to commemorate the sacrifices made will be road by road with residents observing the two minute silence on their doorsteps at 11am on Sunday 8th November. See article about the memorial and the Rainham men listed on it on page 3. Photograph by Andy James of [www.rainham-history.co.uk](http://www.rainham-history.co.uk)

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# AF

Next issue : December 4th 2020  
Copy date : November 20th  
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## Editorial

We are back with a new team of volunteers. Anne Neve and Geraldine Tomlin have taken on the task of organising the distribution. Some existing distributors have had to drop out but new volunteers have come forward. Anne and Geraldine have taken on a huge task and I am sure they will still have some gaps by the time you are reading this. If you are willing to help for an hour or so each month please email your contact details to [distribution@actionforum.co.uk](mailto:distribution@actionforum.co.uk).

Advertising: Lewis Marshall is taking over paid advertising when our new accounts programme is set up and existing details are transferred to it. We do have space for a few more both display and line ads. See page 14 for prices.

Diary: Rachel Hough (our younger daughter) has volunteered to be our diary keeper. Please send entries to [diary@actionforum.co.uk](mailto:diary@actionforum.co.uk). During the present crisis some of you are holding online meetings. We will gladly print details including how to book. Our next issue is December. Please send in details of church services and other activities by our copy date 20th November. Rachel also works for The Net so if you want your event to be listed in The Net's online diary as well as printed in AF you need only send a single email.

Website. For the first time AF has a website. [www.actionforum.co.uk](http://www.actionforum.co.uk)  
By the time you are reading this issue of AF it should also be available online. We know that a number of copies are posted each month to friends and relatives who have moved away, some to different parts of the world. If they have internet access they should be able to read it on line or print out a copy if they prefer paper. Our aim is to make all 563 past issues available. With a suitable search facility this would be a valuable resource for all

interested in Rainham history. One of our advertisers, Mush of Mid-Kent IT (see p5), is also a volunteer helping with computer matters including the website. Scanning all the back issues is a huge task so we are looking for volunteers to help and perhaps learn new skills in the process

Editor: So far nobody has volunteered for this role so I am acting as editor for the time being. Please email [hamish@actionforum.co.uk](mailto:hamish@actionforum.co.uk) with your number and I will call to discuss the role. During the current crisis the pages usually used for the diary will be available for the numerous voluntary groups and charities in the area to tell us something of what they do and if they are looking for new members or volunteers. Perhaps you want to start something and would like to find people to join you.. Please email editor [@actionforum.co.uk](mailto:@actionforum.co.uk)

### National Service (RAF) Association.

As a National Service association we are becoming a rather special band, getting fewer each passing year. After all, the youngest ex-National Serviceman is now around eighty years of age. To that end, I wish to contact all ex-National Servicemen in our area, whatever branch of service, with the aim of recording their details, putting them in touch if they so wish, and, God willing, perhaps arrange a meeting post-virus which at present seems a long way off.  
Chas. Atkins, secretary, National Service (RAF) Association, Mid Kent Branch

### Medway Geographical Society

Nov 27th - Costa Rica - a world of nature - Mick White  
Meetings are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month at Twydall Church Hall, Twydall Lane. ME8 6TN and begin at 7.30. New members will be welcome. Please contact Mrs Lorna Bailey on 01634 572139 for further details.

### Rainham 84 Youth Football Club

Our club has been around since 1984 and continues to go from strength to strength.  
If you are looking for your child to get into football, we have a number of teams across many age groups, including a Soccer School that starts from age 3!  
We currently have teams at:  
U7, U8, U9, U10, U11, U12, U15, U18 including an all girls team at U12.  
If you would like to check the availability of your child's age group, please get in contact:  
[recruitment@rainham84fc.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@rainham84fc.co.uk)

