

FOMA's New Patron

We were delighted to welcome The Very Revd. Dr. Mark Beach, to the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre on Wednesday 14th February 2013. The new Dean of the Cathedral has kindly agreed to become the new FOMA Patron. Odette Buchanan writes about the visit on page 5.

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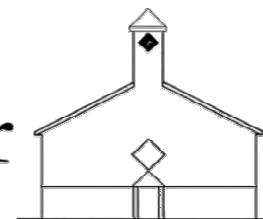
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The Clock Tower



Issue Number 30: May 2013
 £2.00; free to members

The Big Freeze of 1963



Catharina Clement shares her memories

Express delivery to Nickleby Close, Rochester, during the 1963 Big Freeze!
 The Chatham Observer, from the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre collections.
 See page 36

The FOMA AGM

The seventh FOMA AGM was held on 16 April 2013 at Frindsbury Church Hall. Report on pages 3 and 18.



*FOMA Chairman, Tessa Towner, addresses members.
To the left is FOMA Secretary Odette Buchanan and to the right, FOMA Treasurer, Jean Skilling.*



Some of the members who attended the AGM.

The first take went well, and Ben was brilliant at asking the right questions at the right moment, prompting me for the next piece of the story. When we had finished we had to do it all over again, and then close ups of the photographs and shots of us strolling casually across the marshes. It was tremendous fun, but utterly exhausting.

The first episode was shown on 19 April on BBC1 South East. Our day on the marshes was edited down to about five minutes, but the key information was all there. I was delighted that so many FOMA members were able to see the programme and that everyone found it so interesting. As *The Clock Tower* goes to press, the programme is about to be aired across the country on BBC4, and I am sure it will be well received.



A still from BBC4's The Flying Archaeologist; Amanda Thomas talks to presenter Ben Robinson; photograph kindly supplied by Dr Laurence Marsteller.



Helen Winton of English Heritage is interviewed by Ben Robinson in BBC4's The Flying Archaeologist; in the foreground is (left) Producer Paul Dunt and cameraman Peter Eveson.

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, 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.

The Flying Archaeologist

On a sunny morning in November, I headed off round the M25 from Hertfordshire on my way to the Cliffe marshes and to meet the film crew for BBC4's new series, *The Flying Archaeologist*. I had been approached by the production team about the filming several weeks before. English Heritage's Helen Winton was advising on the series and many months previously I had been talking to EH about civilian life during World War One at the Cliffe munitions works. My grandmother, Minnie Rogers, had worked there during the war, although it wasn't until producer Paul Dunt sent me a big pile of documents about the works did I realise that her brother, my Great Uncle Charlie, was the foreman there.

We met at the car park of St Helen's Church in Cliffe and passers by could have easily mistaken us for the crew of *Time Team*, as we were all dressed in typical archaeology gear - walking trousers, layers of waterproofs and heavy boots. In fact the presenter of the programme, the Flying Archaeologist himself, was Ben Robinson, who has appeared in many *Time Team* episodes. Helen Winton was in charge of driving the Land Rover and we had to make two trips down to the marshes to get all the equipment set up and all of us in place. We were fortunate that the weather remained sunny for most of the day. Filming lasted for several hours and each time we completed one part of the programme, we set off again either on foot or in the *Landie* to our next location. These were the moments when we all got to know each other, and the time flew by. Helen filmed her pieces with Ben first, and then it was my turn, though this was several hours after we had first arrived on the marshes. My greatest worry when we started filming was that I would forget everything, as there was a huge amount of detail to remember about the various incidents which had taken place at the works.

From the Chairman

Tessa Towner, Chairman.



The FOMA AGM

We were delighted to see so many members at this year's Annual General Meeting, but it was hard to believe that yet another year has gone by! For those of you unable to attend the meeting, to follow is a synopsis of my address to members.

"We are honoured to have as our new patron the Dean of Rochester Cathedral, Dr Mark Beach who has very kindly agreed to become patron. Unfortunately he could not be with us at the AGM but hopes to attend future events, time permitting. The committee held a very positive meeting with Dr Beach recently, discussing links between MALSC, FOMA and the Cathedral

This last year has seen the final year of our HLF project. Thanks go to our Treasurer, Jean Skilling, who has managed the financial side of the project. Jean has found this quite difficult and her words to me a few weeks ago were, "I'm never going to do this again!!" That said, she has managed the job extremely well and has sent off all the final paperwork. We now await their verdict!

Further thanks go to Medway Archivist, Alison Cable, who has managed the project. The moment she took up the post of Archivist, she was thrown in at the deep end of a project organised initially by Stephen Dixon. Her guidance to all the volunteers was very much appreciated and our thanks go also to all the staff at MALSC for their help.

Elaine Gardner, Brian Joyce and Odette Buchanan managed the education and outreach part of the project. Elaine and Alison coordinated the documentation for the information packs which were assembled for distribution to local secondary schools. These include a DVD of City of Rochester Archive documents, collated by Alison, and production ably managed by Rob Flood whose technical knowledge proves invaluable! Our thanks go to them all. Thanks also to the many volunteers who helped with the project, repackaging documents, removing rusty paperclips etc. we couldn't have managed without them.

We hope that the school liaison will continue to develop and that more material will be produced. We are also planning to help MALSC digitise more of the archive documents, and to have some of the catalogued documents displayed on the FOMA website.

My thanks to all our committee members for all their hard work: Amanda for the excellent job she does with *The Clock Tower* and to Alex Thomas for managing our website - and to all of you for your support."

Obituary

Mr JL Keys



It was with great sadness that Betty Cole, FOMA Membership Secretary, recently received news that FOMA member, John Keys, had died in March. John was an enthusiastic member and a prolific contributor to *The Clock Tower*, as follows:

Issue 11, August 2008 - *166 City of Rochester HAA Battery R.A.*,
Issue 12, November 2008 - *The Municipal Buildings, Gillingham (1)*,
Issue 13, February 2009 - *The Municipal Buildings, Gillingham (2)*,
Issue 15, August 2009 - *How the Benefits System has Changed!*,
Issue 16, November 2009 - *Medway Memories*,
Issue 17, February 2010 - *Medway Memories*
(as part of the Clock Tower Special Feature, *The Great Evacuation*),
Issue Number 20: November 2010 - *Medway Memories*
(as part of the Clock Tower Special Feature, *Medway Memories of World War Two and the Battle of Britain; Part Two*).

Our condolences have been sent to Mrs JM Keys.

Help is always needed with events.

If you think you could help, please contact Elaine Gardner on 01634 408595 or email emgardner@virginmedia.com

The Committee

Patron

The Very Reverend Dr. Mark Beach
Dean of Rochester

President

Russell John Race, JP, DL (pictured)

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

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

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emgardner@virginmedia.com

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bettycole@blueyonder.co.uk

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brianjoyce64@hotmail.co.uk
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Then on 29 June at the Urban History Conference at Christchurch University, Canterbury, I will be giving a short paper about the expansion of Gillingham in the mid-nineteenth century, referred to at the time as '...this mushroom town...'

Later this year it will be time to move onto a new project. Colleagues at the Greenwich Maritime Institute contacted me recently with an idea relating to research concerning the prison hulks on the Medway. So watch this space - I may be looking for volunteers again in the near future!

STOP PRESS!

As *The Clock Tower* was going to press, *Medway towns: river docks and urban life* became available to buy. You can purchase your copy from The History Press website: <http://www.thehistorypress.co.uk/index.php/the-medway-towns-rover-docks-and-urban-life.html> or from Amazon at: http://www.amazon.co.uk/The-Medway-Towns-Englands-Everyone/dp/1860777287/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1368121024&sr=8-1&keywords=sandra+dunster

The book is also available at all good bookshops. ISBN: 9781860777288; price £18.99.

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

There is now a pdf on the FOMA website (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.

News and Events

Odette Buchanan, Friends' Secretary



We were thrilled to welcome The Very Revd. Dr. Mark Beach to MALSC on Wednesday 14th February 2013. The new Dean of the Cathedral has kindly agreed to become FOMA's Patron, and as he is fairly new to the Medway area, a visit to MALSC was arranged to give him an idea of the resources available and how the Friends help.

Tessa Towner introduced the committee to Dr Beach and said how honoured we are that he had agreed to become our Patron. She went on to say that we were delighted he had found time to visit MALSC, especially since his visit fell on the first day of Lent. Elaine Gardner had baked some of her lovely cakes and with the help of Nikki Pratt, Archives and Local Studies Assistant, we had taken from the archives some documents which we thought would be of interest: a few 19th century maps, some significant books on Rochester and many photos of previous Deans of the Cathedral. Dr. Beach then spoke to us about the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) project upon which the Cathedral was about to embark. He told us of the plans for opening up the crypt for a permanent exhibition to incorporate the *Textus Roffensis*, and the projected programme of temporary exhibitions. This led us on a discussion of how FOMA, MALSC and the Cathedral could co-operate in the future and with the HLF project. It was such an interesting and stimulating meeting that we quite forgot to take any photos! So, you'll all just have to believe me when I tell you that it really happened.

