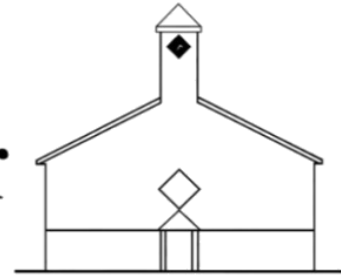


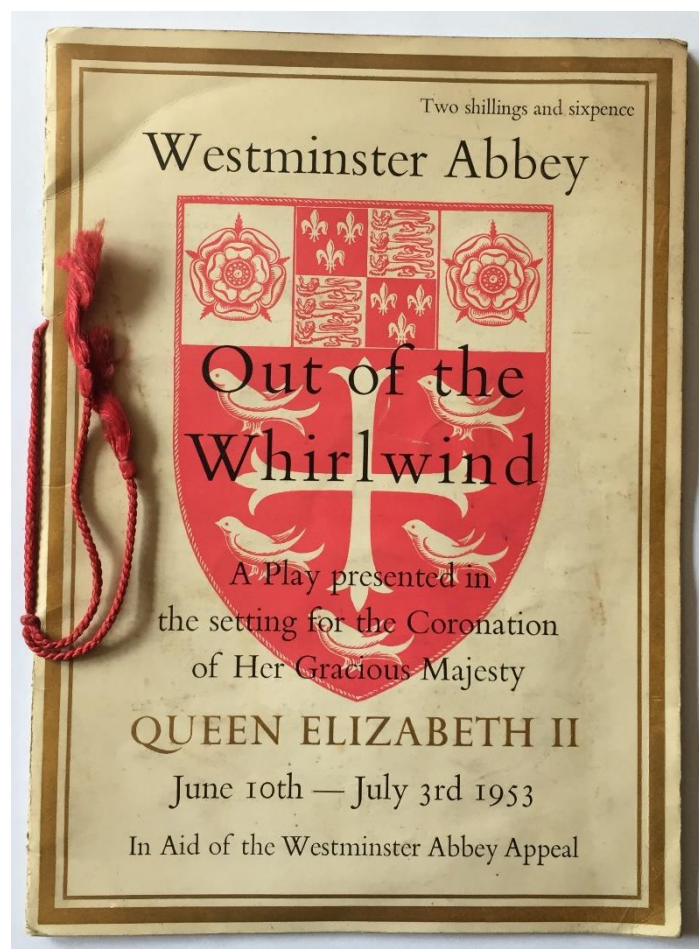
# The Clock Tower



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## Coronation Memories



The commemoration programme for the Coronation Play – which had an important Medway connection. See the second part of our *Clock Tower* Special Feature, *Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee*, on page 25.

### ALSO INSIDE!

The final part of Peter Cook's account of the life of Medway artist, Richard Dadd.

### PLUS

FOMA Secretary, Chris de Coulon Berthoud's fascinating encounter! See pages 22 and 5 respectively.



### ***PhD Graduation***

Dr Alex Thomas , FOMA Webmaster, photographed at his PhD graduation at Bristol University on 15 July. Congratulations, Alex!

### ***Book Launch at Owletts***

On 11 June 2022, at Owletts in Cobham, the Baker family hosted the launch of a new book by John Stewart (pictured) entitled, *Sir Herbert Baker, Architect to the British Empire*. More on page 9.



Camilla Baker is hoping to start a Baker Society to celebrate and raise the profile of Sir Herbert's work. As one of Medway's least recognised sons, this is long overdue. Find out more on page 13.

## *Chairman's Letter*

Elaine Gardner



As I write this the temperature has happily decreased to a very pleasant 25 degrees, or 77 if you still remember Fahrenheit. I don't mind the odd few days in the very low 30s but you can keep anything higher! In Australia it's fine, my brother has a swimming pool and air-conditioning but without those, no thanks!

Since life has been getting back to normal, I have been volunteering at the Medway Archives Centre (MAC) helping Archivist, Elspeth Millar by listing the contents of collections not yet sorted so that they can be made available for research. I began with 16 boxes of material which came from J Collis & Son of Strood, ironmongers, agricultural engineers and gas and heating engineers. It was somewhat alarming that, when telling friends what I had been doing, they looked at me and said, who are they? Am I so old that I was able to go into their Strood shop to purchase assorted ironmongery items? Wonderfully old fashioned, with banks of drawers behind the counter holding every size nut and bolt you could want and an assistant in his brown overall – think the *four candles* sketch of the *Two Ronnies*. Collis' business sadly declined after the likes of Homebase and B&Q came on the scene and now you have to buy a whole packet of screws, nuts or bolts when you many only want a couple. Not only that, but as the packets are sealed you can't even check it is the size you want. Thankfully you can still find a few individual ironmonger businesses, like the one in Rochester, Johnstones, who are really helpful. Don't let them vanish like J Collis! Their site in Strood, situated between The Prince of Wales public house and the railway arch has all been redeveloped including all the land behind it to Janes Creek and beyond so no trace of the shop at numbers 25-27 High St or its engineering premises around Pelican Creek exist. There must be other members out there who still remember - or possibly worked for – J Collis and I'm sure MAC would love to hear your memories.



*J Collis, 25-27 High Street, Strood Medway Archives Centre.*

Helen Worthy at MAC regularly sends the Local Studies newsletter to our Editor, Amanda Thomas who passes it on to members and this always give news of forthcoming exhibitions and talks. If you ignore these, you have missed some fascinating exhibitions – alas too late now! In June/July you could possibly have seen yourself in a photograph as a child in the 1950s on a *Medway Queen* outing to Margate or Southend. To celebrate the Medway Print Festival, MAC mounted a fascinating exhibition of print items they hold in their collections (see Elspeth Millar’s report on page 6 and the inside back cover). These ranged from the traditional engravings that predated photographs of local views, through to events posters, tickets, book plates and company adverts covering the last century or more. At the time of writing, the August exhibition about Medway and Thames sailing barges had yet to be displayed, but I managed to catch a sneak preview the other day when visiting the Archive and it is well worth a visit – really interesting and informative. Depending on printing and the distribution of this issue of *The Clock Tower*, you might also still have time to catch the talk on 16 August, *100 years in the life of Thames sailing barge ‘Pudge’* by John Rayment. Further details on page 34.

This issue of *The Clock Tower* is full of the usual fascinating articles, and I was particularly interested to read Philip MacDougall’s *Medway’s Outer Defences* on page 14. In it, I see he says that the fort at Grain is no longer there. I suppose that’s because you can no longer see it, but technically it *is* still there, buried under a mountain of soil as it was impossible to knock down! I remember sitting on the playing field one summer with friends (back in the late 50s, I think) watching one of those wrecking balls attempt to knock the walls down. We had never seen a machine like that before, but it was no match for the fort, as after a few days demolition was abandoned - the wrecking ball was getting nowhere!

Last, but by no means least, we were delighted to hear the news that our FOMA Webmaster, Alex Thomas (pictured above) officially received his Doctorate from the University of Bristol on 15 July. Well done, Alex! It was a frustrating process delayed by Covid and I know others on our committee involved with research and qualifications have also been delayed - here’s wishing them success too.

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## *New Members*

A warm welcome to new FOMA member Gillian Hakli from Finland and new life member, John Payne of Rainham.

## *Obituary*

We were most saddened to hear the news that Geoffrey Maytum of Strood, a FOMA member since 2008, passed away in March. FOMA Membership Secretary, Jean Skilling sent our condolences to Geoffrey’s son Jeremy who replied:

“He always spoke with such fondness of Strood and the surrounding area. He never really moved far all his life, he knew every inch of footpath, field, wood!”

## *Secretary's Report*

Chris de Coulon Berthoud



Having weathered the terrible heat which caused my laptop to go into a meltdown as it overheated along with the rest of us, I'm grateful for what seems like a less extreme summer ahead.



One of the pleasures of working in the Archive is the chance to meet the many interesting people who come in to use the resources and learn a little more about their research. One such person who has been coming to MAC to research his family's long historical association with the Medway Towns is John Lester. If you live in Rochester, you may well have seen Mr Lester around as he works to keep our streets clear of litter.

It was during the course of his family research that he discovered his three times great-uncle, Abraham Lester, and his nephew Charles Lester, both butchers, were the men who discovered the body of Robert Dadd after his murder by his son, Richard Dadd. It is a reminder of the richness of stories that surround us, and the close ties to the past to be found around every corner.

*John Lester with Chris.*

The story involving John Lester's ancestors was relayed in February (*The Clock Tower*, Issue 65) in the first part Peter Cook's *Richard Dadd*:

Early the following morning Charles Lester, a butcher of Eastgate, Rochester, and his uncle Abraham Lester, were walking through Cobham, en route to Wrotham market. Later, at the inquest into Robert Dadd's death, Lester said,

'A short distance before we came to the stile next the village of Cobham, I saw a man lying on his face in the grass in Cobham Park, about 30 yards from the road ... I said to my uncle, "There lies a man either dead or asleep." On examining the body, I found the deceased quite dead. I saw the shepherd coming across the Park and beckoned to him. I then turned the deceased over on his back and noticed blood on his face and left hand. There was also blood on the ground.'

The final part of Peter Cook's story on Richard Dadd can be read on page 22.



## Medway Archives Centre News

Elspeth Millar



Hello Clock Tower readers!

Since the last *Clock Tower* update, we have had a number of great exhibitions and events.

Our Platinum Jubilee roadshow events were held in most of the Medway branch libraries and community hubs between April and June and reached over 170 people.

We have had two colourful displays in the foyer area over June and July, one curated by the Medway Archives Centre team for the Medway Print Festival. This eye-catching display illustrated the variety of printed images we look after. From the earliest printed book in the collections, which was printed in 1599, to 20th century artwork, this display showcased some of our favourite examples of printing.