Article by Paul Bishop

## THE RAINHAM, KENT, WAR MEMORIAL FIRST WORLD WAR, 1914 – 1918

Rainham's war memorial at St Margaret's Church lists the names of 99 men who died between 1914-20. The men of Rainham represented a variety of military Services. For example, 23 joined the Royal Navy, 12 served with the local, Buffs (East Kent Regiment), two men fought for Australia, and four represented Canadian regiments.  
Two men, Colour Sergeants Thomas Swan (AIF), and Francis Baker (Buffs) were awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal.  
Details from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission reveal the ages of 69 of the Rainham men, which ranged from 17 to 61 years.  
It also provided addresses and family details of many of the men who fell in the First World War. For example, the memorial includes brothers, fathers, sons and husbands. At least 14 men lived in Station Road, six in Ivy Street, and three from Tufton Road. Others lived in 'cottages' along Bredhurst Road, London Road and other Rainham addresses still present today.  
The Rainham men listed are buried locally, and throughout the world, including France, Belgium, India, Iraq, Egypt, Turkey and Russia. Many others have no known grave.  
The loss of 99 Rainham men would have had a considerable impact on a small, closely knit population of around 4000 people, dependent upon agricultural labour.  
We can only imagine how the war touched the lives of so many Rainham families.  
For example, see the following three men, who lived in William Street:-

Rank	Name	Service	Age	Date of Death	Address
Pte.	Edmund Couchman,	Royal Navy,	20,	27/5/15	69 William Street
Pte.	Albert Coppin,	Lanc. Fus.,	19,	24/5/15	53 William Street
Pte.	John Bolton	Royal Sussex.	22	6/9/18	42 William Street

It can be seen, that these men were the same age when the Great War began, and lived nearby each other in the same street.  
Their loss would have been tragic for any family, particularly as the first two men died within three days of each other.

Rainham would have been continually affected by such casualties, which escalated as the war progressed. For example, the Rainham memorial reveals 7 men lost in 1914, 15 men in 1915, 22 men in 1916, another 22 men in 1917, 24 men in 1918, and 6 during 1919. Another two men recorded on the war memorial died in 1920. Two Rainham men, died when HMS 'Princess Irene' was sunk on 27/5/15, and another three men were lost when the Cruiser HMS 'Natal' went down on the 30/12/15..

Continued on page 4

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Continued from page 3

It may be of interest that 2nd Lieutenant Harold Greenhalgh recorded on the war memorial, was the Headmaster of the Rainham Council school. The Landlord of the local pub also lost a son. The Rainham memorial records the names of those that died during the War. It does not include the wounded or all those who also served during the First World War. I am sure many local families, or those with a Rainham connection, could add to these details and tell what they know of the experiences of those who returned. Electoral registers would show where more of these people lived. Census and Parish records would reveal more about their families. Local business directories would indicate their occupations. Newspapers of the day may provide photographs of these servicemen, as well as individual details. I hope someone may research this, so that those names recorded on the Rainham memorial, and all the others who served, will be remembered. The memorial is not only a record of Rainham's contribution and sacrifice, but also rich source of local history. The full listing of names on Rainham War Memorial is now complete at [www.roll-of-honour.com/kent/rainham.html](http://www.roll-of-honour.com/kent/rainham.html)

## Wilder Gardening without upsetting your neighbours

**An online workshop Thursday 12th November**

Our wildlife is in trouble. We are suffering loss of Biodiversity at an alarming rate, but it's not too late. We can all do something to reverse the trend & these actions, however small, will add up to a huge difference.

I work with an award-winning team of Volunteers at Kent Wildlife Trust who are eager to encourage people to make their gardens & local green space more nature friendly. This year, because of Covid 19, we are unable to visit gardens in person, so the Volunteers have been giving wildlife friendly gardening advice using digital means. We have found similar questions occur on regular basis and, rather than just issuing a standard list of "frequently asked questions", we have planned a series of short, friendly workshops. These will initially be via Zoom. Each session will be restricted to a maximum of 15 people to give all participants the opportunity to ask questions and take part in discussions. We will run several sessions on the same day if we have sufficient bookings. It is hoped that, as the year progresses, we will be able to run more live sessions from various venues.