Fortunately, FOMA Committee member, Bob Ratcliffe, contacted the Dean's office, who very kindly supplied us with a photograph (see the back page) and some information on Dr Beach. Our thanks to Marilyn Tyler, PA to the Dean and HLF Project Administrator

The Very Reverend Dr Mark Beach

Mark Beach grew up in Staffordshire. Since then he has not allowed the grass to grow under his feet, having lived in Shropshire, Kent, Nottinghamshire, Oxford, West Yorkshire and Warwickshire, following a varied pattern of education and ministry as a parish priest and Bishop's Chaplain. Mark has had a long involvement with the voluntary sector most recently as chair of trustees of Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action.

Having only become Dean of Rochester in May 2012, he is still working out what the job involves but already enjoys being a part of the worshipping community in the Cathedral and seeking ways in which these ancient stones can speak of a thoroughly modern and relevant faith. He is a keen singer and walking his somewhat over-exuberant lurcher called Murphy. He is married to Annabel.

Calendar of Forthcoming Events and Exhibitions

FOMA Events

11th June, 7.30 pm
1550-1900, Sights and Sounds of Medway
A talk by Dr. Sandra Dunster

10th September, 7.30 pm
A Tram Ride through the Medway Towns
A talk by Bob Ratcliffe

Saturday 12th October, 7.30 pm start
Quiz Night
£5 for members and non-members. **BOOKING REQUIRED.**

12th November, 7.30 pm
Cinemas of the Medway Towns
A talk by Brian Joyce

Please note, the 2014 FOMA AGM has been changed to **8th April 2014**; please amend your membership cards and diaries.

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

11th April - 31st May
Time and Tides
An exhibition of work inspired by the Icon Theatre Project in Cuxton, Upnor, Wainscott and High Halstow

6th June - 6th August
Gillingham High Street
A photographic record

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.

I was hoping to use my column this month to announce the firm publication date of the long awaited *Medway towns: river docks and urban life*. Amazon is confidently stating 13 May 2013 but, as I write at the beginning of May, I have not yet had confirmation from the publishers that this deadline will be met. Fingers crossed.

The volunteers who helped me in so many ways to collect and prepare the material for the book will be aware that there has been a long gap between the completion of the research and publication. Coming at the tail end of the England's Past for Everyone project, the editing and support team within the Victoria County History (VCH) are no longer available and this paperback has had to wait its turn for the attention of the remaining VCH editor in the company of several VCH 'red books', impressive in size and appearance. The writing of the Medway Towns book was completed nearly two years ago but work has continued to fine tune the details, to ensure that everything is correct and that the layout and tone match that of the rest of the *England's Past for Everyone* series.

What is exciting as the time for publication approaches is that I also have the opportunity to share material from the research with a wider audience. I will be supporting FOMA by giving a talk on 'The Sights and Sounds of the Medway towns 1550-1900', on **Tuesday 11 June at 7.30 in Frindsbury Church Hall**. The talk offers an exploration of how the Medway townscape has developed during this period and how the sounds that people heard as they went about their daily lives also changed. I will show many images of the towns, from the earliest sixteenth century map, in glorious Technicolor, to the muted tones of a more polluted landscape at the end of the nineteenth century. Alongside the images, descriptions of what people heard at the time will help to bring the experience of living in the towns to life.

Archives Update

Alison Cable, Borough Archivist



Forthcoming Events

MALSC will be contributing to Medway Council's River Festival which takes place on 6th July this year on Chatham Waterfront. April Lambourne is putting together an exhibition of photographs of life on the river. The exhibition will be viewable at Chatham Library over the Festival weekend. We will also have a small display in the Guildhall Museum where visitors will also be able to see the film, *Watery Trail* in its entirety. For those of you who haven't seen it already, this is a film that was made in 1938 and shows a journey up the Medway from its near-source to the river mouth. The film is a superb document of river life as it shows various industries situated along its banks. The film is being shown with the permission of Screen Archive South East.

Archive Collections

The following catalogues have been completed during March and April and the full catalogues can be seen on our online archive catalogue: <http://cityark.medway.gov.uk>

DE625	Various papers: Rochester local history	1819-1901	March 2013
DE622	Artificial collection (misc. letters about property transactions etc)		April 2013
DE626	Henry Smetham letters etc	1762-1936	March 2013
DE624	Artificial collection (misc. letters about property transactions etc)		April 2013
DE1238	Halling and Cuxton Labour party records (minutes)	1949-2000	April 2013

8th August - 1st October
The Cliffe History Project
Cliffe in the 20th century; a village history

18th November - 28th January 2014
Beyond the Green Baize Door
Life at Cobham Hall above and below stairs

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

22nd May, 2.30 pm
Frederic Wheeler
Social Reformer Extraordinaire. Celebrating 350 years of Rochester Quakers
Catharina Clement

20th September, 7.30 pm
Kentish Family Names
Dr. Paul Cullen
Please note, this event will be held at the Rochester Community Hub, Eastgate, Rochester, ME1 1EW; telephone: 01634 337411. Further information at:
<http://www.medway.gov.uk/leisureandculture/libraries/findalibrary/rochestercommunityhub.aspx>

October (date to be confirmed)
Cliffe and the Marshes
A guided walk during Kent Coastal week
Bill Simmonds

20th November, 10.30 am - 12 noon
Local Politics, Rochester Guildhall and Medway in the 19th Century
An illustrated talk to mark Parliament Week 2013, using contemporary political posters
Jeremy Clarke

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.

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.

Eastgate House will be open for events until works start in the summer and the **Friends of Eastgate House AGM will be held on 18 June**. Further information can be obtained at: <http://www.friendsof-eastgatehouse.org> on Facebook on <http://www.facebook.com/eastgatehouse> and you can follow the FOEH on Twitter <https://twitter.com/EastgateHouse>

To join the Friends of Eastgate House, please contact Terri Zbyszewska, The Membership Secretary, FoEH, 31 The Esplanade, Rochester, ME1 1QW; a copy of the membership form is also available on the website, as above. Terri can also be contacted at tzbyszewska@yahoo.co.uk.

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/, 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 for further information and how to join. Our open members meetings take place on the second Wednesday of the month in the Auditorium at the Visitor Information Centre, Rochester. Guests are welcome and forthcoming speakers are as follows:

15th May

Springtime President/Secretary Outing for Society members and our friends which will include a trip on the Kent and East Sussex Railway and a visit to Hole Park, Rolvenden, to enjoy the bluebells, azaleas and rhododendrons. For further information and to book please contact Chris Furminger on 01634 320598 or e-mail cafurminger@blueyonder.co.uk.

12th June

The City of Rochester Society AGM (further details are available as above).

All members welcome!

Brian Joyce then commented:

"Well I never! thanks very much for that. According to the same website, at the time they appeared in Chatham, they'd only had *Love Me Do* out, and as far as I remember it only just made Top Twenty. No wonder it wasn't such a big deal to local journalists. *Please Please Me* was released the day before this Chatham appearance. I have the newspaper ad somewhere." *See right, from the Chatham Observer, 11 January 1963.*

From Graham Holmes in New Zealand:

"I went to most of them in Chatham, Rochester and Maidstone I was 15 in 63. Can't remember the Beatles being there I am sure I would have gone I am a great fan. Used to hang around some pretty rough dance hall in Gillingham as well. Was in a kid band for a while practising in Gardiner St and played at some youth clubs in Wigmore and West Court Arms in Canterbury St.. Those were the days!"

Elaine Gardner added:

"I was far too busy worrying about mock O Level exams that week and on getting from Grain to Rochester in snowy weather to even think about the Beatles, though they were very popular having had their first hit in November 1962."

From Barry Cox:

"Never heard of The Beatles being here."

Rob Flood also sent the photograph of the Beatles performing and added:

"As far as I know, this was the only visit the Beatles made to Medway although John Lennon did visit Rochester Cathedral with Yoko in on Christmas Eve 1969 accompanied by comedian Dick Gregory. They came in John's white Rolls Royce."

Graham Holmes in New Zealand had the final word:

"Blast it I missed them. Although the Invicta was a bit flash for a Gillingham boy. My ex who was born and raised up the Cuxton Rd. knitted a pair of socks and sent them to Paul McCartney. She got a nice letter back from Paul's mum."

