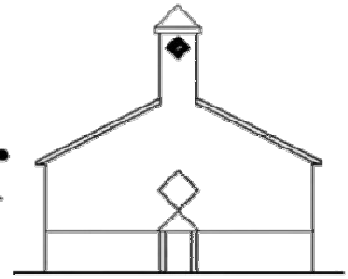


# The Clock Tower



Issue Number 27: August 2012  
£2.00; free to members

## The 2012 Olympic Torch Arrives in the Medway Towns!



On Friday 20 July 2012, exactly a week before the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games in London, the Olympic Torch arrived in the Medway Towns. In the main picture the torch arrives at The Vines in Rochester (photo Rob Flood) and to the left, the torch progresses up Strood Hill (photo Tessa Towner). More pictures inside.



*The torch handover at The Vines Photo by Rob Flood.*



*FOMA Chairman Tessa Towner's great grandson Levi flies the flag! Photo by Tessa Towner.*

*Strood residents (or Stroodites) wait just below the Coach and Horses pub on Strood Hill for the Olympic Torch to arrive. Photo by Tessa Towner.*



*The torch arrives at the Rede Court Road Junction of Gravesend Road, Strood. Photo by Ken New.*

## *From the Chairman*

Tessa Towner, Chairman.



What a fantastic couple of months we have had! The Diamond Jubilee celebrations (despite the rain) were fantastic, the river pageant in all its glory, the wonderful concert in front of the palace and the firework finale, and then the solemn thanksgiving service at St Paul's and the fly past over the palace. What a wonderful tribute to our Royal Family and especially the Queen for 60 glorious years.

Then there was the Trooping of the Colour carried out with the usual military precision for which the British soldier is renowned throughout the world. No other country does this like ours.

And then the Olympics! The opening ceremony was quintessentially British and celebrated our history in such a vivid and spectacular way. Well done Danny Boyle and all his team for such an entertaining ceremony with the climax of the lighting the Olympic flame, which I think surpassed all expectations.

Doesn't it make you proud to be British!

*The Clock Tower went to press on the day of the Closing Ceremony, Sunday 12 August 2012. Team GB received the following medals: 29 gold, 17 silver and 19 bronze. A fantastic 65 medals in total and third place behind the USA (1) and China(2). This is the highest number of medals Great Britain has received since we hosted the Olympic Games in 1908 when we received 146 - but then only 22 countries were competing.*

## FOMA Entrance Fees

Elaine Gardner Vice Chairman and Events Co-ordinator



At the last FOMA Committee meeting, we made the regrettable decision to increase the charges for our talks arranged from September 2012 onwards. The new charges will be £3 for FOMA members and £5 for non-members. We have had to do this in order that these talks do not run at a loss, which is currently the case. One of our key aims as a Friends group is to raise funds to enable the purchase of key documents when they come to market and we cannot do this if we are having to subsidise other events. There have been some very interesting talks since we began holding them and those currently programmed in your membership card promise to be equally fascinating.

**Tuesday 11th September is the date for Odette Buchanan's fascinating talk on the Heritage of The Vines in Rochester, when I think we will all discover something we didn't know. Come along and bring your friends and neighbours. On Saturday October 20th we have our regular Quiz Night with tables of six - it's never too early to get a team organised and the date in their diaries, and if you missed the Archive of Great Expectations Exhibition when it was on in January, you will have another chance to see it in October. The exhibition will be on display at Eastgate House from 17 to 31 October, 10:30 am - 4:00pm daily and there will be a talk on Aspects of the Archive on Thursday 25th October.**

It would be wonderful to see larger audiences, both members and non-members, so do come along, and tell your friends too!

## News and Events

Odette Buchanan, Friends' Secretary



I hope you were all awake for the week beginning 23<sup>rd</sup> July because that was this year's summer. I also hope you all enjoyed the Olympics. Personally, I was very excited on Sunday, 22 July when Bradley Wiggins won the Tour de France – the most gruelling annual sporting event in the world. What an achievement for an Englishman – the first in 109 years.

You might also be interested to know that when I was not watching the Tour de France or the Olympics I have been involved in keeping alive a past local achievement. The Medway Highways Department have funded an interpretation board commemorating the Thames and Medway Canal that finally opened in 1824. Although now all but forgotten, in its day it was a major engineering feat because of the tunnel dug for it under Broomhill, (now the railway tunnel at Strood). I researched and produced the text and photos for the board which is situated along the new bus route linking Medway City Estate with Strood just near where the lock gates used to be. This is part of the Strood Heritage Trail and also the Saxon Shore Way so the next time it isn't raining trot along there and have a look. It's a lovely spot anyway with superb views of the Dockyard and Rochester. Take your camera and/or your water colours. You may also be interested to read my article *Commemorating An Amazing Engineering Feat* about the canal on page 21.



*Odette Buchanan and the board commemorating the Thames and Medway Canal. Photograph by Adam Taylor.*

Fingers crossed September will produce an Indian Summer, although when you have read Amanda's article (see page 37, *Editor's Footnotes*), you may regret that wish. Also, please don't forget the next talk is on Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 7.30 pm. It will be given by me and is entitled *The Heritage of The Vines in Rochester*. All events are at Frindsbury Parish Hall and talks are £3 for members £5 non-members. Booking is no longer necessary - so see you there!

### Old Photographs

Do you have any photographs which need identifying and you would like to be published in future issues of *The Clock Tower*? If so, please send them to the Editor, Amanda Thomas, [amanda@ajthomas.com](mailto:amanda@ajthomas.com) or to 72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, AL5 5NS, Hertfordshire.

## *Calendar of Forthcoming Events and Exhibitions*

### FOMA Events

11<sup>th</sup> September, 7.30 pm  
The Heritage of The Vines in Rochester  
A talk by Odette Buchanan

Sat 20<sup>th</sup> October, 7.30 pm start  
Quiz Night  
£5 for members and non-members.  
**BOOKING REQUIRED.**

13<sup>th</sup> November, 7.30 pm  
Some Mother's Son  
A talk by Peter Ewart

**Please note, booking for FOMA talks is no longer necessary!**  
**All events - and until further notice - are at Frindsbury Parish Hall**  
**Talks are £3 for members £5 non-members.**  
**Booking for Quiz Nights and enquiries through the FOMA Secretary:**  
**Odette Buchanan , 72 Jersey Rd, Strood, ME2 3PE; odette\_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk; 01634 718231.**

### MALSC Events

#### Exhibitions

5<sup>th</sup> July – 4<sup>th</sup> September  
Sporting Life (popular clubs and hobbies) by Norma Crowe  
With help from MALSC staff and volunteers; particular thanks to Bob Ratcliffe

6<sup>th</sup> September – 3<sup>rd</sup> November  
Defence of Kent Project by Keith Gulvin and Mick Smith

19<sup>th</sup> November – 29<sup>th</sup> January 2013  
These we have Loved (shops, stores and emporia of Medway) by Jean Lear

#### MALSC OPENING HOURS

**Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm; Saturday 9.00 am to 4.00 pm. Wednesday and Sunday closed.**

#### Talks and Events

August/September  
Defence of Kent  
Victor Smith  
To be confirmed

2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2.30 pm  
Window Shopping in Kent  
Jean Lear

**Unless otherwise indicated, all the above are held at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, (MALSC) Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4AU. Unless otherwise indicated, talks and events are £5 or £4 for FOMA members. Further information is available from MALSC; please telephone 01634 332714 to book. TICKETS MUST BE BOOKED IN ADVANCE. Please note: You may be aware that Medway Council has been relocated to Gun Wharf. This move does not include the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre and until further notice, we are still to be found in the Clock Tower building, address as above.**

## Exhibitions at Eastgate House

6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> September  
Heritage Weekend

17<sup>th</sup> October – 31<sup>st</sup> October  
Archives of Great Expectation

25<sup>th</sup> October, 7.30 pm  
A talk on the Archives of Great Expectation  
Elaine Gardner

**Some MALSC talks and events also take place at Eastgate House – see above under *MALSC Talks and Events*.**

## The City of Rochester Society

“The City of Rochester Society was founded in 1967 to help conserve the historic City as a pleasant place to visit. The Society is still active today, helping to improve the environment and quality of life in Rochester for residents and visitors alike.” Taken from the City of Rochester Society website, [www.city-of-rochester.org.uk/](http://www.city-of-rochester.org.uk/), where further information on the society and how to join is available.

Talks are on Wednesdays at the Auditorium of the Visitor Centre, 95 High Street, Rochester and start at 8.00 pm. There is a small charge for events to defray expenses; please contact the CoRS Secretary, Christine Furminger on 01634 320598 or at [cafurminger@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:cafurminger@blueyonder.co.uk) for further information and how to join.

### Eastgate House

Eastgate House is one of Rochester's landmarks. Built in the 1590s by Sir Peter Buck, the most senior member of staff at Chatham Dockyard, its structure has been adapted considerably over the years, but research has indicated that the original building may be Medieval or earlier. A Heritage Lottery Grant awarded in January 2011 has enabled Medway Council to begin planning conservation work on the house and to start opening its doors once more to visitors. In the autumn, the Friends of Eastgate House was set up and on 28 January 2012 a very successful open day was held to raise awareness of the work at Eastgate House.

If you are interested in the project and would like information or to be put on the mailing list, please email Tracy Stringfellow, Eastgate House Project Manager, at [eastgate.house@medway.gov.uk](mailto:eastgate.house@medway.gov.uk)

## Friends of Broomhill



Friends of Broomhill Secretary, Odette Buchanan, will be presenting her popular talk *Strood, the Land of Used to Be* at Strood Library on Thursday, 27th September, 7.00 for 7.30 pm. Tickets £5 or £3 for members of Friends of Broomhill. More details from Odette Buchanan, 72 Jersey Rd, Strood, ME2 3PE; [odette\\_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk); 01634 718231.

## The Royal Engineers Museum, Library and Archive

Prince Arthur Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME4 4UG; [www.re-museum.co.uk/events](http://www.re-museum.co.uk/events)

**Brompton 200:** This year the Royal Engineers Museum celebrates the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Royal School of Military Engineering in Brompton. The Royal Engineers Museum is Kent's largest military museum, and holds its only Designated Collection of historical and international importance. The many galleries tell the story of Britain's military engineers from the Roman period to the modern Corps of Royal Engineers. The millions of items in its collection tell a sweeping epic of courage, creativity and innovation and the stories of individuals of great renown (General Gordon, Lord Kitchener, John Chard VC) and the average Sapper who has helped the British Army move, fight and survive for over 200 years.



Opening hours: Tuesday – Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm; Saturday – Sunday and Bank Holidays: 11.30am to 5.00pm; CLOSED MONDAYS. Admission: pay once and get in for 12 months! Adult: £7.80; Family: £20.80; Concession: £5.20; Children under 5: Free.

## Guided History Walks

### Brompton Village Walk

Lasts around 2 to 2 and a half hours, 1mile/1.5km, meeting outside the King George V pub, Brompton. An historical insight into the civilian village in the heart of a military area.

### Chatham Lines Walk

Lasts around 3 hours, 2.5miles/4km, meeting at the Royal Engineers Museum front entrance). Takes in the historic fortifications built by the Royal Engineers to defend Chatham's naval dockyard from a land-based attack.

Walks will be at a leisurely pace with plenty of stops and no real steep parts although the Chatham Lines Walk may be unsuitable for some wheelchairs.

For more information on the area's history visit [www.bromptonhistory.org.uk](http://www.bromptonhistory.org.uk)

Parking is available at the Royal Engineers Museum but please note at the weekend, the car park opens at 10.30am and is locked promptly at 6pm.

Tea and coffee will be available after the morning walks at the Royal Engineers Museum.

At the time of going to press, places were still available on the following walks:

11am on Saturday 25th August, Chatham Lines walk

11am on Sunday 9th September, Chatham Lines walk

2:30pm on Sunday 9th September, Brompton Village walk

Free, all welcome. To book your place or get more information contact Amy Adams: 01634 822261 or 01634 822839 or email: [assistant-curator@rhqre.co.uk](mailto:assistant-curator@rhqre.co.uk)

### **The Will Adams Festival – Volunteers Needed!**

The Arts Team has invited MALSC to get involved and have a display of information on local history, Will Adams, Tudor Medway. The event is on Saturday 15 September at Gillingham Park. Volunteers will need to arrive by 9.30am to set up and can be away by 5pm. If enough people offer to help we can of course have a rota of helpers. Our stall will be in the same marquee as the Guildhall Museum so that we can cover each other's stall during breaks. For the last two years representatives of the Guildhall Museum have been at the Festival, with a display of artefacts and weaponry.

Can you help? Names please to Norma Crowe, on 01634 332714 or email [norma.crowe@medway.gov.uk](mailto:norma.crowe@medway.gov.uk)

## *New Members*

A warm welcome to new FOMA Life Member:

Mr Derek Adams

**Help is always needed with events.**

**If you think you could help, please contact Elaine Gardner on 01634 408595 or email [emgardner@virginmedia.com](mailto:emgardner@virginmedia.com)**

## Readers' Letters

*We welcome letters and emails from readers with their comments. If you have anything you would like to say please write to: Mrs Amanda Thomas, Editor, The Clock Tower, 72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 5NS or email at [amanda@ajthomas.com](mailto:amanda@ajthomas.com). FOMA Secretary, Odette Buchanan, often receives queries from members or visitors to the FOMA website, [www.foma-lsc.org/index.html](http://www.foma-lsc.org/index.html). If you have any additional information for the following correspondents, please contact the Editor.*

### Shadrach Edward Robert Jones

From: Jim Cooper  
Sent: 27 June 2012  
To: Amanda Thomas  
Subject: Brian Butler and "Shadrach Edward Robert Jones"

To the Editor of The Clock Tower,

I refer to Issue 15, August 200, and to Issue 18, May 2010, which featured articles by Brian Butler. The subject of the articles was Shadrach Edward Robert Jones.

Jones came to my notice whilst researching the Pain's Lane Races held in Shropshire in the nineteenth century. Jones attended the races in 1850. He lived in Pain's Lane and was described in the 1851 census as a surgeon. From May 1851 to October 1852 he was going through the processes of bankruptcy (see the London Gazette) in which he was described as an Apothecary, Dealer and Chapman. It must have been shortly after this that he emigrated to Australia though his son Edward's birth was registered in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 1853 in Wellington, Shropshire. Possibly his wife stayed behind for a while when he first went to Australia. Brian Butler correctly finds him in 1871 as visiting his daughter in Wrexham, but he also appears in the census of 173 Upper Kensington Lane, Lambeth. His wife must have misunderstood the census procedures and included him along with two of their sons and a daughter. She also recorded only his middle christian name, Edward. In March 1881 the London Gazette announced the dissolution of the medical partnership between Jones and Henry Jacob Jordan at 47 Berners Street, Middlesex. In the census the following month he was resident at 47 Berner Street, Marylebone, but his name was recorded as Charles E R Jones. His wife was living at 2 Auckland Villas, Lambeth. I hope this information is of use to Brian Butler. Shadrach E R Jones clearly had a complicated and interesting life.