The dates for the initial Zoom sessions are:

Thu 12 Nov 2020: Wilder Gardening without upsetting your neighbours

23 Jan 2021: Dealing with perceived pests in a wilder garden

20 Feb 2021: Building & maintaining a garden

wildlife pond

20 March 2021: Wilder Lawns

More details, including how to book, can be found on our website at [www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/events](http://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/events) Maureen Rainey Wild About Gardens Officer Kent Wildlife Trust

## The Parish of South Gillingham

Dear Readers,

With the ever-changing Covid-19 restrictions everything is difficult to plan and nothing is set in stone. The diary for church services is therefore tending to cover just a few weeks at a time, but what we can tell you is that the Parish of South Gillingham is offering a wide range of church services across the four churches of St Matthew's (Wigmore), St Paul's (Parkwood), All Saints' (Hempstead) and St Peter's (Bredhurst). These include early and evening services as well as main Sunday morning services and there are also online services through YouTube and other events via social media.

All the churches are meeting or exceeding all the Covid-19 regulations and safeguards, which means that there are restricted numbers at the churches, so you will be required to "book" in advance, but we are confident we can find room for you somewhere in the parish.

Details of services and other resources may be found on the website <https://parishofsouthgillingham.co.uk> or by phoning the parish office on 01634 231736 who can also add you to the mailing list if required.

We look forward to welcoming you.

Rev'd Canon Brian Senior  
Area Dean of Gillingham

## MEMORIES OF STATION ROAD, RAINHAM

The article in the Jan/Feb issue of Action Forum jogged memories of my walk to Rainham C of E School at the top of Station Road in the early 1940s. I was born in 1934 and have lived in Rainham all my life. Our family lived at the far end of Henry Street (then a cul de sac).

At the junction of Henry Street and Station Road on the lower side was Brinsons, a general store who kept a limited stock due to war time rationing. On the opposite side was Hales the Butcher. Being a small family butcher he was able to deal with small groups of families who collected scraps and waste food to feed a single pig, rabbits or chicken.

A little further down Station Road was Tom Pearce, a gentleman's barbers. Whilst we were waiting our turn there was a box of metal puzzles to try and solve, also a machine secured to the wall with two handles on the front which when rotated gave you a tingling feeling in each hand.

On the opposite corner of Henry Street were two empty shops (after the war these became Johnsons Iron Mongers).

The next place of interest was Kemps Builders, Undertakers and Timber yard where logs were piled up before being lifted by the shearlegs crane onto the rack bench for conversion into planks. Then I come to Wakeley Road junction (named after William Henry Wakeley, the farmer who owned the land on which it was built). On this corner was a general store, Roots. If my memory serves me correctly he had a small van to deliver goods. A few yards up Station Road was a greengrocers, Pilchers. They sold only local grown produce again due to wartime restrictions.

Further up the road which is still one of the entrances to Rainham Recreation Ground was Bert Dunk and his daughter Elsie who ran a Fish shop, where you could purchase wet fish, or in the evenings fried fish and chips, a piece of cod or similar for 2 old pence and/or one old penny or a halfpenny of chips (remember 240 old pennies made £1). He displayed a selection of fish which every Friday morning he

hawked on a large barrow along local streets. The area between the Fish shop and railway line was a large allotment ground which was extensively worked during the war years, now a car park.

Opposite the allotments was the Post Office (post master - Enoch Raines) He was assisted by his two sisters. It also served as a general household store. Many of the goods for sale were displayed hanging from hooks in the ceiling i.e. pots and pans, garden sieves, enamel jugs and bowls also coal shovels and scuttles.

Then there was the Signal Box. Mr Post operated the gates by turning a large hand wheel to open or close them, they slowly swung across the road. He was watched with great interest when traffic and people were waiting for the gates to open.

