

Erith Town Forum

Meetings take place at The Vets Club, Park Crescent (corner of Glebe Way) 7pm - 9pm.

Meeting dates:

Wednesday 25 March 2009,
20 May 2009 (AGM)

Erith Riverside Festival -

Sunday 7 June 2009

Riverside Community Forum

Public meetings:

Tuesday 21 April, 7pm, Belvedere Baptist Church, 50 Nuxley Road Belvedere, and Tuesday 13 October 7pm, Christ Church Erith.

If you have any news or dates for events to be included in the next newsletter, please contact

erithtownforum@hotmail.com



Erith Playhouse
38-40 High Street, Erith, Kent. DA8 1QY

Box Office: 01322 350345
Book online: www.playhouse.org.uk

16 - 21 Feb Tickets £7.50	The Woman Who Cooked Her Husband by Debbie Isitt <i>A way to a man's heart is through his stomach. Adult comedy</i>
9 - 14 March Tickets £7.50	It Runs in the Family by Ray Cooney <i>Described by The Daily Telegraph as 'A Rolls-Royce of a farce'.</i>
20 - 25 Apr Tickets £7.50	The Hound of the Baskervilles Adapted to the stage by F. Andrew Leslie From the novel Arthur Conan Doyle <i>Sherlock Holmes investigates horror and murder on the moors</i>
11 - 16 May Tickets £7.50	Misconceptions By David Lewis <i>A tragic but hilarious exploration of infertility and human sexuality</i>
1 - 6 Jun Tickets £7.50	The Odd Couple (female version) by Neil Simon <i>New York is the setting for this well-known comedy - with a difference</i>
29 June - 4 July Tickets £9.50	The Railway Children By Peter Quartermain Music by John Puddick, Lyrics by Iris Grover Based on the book by E. Nesbit <i>Family musical based on the classic story by E. Nesbit</i>



Bexley Accessible Transport Scheme (BATS) Hop 'n' Shop Shopping Bus service in Bexley

Since the inception of this exciting service in 2007, BATS has recruited 127 happy shoppers who use the bus on a regular basis to access opportunities to buy their food supplies.

With an itinerary of places to visit each month ranging from local supermarkets to Swanley Market, fresh fruit and vegetable shops and garden centres, members are never short of places to shop and socialise.

Shoppers are invited to free workshops run by BATS in partnership with the Bexley Care Trust on healthy eating, where new recipes and ideas are demonstrated to help you eat more healthily.

Volunteer passenger assistants are available to help you embark and disembark the bus and assist you with your shopping if required. There is plenty of space on board the bus for bags and shopping trolleys and the bus is fully accessible by passenger lift for wheelchair users or those with limited mobility.

Membership is open to the Elderly, Disabled and Parents with young children under 5 who have difficulty accessing public transport and shopping opportunities for food.

For £15 per annum and 50p each way (prepaid ticket) door to door, the Hop 'n' Shop represents exceptional value for money and a great chance to meet new friends using this service.

For further details please contact Pam or Lydia on 01322 333377

Erith Riverside Festival 2009

The Festival will take place for the 18th year on Sunday 7th June 2009. Booking forms for stalls will be sent out at the end of January/beginning of February. There are three categories of stalls - Charity, Craft, and Commercial.

If you have not taken part before but would like a stall at the Festival, please contact me on 01322 332717. If you would like to join the volunteer committee or help on the day please let me know.

Joan McCarthy,
Vice Chairman, Erith Riverside Festival Committee



Erith Town & Around

Note from the Chair

2009 came in with a cold blast but I'm sure we will all keep our spirits high and look forward to what the New Year will bring to us. Erith is a growing community and we hope new homes will be occupied and businesses will open to serve them. The old swimming pool is being taken down to make space for "who knows what" at the moment but Erith Forum will be there to keep a close eye on proposals as they come forward as well as putting forward ideas of our own.

The Town Forum depends on voluntary work for all its activities from organising and documenting meetings, compiling and distributing this newsletter and organising the senior's summer and Christmas activities. Our volunteers also participate in all the activities organised for young people by Tri-Forum Youth. Our meetings provide a platform for information dissemination and community views/opinion gathering. We get early notification about plans for the area from our local councillors who are very supportive of the Forum and despite some political difficulties early in 2008, we continue to have excellent relationships with Council officers who, although no longer allowed to attend our meetings on a regular basis, nevertheless are still very supportive.

