

Top chef to judge finals of Cook It!

WHITSTABLE chef Richard Phillips will judge finalists in a competition to find the nation's best emerging cook.

The Guild of Food Writers annual Cook It! competition is open to 10 to 14-year-olds and entries are now flooding in.

Youngsters can submit their own recipes for a two-course meal for two to four people, which should take no longer than an hour and a half to prepare. The six lucky finalists will be invited on an all-expenses paid trip to London in June to the kitchens of BBC Good Food Magazine.

Mr Phillips, who took over The Pearsons Arms last autumn, will also welcome the winner into one of his four Kent kitchens to prepare lunch for three guests.

He said: "It's an honour to inspire young people and to reinforce their enthusiasm and passion."

Application forms for the competition can be downloaded at www.gfw.co.uk and entries will be accepted until April 28.

Talk at church

THE Friends of St Mildred's Church have arranged a talk by Prebendary Duncan Ross, from St Paul's Church, Bow Common, London.

It takes place on Friday, February 11, at 7.30pm, at St Mildred's Church, Canterbury. Tickets are £5 on the door.

Museum shows that Freemasons have little to hide



The concealed, hard to find and little-known are never far away in a city like Canterbury and to celebrate the secrets that lurk around every corner, we launched our Hidden Canterbury series. This week reporter **Alex Claridge** went to meet members of the East Kent Masons at the Kent Museum of Freemasonry

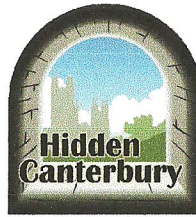
THEY have a reputation for secrecy and bizarre rituals - but the reality behind the East Kent Masons is that they are as open and informative about their ways as they could possibly be.

Few people in Canterbury probably know this, but the Kent Museum of Freemasonry is right here in the city and it's open every weekday for visitors to pop in and have a look.

Visitors will find a history of the masonic movement from its somewhat obscure beginnings in the late 16th or early 17th centuries.

Masonry began in Canterbury in 1730 with the founding of a lodge at the (Red Lion Tavern, next to the former Guildhall in the High Street.

The Kent Museum of Freemasonry is in St Peter's Place and was built in 1933, but much of what is on show inside it predates the building.



It is full of Masonic paintings, glassware and porcelain, documents and manuscripts and Masonic regalia.

The museum also houses a library of some 3,000 books on the Masonic movement.

There is even a life-size representation of what a Masonic meeting would have looked like in 1730s Canterbury and unique 19th century stained glass window which used sit in the old Freemasons' Hall in London.

Those who visit the museum on days when it is open will also find Freemasons on hand to show them round and talk about the movement, its history and what it does.

Tony Elliott is among those who volunteers at the museum. He said: "We try to be open and



ON SHOW: Ray Griffiths from Dymchurch takes an interest in the Knights Templar display

Picture: Chris Davey PD1805146 Buy this photo from kentonline.co.uk



FINE WORK: Tony Elliott inspects a collection of Sunderland lustreware with masonic symbolism

Picture: Chris Davey PD1805156 Buy this photo from kentonline.co.uk

try to educate the public about what we do.

"There aren't really any secrets in Masonry except one of the traditions that we maintain are the symbols of recognising one another."

The museum is open from 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday and from 11am to 2pm and is free to enter.

Log on www.eastkentfreemasons.org for more information about Freemasons in East Kent or the Kent Museum of Freemasonry. There is also a page about the museum on website Wikipedia



Tony Periton, assistant librarian at the Kent Library and Museum of Freemasonry in Canterbury

PD1805153



LOOKING BACK: Brian Yates takes a look at a recreation of a 1730s lodge meeting

Picture: Chris Davey, PD1805147 Buy this photo from kentonline.co.uk

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