On the lower corner of Solomon Road was an A.R.P (air raid post) shelter constructed of concrete with steps leading down for their safety. This was manned by volunteers, one of whom was my father. Tufton Road corner was Mr Briggs, General Store & Tobacconist. Also on rare occasions he sold Dinky toys. All young boys were keen to collect these model airplanes. Next door was Mr Albert Petts, the boot and shoe repairer. He was in great demand to mend footwear, he also sold rubber heels, quarter irons, hobnails and pieces of leather and shoe brads. My father was a regular customer as he used to sole and heel the families shoes, soles wore out quickly as people had to walk everywhere.

On the corner of Webster Road was Wilkins an Iron Mongers and Garen Tool shop. They kept a large display of things which could be used in the country to catch vermin. In the shop a trap door led down to the cellar, Mr Wilkins or his son would go down to fill your can with paraffin. Also for items not regularly sold. Customers were amazed to see Nelly Wilkin grab a fist full of tin tacks with her bare hands to weigh - a real tough old lady.

Arnolds fruit and vegetable shop was opposite on the corner of Hothfield Road. All the produce for sale was locally grown. May Worley's Newsagents was further up the road. She was later joined by her brother who rode a large framed bicycle when doing his evening

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round. A few doors up a Barbers had the traditional red & white striped pole .  
Perks the Grocer was on the corner of Longley Road. Fridays were a treat for us as they sold small beef sausages, half the size of a modern chipolata, which were cooked for Sunday breakfast. The Co-op Butchers was a few doors up. Sides of meat hung from the ceiling. Meat was boned, chopped, cut and weighed to supply the rations for each family. Three men Mr Lacy, Mr Stevens and Mr Parnell cut and served the rations 4oz of meat per person during the war and for some time afterwards.  
Further up Mr Frank Rule's Newsagent & Tobacconists kept a selection of snuff which was weighed on special scales for very small quantities. The paper boys and young girls delivered to all of Rainham. Next was another butchers 'Kemsley' who also displayed their sides of meat hung from rails.  
At the top of Station Road opposite the school I attended was Rainham Co-op divided into two sections (grocery & provisions and Drapery & Millinery) The grocery side had a big display of goods on sale in the window and rashers of bacon were cut to order. The haberdashery side had little to display as this was the era of 'make do and mend' or knitting replacements where possible.  
Some elderly residents may have fond memories of other places inn Station Road which I have omitted. Dick Grice 01634 363516

## Rainham Community Orchard

The orchard was born of a conversation between the landowner, Jimmy Zammitt, and Hamish Mackay Miller in 2014. A volunteer project from the start , the aim was to recover a neglected orchard while encouraging wildlife and flora. Any profits were and are donated to various conservation charities including Kent Wildlife Trust.

The first two years were hard work as volunteer numbers dwindled to a handful. Jungle clearance rather than orchard management best describes that period and we remember the early pioneers with gratitude. Gradually we brought the orchard into better shape. It is now a constant round of mowing, strimming, weeding, mulching and pruning but we now have the numbers to engage in other activities. Our organisation has been loose and consensual and we have progressed as much by trial and error as any

more formal means. We discussed and agreed most things at our post work tea, coffee and cake gatherings, which often featured home-made offerings from volunteers. Sadly Covid means that we now stand in a well distanced circle instead and the catering and our occasional barbecues are no longer possible.

In addition to maintaining what we have we have also planted over forty new trees, predominantly traditional varieties. These are a mixture of donations from Brogdale and grafted specimens. The latter were the work of the late John Hill, such a knowledgeable and thoughtful member of our group. John was interested in promoting wildlife in the orchard and instigated the building of log pile refuges, bird boxes and feeding stations and the planting of wild flowers. These and other, similar ventures have been enthusiastically continued by other volunteers.

The Pick Your Own Weekends that we hold each autumn are a focus for our work and give us the chance to show off the orchard and meet the people of Medway. It is a reward for us all to see the pleasure that they and their children take from their time in the orchard. This year we took over £4500 – a record.

We meet every Tuesday and Thursday from about 9.30am and visitors and volunteers are always welcome. We also have juice for sale on site. We have a Facebook group Rainham Community Orchard which carries news and pictures if you want to take a virtual look.