We keep in close contact with Frogmore the owners of Riverside Shopping Centre and very much welcome the improvements made there during 2008. Frogmore also continue to support the Forum financially by providing money to help pay for layout and printing of this newsletter. We hope to get the Forum included on the interactive information station recently placed in Riverside.

We are also currently in contact with Orbit Housing Association and Crest Nicholson, the two organisations who will be taking forward the Erith Western Gateway Development. Both have stated that they will fully involve the Forum in consultation processes for this important project.

We now have our own website thanks to Alan Boakes, one of our volunteers. All meeting papers and letters sent on behalf of the Forum will be posted on the website as will copies of our newsletters. If you can't attend our meetings then visit the website to see what we are doing on behalf of the Erith community. To visit our site go to www.erithtownforum.org.uk

Details of future meetings are given on the back page of this newsletter. Come along and have your say!

Doreen Ives



Europa Gym - Giving Young People a Chance

The Erith based Europa Centre has developed over the past 16 years with a tremendous amount of local community help, to become a unique sporting experience for young people. Regenerating a disused old light industrial building into an imaginatively designed sports training venue, offering permanently set up areas for Gymnastics, Boxing, Weightlifting and 2 Rehearsal Studios plus a multi use hall for Karate, Aikido and Street Dance.

The Europa Gymnastic Club runs pre-school structured classes, recreational sessions and competitive squads and is fully equipped for both boys and girls gymnastics along with foam filled pits and many other training aids to encourage the fun in learning the sport of Gymnastics. The Club is also very proud to offer classes to youngsters and adults with Special Needs.

Originally starting up as a Gymnastic Centre, the unusual layout of the Fraser Road site lent itself to other sporting activities. The non-profit making Europa Gymnastic Club offered other sporting groups the opportunity to establish themselves, by not charging them rent initially. This philosophy has now seen the membership of the centre grow to nearly 1400 per week.

For any information about any of the sporting activities please ring 01322 439233.

Len Arnold

Erith Town Forum are very grateful to the volunteers at Europa Gym who copy, collate and get ready for post, all the papers to be sent out for our bi-monthly meetings.



At the Christmas Goodwill Week Lunch The Rotary Club of Erith distributed the funds collected during our Goodwill Week collections. With the current economic climate we were expecting a reduction in the amount collected, however once again the Residents of Erith came up 'Trumps' and we nearly equalled last year's collection. So a great big thank you to all concerned and especially the cold, wet and windy weekend at Morrison's Supermarket.

This was another year in our un-broken record of Christmas Collections started in 1950 and we meet

annually Residents who have not missed Father Christmas and his Sleigh for all the years that they have lived in Erith. In one case a lady who had greeted us since moving into her house in 1961, an amazing 47 years of giving.

On the 22nd May 2009 The Rotary Club of Erith Celebrates it's 80th Anniversary. Eight decades of service to both the Local Community and the International Community. It is somewhat ironic that the latter part of 1929 saw the start of the Wall Street Crash and the Depression that affected so many lives worldwide, ironic, in view of

The Rotary Club of Erith - Serving the Community for 80 Years

2009 being a challenging year for everyone, especially those who find themselves without a job or on the verge of poverty. A situation that we all hoped had gone forever!

It was at a 'Preliminary Meeting' in January 1929 that it was agreed that a Rotary Club should be formed within the 'Urban District of Erith' and so with much help from the Rotary Club of Gravesend, the Club was duly formed.

Rotary International had been founded in 1905 in Chicago by a local Attorney and three other colleagues to provide a regular meeting to enjoy each other's fellowship and moved across the Atlantic in 1911. The rest is history and Rotary International is one of the largest 'Service Clubs' in the world with over 1.2 Million Members in 30,000 Clubs in

nearly 200 Countries based on the principle of 'Service above Self'.

In February we are hosting the visit of the President of Rotary International Great Britain and Ireland [RIBI] when all the ten clubs in the North West of our District, Kent and East Sussex will be present. So you can see that we are just a small part of a large organisation. However, what matters to us is Erith, and how we can serve the Community.

If you are over the age of eighteen and can attend a weekly luncheon meeting or help in any way then we are always interested to hear from you. The action of giving service is by far one of the greatest parts of Rotary.

For further details, please contact Les Hoskins on 01634 296605 or e-mail lesliehoskins2002@yahoo.co.uk



Max Miller and Gracie Fields came to Erith!!