Sincerely yours,  
Jim Cooper

*This email was forwarded to Brian Butler.*

### Old Strood Photographs

Readers will recall the correspondence published in the last issue of *The Clock Tower* (Number 26, May 2012) from Maurice Friend in Australia and re-published below. Since the letter was published, the granddaughter of Arthur (Jack) Frost has been in touch with Cindy O'Halloran Senior Archive and Local Studies Assistant at MALSC, and has requested a copy of the photograph below. We are trying to put this lady and Maurice Friend in touch with each other

From: Maurice Friend  
To: [odette\\_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk)  
Sent: Monday, 20 February 2012,

Hello Odette, from Brisbane Australia,

I have a couple of old photos from my grandfather's era c. 1913-14 of young men on the "Beresford-Margate Walla Walla" and also a large group after the Sunday service at St Mary's, Strood c. 1925 which you may be interested in. My grandfather William Jackson 1890 -1988 appears in both photos and lived at 25 Cross St, Strood, along with his parents. My mother was born at Frindsbury. When I was staying with a cousin in Rochester last June I wandered around Strood one morning and was fortunate in seeing inside St. Nicholas Church where the Jacksons, going back to 1850, were christened and married. It had certainly changed a bit from what I remember as a boy when I visited relatives during and after the war from Sittingbourne where I lived. I am now 73 yrs old so doubt that I will get to UK again.

Kind regards, Maurice Friend.

PS I got your address from the Friends of Medway web site which I enjoyed looking at.



*Chatham Town Crier and Mace Bearer .c. 1928 shows Arthur F. Frost (great grandfather of Maurice Friend) and other civic dignitaries.*

Further to this earlier correspondence, Maurice Friend sent the following request:

26 June 2012

Hello Amanda

Thank you for sending the information to view the article, you kindly published, on my old Strood photos. It looked good. Reading through the Clock Tower I saw mentioned the piece on identifying old photos. The photo I have attached has puzzled me for many years and maybe your readers could help me identify one of the soldiers on it.

It was sent as a post card to my grandmother **Beatrice E Frost** (daughter of the said A “Jack” Frost, Mace Bearer of Chatham) who was then a 16 year old girl at the Temperance Hotel in Rochester. Posted in Malta on 19 May 1911 “after the big parade” and signed JS. I believe this to be **John Spencer** born in Chatham 1 March 1874, but I have no way of finding out which one of the soldiers he is. In the 1911 census **John Spencer**, aged 37 unmarried, is listed as being a 3<sup>rd</sup> class Master Gunner, Royal Artillery Malta District Staff, Auberge de Castille, Valletta, Malta. This fits the post card date. John was the brother of Caroline E Spencer who was A “Jack” Frost’s wife.

Kind regards,  
Maurice Friend.





## The Queen's Diamond Jubilee

There was considerable discussion by FOMA members by email prior to the Diamond Jubilee. The lighting of the beacons caused much comment (provoking an exchange of information as to when and where these were taking place), as did the commemorative exhibition at Allhallows, and as follows (see also Brenda Paternoster's article on page 38).

From: Stephen Gwilt  
Sent: 01 June 2012  
To: Amanda Thomas  
Subject: Special Jubilee Event

Amanda,

Allhallows is holding an exhibition of the history of Allhallows from Roman times to the present days, in the church from Saturday through to Tuesday with a talk given by Keith Gulvin on Sat at 4pm. As part of the exhibition we will opening our marriage register to public viewing, it is the oldest continuing marriage register still in use in the country starting shortly after the 1836 marriage act with the first entry being June 5th 1837.

Regards,  
Rev Stephen Gwilt,  
Rector High Halstow with Allhallows & St. Mary Hoo.

Check out our new church website: [www.triunity.org.uk](http://www.triunity.org.uk)

From: Brenda Paternoster  
Sent: 01 June 2012  
To: Amanda Thomas  
Subject: News on Allhallows

If that is correct the vicar of the day jumped the gun and recorded a pre-civil registration marriage in the new book which shouldn't have been started until 1st July 1837. A marriage in June 1837 should have been recorded in the older "Rose" marriage register. I knew that Allhallows is still using the original 1837 register, but I didn't know that it was the last one in the country still in use. I will definitely have to go and have a look at it!

Brenda in Allhallows

From: Ken Walter  
Sent: 06 June 2012  
To: Amanda Thomas;  
Subject: News on Allhallows

I went there yesterday and saw the register entry for myself. It was a nice diversion for the public holiday, well presented by the organiser, and of particular interest for me were the pictures and stories about the old Hundred of Hoo branch line.

Ken,  
Historic Dockyard, Chatham.

From: RM Howe  
Sent: 06 June 2012  
To: Amanda Thomas;  
Subject: News on Allhallows

It occurred to me that, as the vicar "jumped the gun", it was probably a shotgun wedding!! (groan). I was disappointed to discover that the origin of the term is literal - as we shall, no doubt, see at the Olympics. It came from a time when horse races were started by firing a gun.

*Ken Walter has also reported on the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Concert which he and his wife, Lorna, were fortunate to attend on Monday 4 June 2012. See page 44.*



*FOMA Vice President Sue Haydock held the Olympic Torch for a short while for the Japanese delegation in London - find out why on page 14.*

### **Medway Museums and Library Service**

Medway Museums and Library Service has held a series of successful exhibitions, usually lasting about ten days, at Eastgate House, Rochester with the aim of both getting visitors into the house and highlighting the exhibitions put together by MALSC.

However, success depends on volunteers manning Eastgate House when exhibitions are on display, and we are keen to find more volunteers to avoid the stalwart few having to cover two or even three half days.

If you think could offer a two and a half hour morning or afternoon slot at future events please contact Elaine Gardner on 01634 408595 or e-mail [emgardner@virginmedia.com](mailto:emgardner@virginmedia.com) so that we can add you to the list and contact you before the next exhibition. Thank you!

## That Was The News....

Norma Crowe



Norma has been Local Studies Librarian at MALSC since May 1995. Previous posts were as librarian at Erith College of Technology, Hampshire County Libraries and the Radcliffe Science Library, Oxford. Norma has many interests which include visiting historic sites, singing, dancing and sampling real ale.

Local newspapers are a precious but increasingly dwindling part of our nation's media sector. This is a worrying trend, not least for those of us trying to preserve records of the local area for future generations. *The Chatham (Medway) News* was first published by Clayton & Co. in 1859. Mr Clayton was a bookseller with premises at 58 High Street Chatham. He had no experience of publishing a newspaper, and soon went into partnership with Henry Foster, who had been the editor of the *East Kent Gazette*.



*The first newspaper offices of Clayton and Co.*

In 1885 Forster died, and the business was purchased by William John Parrett, who soon brought George Neves in as editor and his partner in the business. Under them the business flourished and their names were thereafter connected with the papers, even though Parrett died in 1905, and Neves in 1921. *The Chatham News* was one of the main local papers for the Medway Towns. Its sister publication, the *Chatham (Medway) Standard*, ceased publication in January 2009. Since 2008, both titles were owned by Kent Regional News and Media, part of Northcliffe Media. Northcliffe Media is a large company, which owns newspaper titles all over the country. Here is a quote from Northcliffe's website:

'We've built upon our role as one of the UK's largest newspaper publishers to become a fully integrated multimedia news and information provider, combining heritage with innovation in order to best serve the needs of our local communities and advertising customers. Our 113 regional newspapers provide access to 5.8 million adults every week and together with our portfolio of more than 180 local and hyper-local websites we reach a de-duplicated audience of 7.4 million adults.'

This confident statement would lead one to think that our local papers were in safe hands. But it was with shock that we learned of the imminent closure of the News late in November 2011. The newspaper group did not seem to want to retain the important local archive themselves, and the staff at Kent Regional News and Media approached us to ask if we would house their collections. Since early December we were in talks to agree terms so that we are able to take in that part of the Chatham News and Chatham Standard archive which complements our own holdings, and which we can accommodate, given the very real pressure on storage room which we are facing. To begin with we spoke with the editor Christine Rayner and her staff, but after closure we have been negotiating with representatives of the parent company, Northcliffe Media. Negotiations have been completed, and we have now added the following resources to our local studies collections:

**Microfilms:** Chatham News 1862- 2003 and Chatham Standard 1889-2003

**Photographic Prints:** assorted Royal visits, special events, snow scenes, floods and aerial photos

**Bound Newspapers:** *Chatham Standard* for the years 1895, 1925- 1943, to complete our run of bound originals from 1922 to 1990.



The first edition of The Chatham News; with thanks to Northcliffe Media



Although these resources remain the property of Northcliffe Media, we have agreed terms with the company, which allows fair dealing usage for personal research and use by Medway Council for displays. This is a fantastic acquisition for MALSC, which extends our coverage, and will offer us all new insights into life in the Medway Towns from the 1890s and through to the mid 1920s.

The final edition of The Chatham News; with thanks to Northcliffe Media

## *Flying the Team GB Flag for Medway!*

Sue Haydock

*News from our roving reporter, Medway Heritage Champion and FOMA Vice President*



Four hundred years ago a chap born in Gillingham called William Adams landed on the shores of Japan and was the first Englishman to do so (see page 7 for further details on the forthcoming festival). He became the teacher and diplomatic adviser to the Shogun, Ieyasu Tokogawa. Adams was rewarded with estates and workers, and honoured with the title of Samauri - the Blue Eyed Samauri. When the political scene changed he moved to Hirado where he died in 1624.

In 1982 Gillingham signed sister city partnerships with Ito and Yokosuka, the towns with which he was most associated during this time. Adams is a national hero in Japan and celebrated everywhere. I went to Ito and Yokosuka on an official visit in 2004 when I was mayor of Medway to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the building of the first western-style ship. I was delighted at that time to be made Honorary Mayor of Yokosuka. I am now Chairman of the Japan Group and in the run up to the Olympic Games I hosted an official delegation from Yokosuka, organised by Ashley Davis to celebrate the 30th anniversary of twinning with Ito and Yokosuka. It was quite a surprise to discover that at the same time Japan and the hotel where they were staying was hosting the torches and athletes!



*Sue Haydock, Honorary Mayor of Yokosuka, (centre) with (not from left to right) the Deputy Mayor of Yokosuka, Mr. Yoshiaki Numata (the Mayor was unable to attend), the Chairman of Yokosuka City Council, Mr. Michio Yamaguchi, the wife of the Chairman, Mrs. Sadako Yamaguchi, Deputy Director-General, Policy Promotion Department, Mr. Yoshihiro Matsumoto, Chief Administrator, International Relations Division, Mr. Yoshikazu Yasuda.*

## About The Clock Tower

*The Clock Tower* is the quarterly journal produced and published by the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre (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; [amanda@ajthomas.com](mailto:amanda@ajthomas.com).

**The copy deadline for Issue 28 of *The Clock Tower* is Monday 29 October 2012, with publication on Wednesday 21 November 2012.**

### Publication date

The fourth Wednesday following the editorial deadline.

The Clock Tower is printed by Ray Maisey, Rabbit Hutch Printers, 106 Charles Drive, Cuxton, Kent, ME2 1DU; telephone: 01634 294655; fax: 01634 723510; email: [Ray@Rabbithutchprinters.com](mailto:Ray@Rabbithutchprinters.com)

### Copyright

The copyright of the contents of *The Clock Tower* belongs to the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre and the authors and owners of any articles and photographs printed. The contents of *The Clock Tower* may not be reproduced without permission of the Editor and/or the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.

### 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 Alexander Thomas.

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

### Further Information

Further information on the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre can be obtained on the MALSC CityArk website <http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/> or by writing to Medway Archives Office, Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4AU. 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 Secretary, Odette Buchanan: 72 Jersey Road, Rochester, ME2 3PE. Telephone: 01634 718231; email: [odette\\_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk)

Membership enquiries should be directed to the Membership Secretary, Betty Cole, 25 Elm Avenue, Chatham, Kent ME4 6ER. Telephone: 01634 316509; email: [bettycole@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:bettycole@blueyonder.co.uk)

## Good Sports Recreation in or by the River Medway

Norma Crowe



Norma has been Local Studies Librarian at MALSC since May 1995. Previous posts were as librarian at Erith College of Technology, Hampshire County Libraries and the Radcliffe Science Library, Oxford. Norma has many interests which include visiting historic sites, singing, dancing and sampling real ale.

The current exhibition at MALSC; *The Sporting Life* which runs until 4<sup>th</sup> September is a small contribution to our special summer of Olympic sporting endeavour. It includes images and information on a variety of sporting and leisure activities, which have been popular in the Medway Towns over the last 150 years. Of course any article or board display is very selective. Our collections contain a wealth of images, reports, newspapers and original documents from groups and companies, which are fertile resources for anyone wanting to research a particular sport or activity in depth. This article uses extracts from the current exhibition, mainly the sections looking at leisure activities connected with the River Medway.

### Medway Rowing Club.



Photo courtesy Guildhall Museum

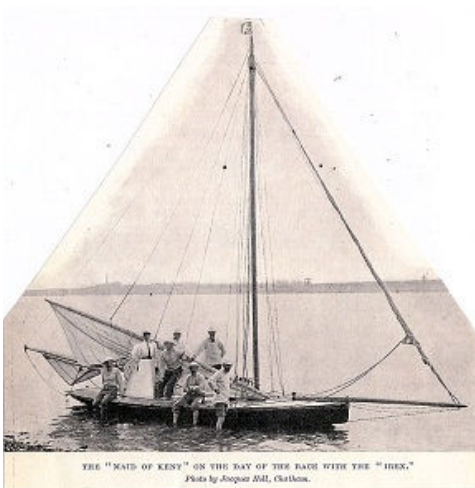
Medway Rowing Club was founded in 1865. This was mainly due to the enthusiasm of the Tuffill family who spearheaded the club in its first 20 years. By 1890 club members were confident enough of their abilities to take part in the Henley Regatta.

One hundred years ago the Medway Regatta at Rochester was a major annual event on the City calendar. Between the wars the club set up the Medway Head Race from Marine Steps at Upnor to Rochester Pier. This course was used until 1957 when, because of the vagaries of wind and tide it was deemed safer to move it to a course at Maidstone.

In the late 1950s there was a lull of interest in the sport, and the two local rowing clubs (Medway and Chatham) amalgamated to form the Medway Towns Rowing Club to secure their joint future. In 2010 the Medway Towns Rowing Club decided to move the Head Race back to the original course, and so in 2010 the race was once again from Upnor to Rochester.

### Medway Yacht Club

Medway Yacht Club was founded in 1880 by local businessmen, members of the Royal Engineers Yacht Club and W.S. Nicholson. The Earl of Cavendish; Lord Beresford; W. L. Wyllie the marine artist and A. Henty (a famous children's author) were all members of the club in its early years.



W.L. Wyllie lived at Hoo Lodge with his family from 1885 until 1907, and enjoyed painting and sailing the Medway. He was Club Commodore from 1896-1904, and took an active part in its development.

In June 1898 an Australian, Mark Foy, challenged the club to race against his prize yacht *The Irex*. The challenge was accepted, and a boat of comparable size was designed for the Medway Yacht Club by Linton Hope, and built by Gill and Sons of Rochester. She was aptly named *Maid of Kent*. A series of races and challenges took place in September 1898. Commodore Wyllie and his wife knew the River Medway well, and their superior knowledge and excellent yachting skill gave them a marked advantage. They won all three races.