Jo Elsmore. Email orchard@thenet.uk.net

## Rainham Active Retirement Association

RainARA is a large group of retired or semi-retired people who normally meet up weekly at The Oast Community Centre for various sporting-type activities, including yoga, short mat bowls, short tennis, keep fit, pilates and line dancing, together with social activities, monthly meetings, holidays, etc. We were set up more than 20 years ago under the umbrella of KentARA and many friendships have been formed over those years. Together with many other organisations, however, we have not been able to meet up since March, and all of our special activities and monthly speakers have had to be postponed. We have endeavoured to keep in touch with our members via our Newsletters and are all looking forward to the time when we can resume our activities and renew our friendships. If any of your readers would like further information or feel that they would like to join us once we are up and running again, they are welcome to contact me on rainarakent@gmail.com or 01634 365103.

Pat Butler, Secretary, RainARA

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# Nature Notes

## COSMO NATURE NOTES FOR OCTOBER

I was recently given a copy of "Panoramas of English Villages", published in 1993. In it the authors claim that "Villages are eternal. Nothing in the 20<sup>th</sup> century seems to portray old-age values as powerfully as villages do". As it so happens, I have a related book entitled "Boxley Village Memories" by Robin Ambrose, published in 2014, which contains memories mostly of the first seven decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. I wondered what age-old values the Boxley inhabitants revealed by their memories. I therefore visited Boxley on a fine Autumnal day, paying particular attention to certain people and places mentioned in the book. Boxley is on the road to Penenden Heath Maidstone via Bredhurst and the road through it is called The Street. I began my visit at The Green, at one end of which is The King's Arms and at the other the Church of St Mary and All Saints. I had read that, in the past, the pub had been well patronised by farm workers at the many mixed farms in and around the village. It was particularly crowded on pay days and this was so into the 1960s. A regular patron of the King's Arms was the Reverend Hale, described as "Boxley's last gentleman parson." Not able to ride a horse or drive a car, he would visit his parishioners on foot or by bicycle. He was seen as a man of the world who enjoyed a drink. Adjacent to the pub is Forge Lane, at the end of which, now a dwelling, was the forge of the village blacksmith, at one time Harry Hills. From the top of the Lane one could often see thousands upon thousands of red poppies growing in crops of wheat. Today the view of one of serried rows of vines.

Back on The Street, and heading up it, I passed a red brick terrace of houses, the first one of which, behind a red telephone box, was "The Nurses' House." One of the nurses was Winifred Kendall and another was Evelyn Trousdell who was remembered as "a sweet and gentle lady". The Parish Nurses wore cloaks and bonnets, travelled to their patients by bicycle and carried their equipment in a black Gladstone Bag. The wages and expenses of the nurses were paid from a Fund to which the well-off ladies of the Parish donated. At the other end of the terrace once lived the village carpenter and wheelwright, Isaac Cripps. His

workshop was next to his house and, after his death, it was turned into a garage which now stands disused. His wife cared for the two young girls of Mrs Styles at Boxley House and she was known, not unnaturally, as Nanny Cripps. Further up The Street is a detached red brick house with a bright red front door which was once The Woodman Inn. It was favoured by members of the Cyclists Touring Club, the Medway Wheelers and the Maidstone Aces motorcyclists. Further still up The Street, where the modern houses are, was a large cherry orchard which, in July, was full of the horse drawn, colourful caravans of local gypsies who picked the cherries.