We were also pleased to host *Medway Queen: beside the seaside*, an exhibition by the *Medway Queen* Preservation Society. The display charts the *Medway Queen*'s history beginning as an excursion vessel in 1924 with additional panels covering the Spithead Naval Reviews and the Second World War, where she assisted with the evacuation of children in 1939, was converted for minesweeping, and took part in the evacuation from Dunkirk. After the war the *Medway Queen* returned to operating leisure routes and her 'day job' of excursions across the Thames Estuary. Taken out of service in 1963 to be used as a nightclub, she was returned to Medway in 2013. The *Medway Queen* is cared for by a small team of volunteers who welcome visitors aboard as part of The *Medway Queen* Preservation Society.

We currently have a display in Twydall Community Hub entitled, *Twydall: From Stone Age to modern housing estate* which charts Twydall from the earliest time of its settlement until its development as a housing estate in the 1950s. Maps and plans are used to document the development of Twydall over the centuries. The display is available to view at Twydall Community Hub during normal opening hours until the end of September, but will be on display at Medway Archives Centre from November until the end of January.

From 25 July until 31 August we are offering three free family history trails, two around Strood and one around Gillingham. The trails can be collected from Medway Archives Centre and Gillingham Community Hub, or email [archives@medway.gov.uk](mailto:archives@medway.gov.uk) for a pdf copy.

In August we will be hosting an exhibition from the Thames Sailing Barge Trust, entitled *Red Sails Over the Medway*. This free exhibition tells the story of the Thames Sailing Barge and its association with The River Medway. The exhibition is part of a project being undertaken by The Thames Sailing Barge Trust who own and operate the sailing barge, *Pudge* which was built at Strood and this year celebrates her 100th birthday.

In September and October, we will be hosting Wendy Cottam's *Gaia, Mother Nature* sculpture, currently on display in Strood Community Hub. Wendy is a Kent based artist, originating from Gravesend. Her most current work, *Gaia Mother Nature*, was inspired by local Strood born Victorian illustrator Anne Pratt, Strood and Medway wanderings, and panoramic views across the Thames Estuary. The sculpture is created from a variety of materials including wire, hemp string, plaster, oil paint and Bio resin.

We held a series of regular drop-in events on Saturday mornings between February and June; we are having a summer break but will be bringing these back in October. In September we are planning to take part in the Heritage Open Days and hope to provide a couple of behind-the-scenes tours.

Please keep an eye out via our newsletter and social media for news of forthcoming events in August, September, and October, and how to book if necessary; further information can also be found on page 34.

## **Staffing**

Adele Martin-Bowtell left Medway Archives Centre in June to pursue other career options, but we are lucky to welcome Emma Ovenden to the role of Medway Archives Centre Librarian! Emma has worked for Medway Libraries for a number of years and started on 25 July.

I am also pleased to have been able to welcome two new members to the team temporarily, Kirsty and Jamie, who have joined us for six months under the Government's Kickstart Scheme. Kirsty has been working as Collections Information Assistant and has been helping with creating collection level records, listing uncatalogued collections, and creating content summaries for audio recordings. Jamie has been working as Digital Archive Assistant, digitising the Local Studies Photographic Collection (some of which is already online via the Medway Images website), digitising audio cassette material, undertaking work tasks from our Digital Preservation Strategic Plan 2021-2024 to ensure digital records currently stored on CDs are backed up.

## **Recent Acquisitions**

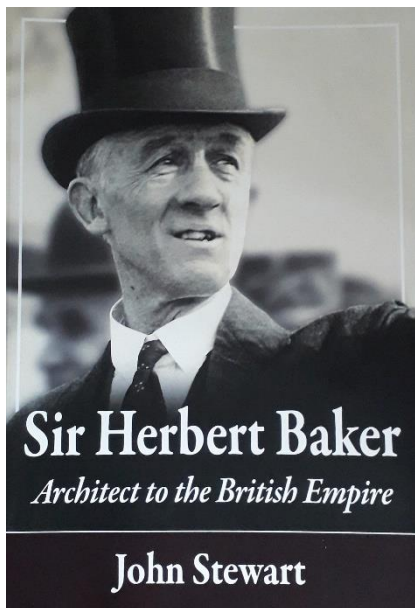
- Ref. DE1322, Ted Bates Personal Papers - Edward Bates was born in Chatham in 1930. He attended Kings School, Rochester (and was evacuated to Scotney Castle during 1939-1940). In 1951 he joined the family firm of Edward Bates Limited (a department store), and became Managing Director in 1966. The papers include personal correspondence (dated 1944-1978), and papers relating to Edward Bates' other personal and professional commitments, including the Wisdom Hospice, the Chatham Round Table, Medway College of Art, League of Friends of the Medway Hospitals, The Castle Group (Industrial Mission in Kent), Medway Health Authority, Winnowing Club, and the Medway and Gillingham Chamber of Commerce.
- P150B/11/1 – Poor Rates book, 1803-1812, St Nicholas Parish, Strood.
- DE1324, Medway Spinners, Dyers, and Weavers Association, 1983-2021. The object of the association was to promote interest and take part in the crafts of spinning, dyeing, weaving and knitting related subject. The collection includes event administration, meeting minutes, flyers and ephemera.
- DE769 (add), City of Rochester Society – CoRS scrapbooks, 1967-2022, and a full set of the CoRS newsletter, 1967-2021.

- DE1327, Janet Skinner, *Walking Through Medway* film. This film (digital copy), narrated and illustrated by Janet Skinner, shares memories of her childhood explorations of Medway during the 1950s and 1960s. The film includes more than thirty paintings depicting that period. Included are scenes of Wainscott, Frindsbury, Whitewall Creek, Upnor, Rochester and the Medway Towns in general. Skinner was raised in Wainscott and attended The Medway College of Art and Design (New Road) between 1970 – 1972.
- Acc. 1555., Bob Ratcliffe Collection (add.) – postcards of the Medway Towns (15 albums), photographic negatives (over 8 binders), box of various photographs of the Medway Towns.



## A Book Launch at Owletts

Amanda Thomas



On 11 June 2022 I was thrilled to attend the launch at Owletts in Cobham of *Sir Herbert Baker, Architect to the British Empire* by John Stewart (pictured). Keen *Clock Tower* readers will recall that this is the ancestral home of FOMA member Michael Baker and his family.



*The book.*

*Architect and author, John Stewart.*

Michael's book, *Travels of a Tin Trunk* was serialised over many issues of *The Clock Tower*, (Issue 43, August 2016 to Issue 60, November 2020) and at the start of this, Michael gives a brilliant synopsis of the history of the house and family:

'The name Owletts is thought to derive from a Huguenot named Houlet, a yeoman farmer. The house was built in 1684 by Bonham Hayes and his wife Elizabeth. They placed their initials and the date on the chimneys and on the fine plaster ceiling above the stair well. Originally standing four-square, with hipped roof and casement windows, it was altered by a later Hayes who added the parapet. In 1790 it changed hands, coming to Henry Edmeades, whose daughter Maria married Thomas Baker. Thomas and Maria celebrated by creating stained-glass windows in oeil-de-boeuf windows showing their family crests, and by adding portraits in the dining room of their fathers, Henry and Samuel Baker the builder.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps they also replaced the casement windows with sash. One of their grandsons was Herbert Baker, my grandfather, born in 1862 the 4<sup>th</sup> son of Thomas Henry, a farmer, and his wife Frances Georgina Baker. He trained as an architect and in 1892 followed a younger brother Lionel to South Africa to help him establish a fruit farm. There Herbert met Cecil Rhodes, who gave him work, and there he made a name for himself as an architect before returning to live at Owletts with his wife and cousin Florence Edmeades.

Herbert added a library for himself and opened up the front hall to create a living room with more fine plasterwork. He commissioned Arts and Crafts workmen and filled the house with artifacts brought home from South Africa. Close to his heart was the preservation of rural England, including Owletts and its cherry orchards. He gave the house and 25 acres to the National Trust in 1939. After his and my grandmother's death, my father took on the tenancy. I took it over in 1984.

It was here that Herbert and his siblings were raised during the prosperous years for yeoman farmers. As the children expanded into the upper floor in the 1870s, they would have watched their father add a north wing, not as well proportioned or generous as the original, to accommodate the servants. Their mother, Frances Georgina, ran the household with a staff of nine.<sup>2</sup>



*Owletts from the north-east, taken from Travels of a Tin Trunk.*



*Left: an example of the extraordinary plasterwork in the house, this on the landing ceiling, dated 1684; below: Michael Baker; photographs by Amanda Thomas.*





Michael (pictured above at the launch) has not lived at the house since 1994, but it is currently occupied by son David and his wife Bella, and Michael's daughter Camilla.; it is run by the National Trust. <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/owletts/>

Sir Herbert Baker came from a long line of builders and in November 2008, Michael discussed in *The Clock Tower* which 'Mr Baker' may have been responsible for the re-building of Strood Church in 1812 (see *The Clock Tower*, Issue November 2008, *Which Mr Baker? or By Nine Votes to Eight...*). Michael concluded in this that it was probably Samuel Baker Senior (1761-1836); it was this Samuel's son, Thomas, who married Maria Edmeades and went to live at her family home of Owletts.

On arrival at the book launch, Michael very kindly gave me a guided tour of the house and also introduced me to the author, John Stewart (see the inside front cover). As it was such a glorious summer day, the many guests - including Christoph Bull and MAC's Catharina Clement - were mostly outside and we were welcomed with a lovely cool drink. Later we were also treated to cucumber sandwiches and tea.

The launch itself was most interesting. Introduced by Camilla Baker, John stood under the clock which Sir Herbert had designed himself (see the photograph), and which displays times across the world. This was made to a design by Sir Herbert which was rejected by the Bank of England for their own interior but which he instead had made for Owletts.



*Camilla Baker and John Stewart underneath the glorious clock which was rejected by the Bank of England; photograph by Amanda Thomas.*

The background to the writing of the book was just as fascinating and it was hard to believe so many publishers had rejected the idea, particularly since John Stewart is an architect himself, and an established writer of architectural history. His proposal was eventually snapped up by the American publisher McFarland, who completely understood the enormous significance of Sir Herbert's contribution to architectural history and the need to set the record straight. As John explained, "I wrote this book because I'd always thought that Sir Herbert Baker had had something of a raw deal."