We were right back in the early fifties for some of the time on 15th December when Erith Town Forum's guests came to enjoy an afternoon of entertainment and fun at Christ Church Hall. Our entertainers John and Kathy invited us to join in with songs made famous by Max Miller and Gracie Fields as well as Vera Lynn and even Elvis Presley, and of course we also had a few jokes, very much to the taste of the senior members of our community there. We even had a couple of ballroom dancers who took to the floor when the music got their feet tapping.

Just under one hundred guests came for the free afternoon but lack of funding from Bexley Council this year meant we couldn't put on the lunch as we have in the past. However, with help from Erith Rotary Club and Help the Aged we were able to provide chocolates to enjoy during the entertainment and then lovely cups of tea, mince pies and Christmas cake during the interval. We had some excellent raffle prizes that many lucky guests took home and then we finished with several games of Bingo for small cash prizes paid out from the money taken for the raffle tickets. Despite the difficult economic circumstances forecast for 2009, Erith Town Forum fully expect to be able to continue with our Christmas event for Erith Seniors which they have now come to expect and look forward to each year.



"Even the Forum Management Committee were dancing, Rosemary White, Doreen Ives, Cllr Margaret O'Neil and Dennis Roberts"



"Our guests were enjoying the entertainment too"

Triforum Youth looks forward to its 9th active year

A belated Happy New Year to all our supporters. Triforum Youth volunteers hope that 2009 will be busy and beneficial to the young people of the north of Bexley.

We held our annual meeting in November. I was re-elected as chair, with Roy Hillman as treasurer and Frances Renton as secretary.

We took part in the Christ Church Erith and Greenwich and Bexley Hospice Christmas Tree Festival at Christ Church, and took our bowling game along to the craft day held in the church hall during the festival.

Our plan for this year is to arrange an open day for parents and other interested volunteers during the Easter school holiday when an expert in art and craft will demonstrate ideas that parents could use with a view to becoming volunteers for the summer fun days.

The next few months will be spent finding funding streams for future activities. Roy has some ideas up his sleeve but other sources would be most welcome. Contact me on 0208 301 3299 or m.moneill@btinternet.com if you can help us.

Cllr Maggie O'Neill

A very sad "Goodbye" to Charles Armitage

It is with much sadness I report that Charlie Armitage lost his long fight with cancer on Thursday 22nd January. He was the Erith Town Forum Vice-Chairman/Community and Treasurer for the past five years.

Apart from his unconditional support for the Forum, he worked tirelessly to promote art in Erith, both with children in schools and in making decisions about the various pieces of art that we now have in Erith and on the compilation of the Erith Town Trail leaflet.

Sincere condolences go to Charles's family at this time.



Did you go to the Christmas Tree Festival at Christ Church?

If you didn't then you missed out on a very spectacular event. 75 decorated and brightly lit trees in a warm beautiful setting with Christmas music to complete the picture. All the services at the Church were made more special having the trees there, particularly for the children who love that time of year.

This Festival is now a regular part of the Erith Christmas Celebrations and helps provide much needed funds both for the upkeep of this beautiful grade 2 listed Church building and the valuable work done for our community by the Greenwich and Bexley Cottage Hospice. If you would like to participate next year by sponsoring a tree then contact me on 01322 345406 and I'll make sure you get all the necessary paperwork in good time.

DO YOU NEED HELP?

Get in touch with SENIORLINE

Free telephone advice service run by Help the Aged for older people.

- ☎ Welfare and disability benefits
- ☎ Housing options and adaptations
- ☎ Care at home
- ☎ Access to health and community services
- ☎ Residential care

☎ **0808 800 6565**
Open 9 am - 4 pm
Monday to Friday

Erith Museum is there for you, make sure we keep it in Erith



Are you interested in Erith's historical past, or would you just like to take a walk down memory lane? Visit the Erith Museum and find out about the illustrated talks given regularly by local historian Ken Chamberlain. It's amazing how much there is to find out about the Town and it's place in England's history.

Did you know that the Mural previously located on the wall of the Erith Swimming Pool has been successfully

removed and is being refurbished and will be re-positioned on the sidewall of the Woolworth's building. A board will be placed underneath giving details of the characters and coats of arms portrayed in the mural. We are very pleased to note that this little bit of Erith's history has been preserved.

The Museum is open each week, Monday and Wednesday from 2pm to 5.15pm and Saturday 2pm - 4.45pm.