Chatham Observer, January 11th, 1963 — 7

Come Dancing

★ INVICTA BALLROOM ★

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12 Admission 5/- 7.30-11.45 p.m.
(Top Recording Group)
The BEATLES
also THE JAYBIRDS

Sunday, January 13 Admission 3/6 7.00-10.30 p.m.
ROCK 'N' TWIST
KEITH TURNER and
THE SWALLOWS

Tuesday, January 15 Admission 2/6 7.15-10.45 p.m.
DISC AGOGO
RAY WADE INTRODUCES IN THE GUEST SPOT
THE CORTINAS

INVICTA BINGO! - MEMBERS ONLY

	Doors Open	Comm. Bingo	Admission
Monday	6.45 p.m.	8.00 p.m.	2/6
Wednesday	6.15 p.m.	8.00 p.m.	2/6
Thursday	6.45 p.m.	8.00 p.m.	2/6
Friday	6.45 p.m.	8.00 p.m.	2/6
Sunday Afternoon	2.00 p.m.	3.30 p.m.	2/6
Wed. Afternoon O.A.P.	1.30 p.m.	2.30 p.m.	G.A.P. 1/-

MEMBERS MUST CARRY MEMBERSHIP CARDS
GUESTS MUST BE PROPERLY INTRODUCED BY MEMBERS

COMING SATURDAY:
BOB MILLER AND HIS MILLERMEN

anyway. Everyone I knew would have got there if they had to ski. The Beatles were the first wake up call that the world was changing. We'd never heard anything like them before."

From Julia Cook:

"I Googled and found this site. <http://www.beatlesbible.com/1963/01/12/live-in-victa-ballroom-chatham/> "

Peter Cook, Medway journalist and FOMA member added:

"Strangely, Amanda, I have been researching the same thing following a request from my editor who is a Beatles fan. They definitely were at the Invicta Ballroom on Jan 12 1963."

From Keith Lambourne:

"12 January 1963

Invicta Ballroom

High Street

Chatham, Kent

Photographer: Southeastern Newspapers Ltd.

The Beatles' southernmost venue to date!"



Friends of Broomhill

Broomhill Park has been awarded a second Green Flag for 2012/13. The Green Flag Award recognises the best green spaces in the country.



Fun Day - Sunday 23rd June. See the website for further details: www.friendsofbroomhill.org.uk

Next volunteer day - Sunday 1st September - wild flower planting. Time - 11am to 1pm. Meeting point – the car park at the end of King Arthur's Drive. Clothing – suitable for rough and dirty outside work – a must is gloves. Tools – you can bring your own, however there will be supply of suitable tools. Please bring a drink.

Healthy Walks

Every Tuesday, meet at Strood Library at 9.45 am.

A guided and pleasant walk with wonderful views overlooking the Medway and Thames, and woodland paths. Duration about 60 minutes. Complimentary tea and coffee served in the library after the walk. Sorry - dogs not allowed in the library. Contact: 01634 333720

It's all FREE, it's FUN, it's HEALTHY and will help us keep our GREEN FLAG AWARD. Further details from the secretary 01634 718231 or email odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk

The Royal Engineers Museum, Library and Archive

Prince Arthur Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME4 4UG;
www.re-museum.co.uk



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.

Events

EOD - The Art of Bomb Disposal; 15th - 16th June

Join the Royal Engineers Museum on the 15th -16th June for a weekend on the history and art of bomb disposal. Lectures, Displays and Live Shows! **For more information please call 01634 822312.**

Big History Showcase; 3rd - 4th August

This August the Royal Engineers Museum will be hosting the Big History Showcase. This weekend will be filled with living history displays showcasing the fascinating and entertaining history of the British Army. **For more information call 01634 822839.**

Keeping Your Militaria; 22nd August, 7pm

Conservation Officer of the Royal Engineers Museum, Mrs Lauren Jones, will be talking about preserving your home collection of militaria including medals, photographs, archives and textiles. Tickets £6. **For bookings call 01634 822839.**

Chinese Gordon; 24th October, 7pm

Gary Dickinson of the Royal Asiatic Society will be giving a talk on the 24th October on some General Gordon Collection items held by the Royal Engineers Museum. Focusing particularly on the Chinese silks gifted to Gordon after the TaiPing Rebellion, Mr Dickinson will elaborate on the period of Gordon's life that led to his nickname 'Chinese Gordon'. Tickets £6. **For bookings call 01634 822839.**

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.



Survey of one of Kent's largest Tudor estates is now on-line

A rare sixteenth century Kent land survey that previously could be read only in an ancient volume at the British Library in London has been transcribed and published on-line by a team of Kent Archaeological Society volunteers. The document originally belonged to the Wotton family, whose estate covered 6,000 acres in nearly every part of the county, from Ringwould in the east to St Mary Cray in the west, and from Cliffe on the Thames estuary to Lydd on Romney Marsh. <http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/kent-archaeology-press-releases/survey-of-one-of-kents-largest-tudor-estates-is-now-on-line/>

The Kent Archaeological society holds a wide range of events. Information can be found at: <http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/event-category/kas-events/>

Members' Memories

Graham Holmes from Tokoroa in New Zealand writes:

"I was 15 in 63 and delivering morning papers around Gillingham and can remember the snow and not being able to see the roads or pavement around Canterbury St. and tucking newspapers under my shirt and socks for gloves. I can remember the Medway frozen at Gillingham Pier where we used to go to fish for dabs and eels and mullet. I can remember going up the Darland Banks onto the 2nd Banks and it started to snow hard and it was a white out couldn't see a thing ahead. Lucky we were at the top and knew where to go. I can't handle the snow in NZ - been up the mountains twice in 40 years!"

Barry Cox from Medway writes:

"1963, I was along with a few others a Telegram Boy. We rode motorcycles in all that snow except for two days when it was so bad. When we came in from a run you took off your coat and shook the snow outside put your gloves on the radiator to dry and then ran your hands under the cold tap to thaw them out. Grabbed a cup of tea and something to eat and half an hour later you were back out hoping you had not got another rural run. We all worked eight hours a day doing this covering six and a half days. Then you had to get home sometimes at nine at night. I worked in Chatham and lived in Strood, sometimes you had to walk home because the buses had been stopped. I lived with my dad and if he was on nights the house was pretty cold, no central heating then, hot bath and bed if you were on *earlys* next day. That's when I knew Roy Murrant. One night we were late getting out about nine thirty I think, bumped in to Roy, "Come for a pint," he said. Woke up next morning under the post office counter in a pile of mail bags not remembering a thing. Wasn't late for work Roy said, rode about thanking the snow for my bad driving. The winter caused lots of hardships to people but we all coped. No health and safety then, you just got on with it. We were all glad when it went. Happy days."

Emails came thick and fast when Brian Joyce posted this memory:

"It's occurred to me that the Beatles ("Top Recording Group") were supposed to play at the Invicta, Chatham on Sat 12 Jan 1963. I've seen the ad in the paper, but looked for a review the following week in vain (but perhaps not considered important enough to report on). All three papers checked. I have never met anyone who claims to have been there either. I wonder if the snow led to cancellation? Don't know."

From Barbara Harrison:

"I remember the occasion well. I begged my parents to let me go but they wouldn't because of the crush that would have been there and they were afraid that I might get hurt (my friend had a similar problem). We were 12 and couldn't understand their concern! I don't remember that it got snowed off, a few feet of snow wouldn't have stopped anyone going

On this particular day something made by mother go back into the kitchen, and it was as well as the thaw caused an avalanche of solid ice and snow to crash down from our single storey kitchen roof onto the area where the mangle and bowl stood. She had a close escape and remarked many years later, that whatever had made her go indoors had probably saved her life! The bowl and mangle, on the other hand, remained buried in over four feet of snow for the next six weeks.



*A frozen River Medway in 1963;
from the Medway Archives and local Studies Centre; The Chatham Observer.*

Well that's the end of the tale. The country did not grind to a halt nor did schools generally close. I would also think I was more practical and self-sufficient than today's six and seven year olds. Or was it that, as the eldest, it was a case of just growing up too quickly?!

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.

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.

The copy deadline for Issue 31 of *The Clock Tower* is Monday 29 July 2013, with publication on Wednesday 21 August 2013.

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

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Front Cover Accreditations and Website Information

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

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

The Clock Tower is also available at 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

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
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

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. FOMA Secretary, Odette Buchanan, often receives queries from members or visitors to the FOMA website, www.foma-lsc.org/index.html. If you have any additional information for the following correspondents, please contact the Editor.

Cranbrook History

From: Narelle Catling
To: Odette Buchanan
Sent: Thursday, 28 March 2013

Hello Odette,
I will be travelling to the UK In July/August and will be in Kent during early August. I am interested in locating my MOORE family in Cranbrook. From 1841 to 1851 James and Sarah MOORE's address was "On the Hill" and by 1861 Sarah's address was "The Hill". Can you tell me if the Medway Archive holds information on Cranbrook and if not who I should contact?

Many thanks,
Narelle Catling.

From: Odette Buchanan
To: Narelle Catling
Sent: Thursday, 28 March 2013

Thanks for your enquiry, Narelle.
Cranbrook comes under Kent. Look for Kent Archives on line - not sure of their contact details. You might also like to get in touch with Kent Family History Society. Good luck in your search. Do hope the weather is warmer by August! Have a good stay.

Regards,
Odette.