It is extraordinary that Baker should not have been remembered considering he won the Royal Institute of British Architects Gold Medal in 1926 and had a hand in designing some of the most iconic buildings in the world, such as the re-building of London's Bank of England. John gave a tantalising explanation:

"The rot started with Edwin Lutyens, who, after their falling out in India when he made a mistake which he sought to pin on Baker, did everything that he could to undermine his former friend's professional reputation. He was ably assisted by his best friend and client Edward Hudson, the founder of *Country Life* magazine. Hudson had used *Country Life* to build Lutyens' reputation and he then sadly allowed his then highly influential publication to be used in attack after attack on Baker's work. ... In an attempt to right the wrong, this book offers the first opportunity to consider his extraordinary architectural portfolio as a whole, because up until its publication, most people around the world seem to just know a little bit about Sir Herbert Baker."

The afternoon concluded with a thank-you from Camilla Baker, who is trying to establish a Baker Society – details below. This will no doubt be of enormous interest to FOMA members who understand the importance of remembering Medway people who have made their mark. It seems quite ludicrous that Lutyens is lauded as one of our greatest architects when so many of his landmark buildings and memorials were not conceived alone but rather together with Cobham's Sir Herbert Baker and whose visionary genius deserves to be celebrated.

*Sir Herbert Baker, Architect to the British Empire* by John Stewart, (McFarland, 2021), is available at all good bookshops and online, ISBN 978-1476684345

#### Notes

1. See Michael Baker's *The Samuel Bakers, Tradesmen of Kent*, 2008. Also *From Owletts to Iowa*, 2002.
2. Census of 1871, Civil parish of Cobham, page 31 from Ancestry.co.uk

## The Baker Society

Are you passionate about Medway history?  
Are you interested in historic buildings and architecture?

We need members AND someone to lead a new society to celebrate the life and work of Cobham's  
Sir Herbert Baker!

The aims of the society:

- To coordinate between the many aspects of Sir Herbert Baker's work, at home and abroad.
- To promote his values and ideals - excellence in craftsmanship, a sense of style, the potential of beauty to elevate society/the human experience
- To promote public access to his works
- To encourage a love of local Medway architecture
- To support life-long learning about architecture
- To catalogue and promote Baker's designs

In the words of his biographer, fellow architect John Stewart:

*Sir Herbert Baker was one of the country's most outstanding architects and as a friend of everyone from Cecil Rhodes to Lawrence of Arabia, he is one of the most interesting characters of early twentieth century Britain.*

*From London, through the commemoration of the empire's war dead in France, via South Africa and Australia to India, Baker celebrated the might of an empire that once ruled a quarter of the world. He was an intimate friend of many of the most fascinating men of his age, including Cecil Rhodes, Lawrence of Arabia, John Buchan, Jan Smuts and, of course, his fellow architect Sir Edwin Lutyens. After a Victorian architectural apprenticeship in London and on to becoming the most prolific architect of his age in South Africa, he built the new imperial capital of New Delhi in India with Lutyens, before returning to London. These built or rebuilt such landmark buildings as the Bank of England, South Africa House, India House, Rhodes House, and the stands for Lords Cricket Ground, as well as numerous churches and private houses.*

Please contact Camilla Baker at [info@herbertbaker.com](mailto:info@herbertbaker.com) if you are interested in getting involved.

## Medway's Outer Defences

Philip MacDougall



*On leaving university during the early 1970s, Philip moved to the Isle of Grain, taking up a teaching post at Hoo, writing the first of his books, The Story of the Hoo Peninsula. Over time his interests broadened, taking a particular interest in the dockyard, and of course witnessing the effects of the closure, and the slow revival that followed. Among his recent books are a three-part Secret series, each book focussing little known aspects of the three towns. He has written several books on Chatham dockyard, a history of Short Brothers of Rochester and one focussing primarily on the one-time experimental air station on the Isle of Grain. His next book will look at the important alliance that once existed with Russia and which brought so many Russian seamen to Medway. While Philip no longer lives within the Medway area, his daughter and grandchildren live in Rochester*

The Isle of Grain, standing at the confluence of the Thames and Medway, was once of massive strategic military importance. Here was located a large coastal fortress, numerous gun batteries that overlooked both the Thames Estuary and River Medway together with searchlight and observation posts as well as later anti-invasion features.



*The range of fortification and defence works on the Isle of Grain existing during World War One.*

It was the geographical position of Grain that made it so important. Following upon the invention of rifled shell-firing ordnance during the mid-nineteenth century, it became possible for heavy guns mounted at Grain, and working in co-operation with ordnance on the Isle of Sheppey, to effectively prevent a potential seaborne enemy making an attack on London or bombarding the dockyard at Chatham. Recourse to history reminded our Victorian forebears that that is exactly what the Dutch had attempted in 1667, first sailing into the Thames towards London before reversing their course to enter the Medway. Therefore, Grain was not only on the front-line to prevent any similar attack, but could provide flanking fire to defend Sheerness and its dockyard from enemy attack.





*Dummy Battery, Isle of Grain. This was the original location of Grain Battery sited during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century on marshland to the south of the three-gun tower, with Dummy Battery replacing the earlier battery in 1905.*

Today, a walk around the coastal frontage of the Isle of Grain offers much evidence of those former defence works, although much has also been covered over or entirely demolished. Impossible to ignore is the three-gun tower located on Grain Spit to the east side of the island where it faces Sheerness. This dates to 1855 and for many decades to follow was armed only with more ancient smooth cannons, one aimed to fire directly into the Thames and two firing across the Medway. Viewed, within a few years, as being totally inadequate for the defence of the Thames and Medway, the three-gun tower was joined, during the following two decades by a large heavily armed coastal fort and an auxiliary battery. While the fort no longer exists, the site of the auxiliary battery is easily located, built on Smithfield Marshes where the existing Dummy Battery, completed in 1905, replaced the original Auxiliary Battery. By the time World War One broke out, Grain had been considerably reinforced, having gained both additional gun batteries and searchlight posts, two of which are to be found on the Grain shoreline opposite Sheerness. To further prevent an enemy accessing the Medway a boom, formed of a heavy chain, was placed across the Medway between the three-gun tower and Sheerness Fort and which could be raised in the event of an enemy threat. The remains of the chain are still clearly visible, wrapped around the base of the three-gun tower that, itself, served as the anchor point for the chain. At the same time, a further gun battery, the boom defence battery, was constructed and given a set of quick-firing guns.

World War Two brought further change, with several of the batteries constructed now converted to mounting quick firing guns to meet the threat of fast-moving German E-boats attacking merchant shipping bound for the Pool of London. To prevent an enemy landing, obstructions were placed on the beach at Grain, known as *Dragon's Teeth*, these are visible on the north side of Grain. At this time, the three-gun tower, which had been disarmed, was re-utilised, provided with mountings for quick-firing guns and a raised observation tower. To control and direct the heavier guns remaining on Grain, a concrete observation tower, now demolished, was also built on the outbreak of war, this overlooking both the Medway and Thames.



*The now demolished World War Two observation tower at Grain. It was equipped with a range finder that probably worked in co-operation with the 6in guns of the nearby fort.*

*Images from the author's collection.*

*FOMA member, Philip MacDougall has written extensively on the Medway Towns, with a number of books to his name. Later this year his Military Heritage of the Thames Estuary will be published and features a number of important defence works that lie within the Medway area.*

## Compare and Contrast

Brian Joyce



*Brian Joyce is the author of several books on the history of the Medway Towns, including The Chatham Scandal and Dumb Show and Noise. He is a past President of the Chatham Historical Society and was on the FOMA Committee. Brian was born in Chatham and continues to take a great interest in the history of the Towns, however, he now lives in Tyldesley in Greater Manchester. Since moving to the North West in 2014, he has contributed articles to many journals specialising in the history of his new local area.*

During the week beginning Monday 16 September 1957, a variety show played at the Ritz Cinema in Chatham. The bill included a trio of dancers – the Three Martinis, Reg Thomson, a comedian, puppeteers and jugglers, singers Harriott (father of Ainsley) and Evans, and ‘TV Wise Crackers’ Mike and Bernie Winters.

While these acts provided what the *Chatham Observer* called ‘good down to earth entertainment’, many if not most people in the crowds yelling and jostling outside the Ritz that week were not particularly interested in Harriott and Evans or Mike and Bernie. Instead, the main attraction was a twenty-year-old cockney christened Thomas Hicks but known as Tommy Steele.

*Tommy Steele, 1958; Wikimedia Commons.*



The *Observer*’s anonymous reporter, ‘DME’, whose observations are repeated here, believed that the excited audience at the Ritz on the first night were there ‘for the sole purpose of seeing for themselves just what hysterical effect this young man has on his teenage audience...’ DME was not disappointed by Tommy and his support band The Steelmen, who ‘played their instruments in a manner which had to be seen to be believed.’ Steele’s performance certainly whipped up younger members of the audience into a frenzy: ‘Some of his more ardent fans – mostly young girls dressed in all manner of strange costume – screamed every time he wiggled his big toe, jumped about the stage in his pegged blue jeans and silk open-necked shirt, or ruffled his already tousled mop of blonde hair. Others made brash exhibitions of pulling out their hair while sitting enthralled on the edge of their seats.’ The modern reader will perhaps be surprised that these teenagers, hysterical though they might have been, had sufficient self-control to keep to the seats that their parents had probably paid for. Certainly, DME expressed disappointment that nobody tried to storm the stage.

After the show, hordes of excited teenage girls thronged Chatham High Street, anxious to get a closer glimpse of their idol. A rumour spread among them that Tommy was planning to escape out of the rear exit and the crowd scrambled into the car park behind the Ritz chanting, “We want Tommy! We want Tommy!” However, they had been duped. Steele now slipped out into a fairly deserted High Street and a waiting police car, ‘which quickly conveyed him to a secret local destination, where his own super de luxe sports car was waiting to take him back to London.’