Once upon a time, the Parish had a policeman. PC Ted Kirby served after the First World War and another, more recently, was PC Tom Rumble who patrolled his patch on a heavy bicycle. Occasionally he would have to visit places on the top of the Downs, which involved pushing his bike up Boxley Hill. He carried a pair of binoculars which enabled him to observe likely suspects in the countryside. He kept a close watch for youths out catching rabbits with ferrets and nets, shooting plump young rooks, poaching trout in the grounds of Place House and, less seriously, scrumping apples and cherries. Tom spent many hours supervising the dipping of sheep, a requirement of the law. Gypsies were a problem when setting up camp on private land but poachers were a much bigger problem. In 1945 the Church of England Primary School in The Street closed and the children had to go to school in Maidstone. Vicky Sadler remembers walking home from Eastborough School and, on hot, summer days, she and her friends would take off their socks and shoes and paddle in the sheep wash, off Tyland Lane, and through which ran the chalk stream known as Boxley Brook. The cold spring water was clear and was pure enough to drink. In due course the old school became the village hall and here met the Young People's Fellowship, set up by the Rev Tom Pritchard. It was a great success but was wound down in 1958, sometime after Rev Tom moved on. On leaving with her father, Tom's daughter Jan had said that "growing up in beautiful Boxley, and especially living in the Vicarage, with its wonderful gardens, was such a privilege and one that I shall never forget."

On the fine Autumn day of my visit I had noted the fiery mixture of the yellow and crimson leaves of the

wild cherry trees along the edge of Boxley Wood; the gold, orange and purple foliage of the large beech trees next to the church and the golden yellow leaves of the field maples down Tyland Lane. I have not left myself any room to write about the domestic staff who worked at Boxley House and Place House. Sufficient to say that, the stories told in Robin Ambrose's book, have indicated much kindness and concern by the land-owning families but set in a time when everybody knew their place. Men and boys would raise their caps or tug their forelocks, while the girls would curtsy. Despite hard working lives with basic housing and within a rigid class structure, people were able to make their own amusements, survive two world wars, and find contentment and support within a close-knit community." ..... Age-old, 20<sup>th</sup> century, village values, I think.

Joe Ennis

## MEMORIES OF RAINHAM

Dear Editor,

I live in Devon but whenever I visit my mother in Parkwood I browse through Action Forum. On one front cover was a picture of the St. Margaret's Church Choir June 1963. I was 15 years old when the picture was taken and it all came flooding back! I started to remember not only those in the picture, but also those not in the picture.

I remember most of the adults in the choir and look back with particular affection on Harry Freegard, the Choirmaster, who was a hard taskmaster but also a very fair, friendly and encouraging man. He had a good sense of humour that managed to manifest itself even under the pressures of learning a new anthem within a relatively short time frame. Harry asked his daughter Alison(?) to play the flute during the service on one occasion and I remember being absolutely transfixed by the beautiful sound that she created. I am sure that sound was responsible for my burgeoning love of music.

I remember with particular affection the Kimbell brothers. I was at school with the Richard (we attended Gillingham Tech' when it was in Gardner Street) but found equal encouragement and enthusiasm in his elder brother Michael. I admired the academic approach that they obviously had instilled into them

by their parents. I also admired their superior knowledge of music, and the fact that in spite of this they never made me feel inferior in any way. Reverend Clifford was always a pleasant and approachable man, as was his Curate of the time Brian Birchmore. Brian was excellent with young people and had been given the task of running a church youth club ("Questors") in the church hall. The club proved to be very successful guided by this energetic, enthusiastic, inspiring and likeable man.

Richard Carleton was not only a member of the church choir but was also an adept conductor and choir-leader himself with his own music group with which I was involved for a very pleasant, albeit short, period. Again I was probably batting above my average but it did not stop my enjoyment - even if it did everyone else's! Richard's father Bill was my metalwork teacher at Gillingham Tech' and was a massive influence on my younger years. Richard shared his father's drive, enthusiasm, sense of humour, intellect and his way with people - it always proved to be a pleasant experience with either of the Carletons.

I am pretty sure it was the Hicks brothers that encouraged me to join the church choir. I lived in High Dewar Road at the time and the Hicks family lived in Solomon Road. I went to school with Terry but the whole family including older brothers Paul and Richard, and their mother and father were all so positive, encouraging and welcoming and all proved to be good friends. Terry and Paul were both in the choir but do not appear in the photograph, as they must have left when their voices broke - whereas, I continued as a tenor.

