

The  
Dover  
Society

# Newsletter

No. 30

December 1997



Castle Hill House, The White Horse Inn and St. James's Old Church , 1902

SP4 3.1



# THE DOVER SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1988

Registered with the Civic Trust, Affiliated to the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies  
Registered Charity No. 299954

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Brigadier Maurice Atherton

## VICE-PRESIDENTS:

A. F. Adams, Mrs Silvia Corral, Ivan Green, Jack Ind  
Peter Johnson, Miss Lillian Kay, Miss Philomena Kennedy, Peter Marsh  
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Miss Christine Waterman and Martin Wright

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## *The Objectives of the Dover Society*

*founded in 1988.*

- to promote high standards of planning and architecture
- to interest and inform the public in the geography, history, archaeology, natural history and architecture of the area
- to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest
- And commitment to the belief that a good environment is a good investment.

The area we cover comprises the parishes or wards of Barton Buckland, Castle, Lydden, Temple Ewell, Maxton, Pineham, Priory, River, St. Radigund's, Town & Pier and Tower Hamlets.

All Members receive three News-letters a year and in each year the Committee organises about ten interesting events - talks, tours, visits, Members' Meetings and usually a Christmas Feast.

The Society gives Awards for improvements to the area, monitors planning proposals and supports, joins in or initiates civic projects and arts events.

# Editorial

## SEASONAL GREETINGS TO ALL OUR READERS

ONCE AGAIN OUR CHRISTMAS FEAST will be held at Dover College Refectory, on Saturday 13th December, and we hope for a good attendance. Application forms for this event went to distributors in the second week in November. If, by any chance, you did not receive a form and wish to attend the Feast, it will not be too late to ring Joan Liggett when you read this announcement in this *Newsletter*, due out on 1st December.

1997 summer outings have had the usual success, with trips to Tenterden Steam Railway, Bodiam Castle, Dixter Gardens, to David Evans Craft Centre of Silk and Silk Hall, to Le Touquet, to Buckingham Palace, to Fordwich, and also small-group trips on the Swale and to Buckland Paper Mill. Thanks are due to our Social Secretary, Joan Liggett, who works so hard to organise all these outings.

The first meeting of the Autumn, at St. Mary's Parish Centre, on 20th October, was a Members' Meeting, addressed by the new Town Clerk and by the Mayor of Dover. Members were very interested to hear all the details of the functioning of the new Town Council, which has been in existence now for just over a year, and to sort out for themselves the various procedures and responsibilities of the Council and its role in Local Government.

After the interval, members divided, as usual, into discussion groups. The first half of the meeting is reported here by our Chairman, Jack Woolford, while the Editor has collated the findings of the group discussions. The Committee invited the Head Boys and Girls of all the local secondary schools to attend this meeting. Unfortunately only one school, St. Edmunds', took up the invitation, sending two representatives. They were pleased they had attended the meeting and it is hoped to include some of their views in the next issue of the *Newsletter*.

The discussion groups, as usual, proved very valuable. One of the main discussions, of most interest to members, was the possibility of a link

between the town and the castle. Everyone holds a view on this topic. Two members in particular had detailed suggestions and had written to Jeremy Cope in advance of the meeting. Barry Shepherd was in favour of a glass lift and Barry Smith's idea was to use an old tunnel which runs from Moat Bulwark at East Cliff up to the castle and could possibly house an inclined escalator. Members also discussed sign-posting in Dover, the Art Trail, the Internet and Dover's provision of attractions and facilities for young people. (See page 8).

The November meeting consisted of two talks on local attractions, one about the Churches of Romney Marsh by members Dick and Dorothy Bolton and the other, by Matthew Shepherd of the White Cliffs Countryside Project, was about the newest piece of the United Kingdom, Samphire Hoe.

Details of future meetings are given, as usual on the back cover of the Newsletter. On January 19 there will be two talks, one by Mr. C. Wade on the Saxon Shore Way and one by Mr. Mike Dawson on Planning for Dover. February brings our ever-popular Wise and Wisdom Evening with Clive Taylor. In March we have two speakers talking about Dover, Lilian Kay and Jon Iveson. In April the Annual General Meeting will be on the 27th of the month, giving plenty of time for members who wish to submit any proposals. All winter meetings are held at St. Mary's Parish Centre.