One hundred years later a repeat challenge race was held, with Richard Stone of Medway Yacht Club skippering *Scot* and Richard Notley *Tagalooma II* for the team from Sydney Flying Squadron.

## Medway Towns Swimmers Union

The Medway Swimming Club (or Medway Towns Swimmers Union as it later became) was founded on 9th September 1896. The initial meeting was held at the Watts Baths Rochester, as reported in the Chatham Observer for 12th September 1896. From 1920 onwards the club used a raft moored by Strood Pier as their base, and swam in the River Medway. In 1931, they purchased an old barge, *Gipsy* (pictured). This served as their clubhouse until the outbreak of war in 1939. Throughout the war *Gipsy* was laid up opposite Gas House Point.

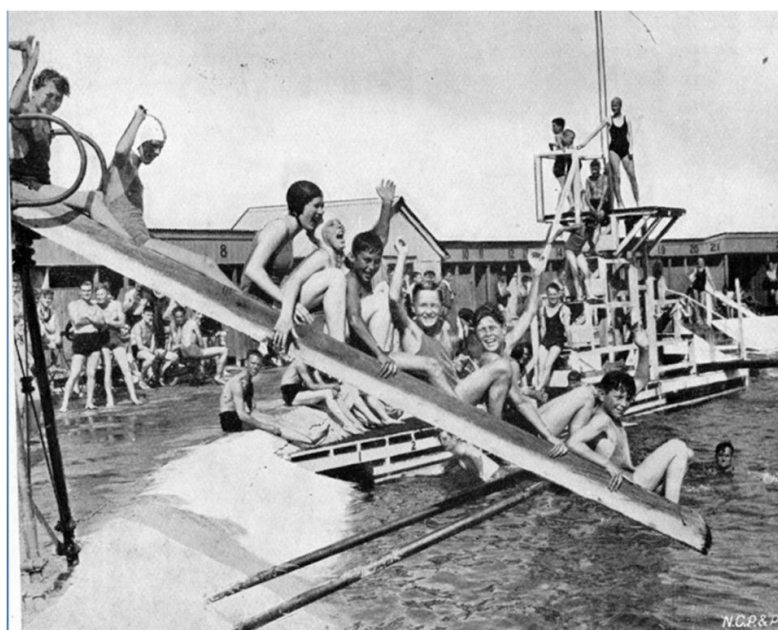


After the war, club members found that the barge raft had deteriorated badly and was unusable. This seemed to herald the end of an era, and of the club, because the story of the Medway Towns Swimmers Union concludes there.

## The Strand

The Strand river frontage was acquired in 1892, and developed gradually as amenity space. In 1894 permission was obtained by Mr Cuckow to construct a bathing pool. It opened in 1896, but was quite primitive; little more than a cement-lined basin with no water cleaning technology. Shortly after World War One chlorination and sanitisation units were installed, and wooden changing rooms were built.

Between the wars other attractions were added, including a paddling pool, bandstand, and putting green. A miniature railway opened in 1948. In 2012 the Strand is still a popular venue for a day out.



## Leisure and Pleasure: a Day at Upnor Beach



From the 1920s and up to World War Two it was commonplace for families to spend their free time in the summer by the banks of the Medway at Upnor (see the photograph above). Mothers and fathers would sit on the shingle or, if they were fortunate, on a deckchair, enjoying the scene. The majority of folk were almost fully clothed. Hardly anyone went for a swim, preferring to paddle. They would queue up for a trip on a motor launch or take a stroll through Woodland Park to the tearooms.

I hope this taster will encourage you to visit MALSC this summer to view the display for yourself.

*All illustrations are from the collections of the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.*

## Keeping up with the Victorians

Alison Thomas

Archive and Local Studies Assistant, The Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre



*After completing a degree in medieval and modern history at the University of Birmingham, Alison Thomas trained as a teacher and worked in primary education for several years. Whilst bringing up her family she had various part time jobs within education ranging from playgroup assistant to special needs teacher. Alison left work to become a full time carer for four years, and joined MALSC as Archive and Local Studies Assistant at the end of February 2010.*

A new series.

## Newspapers, Advertising and Local Businesses

The Victorian age saw a great boom in advertising – an increase in wealth and the rise of the middle class meant that for the first time many people could buy non-essential products. From sandwich-board men, free offers and advertising vehicles to the use of classic paintings like *Bubbles* to advertise Pear's soap, the Victorians saw it all! They also used celebrities to promote their products. Oscar Wilde endorsed Madame Fontaine's Bosom Beautifier, in an advertisement that claimed, 'Just as sure as the sun will rise tomorrow, just so sure it will enlarge and beautify the bosom.'<sup>1</sup> With no advertising standards agency to limit their assertions, businesses often made what appear to us to be fantastic claims.

The local newspapers of the time are littered with advertisements placed by the shopkeepers of the Medway Towns. These advertisements, often amusing in their own right, not only shed light on the *must have* products of the Victorian age, but also tell of the men behind the adverts – the business owners themselves.

**STRAYED.**

A very large and lively Beetle, 1½ inches long, and ¾ inch tail, left legs as long as the right and equally black, answers to the name of "Dick."

**LAST SEEN**

Near a Tin of CLARKE'S STROOD INSECT POWDER, where he doubtless met his death, as Clarke's Powder is a wholesale murderer.

Tins at 1d., 2d., 3d., and 6d. each.

**£100 REWARD.**

### WE Clarke – Chemist, Pharmacist and Eyeman

*An Advertiser's Guide to Publicity* published by Moody's printing works in Birmingham in 1887 had set out two golden rules of advertising; first concentrate on one product, and second, be original.<sup>2</sup> Knowingly or not, Clarke's of Strood had followed this advice! Victorian households often suffered from plagues of insects of various types and so powders were sold to try to remedy the problem. As you can see Mr Clarke hoped his original approach in *The Chatham News* of August 28 1897 would make his advertisement attract attention!

The Kelly's Directory of 1897 shows that the Mr Clarke in question was William Edward Clarke, a chemist who had his premises on the south side of Strood High Street at number 85. From the initial listing of simply *chemist*, Mr Clarke's entry develops into 'pharmacist, analytical chemist, wholesale manufacturing and agricultural druggist, practical and scientific ophthalmic optician, maker of 'Clarke's cure for coughs and colds and numerous specialities for man and beast! By 1900 Clarke's claimed to be the makers of a 'certain cure for coughs and colds.' From 1903 William had expanded his business, now owning a second shop at 74 High Street Rochester. He maintained both shops until the First World War, but by 1920 was only to be found in Strood. In 1930

there was yet another change as Clarke's moved to the north side of Strood High Street, to no. 28. William Clarke kept these premises until at least 1939, but by 1948 had disappeared from the High Street.

This newspaper cutting from The Couchman Collection held at Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre shows Clarke's Chemist on the north side of the High Street in February 1936.

An advertisement in Kelly's for 1916 describes William as *Clarke the Eyeman*, particularly skilled in the 'scientific adaption of glasses and the fitting of artificial eyes.' The First World War meant that many British soldiers were receiving eye injuries in battle. The army's spectacle depot in London had a vast collection of false eyes in all sizes, shapes and colours.<sup>3</sup> It is possible that William Clarke was filling a demand created by the ravages of war, or possibly helping men injured in accidents caused by industrialisation of the workplace.

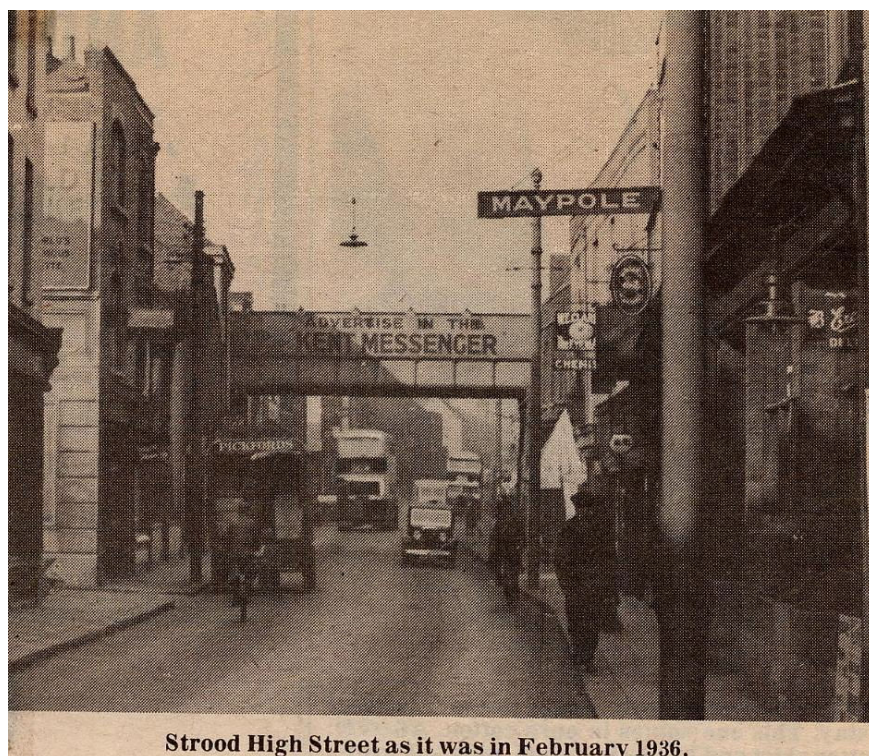
## From Yorkshire to Strood

So Clarke showed the entrepreneurial spirit of the Victorian age in his approach to advertising but who was he? The 1871 census shows a two-year-old William Edward Clarke living in Front Street in the Yorkshire village of Foxholes, with his mother Frances and his father William, a shoemaker. By 1881 the Clarkes were no longer living in their own house but were boarding at the vicarage. William continued with his shoe making, but Frances had taken up employment as a housekeeper. By 1891 William Edward, now aged 22, was

a student of pharmacy in Manchester, boarding at a cabinetmaker's house in Lloyd Street Chorlton Under Medlock, with two other pharmacy students.

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain was established in 1841 as the professional body for pharmacists. From 1868 all individuals who dealt in medicines containing poisons had to register with the society in order to practise and all new entrants to the profession had to pass an examination. Some potential pharmacists spent several years as an apprentice and then studied as a part time student. Others attended a full time course at a school of pharmacy.<sup>4</sup> Several of William's advertisements carry the letters Ph. C. after his name denoting Pharmaceutical Chemist, and since he was also the owner of a chemist's shop, it would seem likely that he had passed the major exam of the Pharmaceutical Society. There is no firm evidence as to how and where he gained this qualification, but there are various possibilities.

Owen's College, a predecessor of Manchester University had opened new buildings in Oxford Road, near Lloyd Street in 1873. The College held classes in Pharmacy, Material Medica and Pharmaceutical Chemistry for its medical students. Non-medical students could attend these classes in order to prepare for the pharmaceutical societies exams, so it is possible that William was one of these students. Sadly, there are no surviving university records giving the names of these external students. Clarke's name also cannot be found in the Registers of the Manchester Pharmaceutical Association. There were other organisations that also held similar classes in the Manchester area, but, as yet, no evidence for William's attendance has materialised.<sup>5</sup> The classes all involved the payment of a fee, but it is impossible to say for sure how William managed this. However his education was funded it was certainly a success in that it provided for William and his family and led to the establishment of a business that was a part of Strood and Rochester for many years. By 1911 William was living in ten rooms at his premises at 85 High Street with his family, including his widowed mother Frances. This has been a very brief look at one of Medway's businesses. As always I am struck not by what I have found but by how many questions remain unanswered and what still awaits discovery.



**Strood High Street as it was in February 1936.**

*From The Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, Couchman Collection. High Street (Watling Street, A2 trunk road), Strood Cutting from Extra comprising photograph of High Street, Strood, between Canal Road and Station Road, looking north west, showing ranges of buildings on each side of road east of railway viaduct (Medway Valley or North Kent Line), Maypole Dairy Co.'s shop (no.24) on right, advertising slogan for Kent Messenger newspapers on side of viaduct and street scene showing cyclists, Pickfords van, motor car, motor van, pedestrians, motor omnibuses and street lighting. February 1936. Published 4 March 1983. p.7 (U)*

#### Notes

1. Jeremy Paxman, *The Victorians: Britain through the Paintings of the Age*, BBC Books, 2010, p. 207.
2. Diana and Geoffrey Hindley, *Advertising in Victorian England 1837-1901*, Wayland (Publishers) Ltd., 1972.
3. From the website of the College of Optometrists, June 2012:  
<http://www.college-optometrists.org/en/knowledge-centre/museyeum/collections/world-of-eyeballs.cfm>
4. From the website of The Royal Pharmaceutical Society, June 2012 [www.rpharms.com](http://www.rpharms.com)
5. Staff at the Archives and Records Centre at the University of Manchester Library helpfully provided the information about Owen's College. They also checked the Registers of The Manchester Pharmaceutical Association and those belonging to the Manchester College of Pharmacy.

## Commemorating an Amazing Engineering Feat

Odette Buchanan



*Odette is a retired teacher. She is fascinated by local history and is actively involved in many aspects of the subject. She is a City of Rochester Society visitors guide, a steward at Restoration House, and was a volunteer on the England's Past for Everyone Victoria County History Project. The City of Rochester Society published her book, Two Gentlemen of Strood, and Odette researches and presents talks on many aspects of local history but especially Strood and Broomhill. She is secretary of the Friends of Broomhill and of course FOMA secretary.*

On 28 June 2012 a group of us met along the new bus route that joins Strood to the Medway City Estate to unveil an interpretation board that the council have erected near where the lock gates of the Thames and Medway Canal used to stand. The idea of the board came from the Chair of the Medway Local Access Forum, Rita Hunt. It stands along the Strood Community Trail and the Saxon Shore Way. Funding came from Medway Highways and Medway Rights of Way Team. Public Rights of Way (PROW) Officer Adam Taylor commissioned me to research and write the text as well as sourcing the illustrations. The site is in Strood North Ward and so all three Councillors were present (Jane Chitty, Jane Etheridge and Stephen Hubbard) as well as our Community Safety Officer, Jayne Gray and members of the Thames and Medway Canal Association ([www.thamesmedway.co.uk/](http://www.thamesmedway.co.uk/)).



*A map showing the location of the canal. From the private collection of Odette Buchanan.*

When the canal was first proposed in 1788 we were at war with France and ordnance was being attacked on its way from Woolwich and Deptford to Chatham Dockyard round the Hoo Peninsula. A canal was seen as a quicker and safer route, however, there was the problem of Broomhill (one of the highest spots in north west Kent) and so a tunnel was built under the hill. This sent the cost way over budget and caused delays. Work commenced in 1799 and engineer Ralph Dodd completed the Gravesend to Higham cut by 1801 but it was not finally opened until 1824 by which time it was *past its sell by date*. Railways were the new, quicker form of transport, the war with France had finished at Waterloo in 1815 and the tolls were very expensive. This and the fact that it was tidal meant that it was not a commercial success. Although time was saved the bargees had to hang around waiting for the tide to come in before making the return journey and although it took longer to round the Hoo Peninsula, here there was no toll. Yet another problem was leakage which meant that expensive pumping machinery had to be installed.