Overall, DME had formed a reasonably favourable impression of Tommy Steele. He reported that once the singer had finished his act, changed his clothes and combed his tousled hair, ‘Tommy is a most likeable young man, true to the Cockney character.’ However, some journalists had a different experience that same night. This time, an anonymous *Chatham Standard* reporter visited the Ritz with a local member of the Tommy Steele Fan Club. The two visited backstage a few hours before the show and the reporter was disappointed by the star’s reaction: ‘When I went to his dressing room a couple of hours before he was due to go on stage and suggested he should be photographed with a local member of his fan club, he said, “I won’t be photographed with anyone!”’ The reporter then sought out Steele’s manager, who scribbled a note to his client, saying, “Go back with this note; that will do the trick!”



However, this was not to be as the singer still refused to talk to the pair, telling them in no uncertain terms to go away. ‘And so,’ wrote the frustrated reporter, ‘we publish no photograph of the *teenage idol*,’ and the *Chatham Standard* did not publish an account of the show.

*Marty Wilde, Wikimedia Commons.*

A little over twelve months later, another variety roadshow arrived in Chatham. This time, the supporting attractions included the Scottish folk singer Nancy Whiskey, who sang five songs including her hit *Freight Train*. The bill was completed by Dave Gray, a comedian and the John Barry Seven. The *Chatham News* reporter covering the event misguidedly believed that the latter had ‘... proved that they are one of Britain’s foremost *rock* groups.’ The show was performed at the Chatham Empire, a venue which had outlived its music hall origins, but which was finding it difficult to survive in the television era. A *Chatham Observer* reporter noted that it was rare to see queues for the Empire outside the pantomime season. However, on that February evening in October 1958, there was quite a throng, mainly composed of excited teenagers with a sprinkling of older people (their parents perhaps). The *Observer* reporter concluded that the jostling crowd were anxious to see what ‘the new £400 a week rock n roll star was like.’ This nineteen-year-old phenomenon was Reginald Smith, better known as Marty Wilde.

The *Chatham News* journalist was impressed with Wilde’s performance: ‘He showed he had complete control of a sometimes-over-enthusiastic audience and silenced cat calls and quips which might have upset a lesser entertainer.’ When one of the adolescent girls screamed more loudly than the others, Marty teasingly replied, “See you afterwards, honey,” a response which might be deemed inappropriate today.

A representative from the *Chatham Observer* found himself sitting near Mary Stevens, a fifteen-year-old Marty Wilde fan. He later wrote that, ‘Throughout the twenty odd minutes he was on stage, she sighed, sobbed, wept and threw her arms out violently towards the stage. When she was not thus occupied, she grabbed a harmless young man next to her and beat her brow on his shoulder.’ When Marty sang his latest hit *Endless Sleep*, Mary ‘... went haywire as those slim hips moved in all directions.’ After the show, the *Observer* correspondent guided the girl to a quiet spot to help her calm down. When Mary discovered that her rescuer was a reporter, she clutched at his coat collar, begging him to get her backstage to meet her idol. Presumably the journalist sent a note to Wilde’s team, because the star dispatched one of them to fetch the pair. On being introduced to Marty, the girl gasped and burst into tears. He spoke to her quietly and soothingly, signed his autograph and escorted the tearful fan outside.

There were two performances that evening, and a *Chatham News* reporter interviewed Wilde between them. The star was sipping from a glass of lager and lime and the journalist noted that, ‘I found him to be a likeable guy who has not been turned by his success.’ On being asked how he dealt with autograph hunters, Marty replied: “Well, if they’re creating a racket, I tell them to shut up, and when they’re quiet, I sign. I rarely refuse to sign – only if I’m really – and I mean really – tired.”

Tommy Steele and Marty Wilde were two young working-class men at the beginning of meteoric careers. Steele later abandoned rock and roll in favour of acting and light entertainment and went from strength to strength. Despite dabbling with acting himself, Wilde continued to perform rock and roll. His career stalled after his marriage in 1959, when many of his teenage fans deserted him. Nevertheless, Marty continued to tour for decades to come. It would be nice to think that Mary Stevens remained a loyal fan.

## Postscript

The following has little to do with either Tommy or Marty, but I couldn’t resist adding it.



*Mott the Hoople, 1974; Wikimedia Commons.*

On 2 December 1973, the band Mott the Hoople headlined a show at the Central Hall in Chatham. The day afterwards the *Evening Post* contained a review, in which its reporter commented on the support act:

‘Queen, the supporting band, seemed to be popular too, which surprised me. They looked like a cardboard cut out of a rock band, superbly dressed in black and white, but their material was mundane, and it wasn’t until the last number *Jail House Rock*, that they sounded at all interesting. And even to the unpractised ear, the feedback was off-putting. The lead singer could probably make a better living imitating Shirley Bassey. His tongue in cheek version of *Big Spender* was excellent.’



## Let's Put Our Stamp On It!

Hazel Thorn

*Hazel was born and has lived in the Medway towns all her life. She spent 30 plus years working in Kent and Medway Libraries and first got into local history working with a blind local history librarian at Springfield. She was one of the AIM group who produced the two volumes of Times of Our Lives recording the lives of the women in Medway, and then Dewponds and Doodlebugs, history of Walderslade for the Kent Arts and Libraries. More recently Hazel helped Doris Herlihy with her project on Parkwood. She is on the FPOGA committee and also enjoys photography, crafts, and stamp collecting.*



I was looking back at the issue of *The Clock Tower* with my son; it was the one after the decimal issue, number 63, August 2021, where I had sent a copy of an illustrated postal cover (pictured) depicting the last issue of the tot of rum to serving Naval personnel in response to Steve Cross' comment: '31 July 1970 was the day the Royal Navy stopped the tot – a great loss to us all!' Postmarked *Portsmouth* I started to think about whether I had ever seen any Medway landmarks on postage stamps, something I have a big collection of, and the answer was no - until

2016! Did you miss that one too? I did. So much of our post is franked now that collecting postage stamps becomes perhaps less of a hobby more of an investment. I see them as little pieces of history in miniature and there was only ever a scattering of Kent based occasions/landmarks.

To set the scene, the first we might recognise as illustrated or commemorative, as opposed to definitive, which were the monarchs head and price, could be the 1913 King George V *Seahorses*. This was highly decorated and had a high postage value (pre decimal) of 2/6, 5/-, 10/- and £1.00. In 1924-5, a British Empire Exhibition low value featured a lion, and a 1929 Postal Union Congress London stamp depicted St George and the Dragon: all bi colours. Commemoratives became more obvious post war, again bicolour.

I started to look at the old favourite Stanley Gibbons Stamp albums, and what I found was that there were no regional commemoratives before the 1969 set of six British Architecture Cathedrals - which featured amongst others Canterbury Cathedral, priced 5d. For the 1970 *Literary Anniversaries* series, the year of the Death Centenary of Charles Dickens, all the commemorative Dickens' stamps were priced at 5d. In the same set there was also a stamp priced 1/6 to commemorate the Birth Bicentenary of Wordsworth. There was a special First Day of Issue Postmark at Rochester, and a First Day of Issue hand stamped at Broadstairs. These both featured Mr Pickwick and Sam Weller (of the *Pickwick Papers*) Mr and Mrs Micawber and David Copperfield, and also David Copperfield with Betsy Trotwood (of *David Copperfield*), and Oliver asking for more (from *Oliver Twist*). However, postmarks are not my particular interest.



Of additional Medway interest, in 1982 there was the *Maritime Heritage* Series; 24p Nelson and HMS *Victory*. In 1983 a *British Gardens* series featured Sissinghurst as an example of a twentieth century garden. In 1991 the *Bicentenary of Ordnance Survey* was illustrated by a map of Ham Street Kent, in the Ashford area. The 1993 Christmas 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the publication of Dickens *Christmas Carol* was illustrated by Quentin Blake and the stamps featured Bob Cratchit and Tiny Tim, Mr and Mrs Fezziwig, Scrooge, The Prize Turkey, and Mr Scrooge's nephew.

In 1997 in the *Religious Anniversaries* series, the 1400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the arrival of St Augustine of Canterbury in Kent was celebrated. Then in the new decade, in 2002, in *British Coastlines*, The White Cliffs of Dover and Broadstairs featured, priced 27p each. In 2012, the Birth Bicentenary of Charles Dickens included some different characters such as Mr Bumble, Mr Pickwick, The Marchioness, Mrs Gamp, Captain Cuttle, and Mr Micawber, in addition there were illustrated scenes from *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Bleak House*, *Little Dorrit*, and *A Tale of Two Cities*; there were no local postmarks for any of these. Finally, in 2016, *Royal Mail 500* included the higher priced £1.52 showing Medway Mail Centre - one of a set of six postal images.

So, what icons has the Royal Mail missed from around Medway? Well, this is purely my own idea of what could show the history and rich variety of our area of - according to Wikipedia - just over 74 square miles. This year, with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and Medway's bid for City status again on the cards, surely there is somewhere or someone that could feature? What about Rochester Castle, built in the 1080s and the tallest Norman Castle in Britain, or Upnor Castle, begun 1559? There's also Rochester Cathedral and Holy Trinity Church Twydall. Another interesting focus would be the Historic Dockyard Chatham, including the Dockyard Ropery; nuclear submarines, and ships such as war ships. HMS *Victory*, HMS *Medway*, HMS *Cavalier*. HMS *Gannet*. Then there is the Royal Engineers Museum and its collection. Perhaps the Royal Mail should also consider Gillingham's Will Adams (1564-1620), the navigator and perhaps first Englishman to visit Japan – he was later made a *shogun* and is a national hero in Japan. Medway celebrates this association with Japan each year in September and in 1982 Gillingham signed sister city partnerships with Ito and Yokosuka, the towns most associated with Adams (see *The Clock Tower* Issue 27, August 2012, and Issue 34, May 2014).

Other famous Medway people to be celebrated would be Walter Burke (1736-1815), buried at Wouldham Church, and who supported Lord Nelson at the Battle of Trafalgar, and Thomas Fletcher Waghorn (1800-1850) who pioneered the overland postal route to India. There are also Thomas Aveling and Richard Thomas Porter, known for the construction of agricultural engines, traction engines, and steam rollers who set up businesses around the Rochester and Strood area.