We lived at the top of a steep hill, Cossack Street, at 8 Thomas Street. There was me, my parents plus two brothers and two sisters. Our family moved into the house in late June 1962 and so we were newcomers to the city. I was the eldest and attended Holcombe Road school, aged six and a half, at this time. School stayed open (no closures like today) and I have vivid memories of trudging up Cecil Road to school with the snow over the top of my wellies, my eldest brother aged five in tow, who had just started school, complaining about walking and the cold! At school I was in Class 4, taught by the head Mrs Playfoot. She was inspired by the long spell of bad weather to keep an immaculate weather chart, placing a daily symbol on the chart (usually of snow) to update it. Some naughty child had drawn on her beautiful chart with a kind of marker pen and she was not amused! Despite her name she lacked a sense of humour. One horrible boy said that I was responsible for the graffiti (I was picked on, being the new girl) and was given a sharp wrap on the back of my hand with a ruler by Mrs Playfoot. What compounded the humiliation was that I had not done it!

Unlike today, people got to work and did their job despite the snow. Our milkman, from Bourne and Hillier, delivered our four pints daily with no complaints or excuses. On occasions he had to walk up the hill with his crate to deliver the milk as the float could not make it. My dad worked for the railway at Gravesend station and not once did he stay home, because the trains could not run. They must have had the right kind of snow in those days!

Trying to get your shopping in was another matter, though. Our local corner shop, Munton's, on the corner of Rose Street and Cossack Street, was a lifeline; especially for the elderly. It was my task to go after school with a shopping list to purchase the day's provisions. I think an element of bribery was also at play: money for sweets! The shops on the Delce were out of reach for many people, as they had to negotiate a steep hill with a trolley or pram. Saturday saw my dad and either me or my brother toggled up and armed with a long shopping list and a couple of laundry bags to trek down to the Delce. I believe a sledge was used to cart the stuff up and back and this reminds me of an amusing incident. Who would trust my dad with several loads of washing in the launderette and expect him to sort it into colour loads? Everything went in together; whites with coloureds, including a red-checked tablecloth. It was hardly surprising when dad's white work shirts and underwear came out a bright shade of pink! However, he could hardly mess up the shopping at Jordan's, a small supermarket, with experienced Daughter Number One in tow.

Despite such trips to the launderette, essentials required hand washing: not my mother's favourite task at any time. So when a temporary lull appeared in the weather during mid-January my mum took a bowl of washing outside to mangle. The bowl was my old peach baby bath - it's funny what little details you remember. In the days before automatic washing machines or even twin tubs my mother used a mangle, turning the rollers by hand to squeeze the water out of the wet laundry.

A Clock Tower Special Feature

In the Bleak Mid-Winter of 1963

Catharina Clement



In 2005, Catharina completed a BA in history at Canterbury Christchurch University, and then began a part-time PhD in local history entitled Reactions in the Medway Towns 1640-1660. She has been involved in various local history groups and projects such as FOMA, CDHS, and the Victoria County History EPE projects. She won the 2009 Friends Historical Society Award resulting in a paper on Medway Quakerism 1655-1918 delivered at the Institute for Historical Research and later this year at the Friends Library in London. Currently Catharina works for MALSC.

The 1953 floods reminded me of the bad winter of 1962-3. This period saw snow on the ground for 73 days (over 10 weeks). It started on Boxing Day 1962 and the weather hardly relented till the beginning of March 1963. A three day thaw set in during mid-January, but this merely created more problems when the melted snow froze over again. Reports indicate that the River Medway was frozen over and coal barges were stuck fast in the river. Drifts were as high as six feet in the Medway Towns and about three feet where I lived in Rochester.



Catharina in 1963

Catharina's parents



Chatham Workhouse

From: Amanda Ireland
To: Odette Buchanan
Sent: Monday, 11 March 2013

Dear Odette,

I hope you don't mind me contacting you but I am trying to find some information regarding the old Chatham Workhouse, which as you no doubt are aware was on the site of the now gone All Saints Hospital.

I believe my great grandmother was in the workhouse in 1913 and was there when she gave birth to my grandmother on 13th July 1913 when she was just 16 years old. I would very much like to know more about this and in particular how she came to be there and how she got out. My mother may have known in the past but now has dementia and isn't able to help. Do you know please if any records exist and if so where I could start looking for them? Many thanks.

Regards,
Amanda Ireland.

From: Odette Buchanan
To: Amanda Ireland
Sent: 12 March 2013 12:47

Dear Amanda,
Thanks for your enquiry. You don't say where you live. Our local Archives have records of the Chatham workhouse which should show your great grandma's entry and exit dates. Do you know where she lived when she was let out? Local census would help there. The archives address is Clock Tower Building, Strood, Rochester, Kent, ME2 4AU and they are open 9 - 5 daily except Wednesdays and Sundays - closed on Saturdays - 9 - 4. If you do not live locally, their website is www.medway.gov.uk/archives and their phone no. is 01634 332714. I have copied in to this reply the Archivist at Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, the editor of our Newsletter and 2 other members of our committee who also belong to Kent Family History Association.

Good luck, happy hunting,
Odette.

Desperately Seeking Susan

From: Michael Prevost
Sent: 05 March 2013

Dear Amanda,

Thank you for all the information that FOMA has been providing me with. I have now established ancestors from 15 different villages plus Canterbury in Kent. I'm about to divide them into Kentish Men and Men of Kent so that I can play with my options. On the Hoo Peninsular I have identified 3 parishes, Allhallows, St Mary Hoo and St Margaret of Antioch by Rochester. I've found quite a number of baptisms, burials and one wedding in the records. I'm hoping against hope that my great-great-grandparents James Thomas Miller and Susanna Clarke were married in Hoo.

Thank you again for all your help.

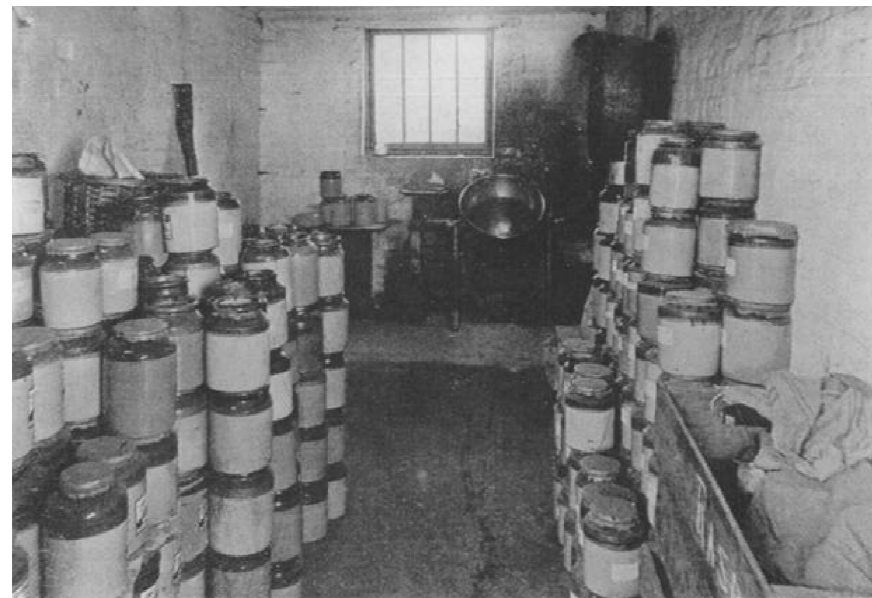
Kind regards,
Michael Prevost.

From: Michael Prevost
Sent: 08 March 2013
To: Amanda Thomas

Dear Amanda,

Susanna Miller and her husband James Thomas Miller who has been described as a blacksmith and small holding farmer living at Fenn Street, seemingly then just referred to as Fenn. Susanna's maiden name was Clarke (with an 'e') and I believe they were born about 1786/1787 respectively. But where? Where were they born? They first appear as a couple in the Hoo Peninsular in the very early years of the 19th century. They already have two children at least when my great-great-grandfather William Holland Miller was born near Rochester in 1818 and baptised at St Margaret's on the 18 Jun 1820. Their eldest son Charles Marshall Miller married a local girl Elizabeth Esther Wellard at St Mary's Hoo in 1839. The two younger brothers, both bachelors, seem to have emigrated to Australia in the 1840's, followed by Charles Marshall and Elizabeth with their 3 surviving children on the 'Ouderkerk aan de Amstel' from Rotterdam bound for Port Phillip Bay, Melbourne in 1854. The parents James Thomas and Susanna Miller must have remained behind, probably still living at Fenn but I have not been able to trace anything further about them, neither their time of death or their whereabouts. Any information would be gratefully appreciated, not only by me but also by their 932 descendants in Australia.

Many thanks,
Michael Prevost.