Nevertheless, the tunnel was acknowledged as an amazing feat of engineering. It opened on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1824 with a grand procession of barges and a formal dinner at the Crown Hotel, Rochester. It was a great tourist attraction with trips through the tunnel. It was 2½ miles (4 km) long and so straight that 'light at each extremity was clearly visible from the opposite end.' It was hand dug under

Broomhill and to accommodate spritsail barges, it was 35 feet (10.6 m) high and had a curved base (as did the lock basins). It was 30 feet (9.1 m) wide and had a depth of 7 feet (2.1m). It was unlined so did not need lighting as the white chalk reflected enough daylight.



*From the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, Couchman Collection. Photograph of engraving entitled The Strood Terminus of the Gravesend and Rochester Railway in 1844 comprising view of area of former canal basin, looking north, showing railway line running from left of scene towards mouth of tunnel in middle-ground, cement factory in left middle-distance, bystanders and spectators in fore and middle-grounds, chalk cliff face under Frindsbury Hill and houses and windmills on Frindsbury Hill. Reproduced by Mike G. Bondi, 92 Allington Drive, Strood. Couchman's accompanying notes pertain to the use of The Thames and Medway Canal after its use as a canal, by Gravesend and Rochester Railway and South-Eastern Railway and operation of first train on Christmas Day 1844 [?]. 6 1/2" x 4 3/4" p.3; DE402/13/3.*



*From the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, Couchman Collection. Copy of photograph of Strood Dock looking north-west from lock gates, showing in left foreground travelling crane and two steam tugs, in right middle-ground the steam vessel Condor of Anvers [cf. Antwerp], Belgium and in distance entrance to railway tunnel, chalk cliff under Frindsbury Hill and houses in Banks Road, Frindsbury. 8 1/4" x 6 1/4" (210mm x 160mm) Original exposed before 1922 p.7; DE402/13/7.*

Eventually the Thames and Medway Canal Company built a single-track railway parallel to the canal through the tunnel. This was so successful that the company sold out to the South Eastern Railway who in 1846 filled in the canal and had two rail tracks laid through the tunnel, as well as converting the canal towing contractor's house into Higham Station. The Gravesend to Higham section remained operational until 1934 and was used mainly for transporting farming produce and manure, earning Higham the nickname Dung Wharf. It suffered bomb damage in World War II and during this period it was used to season thousands of Canadian logs needed to build Mosquito airplanes.



*Photographs from 1974 of the Lock Chamber, Strood Basin and Strood River Lock. From the private collection of Odette Buchanan.*

# Impressive engineering feat to vanish under pile of rubble

Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre  
Couchman collection  
DE402/13/8



The dock and locks at Strood.

CM1168/33

THE LAST Medway connection with what was once considered one of the country's most impressive engineering feats could soon disappear under a pile of rubble and hardcore.

Fierce controversy surrounds plans to fill in the dock and locks at Commissioners Road, Strood, which were once the entrance to the Thames and Medway Canal.

Some say it is a good idea because it will provide a base for industry while others are worried about the environmental effects and the loss of a historical land for water mark.

The Thames and Medway Canal once ran over seven miles from Strood to Gravesend and was the pride of the area. It had a tunnel from Strood as far as Higham.

Plans to build the canal were first put forward towards the end of the 18th century during the war with the French.

But it was not until 1800 that Parlia-

mentary consent was forthcoming. Work began on the canal in 1819 and five years later, the waterway opened.

The tunnel between Strood and Higham was 3,931 yards long, and 35ft. high from canal bed to roof. It was more than 31ft. wide and that included a five-foot towpath.

It could take a 60-ton sailing barge, measuring 94ft. 8ins. by 22ft. 8ins.

There were some steamboat trips through the canal, and it was even used as a pedestrian route by people prepared to pay a toll. A barge-towing contractor lived at what is now Higham Station.

Cargo carried through the canal included agricultural products, beer, hops, cement and groceries. Tolls ranged from 1s. 2d. (6p) per ton of hay, oats or straw, through 2s. 6d. per ton of hops and wool to 10s for an empty barge using the tunnel as a shortcut.

But eventually, the canal proved to be uneconomic. For one thing,

entrance to and exit from it was dependent on tides and it was often found quicker — and cheaper — to take vessels by the coastal route.

A single railway line had been built to share the tunnel with the canal until the waterway part of it was abandoned in 1845.

South Eastern Railways took over the tunnel on 4 December 1845 for £310,000 and the line between Higham and Strood became a double track in 1847.

The canal still operated between Higham and Gravesend. Farmers used it to bring produce and manure from ships and Higham Wharf was charmingly known locally as "Dung Wharf".

When hop fields around the village were turned over to other uses in the 1920s, canal trade died and the rest of the waterway was eventually abandoned in 1934.

**Dennis Pearce**

*From the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, Couchman Collection. Cutting from Chatham News comprising article by Dennis Pearce entitled Impressive engineering feat to vanish under pile of rubble, [Chatham news, 18 January 1985, p. 6; a note below reads, 'The locks were filled in about Feb. 1986] with photograph of Strood Dock and locks looking south-east across the River Medway (Bridge Reach) from Frindsbury Hill towards Gas House Point, Rochester, showing London to Strood railway line in right of view, railway goods sidings in middle-ground, Railway Tavern (later Riverside Tavern) (No.8 Canal Road, Strood) and group of industrial buildings in middle distance and Acorn Wharf, Rochester and gas tanks in distance. Published 18 January 1985. Couchman's accompanying notes state the dock was filled in in 1986. p.8; DE402/13/8.*

Today the Gravesend basin is a pleasure marina. The Thames and Medway Canal Association was formed in 1976 and its volunteers work on restoration and the maintenance of the remaining canal. The Strood canal basin was back-filled in 1986 and built over, leaving only the lock gates as a reminder of this once remarkable feat of engineering. And now even those have gone.

More information on the history of the canal can be found in FOMA member, Dr. Andrew Hann's book, *The Medway Valley: A Kent Landscape Transformed* (England's Past for Everyone); 2009, Phillimore & Co. Ltd. ; ISBN 978-1860776007.

# *A Magnificent Entrance to the Town of Chatham*

Brian Joyce



*Brian Joyce is a semi-retired teacher who lives and works in the Medway Towns. He was born in Chatham and has always been fascinated by the history of the area. Brian is the President of the Chatham Historical Society and the author of several books, including The Chatham Scandal, Dumb Show and Noise and Chatham and the Medway Towns, a History and Celebration. With Bruce Aubry, Brian co-wrote In the Thick of It- Medway Men and Women in the Boer War, which was published by their own Pocock Press. Brian is currently working on a similar volume which will examine the experiences of men and women from the Medway Towns during the First World War.*

In the late eighteenth century, today's Railway Street in Chatham was known as Rome Lane. Then as now, it took the road from Maidstone into the town centre, but at that time it was also the link between the outlying community of Ordnance Place and Chatham proper.

Once the New Road was cut through the fields between Star and Chatham hills in the 1770s, a bridge or viaduct was constructed to take it over Rome Lane. This was built of brick and flanked by landscaped earth banks on its south-eastern and south-western sides. Its central arch was eighteen feet wide, sufficient in 1790 to allow horse-drawn vehicles to pass underneath. Pedestrian arches, with pavements six feet wide, lay on either side of the central arch.

The New Road viaduct served its purpose for the next hundred years or so, but by the 1890s it had become seriously outdated. Chatham had expanded southwards along and either side of the Maidstone Road. Many hundreds of new residents had joined the previously isolated population of Ordnance Place to the south of the town centre. Chatham Railway Station, which had opened in 1858 on the south side of the viaduct, had generated a large increase in road traffic for both passengers and goods. Furthermore, various schemes for a tramway system were being discussed in the 1890s. The existing viaduct would be inadequate to cope if any of these schemes were adopted. The bridge carrying the New Road over Rome Lane (by now renamed Railway Street), was a mere 22 feet wide, and similarly the central arch below was too narrow and probably too low, to allow trams to pass underneath.

By the turn of the twentieth century, worries about the cost of a new viaduct were outweighed by concerns that the existing one was inhibiting the development of the town. In the words of Alderman Charles Skinner, the Mayor of Chatham in 1901, "The old bridge is not only an eyesore, but a serious obstruction to traffic." The Borough Council made the decision that it would have to be replaced by a new structure.

The new viaduct was designed by A T Walmsley M.I.C.E. Its projected cost exceeded £12,000, although Chatham ratepayers were helped by Kent County Council, which contributed £500, and the Chatham and District Light Railway Company, which, as a major beneficiary of the new scheme provided a further £1,500.

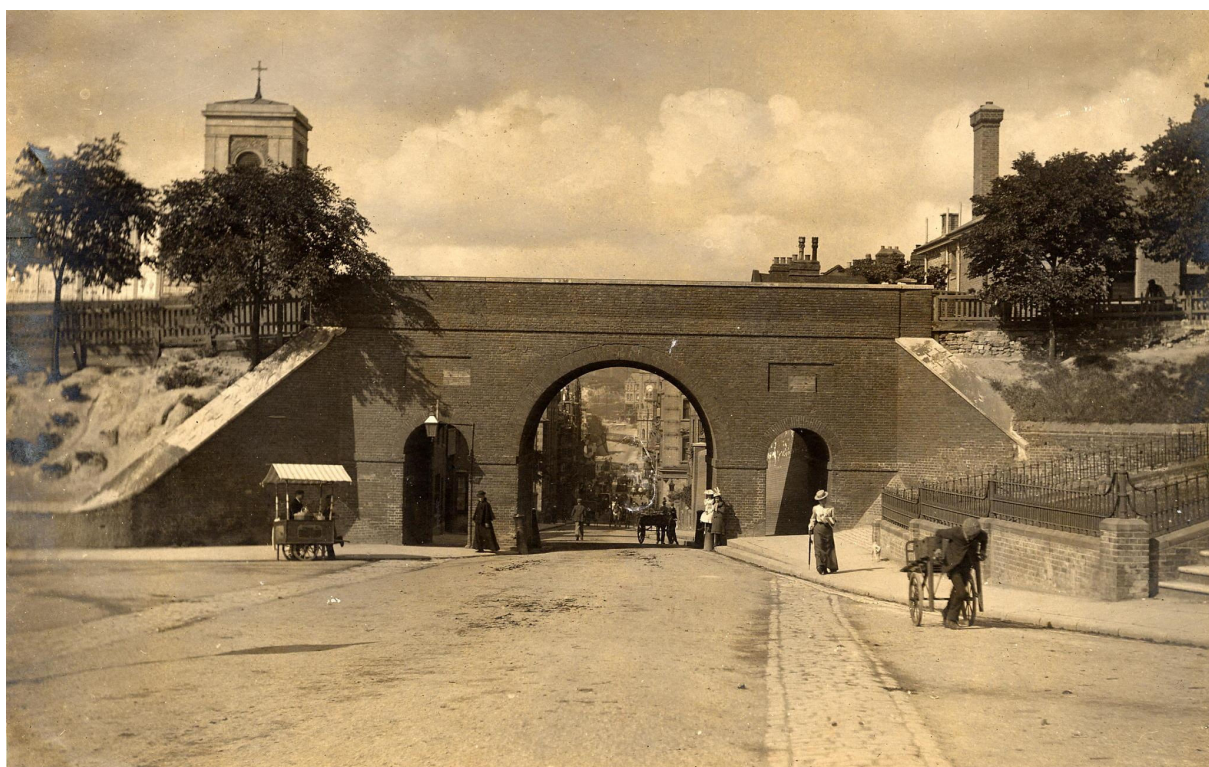
The construction work took about twelve months, which was rather longer than anticipated. The landscaped banks on the south side of the old viaduct needed to be removed; 6000 cubic yards of earth and chalk had to be dug out and carted away before work on the foundations could begin. The new viaduct's piers were more than six feet high and of Kentish ragstone. The rest of the construction was of red brick; more than half a million bricks were used, including many recycled from the old viaduct. Steel girders supported the road above, which had seven feet wide pavements on each side. Beyond the pavement on the south side of the road was a cast-iron ornamental parapet, which was also used to surmount the low panelled wall on the north side. At 44 feet wide, the road over Railway Street was twice the width of that which had crossed the old viaduct, and could easily accommodate the new trams. Underneath, a single rectangular arch 28 feet wide replaced the old 17 feet wide oval arch, again facilitating the adoption of a tramway system. Pavements under the arch either side of Railway Street were eight feet wide, a two feet increase on the previous arrangement.

During the planning of the new viaduct, Alderman Skinner suggested two additions in order to make use of the space under the structure. A new home for the Chatham Volunteer Fire Brigade was provided under the south-western side of the viaduct, while public lavatories and a barber's shop were built under the south-eastern side. As Skinner said during the stone-laying ceremony in October 1901:

"Had it been built before, probably there would only have been the bridge spanning Railway Street, but now, owing to the way in which Chatham is extending in all directions, it has been found necessary to provide proper accommodation for the Volunteer Fire Brigade. We were also studying the interests of the people by building a place where, not only the inhabitants, but the travellers, could obtain a shave and wash and brush up and make themselves comfortable".

The Borough Council was pleased with its completed scheme and as Councillor H J T Browne, who by then was Mayor, said during the opening of the new viaduct on Tuesday October 24 1902:

"I venture to say it is the greatest improvement, bar the Town Hall, that has ever been carried out in the town of Chatham". The tangible result of the Edwardian civic pride felt by Browne is still there for all to see and use 110 years later.



*The viaducts old (top) (DE402/17/15) and new (DE402/17/52); of particular interest is the fact that everyone appears to be waiting for some kind of procession to pass under the new viaduct; the fire engines outside the fire station (to the left) are fascinating. Pictures from the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre Couchman Collection*

## William Bartholomew - A Man of Probity

Pauline Weeds



In 2005 FOMA member Pauline Weeds was awarded the Higher Certificate in Genealogy by The Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies. She was a researcher for the England's Past for Everyone projects and has also transcribed for a Kent Archaeological Society project. Pauline is a volunteer at MALSC, and a volunteer custodian at Eastgate House. Recently she has started training to be a City of Rochester Society guide; she is also a member of the Users' Forum at the Centre for Kentish Studies at Maidstone.

### Part Three: Liberal Success At Last

**CITY OF ROCHESTER**

**ELECTION.**

Notice is hereby given,

**THAT in case a POLL of the ELECTORS of the CITY OF ROCHESTER, for a Member in Parliament for the said City, should be demanded at the Election of such Member appointed to be holden on THURSDAY next, such Poll will be taken on FRIDAY, the Eighth day of February instant. It will commence at Eight o'clock in the Forenoon, and finally close at Four o'clock in the Afternoon of the same day.**

The Poll will be taken at the several places under-mentioned, viz. :-

**No. 1.—At the GUILDHALL,**  
For persons whose surnames commence with any letter of the Alphabet from A to H both inclusive, voting in respect of Property situate in the Parish of SAINT NICHOLAS, Rochester, and for Freemen appearing by the Register to reside therein, whose surnames commence with the same Letters both inclusive: And for persons voting in respect of Property situate in the CATHEDRAL PRECINCT and for Freemen appearing by the Register to reside therein.