In addition, there are also many interesting and important landmarks, including Rochester Bridge, the M2 Bridge built in the 1960s, Chatham's Waterfront Bus Station, Rainham's Oast Theatre, Fort Amhurst, built in 1756, and the 1924 War Memorial on Great Lines, unveiled in 1924, which commemorates over 18,000 naval service personnel from two World Wars.

Usually, commemorative stamps for the different celebrations are decided the previous year. In 2022 there have been many 'tba' but the listing does show some opportunities for Medway to be showcased. However, to conclude, this is my own fantasy selection! Thomas Fletcher Waghorn statue (with or without his traffic cone); Fort Amhurst with re-enactment soldiers; Chatham War Memorial on the Great Lines; Will Adams and Cherry Blossom; Rochester Cathedral and Holy Trinity Church Twydall; Rainham Oast Theatre.

*This article was written earlier in 2022.*

## Richard Dadd

Peter Cook



*Peter Cook began his journalistic career with the Gravesend Reporter during the early 1960s. While working for the paper, he met his wife Lizzie, and the couple became Ten-Pound Poms emigrating to Australia. There he joined the Australian Broadcasting Commission at its outpost radio station in Townsville, Queensland. In 1970, following his return to the UK, Peter joined the staff of a brand-new BBC local radio station in Chatham, BBC Radio Medway. Peter later joined the BBC radio newsroom at Broadcasting House in London, helping provide national coverage for local radio stations. After more than a decade he and a BBC colleague formed Orchid Communications, generating audio communications services for large companies, but this was not to survive with the arrival of new technologies. Peter returned to his local reporting roots and joined the Kent Messenger Group, first at Gravesend and then at Medway. For about 15 years he recorded local history in the Medway Messenger's weekly 'Memories' feature. He describes the latter as 'the best job of my career.' Now retired he and Lizzie live in Ospringe, Faversham.*



*Born in Chatham, Richard Dadd (1817-1886) was a painter best known for fantasy scenes and the supernatural, including fairies. Prior to his mental breakdown and incarceration in the Bedlam and Broadmoor asylums, his work had been more conventional. However, following a tour of Europe and the Middle East, his behaviour became more erratic and unstable, culminating in the murder of his father, and as described in Part One (The Clock Tower, Issue 65, February 2022).*

*Richard Dadd working on one of his fairy paintings; Bethlem Hospital in 1856.*

### Part Three: Later Life and Bethlem

Having stabbed his father to death in Cobham Park on August 28 1843, talented artist Richard Dadd escaped to France. While travelling in a coach near Montereau, he drew a razor and attempted to cut the throat of a fellow passenger. Overpowered, he was sent to an asylum, but British authorities sought to extradite him to be tried for murder.

The French authorities had no doubt that Richard Dadd was seriously mentally ill. He explained to them that he was an envoy of God, with a mission to exterminate men possessed with 'the demon'. He was sent to an asylum at Clermont north of Paris, where he told his doctors he was the son of the Egyptian god Osiris. Occasionally he would stare at the sun all day without blinking, and among his possessions was found a list of people he was to execute, including The Pope.

For members of his family, detention at Clermont was probably the best option. Should he be brought back to England he might well face the death penalty. However, in July 1844, Sergeant Frederick Shaw of the Metropolitan Police was despatched to bring him back. As ever, there was confusion over the paperwork involved, and it was three weeks before they could begin the return journey. After a brief detention in London, Dadd and his escort travelled aboard the *Emerald* paddle steamer to Gravesend, and from there he was driven to Rochester to appear before magistrates on a charge of murdering his father. The *Rochester Gazette* reported his hair was long and bushy and he had a full beard and moustache. 'He looked wildly around,' the paper said, 'and fixing his fine dark eyes on a person present, exclaimed in a firm voice: "He is the murderer. You b.....dy old villain."'

The hearing was adjourned until Monday August 6, 1844, Dadd having been remanded at Maidstone Prison. On the journey to Rochester, he behaved quite rationally. He asked if Colonel Best still lived at Boxley and he recognised some of the Chatham tradespeople whom they passed along the way, recalling their names.

Evidence given to the magistrates was much the same as that presented at the inquest into Robert Dadd's death. Throughout the hearing, Dadd protested that he'd had nothing to do with the murder, but then added: "I only stabbed him once!" After Eliza Coleman, chambermaid at the Crown Hotel, repeated her evidence about a man coming to wash his hands at the hotel, he called out, "I took one of your towels. I took it because it had blood on it." But then he added, "I tell you I did not do it!" At one point Dadd turned towards the door of the court, where presumably members of the public were standing, and called, "Turn those blackguards out, I tell you I did not do it, no I certainly did not sir!" Asked if he wished to put questions to any of the witnesses, he answered calmly, "No nothing."

The magistrates decided there was a case to answer and committed Dadd to appear at the next Kent Assizes. He was once again remanded at Maidstone, but he never faced trial. In 1943 Daniel McNaughton, a Scottish Chartist, had set out to kill the prime minister Robert Peel but became confused and killed his secretary Edward Drummond instead. McNaughton's trial led to a plea of insanity being accepted by the courts for the first time, establishing a precedent.

Under the new McNaughton rules, Dadd was declared a 'criminal lunatic', and sent to Bethlem Hospital, in Lambeth, now the site of the Imperial War Museum. It must have come as a great relief to his family that he would not be tried for murder, with the potential and terrifying consequences of the gallows.

Richard Dadd never recovered and continued to believe he was the son of Osiris to the last. At Bethlem he was first described as 'violent and dangerous'. It is reported that he would sometimes strike someone a heavy blow for no apparent reason, but then apologise profusely. Today he would probably be regarded as having schizophrenia, but that condition was unknown at the time.

In 1864 Dadd was transferred to the new modern asylum, Broadmoor, near Reading. It was there that he died in 1886 aged 68, probably from tuberculosis. At the time of his confinement attitudes towards mental illness began to change and under a more relaxed regime at both Bethlem and Broadmoor, his artistic career revived.

A magnificent watercolour entitled *Halt in the Desert*, evoked a scene from his Middle East tour with Phillips. For a long time it was missing but then turned up in an attic some years ago and appeared on the *Antiques Roadshow*. Today it hangs in the British Museum. A magnificent oil painting entitled, *Flight Out of Egypt*, painted in 1849, is full of activity, colourful and even playful. It is to be found in London's Tate Gallery. There are conventional portraits, often of asylum officials. In addition, Dadd seems to have revived his interest in fairy folk, but in a very different style. His painting of Oberon and Titania, completed in 1858, is very different from *Titania Sleeping*, painted before the murder. In that painting the fairy queen is classically erotic whereas the 1858 version is portly and masculine.

Probably his best-known work is the enigmatic *Fairy Feller's Masterstroke*, which he painted between 1855 and 1864.\* When you study the picture, which is also in The Tate, you can see why it took so long to complete. There is so much going on, although I doubt anyone knows what it is really about. Dadd did set out explain what the painting means in a long and rambling poem. It was created as a gift for G.H. Haydon, steward at Bethlem Hospital, but on his death, it set out on its own adventure.

The painting was bought by collector Alfred Morrison who already owned another major Dadd work. He bequeathed it to his daughter, Lady Gatty, who in turn gave it to the First World War poet Siegfried Sassoon who had married her daughter in 1933. One of Sassoon's closest friends was Julian Dadd, the son of Stephen Dadd, a nephew of the *Fairy Feller's Masterstroke* creator. Julian had lost two brothers in the Great War and had himself been shot in the throat. Sassoon had been able to show Julian the painting and although Richard Dadd had died 70 years or so earlier, he was never talked about within the family. Some time after seeing the picture, Julian committed suicide.

Later Sassoon lent the painting to the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, where it excited a lot of interest among intellectuals of the time. However unbeknown to him, it was put into a London auction house by a dealer who had no claim to it whatsoever. He rescued the work just in time and presented it to the Tate Gallery in 1963, in memory of Julian Dadd, and the two brothers who had died in the Great War. There it hangs to this day.

*Maria Elizabeth Dadd, painted by Richard Dadd in 1838. The Yale Collection of British Art, reproduced with the kind permission of the Paul Mellon Foundation, USA.*



\* For copyright reasons the painting cannot be reproduced here but can be viewed at <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/dadd-the-fairy-fellers-master-stroke-t00598>

## *A Clock Tower Special Feature*

### *Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Part Two*

#### **The Coronation Play**

Amanda Thomas



The Platinum Jubilee Weekend from 2 to 5 June was, I felt, rather a strange affair, with the anticipation perhaps exceeding the four days of celebration. The absence of the late Duke of Edinburgh and the frailty of the Queen added additional poignancy and sadness. The weekend's emphasis on events in June 1953, rather than the accession the previous year, brought into focus the passage of time and the realisation that so many of the events which took place seventy years ago to celebrate the Coronation have been forgotten. Indeed, it was such a long time ago that few of us have any first-hand memory of that time.

*Her Majesty the Queen photographed in 2021 opening the Welsh Parliament; Wikimedia Commons.*



*Right: Dulcie Wraight circa 1953; photograph by Medway photographer, Peter Fox.*

I am fortunate that my mother, Dulcie Jones, née Wraight, had a part in those celebrations in 1953. Sadly, Dulcie (an enthusiastic FOMA member to the last) died in 2012 and so the following are second-hand memories, but they are stories which were told over and over again.

Born in Strood, Dulcie was 20 years old in 1952 and a recent graduate from London's prestigious Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA). In the February she was on tour with Peter Rae Productions, a small travelling theatre company. Peter lived in Whitstable and drove around in a battered old Rolls Royce which the troupe slept in when they couldn't afford digs. Dulcie attributed her bad back to sleeping in that car, but I believe that in the winter months they stayed in guest houses. In February 1952, the group of young actors had just arrived in Rhyl in North Wales but on the death of King George VI, the tour came to a halt and their contracts were cancelled. As explained in Part One, this was part of the process of the Demise of the Crown, and Dulcie's recollection was that in Wales absolutely everything shut down and – worst of all - her contract was cancelled. She eventually managed to make her way back to Strood and she continued working with Peter Rae until at least 1954.



A year later in 1953, the country was gripped by an altogether different mood in preparation for the Queen's coronation. Dulcie was working again and had been asked to perform in the Coronation Play, *Out of the Whirlwind*, written by Christopher Hassall (1912-1963), and produced by Hugh Miller (1889-1976), one of her RADA lecturers.