The Questors Youth Club finished when Brian Birchmore left Rainham. Alistair Mackay Miller persuaded his father, Jamie, to allow him to invite some friends to meet in the cellar of their home, Macklands in Station Road. This was a great venue but the ceiling was riddled with woodworm so a group of us volunteered to scrape off the rotten wood and clean it up. Many hours of very dusty but enjoyable work revealed the condition was more serious than at first thought and needed professional treatment. When this was complete Mr Mackay Miller agreed that we could meet there regularly. Enthused by the go-ahead we constructed a bar (for soft drinks) and decked out the cellar in the correct youth-enticing style of the time and we looked to book the first group.

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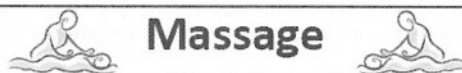
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I am not sure how long the venue continued but it was very successful if gauged by the numbers that attended. However, it fizzled out, spoilt by the bad behaviour of a few. I cannot help but think back and ask what kind of people would allow us to engage a music group with high output speakers to play underneath their lounge for several hours, allow the access of many strangers through their front door and be oh-so-tolerant in many other ways. The answer is Jamie and Phyl Mackay Miller.

Yours sincerely  
Bob Watson

### Editor's note

This article was one of a number in Barbara's unused file but without the date it was received nor any contact details for Bob so I have no way to contact him. It interests me as I was also a member of the Questors youth club but am several years older than him. Our family moved to Macklands in 1956 when I was 10. My brother Alistair, mentioned in the article, is 4 years my junior and lives in Faversham. Our sister Pippa (West) lives in Eastling.

My parents became involved with St Margeret's Church and Rainham life in general as soon as we moved. We had an acre of garden with a large lawn and in 1959 they opened it for a Garden Party to raise funds for the Church. One attraction was bowling for a live pig on view in an old sty in the back garden. It would be interesting to hear of readers' memories of that and of the Cellar Club.

### BIRD WISE

Bird Wise is a partnership between local authorities and conservation organisations in north Kent. Their objective is to ensure that people are able to enjoy the coastal areas whilst protecting birds and wildlife that depend on the Thames, Medway and Swale estuaries. **How you can help protect birds on the north Kent marshes**

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Cold and wet weather can make life tough for birds and when they are disturbed they can stop feeding, or may even fly away wasting valuable energy. They need to spend as much time as possible feeding to ensure they can make the long flight back to their breeding ground in spring.

### Good behaviour guide on land

Stay a good distance away from feeding or resting birds.

Follow signs and requests and keep to paths.

Keep your dog under close control, on a short lead if unreliable.

Exercise your dog away from birds and never allow dogs to chase birds.

Stay on the landward side of the sea wall whenever possible.

Always clean up after your dog and take all rubbish home.

### Good behaviour guide on the water

At high tide stay away from roosting birds.

Avoid landing on the islands, they are used for breeding in summer and roosting in winter.

Keep noise levels low.

Only use authorised launch sites.

Keep to the speed limits.

View wildlife from at least 100m away and move if they become agitated.

Extracts from a leaflet published by Bird Wise

To find out more see [www.birdwise.org.uk](http://www.birdwise.org.uk) email [birdwise@medway.gov.uk](mailto:birdwise@medway.gov.uk) Facebook @birdwisenk

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**Gillingham and Rainham Local History Society** Twydall Evangelical Church, 56/58 Goudhurst Road, ME8 6LQ usually second Friday each month, September to June, 2.00 - 4.00pm. Annual subscription £20, Visitors £3 per meeting. Tea/coffee available for small charge. Details contact Val Barrand **07947 583327**, email [lupusrufus@sky.com](mailto:lupusrufus@sky.com)

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**Medway Antique & Collector's Club** meet second Tuesday each month Rainham Cricket Club, Berengrave Lane, Rainham ME8 7NA. 7.30 for 8.00pm. Visitors are always welcome, £2.50 per night (annual membership £25) information call Cyril Baldwin on **01634 851512**

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