**No. 2.—At the SAINT NICHOLAS SCHOOL HOUSE, in Free School Lane,**  
For persons whose surnames commence with any Letter of the Alphabet from I to Z both inclusive, voting in respect of Property situate in the Parish of SAINT NICHOLAS, and for Freemen appearing by the Register to reside in the same Parish whose surnames commence with the same Letters, both inclusive.

**No. 3.—At the WORKSHOP of HENRY COLYER, opposite Strood Church,**  
For Persons voting in respect of Property situate in the Parish of STROOD, and the Parish of FRINDSBURY, within the City, and for Freemen appearing by the Register to reside therein.

**No. 4.—At the HOUSE of WILLIAM TERRY, called Nile Terrace Lodge, on the New Road,**  
For persons voting in respect of Property situate in CHATHAM INTRA, and for Freemen appearing by the Register to reside therein:—And for persons whose surnames commence with any letter of the Alphabet from A to H both inclusive, voting in respect of Property situate in the Parish of SAINT MARGARET, and for Freemen appearing by the Register to reside therein, whose surnames commence with the same letters, both inclusive.

**No. 5.—At the SAINT MARGARET SCHOOL HOUSE, in Saint Margaret Street,**  
For persons whose surnames commence with any letter of the Alphabet from I to Z both inclusive, voting in respect of Property situate in the Parish of SAINT MARGARET, and for Freemen appearing by the Register to reside in the same parish, whose surnames commence with the same letters, both inclusive. And for all persons voting in respect of Property situate in places not above allotted, and for Freemen appearing by the Register to reside in such places.

**FREEMEN** residing without the Electoral Limits of the City may vote at any of the above mentioned Polling Places.

Dated this Fourth day of February, 1856.  
F. FURRELL,  
Mayor and Returning Officer.

From the Rochester Gazette, 5 February 1856

The 1850s were finally to see a change to the political order in Rochester, although not before more controversies had raged in the city. William Bartholomew and his fellow Liberals must have felt increasingly frustrated as the years went by and they waited for the tide to turn. However, for William his personal life took an upturn early in 1854 when, some four years after the death of his first wife, he married again. His bride was Hannah Friend, an unmarried lady aged 56, who was living in Chatham.<sup>1</sup> She had been born at Sandwich, baptised at St Mary's Church on 21 January 1798, the daughter of William and Mary Friend. There is an unresolved curiosity, however, regarding this marriage. William and Hannah appear to have married twice at two different London churches. The first wedding took place at St Pancras Old Church on 26 February 1854 where the couple were described as widower and widow, both of Commercial Place. On 13 May 1854 there was another marriage at the church of St Dunstan's in the West. On this occasion the couple were described as widower and spinster. William's address was given as Fleet Street and Hannah's as Rochester. The fathers' details were the same on both marriage certificates and, in particular, the couple's signatures appear identical. I wonder whether the first marriage was considered invalid because Hannah was erroneously described as a widow, although I am sure such mistakes were not uncommon.

As has already been said, during the early years of the decade the municipal elections were uncontested and the Conservatives remained firmly in control of the Council. In 1855 Liberal candidates once again put themselves forward for election but, due to the Revision Court, they were still unable to break the Conservatives stranglehold. However the political pot, that had been simmering for so many years, was now starting to come to the boil. At a parliamentary level Francis Villiers, one of the two Tory M.P.s for the City, had decided to retire and the by-election had been called for Friday 8 February 1856. The Liberals had selected a new-comer, 27-year-old Philip Wykeham Martin, as their candidate while the Conservatives had chosen William Henry Bodkin, who had previously represented the city during the 1840s. During January, as the canvass gained momentum and numerous meetings were held by both parties, the excitement in the city reached fever pitch.

The nomination of the candidates took place at the Guildhall on Thursday 7 February, and according to the *Rochester Gazette*, "when the hour arrived, no sooner were the doors opened, than the hall became densely filled by the electors, each party evincing a degree of excitement never exceeded within those walls on any similar occasion." After the two candidates had both been proposed and seconded, Mr Martin was the first to address the crowd. He commenced by saying that he was in favour of extending the suffrage to a much greater proportion of the population. He was not totally against the secret ballot and thought it should be given a trial to see if it would work. Other measures he would support included the extension of education, the abolition of church rates, the admission of Jews to Parliament, free trade principles, the setting up of limited liability companies, and municipal reform. The latter, he declared, was certainly greatly needed in Rochester.

He also affirmed that he supported the manner in which the present government had conducted the Crimean War. Mr Bodkin, when he spoke, declared that his aims were not so very different to those of Mr Martin. He too favoured an extension of the suffrage but would not go as far as his opponent, and he was against the secret ballot. While he would certainly like to see a proper system of education set

up, he also favoured the introduction of reformatories for young offenders. He would support the setting up of limited liability companies. However, he could not agree to the abolition of church rates unless a suitable substitute was introduced and he was also concerned that the ending of certain Council dues would result in an increase in the rates. While he supported the way in which the Crimean War had been conducted, he wanted an enquiry into the fall of Kars where, he said, a band of heroic Englishmen had been left to perish. After the two candidates had spoken a show of hands was called for and the Mayor declared the result equal, saying that a poll would take place the following day. The Liberal supporters thought they had clearly won on the show of hands and refused to back the vote of thanks to the Mayor for his conduct of the proceedings.

The polling opened at 8 o'clock the following day amidst much excitement and by 10 o'clock Mr Martin already had a majority of nearly 40 votes. This increased steadily throughout the day and when the polling closed at 4 o'clock Mr Martin had 560 votes to Mr Bodkin's 499, a majority of 61. Mr Bodkin set off almost immediately to the station to catch the next train back to London. Mr Martin thanked his supporters and promised to do his very best for them as their Member of Parliament. He said that there would not be a chairing to celebrate his victory as he had been advised that it "might jeopardise the position in which they, by their united efforts, had placed him." However, on the following morning it was announced that a *grand demonstration* would take place to celebrate the return of Mr Martin. At 5 o'clock a cavalcade of horsemen, carriages and a large and enthusiastic crowd of people, preceded by a band and colours, started from the New Road and paraded the streets in which several beautiful banners were displayed.<sup>2</sup> As regards the Conservatives, it appears they were not good losers as they subsequently petitioned Parliament complaining of an undue election and return for the City and Borough of Rochester because of bribery and treating during the election canvass by Mr Martin and his agents. The Select Committee met to hear the petition on 10 April, when it was found the petitioners had withdrawn their petition late the previous evening. Mr Martin's representatives stated that the petition was frivolous and vexatious. The petitioners had issued 200 summonses on voters to attend and give evidence before the Committee, threatening the most illiterate of them if they did not cooperate. The petitioners' agent declared that the petition had been withdrawn because he had had not time to prepare the case, not because there was no evidence. The case was adjourned until the following day when the Committee declared that the petition had been abandoned and that they had found nothing in the circumstances requiring a special report to the House. In their opinion the petition was frivolous and vexatious.

Now that the dust had settled a Public Dinner was announced to be held on Thursday, 12 June, for the Liberal Freeman and Electors of Rochester to celebrate Philip Wykeham Martin's triumph. It would take place in a meadow near Star Hill opposite Nile Terrace (now Jackson's Recreation Ground) and tickets were 3s 6d (17½p) each. A booth was erected which would accommodate 800 people and the catering was undertaken by Mr Willson of the Crown Hotel. When Mr Martin arrived by train at about 1.30 p.m. a large party of electors had gathered at the station to welcome him and escort him to the booth for the reception. A procession formed and accompanied by two bands and a magnificent display of flags and banners, the party proceeded through the High Street to the place of entertainment. Several other Members of Parliament and other well-known advocates of Liberal principles attended the banquet.

In September it appears that Mr Martin's election success was still rankling with his Conservative opponents when James Lewis, the Town Clerk, applied for "a summons out of the district against P W Martin Esq. for the recovery of £29 8s 0d (£29.40) due for fees and expenses incurred at the late election." A letter dated 11 September 1856 which appeared in the *Rochester Gazette* from Mr Martin's agent stated that these particular charges were illegal and that he had disallowed them. Mr Martin had discharged all the legal expenses due from him in connection with the election.

The following month it was time once again for the annual meeting of the notorious Revision Court. There had been heightened political tension in the City since the summer when an alliance of Liberals and Nonconformists had managed to stop the levying of the church rates in both St Nicholas' and St Margaret's parishes. The Court met on 13 October and consisted of the Mayor, Mr Furrell, a local coal merchant and Councillor for St Margaret's ward and the two Assessors, Mr French (Conservative) and Mr Galer (Liberal). The two parties were represented by Mr Stephenson (Conservative) and Mr Prall (Liberal). However, it was the Town Clerk, Mr J Lewis, who took the leading role. Following a question from Mr Stephenson, he admitted he had entrusted the publishing of the burgess lists to a junior clerk who, when sworn in, confessed that only the lists for St Nicholas and the Cathedral precincts had been published by the required date, 6 September. Amidst considerable uproar and confusion, the Town Clerk claimed he had done all he could to publish the lists on time but, having failed to do so, agreed he was subject to a £50 fine. On behalf of the Liberals, Mr Prall at once argued that non-publication did not necessarily mean the disenfranchisement of the whole parish, but this argument was rejected by the Mayor. As the waiting crowd became noisier, one man accused the Town Clerk of a "political thimble-rig" (sleight of hand) and another called out, "It is a farce – it is a farce; where did you rehearse it – at the Duke's Head or at the Theatre?"

The Court still had to consider each party's claims for the enfranchisement of certain of their supporters and their objections to the vote being given to known opponents. The Conservatives had handed their list to Mr Lewis in person at his Yalding home, some fifteen miles away, on the appointed day. The Liberals, however, had given their list to a servant at Mr Lewis's home in Rochester and the Mayor, therefore, refused to accept their list because the Town Clerk had not received it himself on the correct day. This was not all, for when the Mayor scrutinised the rate books he refused to accept as proof of rates being paid houses listed in the books with ditto marks instead of the word *house* written in full. This was all too much for the crowd which now began to get out of hand. One of the burgesses, a Mr Andrews, demanded to see the rate book and, when the Mayor refused, Mr Galer, the Liberal assessor, grabbed the book and threw it to him. Other burgesses then grabbed the other rate books and in the commotion which followed one of the rate books was actually thrown out of the window to the crowd gathered outside. The meeting ended in chaos and Mr Lewis needed the protection of three policemen and a magistrate to get him home safely.

When a second Revision Court was held the following day, the Conservatives had both sworn in special constables and applied for policemen from London. As the rate book thrown from the window had not been found, other proof of payment of rates had to be accepted and as a result, much to the chagrin of the Conservatives, some Liberal burgesses were reinstated. For the Mayor and Town

Clerk the most difficult part of the day came when they tried to leave the Guildhall and the *Rochester Gazette* carried a vivid account of what happened:

“A strong body of police and special constables were stationed outside, and at length the Mayor and Town Clerk descended the staircase, accompanied by two of the Borough Magistrates and, surrounded by the police force, entered the street. No sooner did they make their appearance than the mob set up a loud shout and, following in the rear, yelling and hooting and in their progress hurling such missiles as they could pick up – stones, oyster shells and co [sic]. The Town Clerk was first conducted to his residence in St Margaret’s and the party then proceeded with the Mayor by the Church Walk to his house in Eastgate, the mob following, after a struggle between them and the civic attendants in the narrow entrance to the Walk, in which the latter appeared to get the worst of it.”

The outcome of this affair was that J A Kinglake, a Sergeant-at-Law, or barrister of high rank, and a leading Liberal politician, took the Mayor and Corporation to the High Court to obtain a writ of Mandamus to reverse the decisions of the Revision Court. He was eventually successful, but not until after the following year’s elections had already been held. As a result of the Conservatives’ *dirty tricks* the Conservatives were of course again returned to office. However, many of the disenfranchised Liberals did turn up to show how they would have voted and the local newspapers were able to claim a resounding, if only moral, Liberal victory. This was indeed the death knell for the Conservatives in Rochester as they managed to hang on to power for only a further three years. Because of the widespread popular anger they dared not try any more underhand measures and in both the 1857 and 1858 elections the Liberals made large gains, although because only one third of the seats were contested each year they did not achieve a majority until 1859. An historic annual meeting was then held on 9 November and John Foord, a Liberal Councillor, was elected Mayor to much popular acclaim. The first action of the new Council was to replace Mr Lewis as Town Clerk, electing Mr R Prall, their legal adviser in the Revision Court, to that position. The Conservatives had been absolutely routed and no further Conservative was elected to the Council until 1880.<sup>3</sup>

#### Notes

1 1851 Census Ref HO107/1611/281.

2 *Rochester Gazette*, 12 February 1856.

3. *Bygone Kent*, Vol. 8, No.3, March 1987.

#### Bibliography:

Giles Falconer, *Popular Politics and Party Politics in Nineteenth Century Rochester*; *Bygone Kent*, Vol, 8 No.3 March 1987.

F F Smith, *A History of Rochester*, 1928.

William Bartholomew - *A Man of Probity* by Pauline Weeds will conclude in the next issue of *The Clock Tower*, published on Wednesday 21 November 2012.

### ***The Clock Tower is now fully indexed!***

There is now a pdf on the FOMA website ([www.foma-lsc.org/newsletter.html](http://www.foma-lsc.org/newsletter.html)) which lists the contents of all the issues since Number 1 in April 2006. In addition, each of the past issues now includes a list of contents; these are highlighted with an asterisk (\*).

**If you have missed any of the previous issues and some of the articles published, they are all available to read on the website.** Read them again - *A Stroll through Strood* by Barbara Marchant (issue 4); *In Search of Thomas Fletcher Waghorn (1800-1850)* by Dr Andrew Ashbee (issue 6); *The Other Rochester and the Other Pocahontas* by Ruth Rosenberg-Naparsteck (issue 6); *Jottings in the Churchyard of All Saints Frindsbury* by Tessa Towner (issue 8); *The Skills of the Historian* by Dr Kate Bradley (issue 9); *The Rosher Family: From Gravesend to Hollywood* by Amanda Thomas (issue 9); *George Bond, Architect and Surveyor, 1853 to 1914* by Pat Salter and Bob Ratcliffe (issue 10) plus all the regular features on the Victoria County History by Dr. Sandra Dunster and Dr. Andrew Hann, Edwin Harris by Janet Knight and Alison Thomas, not to mention regular contributors such as Betty Cole, Brian Joyce, JL Keys, Peter Burstow, Odette Buchanan and Catharina Clement.