*Hugh Miller, from a distributed postcard; date unknown.*

Dulcie always spoke fondly of Miller, one of the early film actors of the twentieth century and a founder in 1925 of the original London Film Society. According to Screenonline, 'Miller joined forces with recent Cambridge graduate Ivor Montagu to assemble what became the Film Society's governing council, including Mycroft, *Spectator* critic Iris Barry, director Adrian Brunel and exhibitor Sidney Bernstein.'<sup>1</sup> The aim of the group was to promote artistic films, 'those which the trade deemed uncommercial or which the censor refused,'<sup>2</sup> and was supported by some of the greatest intellectual and literary figures of the time, including H.G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw, Augustus John, and John Maynard Keynes.<sup>3</sup> Miller subsequently worked as an actor in America – and was well-known for his portrayal of Mr Jingle in the 1927 Broadway production of *Pickwick*.<sup>4</sup> By the 1930s, Miller's association with RADA was already well established. He lectured and directed plays and took a keen interest in the careers of his students.



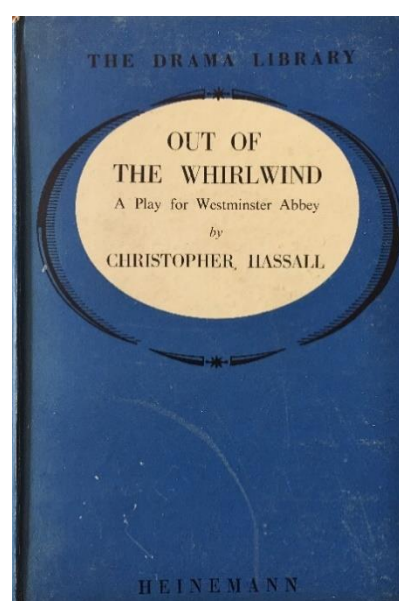


*Christopher Hassall, date unknown, but taken before 1938 by Lady Ottoline Morrell; Wikimedia Commons*

Christopher Hassall was better known for his partnership with Ivor Novello and the musicals they created together, many of which were long-running hits in London's West End. Perhaps of greater interest here is the fact that Hassall died of a heart attack in April 1963 whilst on a train at Rochester.<sup>5</sup> *Out of the Whirlwind* was to be staged on the dais and surrounding area on which the Queen was to be crowned and is mentioned as part of the Coronation celebrations on the Westminster Abbey website:

*While the special stands were still in place a play entitled Out of the Whirlwind by Christopher Hassall, was performed on weekday evenings from 10th June until 3rd July, in aid of the Westminster Abbey Appeal Fund.<sup>6</sup>*

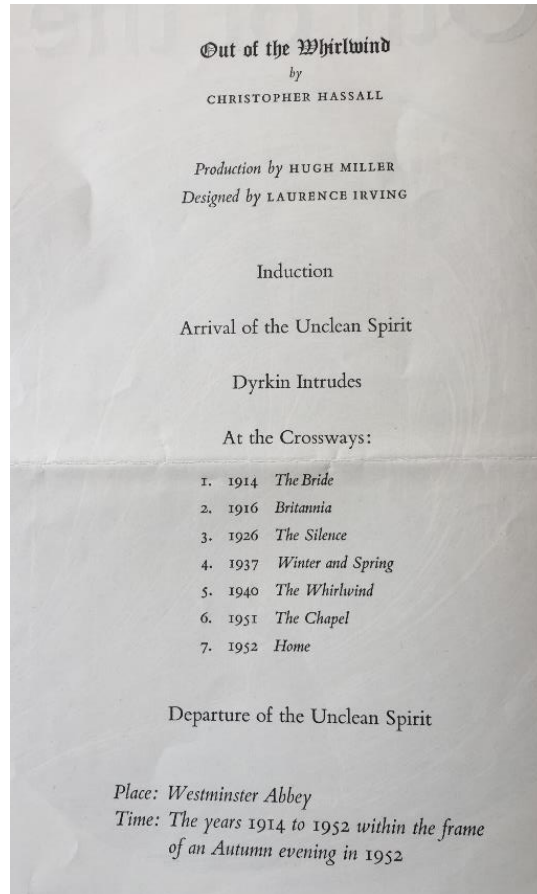
Over the years I have managed to purchase some memorabilia associated with the play, including the text itself (pictured), but the best description of the plot was included in the programme (on the front cover, above), a souvenir edition of which was sold to audiences for 2/6 (2 shillings and 6 pence), and an ordinary sheet version for 6d (6 pence), the cover of which is pictured below:



*It is an autumn evening in 1952, after Evensong in the Abbey. Two men casually enter the acting area, a Canon of Westminster and an author who has been called in to discuss the possibilities of mounting a play on this spot the following year, soon after the Coronation. One by one the ingredients for a drama come out in conversation. They set the author's mind working, and thinking aloud, with a gesture he seals off the acting area from the rest of the Abbey, calling it neutral ground which might be made to represent any locality he chooses. The Canon goes away for a moment and at once the author's play begins, as though the audience were seeing enacted before them the whole process as with mounting excitement he follows his train of thought.*

*A stranger interrupts his reverie, but the author has already become a character in his own unfolding story. The intruder, likewise a figment of the mind, has overheard the discussion about a projected play and has felt impelled to intervene. The author soon finds himself carried along by the forces he had brought into being, for they proceed to work out a dramatic pattern of their own over which their creator has perilously little control. The dream develops so as to embrace a band of medieval Miracle players who serve as Chorus and stage mechanics.*

*The ground having been prepared it now becomes apparent that the drama is a struggle between the forces of Light and Darkness for the possession of a single human soul. It is in fact a variation in modern terms on the theme of Job, which from first inception to ultimate fulfilment is experienced simultaneously in the author's imagination and by the audience assembled in the Abbey.*



*The 6d cover and first page of the programme.*

Hassall wrote the play when he was about 40 years old and in it he incorporates the theme of the Coronation, including music and singing. The techniques employed are reminiscent in some respects to those of playwrights such as Brecht<sup>7</sup> and Pirandello<sup>8</sup> who set out to alienate their audience. This was sometimes for political effect, as in the case of Brecht. However, generally speaking, alienation techniques are used to raise awareness, dampen emotional involvement and a sense of being entertained, in order to better understand human predicaments. Audiences are made to feel they are in a theatre watching an artificial performance and it is interesting that the first page of *Out of the Whirlwind* sets just such a scene:

*The acting area is quite bare except for the Coronation Dais. There is no scenery, but the Sanctuary is concealed by a partition or false wall about eight feet high, designed and coloured so as to merge with its surroundings.*

Throughout the play, the audience is made very aware they are in a sacred place where something of enormous historical significance has recently occurred. Dulcie reminisced that the actors were stunned to have been able to walk right up to the Coronation dais and I do believe she even had a small square of the red carpet which they were all given as a souvenir, and which sadly I have been unable to find.

*The cast of Out of the Whirlwind.*

Characters	
Doctor Fountaine, Canon of Westminster	Robert Harris
John Protheroe, a Literary Man	Peter Coke
Doctor Opprobrius, of no fixed abode	Reginald Tate
Dyrkin Townley	Leslie French
Meg	Lala Lloyd
Roger	Norman Ayrton
Ralph	Ronald Hines
Truth	Myrtle Rowe
Righteousness	Elizabeth London
Mercy	Diana Wilding
Peace	Marie Sutherland
Martha, Wife of Davy Gam	Fay Compton
Ellen Daye	Olga Lindo
Colonel Broad	Ballard Berkeley
Alice, her Maid	Betty Bascomb
King Henry V	Anthony Nicholls
Duke of Exeter	John Schlesinger
Duke of Gloster	Denis Holmes
Montjoy	Denis McCarthy
Crusader	Donovan Winter
Davy, Husband of Martha	Andrew Faulds
Son at 24 years	
at 10 years	
Grandson	Jimmy Taylor
Elizabeth Straker, Wife of Davy Junior	Elizabeth Henson
St Peter	Robert Speaight

Drummer, Trumpeter, Sightseers, Wedding Guests, Attendants on the King, A.R.P. Personnel, Crusaders, Villagers, Telegraph and Newspaper Boys, etc: Jennie Adams, Patrick Alexander, Arnold Beck, Philip Blaine, John Britton, John Brooking, Sheila Clements, Julian Glover, Ann Greenland, Peter Harris, Murray Hayme, Lionel Jeffries, Oswald Laurence, Beatrix Mackey, Donald Moffat, James Villiers, John Woodvine, Sverre Wilberg and Dulcie Wraith.

Dulcie was very proud to have been asked by Hugh Miller to take part in the play, even though her name is right at the end of the cast list, amongst a host of others playing parts such as ‘drummers’ and ‘villagers’. However, amongst these is also the name of Lionel Jefferies (1926-2010), a fellow RADA student who would later become a well-regarded actor, writer and director, particularly for his 1970 film adaptation of *The Railway Children*. At the time much was made of the fact that Fay Compton (1894-1978) was in the cast playing the character of Martha. Dulcie often repeated that Compton was difficult and ghastly to work with. Another young actor named Ronald Hines (1929-2017) is listed in the programme as playing Ralph, one of the Miracle Players. Hines (much liked) was also a fellow RADA student and went on to be familiar face on British television in the 1960s, ‘70s and ‘80s. Many of us will remember him reading *The Wombles* on BBC1’s *Jackanory*, but he made a huge number of films and countless other television appearances. Perhaps one of the roles he will be best remembered for was that of father and husband, Henry Corner, opposite Wendy Craig (Jennifer Corner) in the sitcom, *Not in Front of the Children* (1967-1970).



*Fay Compton, 1938; Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, Australia; out of copyright.*  
<https://collection.slnsw.gov.au/record/9Bv7K109>.