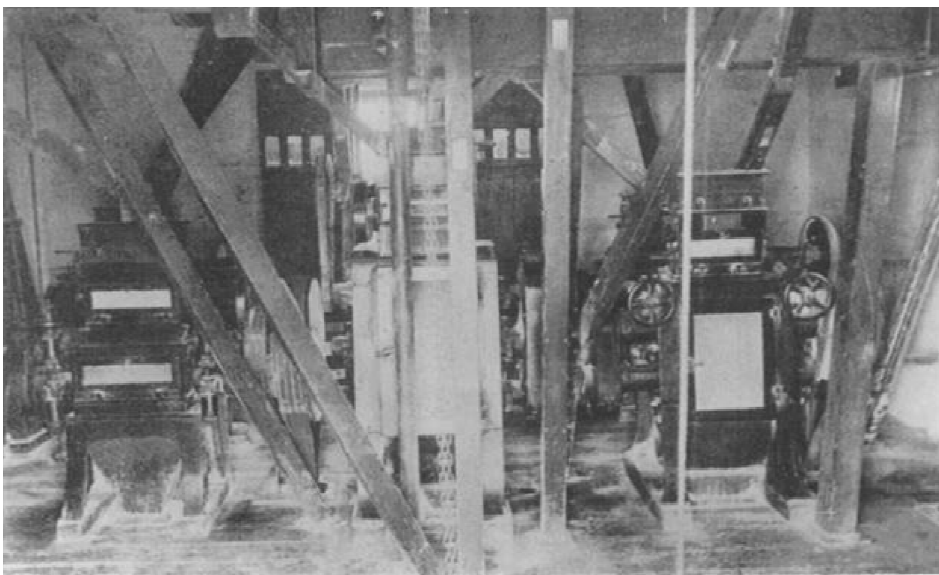
The Jam Making Department at the Mill; Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre; from The Gentleman's Journal, 13 June 1908 P459.

Notes

1. William Coles Finch, *Watermills & Windmills*, pub Arthur Cassell 1933.
2. Will of John Glover proved 1 Mar 1902.
3. 1841 Census Ref HO107/456/5.
4. 1851 Census Ref HO107/1610/207 & HO107/1610/267.
5. 1861 Census Ref RG9/483/11.
6. 1871 Census Ref RG10/903/100.
7. Original amounts.
8. *Chatham News*, 16 Mar 1872, *Chatham Observer* 16 Mar 1872.
9. TNA Ref WO97/2889/91.
10. Kent MH/Md2/Ap2/2 & 3; MH/Md2/Ap25/26; MH/Md2/Ap28/152.
11. Walter Hughes FLS, *A Week's Tramp in Dickens Land*; *Chatham News*, 2 Nov 1945.
12. P B Humphrey 1971; www.medwaymemories.co.uk
13. TNA Ref IR58/70975.
14. P B Humphrey 1971

Robert Callaway died on 2 August 1889 aged about 84. John and his son Walter were executors of Robert's will and he left personal estate valued at £504. It was probably after the death of Robert that Walter became a partner with his father in the business and the firm changed its name to J Glover & Son. In 1895 a young lad named Bertram Humphrey started work at the mill. He was about 12 years old. In later years he would become the manager and continued to work at the mill until his retirement in 1943.¹²

The mill's frontage of 115ft was to Burritt Street and Cossack Street.¹³ Although a wind mill (the automatic shutters of the four sweeps were added c. 1897), it also had a horizontal double-acting, single cylinder steam engine with a 10 feet long fly wheel. This, together with its saddle boiler, was housed in the right wing of the building. The mill could, therefore, work on windless days while the other dozen mills, visible from the cap of this mill in 1900, remained stationary. As well as two pairs of mill stones, there was also a modern steel roller plant for grinding even finer flour. On the first floor was a power-driven chaff cutter. A jam manufacturing plant occupied an extension to the brick base at the rear. It was steam heated from the boiler and used fresh fruit only from the local orchards. The left wing at the base housed the jam packing room and the tiny office. In 1919 pure mixed fruit jam was sold at 14 lbs for 11½d. A long building to the rear of the mill housed the stables, corn store and millwright's workshop.¹⁴



Roller Plant at the Mill; Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre; from The Gentleman's Journal, 13 June 1908 P459.

52 and 83 High Street, Rochester

Readers will recall that in the last issue of *The Clock Tower*, we published the following letter which had been forwarded to us by FOMA member Christine Furminger, who is also Secretary of The City of Rochester Society.

From: Beverley Thorpe
To: Christine Furminger
Sent: November 10, 2012

Good evening Christine,

I've had a lovely day exploring the Rochester High Street. I am down here celebrating a friend's wedding and have also used the trip to bring some life to my family tree. I have ancestors who lived originally at no 52 and then 83 High Street. Sadly my trip was slightly frustrated by the Archives being closed for stock taking so I have been unable to learn more about my ancestors. However, the owner of Rochester Handbags on the High Street, suggested I contact you. His suggestion was that the Society would hold records that may answer my questions. If the Society can help me, would you put me in touch with somebody who can help me directly please. I am interested in knowing more about the Thorpe's who lived at 52 High Street around 1881-1891+ who then moved to 83 High Street (were there in 1901 census).

Any assistance you can offer will be gratefully received. Many thanks.

Kind regards,
Beverley Thorpe.

The letter provoked some considerable discussion and here we publish the final conclusions.

To: Amanda Thomas
From: Elaine Gardner
Sent: 08 February 2013

Having spent some time looking at the numbering in Rochester High Street, Beverley might be surprised to learn that her ancestors never moved house at all!

Until the late 1880s numbering in the High Street ran consecutively, not odds and evens as now. Number 1 started up by the bridge on the Guildhall side. The White Hart, currently the first building on that side was number 16. The numbering went down roughly to where the old court house & station are now then crossed over and came back up the other side ending at the Crown Inn next to the bridge as number 218. The odd/even system began in 1881

though photos of the shops show some of them still with their old numbers and examples of receipts in the Couchman collection still had the old number even into the 1890s - obviously frugal shop keepers were not going to waste money rebranding when their customers knew where they were! These 1881 numbers were then revised in 1891 to take account, presumably, of new building. Number 83 in the 1891 listings had been No 81 in the 1881 system and 52 before that. It was the building next to the entrance to Lloyds yard, now the cobbled entrance from the High St into the Cathedral car park The building is currently the Deaf Cat cafe and I think is still number 83.

Early directories list 19th century occupants as B Brenchley Contractor, in 1832 Wrights Directory; E Courtney Milliner, 1849 Williams Directory; R Williams Bootmaker, 1865 Simpson's Directory and no listing in the 1871-3 Percy & Co Directory Number 51 next door was occupied for the whole of this period by W Greenwood watchmaker and silversmith and the building the other side of the entrance to the car park No 53 (now a greengrocers) was Palmer's Gunsmith & Cutley business. There is a picture of this in the Couchman collection DE402-4-41 if I have picked the correct one without actually looking. The building that became 52 in the 1891 numbering was 191 before that.

Hope this helps Beverley place her early relatives in Rochester High Street.

Elaine.

From: RM Howe
Sent: 03 March 2013

Concerning Beverley Thorpe's enquiries about ancestors who lived in Rochester High Street, don't forget that the addresses in the High Street were renumbered (in phases) in 1881, 1894 and 1895. There was further renumbering in 1953. Therefore street directories of the time need to be checked to make sure that Beverley has the right photograph.

Robert Howe.

Beverly Thorpe sent her thanks.

New Members

A warm welcome to new FOMA members:

Mr Colin Allen,
Mr Colin Hayes,
Mr Michael Prevost
Ms Alison Thomas.
Life Member: Mr Michael Baker.

On 16 June that year they transferred her to the Kent County Asylum at Barming Heath. There she was described as depressed and suicidal, although not a danger to others. She thought that her father, who had accompanied her to the asylum, was trying to kill her and at times she believed that she was being punished for something and that she was going to be burned to death. Her condition does not appear to have changed at all while she was in the asylum and she died there on 19 January 1903 due to a blood clot. Notice of her death was immediately sent to John, then living in Woolwich, and she was buried in the asylum cemetery at 2.30 p.m. on 23 January.¹⁰ We do not know whether or not John attended her funeral, but we can assume that he probably did.

John had been discharged from the Royal Artillery on 6 June 1898 at his own request and he was awarded a pension of 12d per day. He subsequently lived in the Woolwich/Plumstead area and worked as a general labourer, possibly in the dockyard there. He died at Plumstead on 7 March 1922.

Prosperous Times

Because John Glover made his will in 1881 we can see how much he, the son of an agricultural labourer, had prospered in the years since he took over Delce Mill. In his will he described himself as “miller and corn dealer and factor” and his property as “my leasehold wind mill known as or by the name of Delce Mill with the millwright’s shop, engine and boiler house, stable, outbuildings, yard, garden and ground thereunto belonging.” He then referred to the goodwill of his businesses of miller, corn dealer and factor and to “the horse and van and harness, steam engine and boiler implements and utensils used by me in the said businesses, moneys standing in my name on current account at my Bankers, moneys in the house or in the counting house and also all sums of moneys and debts due and owing to me in respect of the said businesses.” He had also been in a position to buy other property in the area. He referred to “his five freehold dwellinghouses with the outhouses, ground and appurtenances known as Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 Cavour Place, Skinner Street, New Brompton,” which he had purchased of Mr Alexander Frederick Gardiner and also to his “freehold dwellinghouse with the outhouses, ground and appurtenances thereunto belonging situate at Borstal,” which he had purchased of Mr Thomas Ames.