# *The Outings and Excursions of the People of the Medway Towns in the Nineteenth Century*

Peter Lyons



*Peter Lyons is a volunteer at MALSC and has worked on local history research for the Victoria County History with Dr. Andrew Hann and Dr. Sandra Dunster. Peter is retired after a career 'spent mostly in banking.'*

## Part Three: How They Got There

Horse drawn vehicles, steamboats and trains took the parties to their destinations. In the early days the state of the roads was a factor in consideration of distance. De Quincey, in writing of coach travel at the end of the Eighteenth Century, states that no carriage travelled straight, but had constantly to manoeuvre from one side of the road to the other to avoid the ruts and pool-filled pot holes. By the early nineteenth century, which has been described as the "golden age of coaching" with improved roads and vastly increased speed, we find Cobbett writing:

"To travel in stage coaches is to be hurried along by force, in a box, with an air-hole in it, and constantly exposed to broken limbs, the danger being much greater than on shipboard, and the noise much more disagreeable."<sup>1</sup>

However, travelling by steamboat could have its disadvantages. According to *The Times*, "The manner in which the steamers were crammed with passengers during the holy days was highly dangerous. It was really frightful to see the steamboats pass up and down the pool during Monday and Tuesday, crowded as they were with human beings...pushed in the cabins as close as negroes in the hold of a slave ship...The little boats carried 300, 400 and 500 persons, and the larger ones...to Gravesend, Herne Bay and Margate frequently took down and brought up 500, 1000 and 1500 passengers. Collisions were nearly occurring several times between the rival steamers...in coming in and going away from the landing places; and it is fearful to contemplate the dreadful sacrifice of human life that must have been the result if a collision had taken place."<sup>2</sup> Such a collision did occur in 1879 when the pleasure steamer *Princess Alice*, after visiting Gravesend and Sheerness, was run down by a screw collier at Erith and more than 600 drowned mostly women and children.

Overcrowding was not the only hazard, there were also the elements. According to Alan Delgado in his *The Annual Outing and Other Excursions*, "The success of the steamer outing depended on good weather. The day might begin fine but by the end of the day storm clouds could gather which would dampen the high spirits of those on board and compel some to expel into the sea the food and drink they had indulged in earlier. The vessel could become a living hell with no means of escape until she docked, when the unfortunate excursionists staggered about on dry land and made for home as quickly as possible."<sup>3</sup>

The Medway Steam Packet Company charges in 1885 to Sheerness and Southend were as follows:

Saloon Return 2/- Fore Cabin 1/6  
Saloon single 1/6 Fore Cabin 1/-  
Strood to Chatham or Upnor 2d.

The enterprising on the river without steam might be able to harness its power and as described in the *Rochester Naturalists' Club Minute book 1890/1903*:

"The river trip took place on Saturday last and proved to be a great success. Care had been taken in arranging the excursion, to select a date when the tide would be favourable, and thus the rowing was comparatively easy although the water in Chatham Reach and particularly off Gas House Point was somewhat choppy... a tug was seen going up the river and a determined effort was made by the rowers to catch it in order to get the benefit of a *tow* up. After an exciting chase, success rewarded their efforts."<sup>4</sup>

Rail also had its problems and in one instance Charles Dickens survived a derailment near Staplehurst when ten were killed and 50 injured.

Whatever method was chosen it was a big day for many. Dressed in their best clothes, flowers in buttonholes, the excursion was eagerly anticipated. With sufficient numbers, a special train would be required, which might be decorated with flowers and evergreens, and the town might be there to see them off as is shown in this description of a C Townsend Hook Outing:

"In the early hours of the morning the streets of Snodland are usually thronged with industrious workpeople proceeding to their various employments, but on Saturday a large proportion of the early risers were attired in holiday dress, the mill having been shut down, while lively strains of music brought nearly the whole of the inhabitants to their doors to wish the excursionists a pleasant journey and an enjoyable day. The celebrated Birling brass band was engaged for the occasion...Shortly before seven o'clock a long special train arrived from Strood...passengers total number being 520...the greatest possible hilarity prevailed in every carriage of the train...Brighton was reached shortly after half past nine o'clock and the procession reformed. Headed by the band, the excursionists proceeded to the sea front."<sup>5</sup>

The presence of a band to attract attention was common. In 1870 the Carters Association excursion, which was an annual event, consisted of a party of 800. They embarked on the *Rothsay Castle* for Lochgoilhead. The excursionists marched to Broomielaw in the early morning and back into the city on their return in the evening. It is small wonder that the streets were packed with people, especially in the evening. Each way they formed a procession headed by a Rifle Volunteer Band riding a large wagon drawn by eight

horses, while bringing up the rear were the office-bearers of the Association, each wearing a bright-coloured sash and a broad Kilmarnock bonnet. All were mounted on horseback.<sup>6</sup>

Not all arrangements went smoothly. After much correspondence and many difficulties, arrangements having been made with the SER Company, a party of upwards of 40 teachers met at Strood station to proceed on the long proposed and often talked of outing to the Wells. The Secretary arrived late – the tickets took a long time to write on and stamp with date – payment took some time and the party minus the Secretary seated themselves and went off to Maidstone. By the courtesy of the station master a telegram was sent to the various stations along the line that the tickets were obtained and were coming by next train in charge of the Secretary. Fortunately an extra express train went shortly to Maidstone and the bearer of the tickets was posted off to overtake his co-excursionists. This he accomplished at Maidstone. The trip to Tunbridge Wells involves many changes and this part of the performance made no small amusement, especially in and out the saloon carriage from Paddock Wood to Tonbridge.<sup>7</sup>

Various types of horse drawn vehicles were used but for large parties the two or four-horse brake or waggonette was popular. According to the July 1877 minutes of the National Union of Teachers held at MALSC:

“At about nine in the morning the brake would arrive. A brake was a vehicle with open sides and a canvas roof which could be rolled back in fine weather. Down each side were forms for sitting on. A pair of wooden steps would be placed at the back of the brake to allow the passengers to climb in. There were four large wooden wheels with iron rims on them. In front was the driver’s seat. This was called the *dickey*. It stretched the width of the brake. Sometimes the brake was drawn by two horses who were harnessed side by side with a wooden shaft in between to separate them. If the brake was large four horses would be used, two more being placed in front of the first two already there. It required great skill to drive a brake with four horses, for they were controlled only by the pull of the reins held by the driver.”<sup>8</sup>

One of these was involved in an accident in Luton and reported in July 1889 in the *Chatham News*:

“A huge and commodious conveyance known as *The Pride of Kent* containing between 30 and 40 children and women was accidentally overturned and most of the occupants were more or less injured. Having come to a stop on a hill the brake then ran backwards and collided with a wall and overturned. Six people taken to hospital and the vehicle considerably damaged.”<sup>9</sup>

In old photographs they seem to be well filled, or even overfull, but may or may not have been protected from the weather and, despite a determination to make the best of things, the weather was an important factor and it would not have been unusual for a party to return early “glad to escape further inconvenience from the elements.” According to *The Times* of August 1886, “The unfortunate weather of yesterday naturally had its influence upon the Bank holiday and must have sensibly diminished the enjoyment of the season. Pleasure vans were to be seen starting in the rain, their occupants attempting to shelter light summer clothes under umbrellas, and singing as they went, an imperfect prophylactic, it is to be feared against rheumatism.”<sup>10</sup>

This view by a London reporter view is that the horse brake excursion benefitted society:

#### AN EASTER EXCURSION VAN

Easter in London is worshipped by embarking in a *wan* and a drive to *Ampton Court* or *the Forest*. Nor is it after all a bad way of sacrificing to the shrine of *Saint Monday*. Let not our reader sneer at the short and simple pleasures of the poor. Has he or she, honourable or right honourable ever ridden in a *wan*. A good one mind you; gaily painted and with curtains, easy springs, with three horses on great occasions, two rusty chestnuts and a grey which has not any definite idea of his position as a leader...there are few places more delightful than a *wan*; a splendid *wan*, which for 2s6d, paid by instalments, starts from the greengrocer’s next door to the Soho dairy, to the envy, delight and disturbance of the neighbourhood...at a given time the happy passengers crowd into it...The little tailor, the greengrocer...the local printer...the sporting gent...the stout sturdy publican...who has had quite a run on him for stone bottles, which are crammed into all sort of baskets, and which keep rumbling about the legs of travellers whenever the *wan* lurches...the young man with his sweetheart...the carpenter...the young lady with the black hair...the boy in knickerbockers, the stout old lady and the irritable young gentleman...are at last all absorbed...Seven bold spirits, besides the driver have mounted outside. A *party* has improvised a banner from a piece of print. The weazy [sic] old leader commences operations by dancing half across the road and back again; the wheelers pull together; the whip smacks; the boys – London boys – set up a discordant and altogether fiendish yell, enough to frighten a foreigner and off they go....They are gone; and when they come back tired and exhausted, pleased with the beauties of nature, and elated with the fresh air, the journey, and a not unnatural flow of spirits, no one but will join us in the assertion that people might do worse than take an excursion on Easter Monday in a van.<sup>11</sup>

Announcing your presence was part of the fun. Readers of Maugham’s *Liza of Lambeth* may remember that Liza’s indecision as to whether or not she should go on the Bank Holiday outing to Chingford was largely overcome at the sight of a man leaving the public house carrying a horn, and if there was anything she adored it was “to drive along to the tootling of a horn.” It was a beautiful day and “the coachman cracked his whip, the trumpeter tootled his horn, and with a cry and a cheer from the occupants, the brake clattered along the road.” A start had been made early in the morning and “as the hour grew later the streets became more filled and the traffic greater”. Once on the road to Chingford they caught up with other vehicles going in the same direction. “...donkey-shays, pony-carts, tradesmen’s carts, dog-carts, drags, brakes, every conceivable kind of wheel-thing, all filled with people...they exchanged cheers and greetings as they passed, the Red Lion brake being noticeable above all for its uproariousness.”<sup>12</sup>

Rochester Naturalists Club have left us a record of some of their outings:

“In July 1892 a party of 44 to Yalding was taken in one 4-in-hand and one 2-horse brake with two on bicycles. Total cost 3/6, 2/6 for the drive and 1/- for tea.

In August 1893 they held their annual drive to Farningham. The 26 present went in Miss Lloyd's new 4-in-hand. Through Meopham and Ash out - return through Longfield. Tea at The Bull. House not so good as could be wished though well attended by parties. Tea good. Got home soon after tea."

In September 1893 A river party was conducted by Mr Neate who had secured the loan of the barge *Black Eagle* and had had it fitted up in good style. The weather turned out to be stormy about noon and the Capt either ignorantly or wilfully misunderstood Mr Neate's instructions and ran the barge up to the wharf leaving it there to be stranded in the mud. The consequence was that the party was left helpless on the pier at the time appointed for starting. Mr Neate hired a large workman's boat licensed to carry 50 and by means of his steam pinnace towed the party to Upnor. The crockery and provisions supplied by Mr Neate were also taken down. " However, the newspaper report omitted this contretemps and merely stated:

"The members assembled in good force notwithstanding the threatening aspect of the weather and were conveyed to Upnor in a large boat, towed by Mr Neate's pinnace."<sup>13</sup>

## What They Did

For those who travelled by road, sports and games figured largely during the day. Cricket was very popular, frequently a match between married and unmarried men, also bowls, quoits, trap-bat, rounders and other amusements. With dinner, frequently described as a *sumptuous feast*, a *substantial repast* or an *excellent spread*, followed by an evening of song and conviviality. Some members of the Royal Marine or other band might be taken along to provide musical accompaniment or the group might provide its own.

Seaside visitors could expect entertainment to be provided for them. "Indeed noise seems to be the grand joy of life," writes Jane Welsh Carlyle of Ramsgate in 1861. "A brass band plays all through our breakfast, and repeats the performance often during the day, and the brass band is succeeded by a band of Ethiopians, and that again by a band of female fiddlers! And interspersed with these are individual barrel-organs, individual Scotch bagpipes, individual French horns!"

A few years earlier we find Dickens bitterly complaining at Broadstairs:

"Unless it pours with rain I cannot write half an hour without the most excruciating organs, fiddles, bells or glee singers. There is a violin of the most torturing kind under my window now (time ten in the morning) and an Italian box of music on the steps – both going full blast."

Add to these music-vendors, the Punch and Judy men, the purveyors of shrimps and cockles, of buns and lemonade, the sand acrobats, the pleasure-boatmen, the camera men, and the donkey men, all bawling their wares and enticements at full voice, and it is perhaps no wonder that there were "anti-trippers" who fled these "breezy coasts and superb sands"<sup>14</sup>

Rowdiness could be a problem, largely due to the amount of drink consumed, but a report on C T Hook and Company's Mills of Snodland outing to Ramsgate and Margate concluded, "The whole party arrived at Snodland on their return about 10 o'clock thoroughly satisfied with the day's enjoyment, which was not, we are glad to say, marred by any excesses so common on such occasions."

As might be expected, no rowdiness was part of this National Union of Teachers outing from Strood rather simple and innocent amusements:

"Tunbridge Wells was safely reached about 9.55 am. Mr Thorne was waiting to receive us and introduce us to the TW teachers present. The party first wound their way to the famous waters and partook of same – tho' several forgot to use the sage leaves...Then under the able guidance of Mr Thorne across the Common, along country lanes and thro' a most pleasant country to the neighbourhood of the High Rocks. A Roadside Inn was heavily taxed to supply viands for hungry and thirsty travellers. Refreshments over we entered the grounds and scampered about, mounting the High Rocks, reading inscriptions, singing appropriate pieces before various rocks, notably the *Bell Rock*. Listening to the keeper who read an able description of the Rocks, threading the intricacies of the Maze, swinging, singing, scrambling and amusing ourselves to the utmost. The swings proved a source of consternation to two, who however reached home without mortification...Some found their way to the Pan-tiles and listened to the strains of the band, others wandered about the town – but all about 5pm found their way to Mr. Boorman's where a refreshing cup of tea awaited each...(after) the party scattered into small groups and wandered aimlessly about till time for the train to start. A special carriage was in waiting and a pleasant ride to Maidstone then on to Strood terminated the day's business. A heavy shower at Maidstone reminded the party of their wisdom in deciding to go by train in preference to road."<sup>15</sup>

### Notes

1. Ruth Manning Sanders, *Seaside England*, pp.87-88.
2. *The Times*, 23 May 1839.
3. Alan Delgado, *The Annual Outing and Other Excursions*, p. 90.
4. Rochester Naturalists Club Minute book 1890/1903, 15/8/1896.
5. *Kent Messenger*, 14 June 1882.
6. Alan Delgado, *The Annual Outing and Other Excursions*, p. 99.
7. National Union of Teachers Minutes 7 July 1877; Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.
8. Grace Foakes, *Between High Walls*, p. 47.
9. *Chatham News*, 27 July 1889.
10. *The Times*, 3 August 1886.
11. *The Illustrated London News*, 19/4/1862; p. 395.
12. Alan Delgado, *The Annual Outing and Other Excursions*, pp. 37-38.
13. Minute Book 1890 - 1903.
14. Ruth Manning-Sanders, *Seaside England*, p. 122.
15. National Union of Teachers Minutes, 7 July 1877; Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.