*Out of the Whirlwind* was performed in Westminster Abbey in the week following the Coronation, from 10 June to 3 July, 1953. Proceeds were in aid of the Westminster Abbey Appeal Fund which had been set up ‘to provide funds to meet the costs of repairs and maintenance to the fabric and precincts of Westminster Abbey [and to] ... support the Westminster Abbey Choir School.’<sup>9</sup>

The appeal was set up by Prime Minister Winston Churchill on 30 January 1953, right at the start of the Coronation year. However, the very next night, tragedy struck, as explained by FOMA’s Brian Joyce on the sixtieth anniversary of the great floods (*The Clock Tower*, Issue 29, February 2013):

*A deep area of low pressure passed from the Atlantic into the North Sea, where it met a high spring tide. High winds caused a storm surge to race down the east coast, killing 19 people in Scotland and then ravaging low-lying English coastal counties from Lincolnshire to Kent. Thirty thousand people had to be evacuated from their homes and 24,000 properties were severely damaged. In Canvey Island in Essex, which lies entirely below sea level, 58 people were drowned, many in their sleep. A further 37 died in Jaywick, a similar coastal community of cheaply-constructed bungalows. Although far less seriously affected than the Netherlands, where the floods killed nearly 2,000 people, the United Kingdom lost 300 to the storm that Saturday and Sunday. Fortunately there were no fatalities directly caused by the floods in the Medway Towns, although there was widespread damage and disruption to the north Kent coast.*

The Westminster Abbey Appeal Fund was immediately halted, and money diverted to the National Flood and Tempest Distress Fund. It is unclear when the Westminster Abbey Appeal began again, but it was certainly not much later that year and before the Coronation, as evidenced by a broadcast made by the Reverend Alan Don, Dean of Westminster and held in the British Pathé archive:

*On January 30th, Mr Churchill launched Westminster Abbey Appeal for a million pounds. The very next day, the great floods burst and the Abbey Appeal had to be halted in favour of the National Flood and Tempest Distress Fund. But now the time has come to give the Abbey Appeal a fresh start, and to remind you of what Mr. Churchill said ... A million pounds from a million people. Yes, you can give as much and as little as you like. Anything you can spare, to help in the preservation of the Coronation church, in the Coronation year.*<sup>10</sup>

I have no idea how many people attended the performances of *Out of the Whirlwind*. It is pleasing that it is now included on Westminster Abbey’s website as a significant element of the celebrations, but it is disappointing to realise the play was probably never performed again. Perhaps it might be resurrected for the next Coronation.

## Notes

1. <http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/454755/index.html>
2. idem
3. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Film-Society-of-London>
4. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugh\\_Miller\\_\(actor\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugh_Miller_(actor))
5. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher\\_Hassall](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Hassall)
6. <https://www.westminster-abbey.org/abbey-commemorations/royals/elizabeth-ii>
7. Eugen Berthold Friedrich Brecht (1898 – 1956), German playwright and poet.
8. Luigi Pirandello (1867 – 1936), Italian dramatist, novelist, poet, and short story writer.
9. <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-details/?regid=1161761&subid=0>
10. <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/abbey-appeal>





## The Coronation and Jubilees Past and Present

Odette Buchanan

At the time of the Coronation, I was living in Harrow, Middlesex and when we celebrated the Silver Jubilee in 1977, I was living in Higham.

When George VI died in February '52 I was in the 4th Year (now called Year 10) at school. All lessons were cancelled, and we had a special, very solemn assembly. Then, in our registration forms we were asked what we remembered about him and his reign.

Come the following year and the coronation: it was a national holiday; the weather was cold and miserable (despite being in the summer) and the pubs were open all day! My aunt and uncle were with us in our local. He was very tall and had been a Captain in the Guards in the First World War. The pub landlady had decorated the bars. In the saloon bar were large balls of cotton wool with many tiny union jacks stuck in them on pins. Uncle Bob took it upon himself to divest these ornaments of their little flags and went all round the bar pinning them into the men's jacket lapels! Everyone wore formal suits and smart dresses to go out in those days. The landlady was not best pleased. But more was to follow! Someone started singing and we all joined in (patriotic songs like *Land of Hope and Glory*). In those days pubs had a licence to sell alcohol but they needed another licence for anything else such as singing or dancing. When the singing started, the landlady tried to shriek above the din: "NO SINGING!" Of course, she was ignored.

Then someone started a Conga (the dance when everyone grabs hold of everyone else and weaves around in single file like a snake) round the saloon bar. Out the door, round to the Public Bar, round that, then out the door and into the really posh Lounge Bar (cut glass ash trays and fitted carpet with armchairs and sofas - not tin ashtrays with wood floor and chairs - spit and sawdust - like the public or pottery ashtrays, floor covering and padded seats like the saloon). All the time the landlady was hoarse with yelling, "AND POSITIVELY NO DANCING!!!" Ah, they don't have coronations like that these days!

During the Silver Jubilee celebrations in the 1970s I was living in Higham. We had moved into the house when it was a new build in 1967; it was a close of 20 houses, so we all knew each other and socialised frequently. On the Silver Jubilee we had a street party in the daytime for the children and then another in the evening for the adults. Again, it was a miserable, cold day in July, fortunately not actually raining, but everyone enjoyed themselves.

The close is now home to many of the offspring of the original inhabitants and I was invited back there this year to join them for this Jubilee's street party as an *hon. member*. Sadly, I'm one of only three still alive from 1977. The street party went off very well and in total contrast to previous Jubilees it was a hot, sunny day, so neighbours had all set out tables around the perimeter of the close. One resident is a member of a small band and they played jolly/patriotic/memorable music so long as they were kept supplied with liquid refreshments. We mingled, socialised and laughed until the sun finally went down, and I now have more enjoyable memories to retrieve, especially since we were able to meet in the flesh after having been locked up for so long with the Covid.

As a footnote to all of this, I've got beer glasses, mugs, etc. commemorating both events. Strangely, I've no memories of the Golden Jubilee – weird.

## *Readers' Letters*

*We welcome letters and emails from readers with their comments. If you have anything you would like to say please email the Editor, Amanda Thomas, Editor, at [editor@foma-lsc.org](mailto:editor@foma-lsc.org), the FOMA Secretary, Chris de Coulon Berthoud at [berthoud@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:berthoud@blueyonder.co.uk), or visit the FOMA website, [www.foma-lsc.org/index.htm](http://www.foma-lsc.org/index.htm) or our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/fomalsc>*

### **Medway Asylums**

21 May 2022

I don't know if you can help me but I'm looking for some more information about a mental/lunacy asylum in the Kent area in 1846/1847 time as my 5th great grandmother was in one and curious as to why? Thank you.

Dawn Wright

### **George Dickson**

18 July 2022

Dear the Friends of Medway Archive,

I am a PhD student at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, and a researcher on a funded project that recovers working-class poetry from 1840s to 1920s - <https://www.pistonpenandpress.org>.

I am emailing with an enquiry about George Dickson (1896-?), who was managing director of Winget Ltd. in Rochester from 1937 to 1950. We are interested in Dickson because he was Scottish (originally from Carronshore, Stirlingshire), an engineer, fought with the Royal Navy in the First World War, and wrote an epic poem about his experiences of the War, engineering, and economic decline in Glasgow in 1925 that was published in book form as *Peter Rae* - <https://www.pistonpenandpress.org/piston-pen-press-and-the-first-world-war-i/>. Dickson also published books on industrial relations and Christian-Socialism that seem to have been inspired by his time at Winget Ltd.

I am hoping that you might be able to help us trace people who knew Dickson, or possibly members of his family who might still live in the Strood/Rochester area. We are really keen to recover information about Dickson's life as his poem is exceptional in the history of Scottish working-class literature.

Any help that you might be able to provide is greatly appreciated,

Best wishes and kind regards,

Charlotte Lauder.



## Restoration House Dame School

The quest continues to discover more about the Dame's School at Rochester's Restoration House. In his *Travels of a Tin Trunk*, serialized in *The Clock Tower*, (Issue 43, August 2016 to Issue 60, November 2020), FOMA member Michael Baker alludes to this, and that it was attended by family members Herbert and Alfred (pictured). Research by Elaine Gardner and the current owners of the house has revealed very little, though it is understood that the school only occupied a part of the house and that pupils boarded there, perhaps only on weekdays. Michael believes that the boys' mother, Frances Baker (1836-1916) may also have attended the school, so perhaps it was an establishment with some longevity. If you know anything more about the school at Restoration House, please contact the Editor, Amanda Thomas at [editor@foma-lsc.org](mailto:editor@foma-lsc.org)

You can read more about Herbert Baker on page 9 and the launch of a new book by John Stewart entitled, *Sir Herbert Baker, Architect to the British Empire*.



*Herbert Baker (born 1862) and Alfred Baker (born 1864), c. 1874.*

## *News and Events*

Calendar of Forthcoming Events and Exhibitions

### **FOMA Talks and Events**

All events are subject to change and to government guidance. Further information will be available on the FOMA website ([www.foma-lsc.org](http://www.foma-lsc.org)), our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/fomalsc](http://www.facebook.com/fomalsc)) and sent to members via email, where appropriate.

Friday 9 September, 7.30 pm

*Richard Watts - A man of his time; a charity of its time*

A talk by Geoff Ettridge

Friday 11 November, 7.30 pm

*Wings over Rochester* – to be confirmed

A film show on the story of Short Brothers in Rochester.

Booking for FOMA events is not necessary and unless specified are ALL held at St Nicholas Church Lower Hall, Strood, Rochester, Kent. ME2 4TR; car park entrance is off Gun Lane, ME2 4UG, almost opposite the Health Centre. Please check our website ([www.foma-lsc.org](http://www.foma-lsc.org)) for further information and for other forthcoming events. Talks are £3 for members, £5 non-members. Booking for Quiz Nights and enquiries through the FOMA Chairman: Elaine Gardner, 102 Valley View Road, Rochester, ME1 3NX, Kent; [emgardner@virginmedia.com](mailto:emgardner@virginmedia.com); 01634 408595.

### **Medway Archives Centre**

32 Bryant Rd, Rochester ME2 3EP; 01634 332714; [malsc@medway.gov.uk](mailto:malsc@medway.gov.uk).

Events and Exhibitions

*Red Sails over the Medway* by the Thames Sailing Barge Trust;

Exhibition in the foyer; August – 3 September 2022.