It was later in 1881 that John’s son, Walter, married Isabella Hopper. Isabella was a local girl, living with her widowed mother in Dunning Lane in Rochester. She was the daughter of well-known Rochester portrait artist, John Hopper. He appears to have been particularly renowned for a vignette photograph of Charles Dickens that he had coloured and that hung in the Leather Bottle in Cobham and is also said to have been mentioned by the author in one of his works.¹¹ Following their marriage Walter and Isabella had three children: Mabel born in 1882, Walter born in 1884, and Eva born in 1890.

A Rift in the Family

At the time of the 1871 census both of John's sons were still living at the family home in Burritt Street. John, then aged 18, was described as a "grocer" and Walter, aged 15, was described as a "miller's son". The following year, on 20 October 1872 John married a Mary Nash at the parish church at Northfield, near Birmingham. What took John to the Midlands or where he and his wife spent the next few years is not known, although they are not believed to have had any children. On 21 January 1880 John enlisted at Westminster in the Royal Artillery.⁹ Just over a year later, on 5 April 1881, John Glover (snr) made his will and in it he totally ignored his son, John. The beneficiaries were his wife and other son Walter who he, perhaps pointedly, referred to as "my dear son Walter James Glover (now residing with me and assisting me to carry on my said businesses)." Perhaps he was angry that John had not remained at home in the family business or perhaps there was another reason. We shall never know the answer to this, but he certainly never forgave John, for he lived another twenty years and in all that time never changed his will. For his mother, however, it was different. After her husband's death she made a will, making her son Walter her executor and sole beneficiary, subject to him paying her son John an allowance of twelve shillings a week for the rest of his life.



Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre; from The Gentleman's Journal 13 June 1908, P458.

John junior's life does not appear to have been a particularly happy one. He remained in the Royal Artillery for eighteen years, rising to the rank of corporal. Apart from the last few months when he was sent to Malta, he served only in England and Ireland and during most of that time his wife remained with him. Sadly in 1896 his wife was admitted to the Warwick County Lunatic Asylum.

Mystery Photos

Looking for a Lost Family

At the end of February, a lot of the FOMA committee members (who are also members of the Kent Family History Society) helped man the KFHS stand at the *Who Do You Think You Are? Live* exhibition in London's Olympia. Many members come along for a chat, to purchase books and CDs and to ask for advice. Occasionally, we receive queries from people who have attended the exhibition seeking long-lost relatives. Andrew Erian's case is particularly interesting, and *Clock Tower* Editor, Amanda Thomas, agreed to print his story.

"I am 83 years old and live in California, USA. I am attempting to locate my family in England. My mother, Cissie Alice Attwood (also known as Betty) and her sister Dorothy (Dolly) (who married Cuthbert Holmes) had three children: Leslie (a boy) Jean and Brian Holmes, originally of Queenborough, Kent. My mother had two more sisters. Eva Todd (now known as Martin) emigrated to Perth, Australia, and Elsie Saunders, who lived in Brondesbury, Kilburn, London. My grandfather was Henry Attwood and my grandmother Annie."

Amanda was contacted again a couple of weeks later: "I have found a couple of names and addresses of two cousins. The house belongs now to someone else, but I was lucky that the person [living there] knew a neighbour who knew a relative of the Holmes family. Unfortunately Leslie, Jean and Brian Holmes are all dead."

The sister-in-law of Jean Holmes is trying to help further, but the search has hit a brick wall.

Pictured: Leslie, Brian and Jean Holmes, originally of Queenborough, Kent.



If you have any information, please write to: Mrs Amanda Thomas, Editor, *The Clock Tower*, 72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 5NS or email at amanda@ajthomas.com.

The FOMA AGM

Amanda Thomas



The seventh FOMA AGM was very well attended, and a big thank you to members who were able to come. Proceedings started promptly on 16 April at Frindsbury Church Hall. Everyone was in good spirits as following a prolonged cold spell, the sun was pouring through the windows and the weather had turned distinctly milder.

Reports were presented by Secretary Odette Buchanan, *Clock Tower* Editor, Amanda Thomas, Local Studies Librarian Norma Crowe and Treasurer Jean Skilling, who presented a healthy balance sheet for the previous year.

The committee was re-elected as follows:

Chairman, Tessa Towner

Vice Chairman and Events Co-ordinator, Elaine Gardner

Treasurer, Jean Skilling

Secretary, Odette Buchanan

Membership Secretary, Betty Cole

The Clock Tower Editor and Publicist, Amanda Thomas

Members, Dr Sandra Dunster, Rob Flood, Brian Joyce, Bob Ratcliffe, Kevin Russell.

Contact details for the committee can be found on page 45.

As always, members were keen to catch up with each other and when the meeting came to a close, refreshments were served. A raffle raised some additional funds and many of the unidentified photographs on display from MALSC were finally identified. By the time everyone left the AGM, darkness had fallen outside.

Later that evening, the following email was received from FOMA member Barry Cox:

"That was an excellent meeting tonight. Thank you to everybody that made it possible. You should all give yourselves a pat on the back."

Photographs of the AGM can be seen on page 2.

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 or to 72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, AL5 5NS, Hertfordshire.

John Glover was born on 29 December 1825 at Hartlip in Kent. In 1841 he was living with his parents and several siblings in Bredhurst Street, Bredhurst, where his father worked as an agricultural labourer.³ By the time of the 1851 Census John had moved to Rochester where he was in lodgings in John Street. He was working as a miller's loader, almost certainly for Isaac Belsey who worked the mill on Star Hill.

Among Mr Belsey's household was a young woman, Sarah Callaway aged 23, who was employed as a housemaid.⁴ Sarah's family were from Rainham in Kent and it is quite probable they already knew the Glovers and were possibly even related to them. When Sarah's parents married in 1825, the witnesses were a James and Mary Hales; John's mother's maiden name was Frances Hales. Whatever the case, clearly a relationship blossomed between John Glover and his employer's maid servant and they were married at St Margaret's Church in Rochester on Saturday, 13 September 1851. The couple had only two known children, John born in 1852 and Walter James born three years later in 1855.

Fire at the Mill

In 1861 John, now recorded as a miller, and his family were living at 3 Austin Cottages in Chatham.⁵ Some time during the early 1860s they moved into 37 Burritt Street, the property formerly occupied by millwright, Henry Paine.⁶ John was also joined in his new business by his father-in-law, Robert Callaway, who appears to have been made a partner as the business is subsequently recorded in local directories as Glover & Callaway.

In the early hours of Tuesday, 12 March 1872, disaster struck the mill. Local inhabitants were suddenly woken from their beds and, on looking out of their windows, saw that the mill was enveloped in flames. The fire had already been discovered by local constables who had informed the City Police Station. Superintendent Radley, Sergeant Parrott and Sergeant Broadbridge, together with several constables, proceeded to the scene with the hose reel, which they put on a passing cab to convey it as quickly as possible to the mill. The hose was immediately affixed to the Waterworks Company's hydrant, near the mill, and a plentiful supply of water was obtained. However, by this time the flames had already got a firm hold on the building which, because it was tarred both inside and outside and the upper part was entirely of timber, sent forth tremendous volumes of flames. It was not long before the sweeps fell with a mighty crash and the building was entirely gutted. Little more than the walls of the lower section remained with some charred upright timbers of the upper part. A nearby shed was also badly damaged. The mill was insured with the Liverpool & London & Globe Fire Office for either £300 or £400.⁷ Newspaper reports vary regarding the amount but it was not enough to cover the cost of the damage and part of the stock was not insured. The cause of the fire was not known.⁸ The mill was rebuilt soon afterwards by Henry Paine.