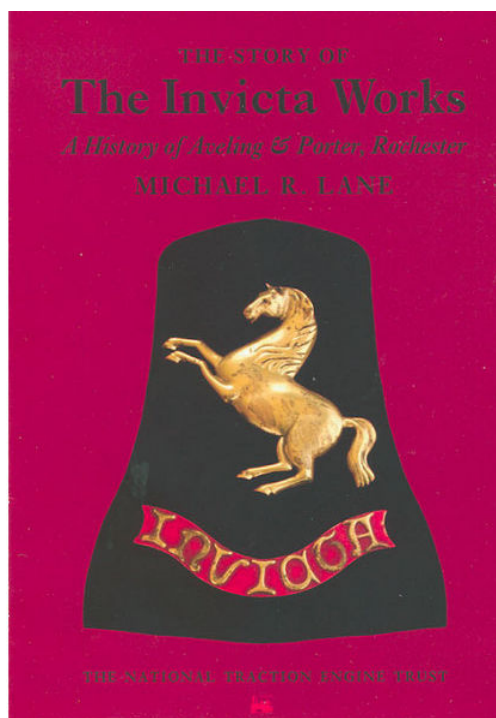
## *Magnum Opus*

Cindy O'Halloran

*A review of the latest Medway titles.*



### *The story of the Invicta Works. A History of Aveling and Porter, Rochester,* by Michael R. Lane



For those interested in the marvellous mechanical output of the Aveling and Porter works, this volume is a cornucopia of information about the family and their engines.

The first chapter relates the background history of the Company and the Aveling and Porter families. The Aveling family originated in the Wisbech area of East Anglia. They were local yeomen who had been closely involved in the drainage of the fens and had served as Commissioners of the Great Level and High Sheriffs of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdon. Thomas Aveling's move to Kent took place at the time of agricultural depression in East Anglia and the outbreak of the Swing riots. Stephen Aveling, younger brother to Thomas, had already relocated to Kent, no doubt prompting his brother's move. Thomas junior, after his father's early death, was apprenticed to the Lake family of Hoo. They owned a very early threshing machine, which captured the imagination of young Aveling.

The remaining sixteen chapters of the volume are devoted to the many varied steamrollers, cranes, tramway engines, tractors and showman's engines produced by the company themselves and those made under licence. There are many illustrations and photographs of the machines including many of those exported overseas. For mechanical geeks (sorry!) there are 16 appendices detailing minutely the specifications of the steam wagons and rollers.

The volume runs to 238 pages and is beautifully illustrated. The author, Michael Lane, has written a series of publications relating to industrial heritage including works about Burrell's Showman's Road Locomotives, Marks of Woolwich and the Wellington Foundry, among others. The price of £30.00 may seem rather steep but the quality of the publication and the fully researched subject would make this an ideal purchase for those who love the works of Aveling and Porter.

Available from Camden Miniature Steam Services, 01373 830151, and for purchase online at <http://www.camdenmin.co.uk/the-story-of-the-invicta-works-p-3124.html>

*Cover image from the publisher's website, as above.*

## Archives Update

Alison Cable, Borough Archivist



Now that the cataloguing of the Rochester City Archives has been completed, I have been able to concentrate, for the time being, on other cataloguing work. I have recently re-catalogued the records of Cliffe Parish Council (to include additional material) and the diaries of Marjorie Gunn.

The FOMA Collection was launched in April 2010 at the fifth AGM with the symbolic handing over to MALSC of some 52 historic documents relating to the Medway area (see *The Clock Tower*, Issue 18, May 2010).

The diaries of Marjorie Gunn were purchased by FOMA, at auction in May 2011 and shed a fascinating light on Marjorie and her family, as they enjoyed regular trips to the continent. The volumes mainly date from the early 1920s and are illustrated with numerous photographs, postcards and amusing drawings of various scenes and situations encountered on their trips to Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Marjorie clearly had a good sense of humour and enjoyed poking fun at friends, relatives...and most of all, herself. I have also discovered that Marjorie was a professional musician (violin) and was directly related to the Hulkes family (Hulkes Brewery) of Strood and the Winckworths. (See *The Clock Tower*, Issue 24, November 2011, pp. 8-11, *The Clock Tower*, Issue 12, November 2008, pages 39-40, and the FOMA website, <http://www.foma-lsc.org/Downloads/Catalogue%20Collection.pdf>. The collection has been catalogued under the reference: DE1225 and reads as follows:

### 'Diaries of Marjorie Gunn 1910-1923: Introduction

Mary Marjorie Gordon Gunn was born in 1888, in Strood, and died in London, 1967. She was the daughter of Barrett and Florence Gunn (née Winckworth). Barrett Gunn was a Royal Navy surgeon. The family lived at Elm Lodge, St Margaret's Street, Rochester, according to the 1911 Census. Marjorie attended music school in Surrey (possibly at Hindhead) and went on to become a concert violinist. Evidence from the diaries suggests that she taught music or violin at Downe School [then in Kent] for a short time, circa 1920. In later life Marjorie lived at Abbey Road, St John's Wood London, and it was here that her mother died in 1928. Marjorie's maternal grandmother was Mrs Penelope Hulkes- the Hulkes family ran a brewery in Strood. [see DE1210 for Hulkes family legal documents].

Marjorie Gunn's diaries mostly describe trips to Europe (Germany, Austria, Switzerland) and it would appear that the trips to Germany were often related to Marjorie's music training. The trips nearly always include visits to the Petzold family.

There is no implication that Marjorie cease to keep a diary during WWI, and in fact she only refers to a hiatus of one year when she recommences her journal in December 1919 [see DE1225/2]. The diaries are heavily illustrated with comical drawings, postcards and original photographs.

*Custodial history is unknown: these diaries were bought at a London auction in 2011. Accession 1298. Deposited by FOMA. Catalogued June 2012. Copyright holder not established.*

[http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/query/results/?Mode=Search&SearchMode=explorer&SearchWords=&DateList=&.submit=Submit+Query&Boolean=AND&Results=25&PathList=%2FUnofficial\\_or\\_Privately\\_Originated\\_Collections%2FDE1225\\_Diaries\\_Marjorie\\_Gunn%2F&.cgifields=Verbose&.cgifields=Exact](http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/query/results/?Mode=Search&SearchMode=explorer&SearchWords=&DateList=&.submit=Submit+Query&Boolean=AND&Results=25&PathList=%2FUnofficial_or_Privately_Originated_Collections%2FDE1225_Diaries_Marjorie_Gunn%2F&.cgifields=Verbose&.cgifields=Exact).'

The records of Cliffe Parish Council (1894-1999) are catalogued under reference: PC94 and the description reads as follows:

'Cliffe-at-Hoo parish council established 1894, and formed the lowest tier of local government after Strood Rural District Council. The Council met for the first time on 4 Dec 1894. In 1896, the parish council commenced street lighting. In 1898, the council took over a lease of Park Field and used 6 acres for a recreation ground and 4 acres for allotments. The council subsequently bought the land and in later years, a sports pavilion was built on the site. The parish council fire brigade was inaugurated in 1904, with its fire station being built on a small plot on Buttway Lane. In 1938, Strood RDC became the fire authority. Collection consists of the following accessions:

DE105 deposited by Parish Clerk Jan 1991

DE 935 deposited by Parish Clerk Jul 2004 [pc94/9/1]

DE1069 deposited by Parish Clerk Apr 2006

DE9 (part) & 9CEN/GM2 (part) transferred from Guildhall Museum, Mar 1990. Earlier custodial history unknown.

The table of contents below represents an overview of the collection- listing the main series that make up the archive collection. For a detailed description of each document in each series, you need to refer to the main catalogue on the following pages.

Collection recatalogued May-June 2012, to include previously unlisted material.

### Main Series of Records

pc94/1 Minutes

pc94/2 Declarations

pc94/3 Financial

pc94/4 Financial: rates for statutory services

pc94/5 Clerks correspondence

pc94/6 Allotments

pc94/7 Deeds/Legal

pc94/8 Plans

pc94/9 Miscellaneous

<http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/query/results/?Mode=Search&PathList=%2F&SearchWords=pc94&x=0&y=0>.'

Please book an archive table (telephone: 01634 332714, fax: 01634 297060 or email [malsc@medway.gov.uk](mailto:malsc@medway.gov.uk)) and ensure that you have a current CARN ticket if you wish to take a look at any of these records.

**Medway MATTERS** THE COUNCIL MAGAZINE FOR EVERYONE IN MEDWAY August/September 2012

## From workhouse to hop garden

### Medway's past is waiting to be discovered at archive

From travellers to military personnel, from the workhouse to the dockyard, the people and places that feature in Medway's history are just waiting to be discovered.

With more than 600 visitors a month, the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre (MALSC) in Strood is a must visit for those wanting to research their family tree or discover more about local history and geography.

Parish registers, council records, title deeds, workhouse records, burial records, school log books and electoral records are all good starting points for finding ancestors.

And these can often result in some surprising revelations explains Cindy O'Halloran, Senior Archive and Local Studies assistant.

She said: "People are often surprised to find their ancestors were in the workhouse but many people went in for health reasons as it was the only place that offered any kind of medical treatment.

"School records might also reveal naughty relatives who were entered in the log book, or if they missed school through hop-picking duties or illness and epidemics.

"We learn a lot from our customers, they are very important to us. We may have the facts but they have the stories and memories, which bring the facts to life."

Maps, photos, newspapers and directories help those interested in local history build up a picture of the past. And this information can also affect the present, inspiring street names for new roads and providing useful background for land earmarked for development.

Cindy added: "The archives aims to preserve the history of Medway for future generations. We're always interested in people's stories and photos of buildings now long-gone but that remind us of Medway's past."




### Some archive treasures

- **Naval collection**  
An important book-based collection on the history of the Royal Navy at Chatham Historic Dockyard.
- **Textus Roffensis**  
An Anglo Saxon manuscript said to have inspired the Magna Carta.
- **Dickens Collection**  
This includes copies of his published works, criticism, letters, plays and readings, books about places he visited and loved.
- **Religious registers**  
Synagogue, Rochester Cathedral records and Church of England records.
- **Cobham Hall records**  
This provides an overview of how an estate was managed and is well used by art historians and researchers and those interested in cricket, thanks to its Ashes connection.

● The Friends of Medway Archives (FOMA) help out with packaging, translating, fund-raising and are an invaluable asset to the archives centre and its customers. To find out more about their work visit: [www.foma-lsc.org](http://www.foma-lsc.org)

● MALSC and Medway Libraries offer customers free access to Ancestry UK

● On Tuesday and Thursday mornings the Medway branch of the Kent Family History Society are based at the archives centre to help people research their family tree.

● Online resources include CityArk database, Medway images, and newspaper index.

● Useful websites and social media: [www.medway.gov.uk/archives](http://www.medway.gov.uk/archives) and [www.facebook.com/medwayarchives](https://www.facebook.com/medwayarchives)

### Exhibitions

Until 4 September - **The sporting life: popular clubs and hobbies**  
 6 September - 3 November - **The Defence of Kent Project: The findings in Medway**  
 19 November - 29 January 2013 - **These we have loved: Shops, stores and emporia of Medway**

The August /September 2012 issue of *Medway Matters*, published by Medway Council, included a full page article about MALSC in their latest issue, which we hope will encourage more visitors.

The *Textus Roffensis* (and indeed, our strongroom) has featured in two recent television series: Michael Wood's: *The Great British Story* (BBC2) and also *The Strange Case of the Law* (BBC4).

Work on the education component of the HLF project is still very much ongoing, and we plan to have lots of school groups visit MALSC in the autumn to use the RCA collection for the study of WWI history and Public Health legislative history.

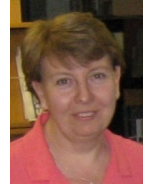
### Request for Material

The Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre would like to expand its biography base to include more variety and diversity. Any information or material on local *celebrities*, past or present, with connections to the Medway area by birth, residence or close links would be much appreciated. This can include families as well as business partnerships. Particularly welcome would be material on Medway's *ethnic* families or persons and Rainham individuals, which are at present under represented in our collection.

**Please contact Catharina Clement at MALSC on 01634 332714**

## *Cindy's Little Gems*

Cindy O'Halloran



*Cindy is Senior Archive and Local Studies Assistant at MALSC, responsible for the daily management of the searchroom and non professional staff. She has worked at MALSC for six years following 12 years in branch libraries and as a teaching assistant at a local primary school. Cindy's interests include reading, gardening and anything to do with history, her main passion being the 17th century and the English Civil Wars.*

### Ticker's Torch.

London 2012 will be occupying our thoughts over the next month and for our young athletes it will be the culmination of many years of arduous training. The modern Olympiad is very different from those held in the past where athletes taking part were keen amateurs who took part without sponsorship and held down full time jobs, fitting in their training in spare hours.

London will have hosted the Olympics three times, in 1908, 1948 and 2012. The 1948 Games were known as the 'austerity games' (this sounds all too familiar!) as they were held during the period when Britain's economy struggled with post war debt and rationing. In 1948 a keen young athlete from Medway, named Stuart "Ticker" Fry entered the trials to be selected for the British Olympic team. He was a keen track athlete and was a renowned runner over a mile. He was once ranked eighth in British athletics and had, on one occasion, beaten Roger Bannister - famed as the first person to run the four-minute mile.

Unfortunately Ticker narrowly missed selection for the Olympic team but was selected to run with the Olympic Torch as it travelled through Kent. The Torch bearers for the 1948 games were selected by county athletic clubs and each stage of the torch route covered two miles, hence the need for genuine athletes. The 2012 torch bearers covered a mere 300 metres each and were chosen by entirely different criteria.

Ticker later entered local politics where he was keen to promote sport for all. He served Rochester Council for 15 years becoming Mayor in 1965. He was responsible for the Parks Committee overseeing sports facilities, including the swimming pool at Strood. He eventually stepped down from local government in 1991 after 34 years of service.

Ticker was a lifelong member of Medway Athletics Club, Kent Amateur Athletic Association and several other local sporting groups. In 2001 Shaws Wood residential home, where Ticker was a resident, was earmarked for closure and despite his frailty he campaigned successfully to save the home from shutting. At the time that he was interviewed about the home closure his Olympic Torch was still in his possession at Shaws Wood. It was reportedly then given to the Black Lion Sport Centre where it was displayed in the bar area. Subsequently the torch seems to have vanished and its current whereabouts are unknown. If any of our readers know otherwise we would be interested to hear of its fate.

\*\*\*

**Please note that Part Two of Catharina Clement's *A Token in Time*, will be published in the next issue of *The Clock Tower*.**

\*\*\*

# The Victoria County History

Dr Sandra Dunster



*Dr Sandra Dunster was appointed by the University of Greenwich as Kent Team Leader for the Victoria County History's England's Past for Everyone (EPE) in October 2007. With the help of volunteers, she is researching and writing a history of the Medway Towns. She previously taught local and regional history at the University of Kent. Sandra was born and raised in Whitstable and, after 25 years absence, returned to live there in 1999.*

## Races on the Lines

Writing this during the 2012 Olympics and having seen the crowds flocking to the Olympic venues to watch the sport, I was reminded of the sporting event – the annual races - that drew huge crowds to the Lines in August in early 19<sup>th</sup> century Medway.