*100 years in the life of Thames sailing barge 'Pudge'.*

Tuesday 16 August, 2pm; FREE talk - no booking required.

A talk by John Rayment telling the story of sailing barge *Pudge*, which in 1922 was built in Rochester by the London & Rochester Barge Company Ltd. It charts her life to the present day through her trading exploits and the work she has done during her 100 years.

Summer Holiday Local History Trails

#### **Gillingham Town Centre Trail**

Collect a map and clues from Gillingham Library.

A free activity during the summer holidays to get to know your local town centre and its history. Discover what was in the Gillingham High Street nearly a century ago. Look up above the shops to see some of the early architecture. Find out about some Gillingham people from the past. Please use Gillingham library to find out more about the historic town centre or help you with the clues.

### **Strood Town Centre Trail**

Collect maps and clues from Medway Archives Centre or email [archives@medway.gov.uk](mailto:archives@medway.gov.uk) for a digital copy.

Discover some of the history of Strood town centre. This is a free activity during the summer holidays suitable for all the family. Find out what industries and shops existed here in the past. Much of Strood's hidden history is uncovered.

### **Strood Family Trail**

Collect maps and clues from Medway Archives Centre or email [archives@medway.gov.uk](mailto:archives@medway.gov.uk) for a digital copy

Come and discover the streets around Medway Archives Centre in Strood. This trail is free and suitable for all age groups. It is a short trail lasting about 45 minutes with clues easy to follow. Find out who worked and lived in this largely Victorian area of Strood. Feel free to drop into the archives to find out more or help solve the clues.

### **Opening Hours and Visiting**

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, Saturday 9am to 12.30pm, Wednesday and Sunday closed.

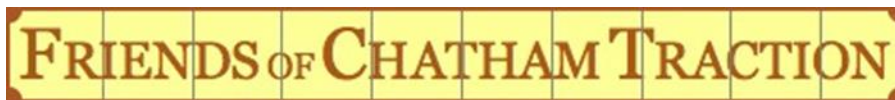
Opening hours have returned to normal. Our reopening has been planned in a cautious way to ensure that we can review all of the practical issues involved in running the service safely. We will keep these opening arrangements under review.

We are now accepting drop-in visits for published materials and photographs if there is space in the search room. An appointment must be made to view original archive material and use microfilm or fiche readers

### **How to Make an Appointment**

Email us at [malsc@medway.gov.uk](mailto:malsc@medway.gov.uk) to make an appointment and to discuss which items you wish to consult. For original archive material you must give at least 3 working days' notice of your intention to visit. For all other material (such as books, maps, photographs) we just require 1 working day's notice. When you book we will ask for your name and contact details so that we can keep in touch with you about your appointment.

- You can also search or browse for original archive material on the [Medway Council Heritage Services catalogue](#).
- You can find books and periodicals by searching the [Medway Libraries online catalogue](#).
- If you cannot find what you are looking for, please contact us.



## **BAE Systems**

We've referred previously to an approach Wendy Mesher (Vice Chairman) made some time ago to BAE Systems at Rochester, seeking to draw on their corporate community funding budget which is aimed at worthy causes local to the various BAE operations. Negotiations begun last November resulted in an allocation to FoCT of £2000. This will be used to fund an exploratory exercise with a partner local primary school to explore and begin to define the learning resource the restored bus, together with associated items from our collection, can provide. Wendy is now in touch with Medway Council's Education Officer to arrange connection with a suitable school. BAE's Communications Specialist Gemma Fabian said "BAE Systems in Rochester are very excited to be partnering with the Friends of Chatham Traction in the Medway Heritage bus project. The bus is a pivotal piece of history for the Medway towns, and we are looking forward to when it will be restored to its former glory and able to provide community and STEM activities to people in the Medway towns." Some relevant technical support may be available. We've taken up the latter possibility in our pursuit of the need to replicate parts we are short of. Chris Gibbons has been to meet Sean Holbrook, Senior Process Engineer at BAE and delivered a saloon bell-push and a glass lampshade. Sean advises that the bell-push should be no problem, and that he would seek advice on a suitable modern material for the shade, as this is likely to be reproduced using modern digital techniques. Also, volunteering opportunities can be advertised around BAE staff. Exciting times!

## **Chatham Dockyard 40s Weekend**

Once again, we've asked for a space at this event, which this year takes place on 10th and 11th September. We did discuss the possibility of taking the bus along, whether or not it was driveable. However suitable covered accommodation near the centre of the event wasn't available, and the logistics of moving the bus from and back to Aylesford we felt wasn't worth the associated disruption at both ends, or the cost. So we'll just be there with the stand as usual. Either way we have progress to report so we can update our message. Assistance on both days would be appreciated, and we'd be pleased to have new faces volunteering for an hour or two on either day to explain to passing folk what we're about. (As well as the regulars, of course!) Please contact the Secretary, Mike Hodges if you're interested: 8 Pier Avenue, Whitstable, Kent CT5 2HQ michaelrhodges011@gmail.com

A full version of this update can be read at  
[http://files.chathamtraction.org.uk/updates/220727\\_Update\\_59.pdf](http://files.chathamtraction.org.uk/updates/220727_Update_59.pdf)

For more information see the website at [www.chathamtraction.org.uk](http://www.chathamtraction.org.uk) or contact Richard Bourne (Chairman); 31 Usher Park Road, Haxby, York YO32 3RX; 01904 766375, or 07771 831653. Email [Richard@thebournes.me.uk](mailto:Richard@thebournes.me.uk).



## Friends of Broomhill

The Friends of Broomhill, Strood, Task Days are the first **Sunday** of every month (except January), from September to April inclusive, 10 am to noon. **Thursday** Task Days are every Thursday morning (all year) concentrating on the Old Orchard woodland, 10 am to noon. Meet in car park at end of King Arthurs Drive, Strood, ME2 3NB. All welcome, no experience necessary, tools provided or bring your own. It's fun, free and healthy!

For further details see our car park notice boards or visit our website: [www.friendsofbroomhill.org.uk](http://www.friendsofbroomhill.org.uk) . You can also find us on social media (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) or contact David Park, Secretary on 07968-380588 or email: [secretary@friendsofbroomhill.org.uk](mailto:secretary@friendsofbroomhill.org.uk)

## Medway Geographical and Local History Society

Gillingham and Rainham Local History Society has now amalgamated with Medway Geographical Society, and will hitherto be known as Medway Geographical and Local History Society.

We will be starting the new season in September 2022 as follows:

Friday 23 September: *The Inca Trail* - a talk by Elizabeth Mooney.

Friday 28 October: *History of the Local Area* – a talk by Maggie Francis.

Friday 25 November: *The Royal Parks of London* – a talk by Andrew Mayfield.

*No Meeting in December.*

Meetings are held in Holy Trinity Church, Twydall Lane, Kent, ME8 7JU.

Meeting time: 2.00/3.30pm, doors open 1.30pm.

Subscriptions £18.00 per annum; visitors £3.50 per meeting.



## About The Clock Tower

*The Clock Tower* is the quarterly journal produced and published by the Friends of Medway Archives (FOMA), [www.foma-lsc.org/index.html](http://www.foma-lsc.org/index.html).

### Editorial deadlines

Please note, the deadline is the **last** Monday (or Tuesday when a Bank Holiday occurs) of January, April, July and October. Articles, letters, photos and any information to be considered for inclusion in the journal must be received before this date by the Editor, Mrs Amanda Thomas, 72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, AL5 5NS, Hertfordshire; [editor@foma-lsc.org](mailto:editor@foma-lsc.org).

**The copy deadline for Issue 68 of *The Clock Tower* is Monday 31 October 2022, with publication on Wednesday 23 November 2022.**

### Publication date

The fourth Wednesday following the editorial deadline.

*The Clock Tower* is printed by Barkers Litho, Unit 18 Castle View Business Centre, Gas House Road, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1PB; telephone: 01634 829048, email: [info@barkerslitho.co.uk](mailto:info@barkerslitho.co.uk)

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### Front Cover Accreditations and Website Information

The logo for *The Clock Tower* was designed by Bob Ratcliffe.

The banner design (incorporating the logo) and the title *The Clock Tower* were designed by Dr Alexander Thomas.

*The Clock Tower* is also available at [www.foma-lsc.org/newsletter.html](http://www.foma-lsc.org/newsletter.html)

*The Clock Tower Index* (<http://foma-lsc.org/journal.html>) is updated by Nic Nicholas.

### Further Information

Further information on the Medway Archives Centre can be obtained on the MAC website <https://cityark.medway.gov.uk/> or by writing to Medway Archives Centre, 32 Bryant Road, Strood, Rochester, Kent, ME2 3EP. Telephone +44 (0)1634 332714; fax +44 (0)1634 297060; email: [malsc@medway.gov.uk](mailto:malsc@medway.gov.uk)

General enquiries about the Friends can be obtained from the FOMA Chairman: Elaine Gardner, 102 Valley View Road, Rochester, ME1 3NX, Kent; [emgardner@virginmedia.com](mailto:emgardner@virginmedia.com); 01634 408595. All correspondence should be directed to the FOMA Secretary: Christopher de Coulon Berthoud, 4 Albert Road, Rochester, ME1 3DG, Kent; [berthoud@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:berthoud@blueyonder.co.uk)

Membership enquiries should be directed to the Membership Secretary, Jean Skilling, 15 Port Close, Lordswood, Chatham, ME5 8DU, Kent; [membership@foma-lsc.org](mailto:membership@foma-lsc.org)

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## The Medway Print Festival at MAC

In June and July, the foyer at the Medway Archives Centre was host to an eye-catching display and in celebration of the Medway Print Festival. See Elspeth Millar's article on page 6 for more information!



Photographs by Elaine Gardner.

## Coronation Memories



A ticket for the Queen's Coronation in 1953; from the collection of Editor, Amanda Thomas. For more Coronation memories, see the second part of our *Clock Tower* Special Feature, *Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee*, on page 25.

If undelivered, please return to:  
Medway Archives Centre,  
32 Bryant Road, Strood, Rochester, ME2 3EP.