Delce Mill and the Glover Family

Pauline Weeds

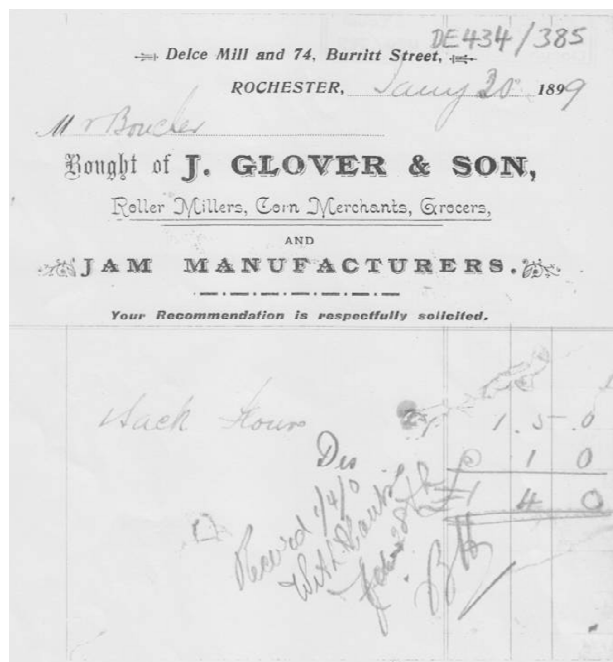


In 2005 Pauline Weeds was awarded the Higher Certificate in Genealogy by The Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies. She has been involved in research for the England's Past for Everyone projects as well as transcribing for a Kent Archaeological Society project. She is a volunteer at MALSC, helping out with some fairly routine tasks, and a volunteer custodian at Eastgate House. She has recently become a City of Rochester Society guide.

Part One

John Glover

Delce Mill was built in about 1853 by Henry Paine at the top of Cossack Street and Burritt Street, to the west of Delce Lane in Rochester.¹ Henry Paine was a well-known and respected engineer and millwright and at that time lived with his family in Burritt Street. The mill was worked for a short time by a Mr Chapman, but in 1859 the leasehold of the property was acquired by John Glover from Mr John Wyles.²



Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre; ALSC Ref DE434/385

The FOMA Collection

Dickens School, Chatham

Members will recall that Betty Cole, the FOMA membership Secretary, collects old postcards. Recently Betty spotted this gem on Ebay and alerted Norma Crowe, MALSC's Local Studies Librarian. FOMA Treasurer, Jean Skilling, bid for the postcard, which will now be added to the FOMA Collection at MALSC. The postcard is in good condition and Bob Ratcliffe believes it probably dates from around World War One.



The inscription reads: School kept by William Giles where C. Dickens attended 1817 to 1823.

Following the acquisition, Brian Joyce recalled that some time ago, he had conducted some research to establish the location of Dickens' school. The school was most likely situated in what is today the corner of Rhode Street and Best Street, now covered by the car park in Chatham.

Heritage News

Sue Haydock



The latest from our roving reporter, Medway Heritage Champion and FOMA Vice President

When East Met West

As summer approaches, I am reminded of an event which I attended last July. It was a warm day (yes we did have one or two) when the Deputy Mayor of Yokosuka, one of Medway's twin cities, visited with the Chairman of the City Council, the Deputy Director-General of Policy Promotion, and the Chief Administrator for International Relations. They were on an official three-day visit to Medway during which the group had requested to see the library of the Chatham Dockyard Historical Society (CDHS). The Medway Japan Group arranged for them to see the training records of Admiral Togo Heihachiro, who as a cadet trained on *HMS Worcester*, and *HMS Hampshire*, and then as a Lieutenant, was schooled at the Dockyard. CDHS members, Shirley Goodhew and Peter Dawson, had spent a considerable amount of time researching Admiral Togo in their archives and were able to produce his 'school' reports showing his exam marks, as well as others in his class. Considering English was his second language he did very well and passed out in second place.



The Deputy Mayor of Yokosuka (second right) looking at photographs at the library of the Chatham Dockyard Historical Society

Admiral Togo is famous for his winning action in various battles and conflicts in the Far East, with Russia and with China, and rose to the rank of Admiral as a result. He was made a member of the British Order of Merit by King Edward VII in 1906. Later, he was created a Count in the Japanese Peerage system, given the honorific title of Fleet Admiral and became the only non-royal to be awarded the collar of the Supreme Order of the Chrysanthemum in 1926. Before he died he was elevated to Marquis. More information Admiral Togo Heihachiro can be found at <http://militaryhistory.about.com/od/naval/p/togo.htm>

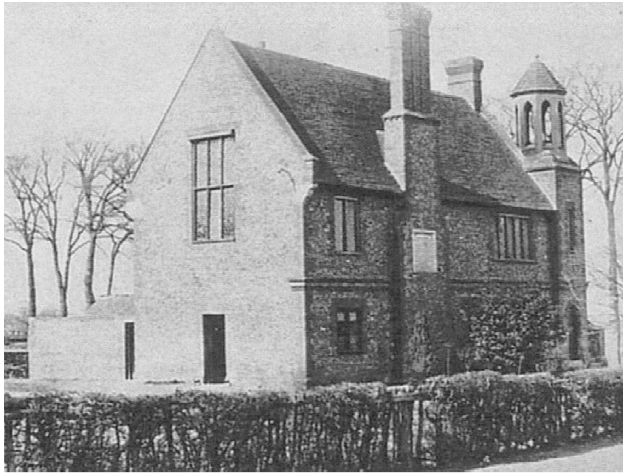
The last picture shows the extended school as most people will remember it with the iron fire escape from the upper floor; there was a similar staircase at the rear.



The school after it was extended. From a postcard sold by Sunburst Books, Station Road, Rainham in aid of St Margaret's Church.

Notes

1. *More Pictures of Rainham*, Barbara Mackay Miller. Pub. Meresborough Books 1987.
2. www.visionofbritain.org.uk University of Portsmouth.
3. P296/ 25/8 Rainham School Church Fund.
4. *Education in Gillingham before 1893*, John Fox MA. Pub Gillingham Library 1974.
5. CES296/1/2 Rainham School log book 1870-1917.



The first Rainham National School c1860 from postcard sold by Sunburst Books, Station Road, Rainham in aid of St Margaret's Church.

A page from the account book P296/25/8 showing some of the donations including £104 14s [£104.70] proceeds of bazaar.

for	Rev. C. C. Anderson	10	..
for	Mr. Baker	5	..
for	St. Martin	1	..
for	Mr. Butcher	5	..
for	A. Friend	5	..
for	Records of Rainham 1844
for	Mr. J. J. J. J. J.	1	..
for	Mr. W. W. W. W.	5	..
for	Rev. F. Smith	1	10
for	Miss Randall	1	1
for	Rev. J. J. J. J.	3	..
for	Mr. Taylor	5	..
for	Beaumont	5	..
for	Gilbert	5	..
for	Miles	3	..
for	Watson	3	..
for	J. Longley	3	..
for	Mr. J. J. J. J.	1	..
		32	19

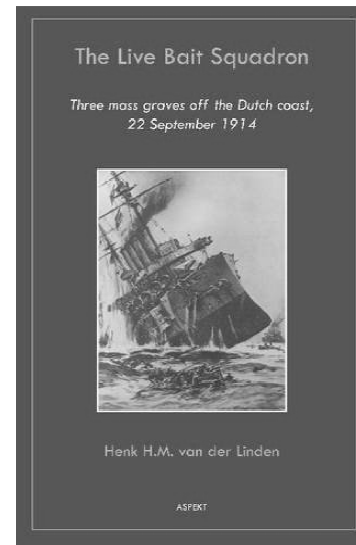
Magnum Opus

Cindy O'Halloran

A review of the latest Medway titles.

The Live Bait Squadron

Henk van der Linden



This book covers a topical subject in view of the imminent centenary of the outbreak of World War One.

On 22 September 1914 the three ships *HMS Aboukir*, *Cressy* and *Hogue* were sunk by a German U-Boat off the Dutch coast, resulting in the loss of many lives. These were Chatham ships and many of the sailors were local young men. This book was inspired by the author's visit to the municipal Hague cemetery and the discovery of a military section containing the graves and a memorial to eight victims of the disaster.

It is well researched and van der Linden worked with both the Imperial War Museum and Dartmouth College to gather together the data and background to the disaster. Written from a Dutch perspective, this book explores English, Dutch and German contemporary sources. Both the personal stories and the local newspaper accounts give a certain poignancy to the


event and this book is well illustrated throughout.

The work is divided into three distinct sections. First the book sets the background of the war, ships and sailors. Second, the middle part describes the disaster and gives firsthand accounts of the tragedy, and finally the book looks at the aftermath of the event and how this was reported in various countries' press.


The book is available in paperback and in the Medway area available from Baggins and the local branch of Waterstones in Chatham at £19.95. ISBN 13 97 894 6153 260 2

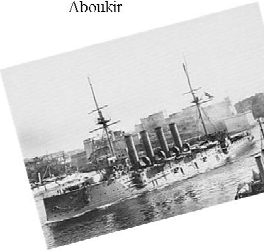
Cindy O'Halloran's regular column, *Cindy's little Gems*, will return in the next issue of *The Clock Tower*.

In Issue 28 of *The Clock Tower* (November 2012), FOMA Chairman, Tessa Towner wrote of her involvement with Henk van der Linden and their quest to trace the descendents of the men on board the ships and the impact on their families. At the recent *Who Do You Think You Are? Live* exhibition at London's Olympia, Tessa circulated publicity about the project (see below) and subsequently articles were published in *Your Family History*, *Family Tree*, *Your Family Tree* and *Who Do You Think You Are?* magazines.