Robert Pocock recalled that when he attended in 1822, 'It was windy...there were races for a plate of £50 when, it is said, twenty thousand persons assembled.' Sixteen years later *Wrights Topography* reported that this was still 'a scene of great animation being numerously attended by a gay assemblage of rank and fashion, there is almost a total suspension of business for great and small are equally attracted to the stand and all alike intent on the exciting nature of the sport.'<sup>1</sup>

However it is clear that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, as with the 2012 Olympics, security at such events was an issue. Pocock noted that in the year that he attended 'a poor woman was killed by a horse and cart going over her'. The *Times* of 24 August 1834, picking up a report from the *Maidstone Gazette*, reported 'that the town of Chatham was thrown into utmost confusion' following 'a serious riot that took place on Chatham Lines'. According to the paper, on the Thursday evening after the races some members of the 88th Regiment attacked members of the public who were enjoying the entertainment offered by the booths on the Lines. About 30 people were injured and several were hospitalised: 'The scene on the Lines was terrific men, women and children were trampled and cut about in a most horrid manner'. The following day men from the same regiment 'sallied out of the barracks on the Brompton side...urged on by the sergeants and corporals,' to attack a group of sailors who were outside the Queens's Head again causing serious injury.

However, the *Naval and Military Gazette* put a somewhat different spin on these incidents. Their report asserted that there had been an altercation at an oyster stand on the Thursday evening 'between some civilians or seamen and a few soldiers of the 88th regiment...' The soldiers were overpowered and wounded and when their comrades saw them being taken to hospital, it was only by virtue of the restraint urged by the officers that the rest of the regiment were prevented from taking revenge. The following evening a group of seamen armed with bludgeons were said to have provoked the 88th regiment outside the barracks resulting in a scuffle. It is perhaps not surprising that the *Gazette* exonerated the soldiers, stating that 'we have no hesitation in saying that had the civil power done their duty, by interfering and preventing the unlawful assemblage of seamen.....and had they been active on the race course on Thursday, these disturbances could not have occurred.'

Whoever was to blame, the residents of Chatham wrote to the High Constable calling for a public meeting, '...to take into consideration the steps necessary to be adopted to protect themselves from the violence, and to prevent, if possible a repetition of the outrages which have recently been committed by some of the troops...' This was not the first time that this regiment had upset the local populace.

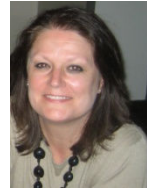
Three weeks earlier the shopkeepers of Chatham had been forced to close their doors because of disturbance caused by the 88<sup>th</sup> regiment and several people had been killed. It was not just violent troops which caused concern. The entertainment on offer at the races offended the sensibilities of some Victorian inhabitants of the Medway area. In 1851 an anonymous local resident wrote to the High Constable expressing concern about the effect on the female population of the 'disgraceful exhibition of the boxing men displaying their prowess and in seeing two men knock each other about.'<sup>2</sup> One wonders what this correspondent's reaction would have been to the inclusion of women's boxing in the 2012 Olympics!

### Notes

1.R Baldwin, *The Gillingham Chronicles*, p.266

2. MALSC EL/LE/LIM/GM/01/70 1 September 1851

## Editor's Footnotes



*Amanda Thomas is a freelance writer and public relations consultant. Born in Chatham, but now based in Hertfordshire, she belongs to several historical organisations, including the Kent Family History Society, the North West Kent Family History Society, the City of Rochester Society and The Council for British Archaeology; she has a degree in Italian from the University of Kent and is a member of their alumni association. Amanda was made a full member of the Society of Women Writers and Journalists in 2008.*

It is appropriate for this summer issue of *The Clock Tower* that I should be writing on one of the hottest days of the year, 29 degrees the thermometer says, and according to today's *Daily Telegraph*, if it gets much warmer, we'll be basking in the same temperature as the Western Sahara. I am crossing my fingers that it stays like this at least until the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games in just two days' time, and by the time you read this you will know if my wish was granted.

The sunshine is a welcome relief after the weeks of rain, however, apparently this is not good news as it would appear that wet, humid weather is ideal for the breeding of mosquitoes, '...the combination of a wet June followed by a warm July has created the perfect atmosphere for them to flourish.' (*The Daily Telegraph*, 25.07.12, p. 20). Fortunately British mosquitoes may only give us an irritating itch rather than the deadly diseases such as malaria and dengue fever, however, these carriers appear to be on the increase in mainland Europe. It is hard to believe that malaria was only eradicated in Britain in the 1950s, but those of us with an association with the marshland villages such as Cooling and Cliffe will have ancestors who most certainly suffered from and died of malaria. In the year of the 200th anniversary of his birth, it is fitting to repeat here once again Dickens' fascination with the lozenge graves of the Comport and Baker children at St James' Cooling and which he describes to great effect in the opening scene of *Great Expectations*. Local historian Alan Cherry believes the children most certainly died of malaria.

Recently I received an email query about an eleven year old girl who had died of yellow fever in Lambeth, London. Like malaria, this viral disease is also spread by mosquitoes and today occurs in sub-Saharan Africa, South America and parts of the Caribbean. In the nineteenth century, outbreaks were common on board ship travelling to and from warmer climes and ships would fly a yellow flag to indicate it was infected. Needless to say, the disease would have been feared in the London Docks and places such as Sheppey and Chatham, though exactly why a child should have died in Lambeth is still a mystery.

The Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre holds records relating to Burntwick Island where in 1845 many yellow fever victims were buried. According to Senior Archive and Local Studies Assistant, Cindy O'Halloran, 'The headstone of Sidney Bernard, naval surgeon is the only marked grave there (possibly gone now due to rising sea levels); HMS Eclair returned to Chatham from Africa bringing the disease.' The Wellcome Trust website gives more information about the journey of the ship from Freetown in Sierra Leone, where the infection most likely started and its eventual quarantine at Stangate Creek in the Medway:

'...the *Eclair* was sent on to the Quarantine Station at Stangate Creek in the Medway. Five more men died there, including Sidney Bernard, perhaps because the infected mosquitoes were able to breed in the heat below deck generated by the steam engine. Ironically, had the crew disembarked they may have escaped infection.

Sidney Bernard became a martyr and a hero in the British press. His death, and the heroism of another naval surgeon, James Ormiston MacWilliam (who lost most of his crew and captain to yellow fever on the 1841 Niger expedition and piloted the vessel back down the river himself) began to draw attention to the plight of the navy.'

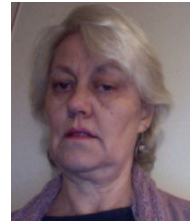
(<http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/News/2011/Features/WTVM052418.htm>)

Stories such as these certainly curb one's enthusiasm for the warm weather and hopefully (once the Olympics are over) we will return to our cooler - and healthier - normal British climate.

# Medway Celebrates the Queen's Diamond Jubilee

## *The Register at Allhallows Church*

Brenda Paternoster



*Brenda was born and grew up in Gravesend and moved to Strood when she married in 1969; she went to live in Allhallows nine years later. After leaving Gravesend Grammar School, Brenda worked at the Ministry of Defence laboratories in Woolwich Arsenal for five years and then had ten years as a full time mother during which time she learned bobbin lace making and developed an interest in family history. When the younger two (twins) were about to start school she was offered the opportunity to teach lace making in Adult Education and spent the rest of her career in various roles within Adult Ed. Family history became more important as she got older and since retiring two years ago Brenda has been able to take on more commitments with the Kent Family History Society and is now a committee member and one of the team of KFHS volunteers on the helpdesk at MALSC.*

To mark the Diamond Jubilee there was a display of local history and memorabilia in Allhallows parish church and the exhibits included the marriage register which has been in use since 1837.

The first marriage recorded in the register took place on 5th June 1837 between John HARRISON and Frances EVERIST. It is not at the end of the old Harwick register where it should be, and would therefore be available on CityArk. Instead the curate saw fit to record this marriage as the first entry in the new register, which should not have been started until 1st July 1837. Consequently it is not in the General Register Office (GRO) index for July-Sept quarter 1837 and of course there is no April-June 1837 index, so a certificate cannot be obtained from the GRO. Because the register is still in use at the church the local Register Office do not have the copy register and so cannot issue a certificate either. The only way to get a certificate for that marriage is from the vicar Stephen Gwilt - or contact me as I have the full details!

Marriage registers are printed in a variety of sizes allowing for (I think) 20 entries up to 500 entries per book. Allhallows was not a rich parish but was obviously keen to get the best value from their marriage register and so ordered the biggest size available. It is also a small parish; the previous Hardwick register recorded just 25 weddings in 23 years, and although the rate did increase to almost two a year through the present register, the book is still only two thirds full. With the last entry in June 2009 who knows how much longer that register will remain in the custody of the incumbent?

## *I Was There!*

Ken Walter



*FOMA member Ken Walter was born in Dartford where he lived for the best part of 50 years until moving to Chatham's Historic Dockyard in 2001. He attended Dartford Grammar School and today when he is not working on genealogy is a qualified accountant. He has been married to Lorna for 34 years and they have two sons.*

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee weekend in June was a tremendous weekend, and we were swept away by the patriotic fervour! My wife Lorna and I were allocated standing tickets in the ballot for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee concert at Buckingham Palace on Monday (4 June 2012). We were excited by the prospect and set off by train from Longfield at 2pm, even though the concert was not due to start until 7.30pm. We had been informed that the gates would open at 5.30pm and we had specific instructions about which gate to enter. We were also told that security would be strict and so we carried our passports and driving licences as identification.

After a stroll from Victoria station, the crowds were milling around the Palace at 3pm, and some had been lucky enough to be granted tickets for the garden tea in the Palace gardens. We arrived at Buckingham Gate at about 3.15pm and a queue had already formed in Birdcage Walk so we decided to join it. Old age legs and ankles were starting to ache by 5.30pm and I was wondering how I should survive the rest of the day on my feet!

The queue was very orderly and having passed the security check there was a dash (by some) for the prime spots in front of the impressive stage that had been erected around the Victoria Memorial. We found a fence on which we could rest our backs in front of the stage, with a good view of the impending proceedings. By 7pm the area around us was packed - it felt like being in a large football crowd, only the atmosphere was full of very good humour.

I thought: "Will my bladder hold during the coming few hours?" as we were wedged in with no obvious pathway out of the melee. It was not an issue! At 7pm Rob Bryden and Lee Mack started to warm up the crowd and a nondescript five-piece boy band (whose name I have forgotten) performed a couple of numbers. The crowd now has grown to 10,000 standing and another 10,000 seated, to build a great atmosphere. Outside there was an estimated 300,000 people in The Mall, watching the concert on big screens.

At 7.30pm, after the royal entourage had arrived (not the Queen yet), the show began with Robbie Williams singing *Let Me Entertain You*. The party was in full swing and we were jigging away. Other presenters included Miranda Hart and Lenny Henry, joined by Rolf Harris and later on Peter Kay, dressed as a beefeater. The line up of artists was spectacular: Will.I.Am, Jessie J, JLS, Renee Fleming, Lang Lang, Ed Sheeran, Ruby Turner with Jules Holland, Grace Jones (who twirled a hoola hoop for the whole of her performance), Andrew Lloyd Webber, Alfie Boe and Sir Cliff Richard, with performers from the Commonwealth, the Bands of the Guards, and the Military Wives, all supported by the high class BBC Concert Orchestra.

After the Queen arrived at 9pm, the skies cleared to make way for a beautiful sunset. She was greeted by Robbie Williams with the old classic *Mack The Knife* and then the big names pitched in: Tom Jones, Annie Lennox, Shirley Bassey, Kylie Minogue, Madness (on the roof of the Palace), Stevie Wonder, Elton John and finally Sir Paul McCartney. Gary Barlow performed at various stages and was praised for his excellent management of the whole concert. After sunset the biggest spectacle were the fireworks and the images projected on to the front of the Palace, that put the icing on the cake as far as I was concerned.

We had survived the crowds, we had danced to the music, my bladder was relieved, and we made our way back to the station in very good mood. Quite simply it had been a day to remember and a most fitting way to celebrate the Jubilee and give tribute to our sovereign who has reigned over us for the last 60 years. GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!!!



*The view from the crowd as Annie Lennox sings*



*The projection on Buckingham Palace*

*Photographs by Ken Walter.*

## *The Committee*

### Patron

Position vacant

### President

Russell John Race, JP, DL



### Vice Presidents

Sue Haydock (Medway Council Representative), Pat Salter, Brian Kingsley Smith, Bruce Aubry, Professor Sir Robert Worcester KBE DL

### Chairman

Tessa Towner:

37 Ravenswood Avenue, Frindsbury, ME2 3BY, Kent.  
picketywitch@blueyonder.co.uk

### Vice Chairman and Events Co-ordinator

Elaine Gardner:

102 Valley View Road, Rochester, ME1 3NX  
emgardner@virginmedia.com

### Treasurer

Jean Skilling:

15 Port Close, Lordswood, Chatham, ME5 8DU, Kent.  
jean.skilling@blueyonder.co.uk

### Secretary

Odette Buchanan:

72 Jersey Road, Rochester, ME2 3PE, Kent.  
odette\_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk

### Membership Secretary

Betty Cole:

25 Elm Avenue, Chatham, ME4 6ER, Kent.  
bettycole@blueyonder.co.uk

### Members

Dr Sandra Dunster:

S.A.Dunster@gre.ac.uk

Rob Flood:

16 Albert Road, Rochester, ME1 3DG  
rob@feetontheground.co.uk

Brian Joyce:

72 William Street, Rainham, ME8 8HW  
brianjoyce64@hotmail.co.uk

Bob Ratcliffe:

12 King Edward Road, Rochester, ME1 1UB, Kent.

Kevin Russell:

11 St Catherine's Almshouses, Star Hill,  
Rochester, ME1 2AA, Kent.  
k.russell47@sky.com

### The Clock Tower Editor and Publicist

Amanda Thomas:

72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, AL5 5NS, Hertfordshire.  
amanda@ajthomas.com

The lighting of beacons for Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on the night of 4 June 2012 caused great excitement amongst FOMA members as information was exchanged via email on the timings of the various events (see *Readers Letters pages 10 to 11*) .



Ben Cooper kindly reported for *The Clock Tower* from the beacon lighting at Broomhill in Strood:

"There was a crowd of about three hundred of all ages. An anonymous council man in a health and safety high visibility waistcoat lit the bonfire at ten thirty, and set off a lone firework. There was no pomp, no speech, no nothing really! A few minutes later the fireworks display on the Great Lines could be seen. I think everyone there was struck by how beautiful the park was at night, with the bonfire, the stone, and the spectacular views, all under a clear sky with a full moon."



# Bygone Kent

## Read Kent's fascinating history magazine

Fully illustrated, unique articles on Kent - Britain's most historic county.

*Did you know that the Medieval town of Faversham was once the capital of England?*

To find out more fascinating facts and interesting articles about your county  
- you need to read Bygone Kent!

**SUBSCRIBE NOW ON OUR WEBSITE  
ONLY £26 FOR 6 ISSUES  
[www.bygonekent.org.uk](http://www.bygonekent.org.uk)**

E: [subscriptions@bygonekent.org.uk](mailto:subscriptions@bygonekent.org.uk) T: 01227 469060  
Bygone Kent, 27 Castle Street, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2PX