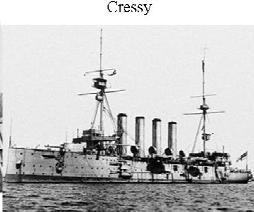


The Live Bait Squadron

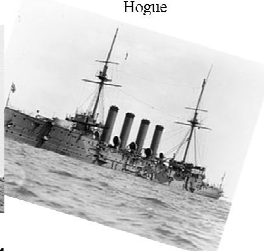




Aboukir



Cressy



Hogue

Sunk 22 September 1914

Can You Help?

On the morning of 22 September 1914 some 130 men from the Medway Towns drowned when *HMS Cressy*, *Hogue* and *Aboukir* were torpedoed and sank off the Dutch coast.

Known as "The Live Bait Squadron" The Friends of Medway Archives (FOMA) in conjunction with the Kent Family History Society (KFHS) are looking for their descendants.

How did the families cope? What happened to them? Was there help available and what was the effect on the tight-knit communities of the Medway Towns?
Was a member of your family on one of these ships? If so we would like to hear your stories!

The project is the result of research done by Dutchman, Henk van der Linden, following his discovery of the graves of some of these men in a cemetery in The Hague. In September 2012 he published a book, *The Live Bait Squadron*, and a service was held at Rochester Cathedral for those who died. Many relatives attended and later met at the St. George's Centre, Chatham, where they were able to share their stories. Plans are now in hand for a similar event to commemorate the 100 years anniversary.

More information is available on the website: www.livebaitsqn-soc.info

Send your stories to:
Tessa Towner FOMA Chairman and KFHS Secretary
Email: picketywitch@blueyonder.co.uk

The second photograph shows a class in the Boys School. Cornelius Plum is the second boy from the left in the second row from the back. The photograph was probably taken in about 1918. My thanks to FOMA member Steve Cross for enhancing the photo.



Rainham School, the Early Days

The school in Station Road was erected in 1846 and included accommodation for the school master. The stone tablet, which can be seen on the chimney stack in the picture below, states that the land was donated by The Earl of Thanet.¹

The school quickly became overcrowded. The population of Rainham grew from 1,175 at the time of the 1841 census² to 1,422 when the 1861 census was taken, an increase of more than 20%. In 1865 a fund was set up to raise money to extend the school and provide a separate schoolroom for the infants. MALSC hold a small book containing the accounts of *Rainham School Church Fund 1865-1868* which has a list of donations towards the fund.³ Initial donations ranged from £150 received from Sir R. Tufton and £50 from Dr Poore, to £1 each from Mrs and Miss Mansfield. In total more than £500 was raised. The cost of erecting the school was £687 17s 6d (£687.87).⁴

The Plum children would have all been pupils at some time during the Great War and I wondered what impact, if any, that had on their school life. Sadly I did not ask my late mother-in-law about her life at school so all I know is that she left at the age of 12 to go into service. While working as a cook in a house on Star Hill, Rochester, in about 1924 she met her husband to be, they married in 1932 and she spent the rest of her life in Rochester.

I inherited copies of two photographs which were taken at Rainham School. The first shows a class from the Infants Department and probably dates from about 1912. My mother-in-law Mahanna Plum is second from the left in the back row and her sister Gladys is third from the right in the second row.



Trouble at St Margaret's

Betty Cole



Betty Cole is FOMA's membership Secretary. She is interested particularly in local and family history and holds a Certificate in Theory and Practice of Local History with the University of Kent at Canterbury. Betty is a volunteer transcriber and checker for free-to-access internet sites for the researching of census and parish records.

I recently visited the Kent History and Library Centre at Maidstone and whilst waiting for documents to be produced I browsed the shelves within the closed area. I came across four volumes entitled *Calendar of Assize Records - Kent Indictments*. The volumes include Assizes in Rochester, Dartford, Gravesend and Maidstone and cover the period from the reign of Elizabeth I to James I. These volumes are a great source for local historians and mention place names which may no longer exist. Family historians might also find here an ancient ancestor among the accused or injured parties in the indictments listed.

For example, Robert Wing, a Strood Victualler was indicted "for allowing persons of ill fame to frequent The Pied Bull at Strood on 1st July 1643 and other occasions." Does anyone know where that public house was? At Rochester Assizes "John Fox of Rainham, labourer, indicted for rape. On 9 Jun 1584 he raped Agnes Brisenden aged 20 years in a field called *Symes* at Rainham. Guilty: to hang". Is there still a place at Rainham that has this name?

The punishments handed over were very harsh. At Maidstone Assizes "Ellen Peckman, wife of Henry Peckman of Hoo All Hallows, labourer. Indicted for murder by witchcraft. On 3 April 1571 she bewitched Robert Nicholas, the infant son of John Nicholas of Hoo All Hallows, labourer, so that he languished until 13 April and then died. Guilty: to hang."

In another case At Dartford Assizes, "John Johnson of St Margaret's Parish Rochester, Yeoman, keeper of the bishop of Rochester's gaol indicted for extortion. On 3 March 1570 he extortionately took 40s from Alexander Harryson, a convicted clerk, to excuse him from branding with a hot iron." Other punishments mentioned include whipping, set in stocks and pilloried. In cases of larceny the indictments include the values of each item stolen, thus a coat (10d) for the theft of which William Savage of Rochester was whipped. A petticoat (2s), a ruff-band (1s), a hat (6d), a pair of shoes (4d) and a smock (1s) to which offence of grand larceny. Margaret Abbott of Rochester, Spinster, confessed and was "allowed clergy." John Marten of Rochester, labourer, was sentenced to hang for the theft of a grey gelding (£3). He was reprieved after the sentence.

One particularly noteworthy case concerned St Margaret's Church, Rochester, where should you be visiting the church, you might pause in the porch and think of this incident which occurred there in 1625/1626.

"Before George Croke, J and Serjeant John Davies (Assizes 35/68/6) 12th July 1626.

158. Articles of complaint against John Mallet of St Dunstan's in the East London of his misdemeanors in general and in particular towards William Franklin Vicar of St Margaret's Rochester and Alice his wife.

1. His neighbours report that Mallet frequents bowling alleys and spends much time playing unlawful games in alehouses. He neglects his calling and has not received communion for two years.

2. About Candlemas last Mallet came to Rochester and railed publicly in the streets against Franklin and his wife 'affirming that she was contracted to him in matrimony and that she was also a whore, and that he had carnally known her so often as he had fingers and toes.'

3. Being afterwards taxed by Franklin for these slanderous reports, Mallet confessed, in the presence of several witnesses, that he was mad and distracted when he made those claims and acknowledged a confession in writing.

4. Not withstanding [sic] this confession, he returned to Rochester about Midsummer and again publicly scandalised Franklin and his wife. He continues to do so, to their great disgrace.

5. Mallet has threatened to murder Franklin and his wife.

6. While dining with Widow Billingslie at Chatham on 9 July last he vowed that he would not work one day until he had killed Franklin, his wife or some of their children.

7. After this, he went to St Margaret's Church, with a sword at his side, accompanied by several 'loose fellows' and 'behaved himself in a wild manner' during the service and sermon to the great terror of Franklin.

8. After the service, he stood at the church porch with his hand upon his sword and offered to draw but was restrained by his own companions. He then pursued Franklin and his wife to their house, railing and reviling them and attempting to draw his sword.

Taken 13 July 1626. Witnesses John Maye, Mayor, Robert Gune, James Dryer, Anthony Allen.

I didn't find the verdict on this case as my requested documents were then produced and I had, reluctantly, to put the books back on the shelf. I am hoping that copies of the volumes will eventually be available to browse at MALSC - I am sure they would be of interest to all who have an hour or two to spare!

Keeping up with the Victorians, Alison Thomas' popular series, will return in the next issue of *The Clock Tower*.

Rainham Church of England Primary School

Jean Skilling



Jean moved to Gillingham at the age of four and has lived in Medway ever since. On leaving school she went to work for Kent County Council at Maidstone where she qualified as an accountant. After time as a full time mother she worked at Mid Kent College before returning to Kent County Council. Since taking early retirement in 2004 she has pursued her interest in family history and has begun to take an interest in the history of Rainham where she spent her childhood. She is Treasurer of FOMA, Kent Family History Society and the Medway Heritage Centre Trust.

Part One

Introduction



Some members will remember the old school at Rainham, with its distinctive flint studded walls. It stood for many years near the junction of Station Road and the A2 at Rainham and was demolished in the early 1970s to make way for Rainham Shopping Centre.

My mother-in-law Mahanna Mary Ann Plum (1905-1987), her siblings Gladys May (1906-1955) and Cornelius Daniel (1910-1992) lived in Tufton Road, Rainham and attended the school. It is possible that their father Cornelius Joseph Plum (1877-1958) and his siblings also attended the school but there are no surviving records to confirm this.

Left to right: Mahanna, Cornelius and Gladys with their great great aunt Mary Springhall. Taken outside their home in Tufton Road c1912.