This issue includes a report from John Gerrard of Dover Harbour Board which gives us a welcome and heartening update on the Board's future plans.

It reveals that the second phase of the De Bradelei's Wharf factory shops is due to open at the end of November and that new shops will sell glass, china-ware, kitchen goods and other household items.

The Harbour Board hopes to extend the number of yacht berths yet again in 1998 and is also considering a major investment in a second cruise terminal.

In addition there are plans for a new modern hotel on the Marine Court site on the seafront and for the development of the

Old Park Barracks site if the Board decides to purchase it. (see pp 25-26). All these are exciting new projects for Dover.

Excursions are, as usual, planned for every month in the summer, but as these are at the planning stage details will be given in the April Newsletter. It is hoped that one outing will be led by Dick and Dorothy Bolton to the Churches on the Marsh, the subject of one of the November talks.

Members have been kind enough to comment that the new-look *Newsletter*, reduced to 44 pages, was as good as previous issues. It is intended that future publications will keep to this length. As already stated in earlier issues, Newsletter 30 is the last one to benefit from the invaluable work of 'Budge' Adams. We will miss him greatly but he has promised to keep an eye on us and to give us help and advice when we need it. I have left it to him to say his own farewell to readers and this follows the Editorial.

'Budge' has an idea which has been under discussion between us for some time and this is to start a 'Local History' branch of the Society, which would meet three or four times a year. It is visualised that it would be a fairly small group of members interested in the subject. In the beginning 'Budge' would lead the group and, of course, we would have to decide on the chair, the venue, procedure and organisation. If you would be interested in joining such a group, please let us know by telephoning either myself on Dover 205254 or 'Budge' on Dover 208008, so that we can get some idea of the size of the group which would be involved. Should there be enough response, more information will be available in the next *Newsletter*.

Once again thanks to all our contributors and a thank you to all our advertisers for their support, which is a valuable aid to the production of the *Newsletter*. You will notice that we have lost some advertisers this time and gained others. As always new contributors and new advertisers are always very welcome.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR MEMBERS

EDITOR

# 4 Farewell, but not Goodbye

BUDGE ADAMS writes:

In the first few weeks of the Society's existence I was elected to a Vice-Presidency and though my initial reaction was a grateful one I felt that if at all possible a V.P. should actually work for the Society that had so honoured him or her. My opportunity to do just that came in the summer of 1990 when I took on a quite unofficial job as producer, distributor and advertising executive (what a title I gave myself!) for the *Newsletter* and thus became an assistant to Philomena Kennedy who, as well as being the editor, was also the producer and distributor. Joan Simmonds until her retirement trudged around the town drumming up advertisements, the revenue from which was very necessary.

Talking to Philomena about her job, and sometimes assisting her, I began to feel that the expertise I had acquired in a lifetime as a printer had made possible the production of a journal that would make its mark amongst publications from similar societies. With no fuss and a nod of approval here and there I was given the opportunity to put my ideas into practice. What a wonderful opportunity it was!, I was as happy as a lark – and the thrill and sense of achievement that developed is with me still.

I began my job with issue No. 8 for September 1990 and Philomena remained as Editor until September 1991, when she handed over to Merrill Lilley. It was impossible to match the spontaneity and *élan* of Philomena's production but with expansive headings and good typography I did what I could to preserve the subtle originalty of her pages.

Towards the end of 1995 I began to take stock of the position in which my enthusiasm had placed the Society. I was in the second half of my eighties and I could see that the expertise and the necessary facilities that were at my disposal might be difficult to replace if and when I was unable to do the work – that is, if no steps were taken to find alternatives – but I had the feeling that as long as I continued those steps would most probably not be taken. That was, and is, a compliment to me, but I could see the danger. I let my thoughts be known to one or two and at the end of the year I formally told the Executive Committee that after issue No. 27, December 1996, I would 'retire from action'. Regretfully that did not prove to be possible and I then agreed to continue until December 1997.

That date is now here and, alas, after twenty-three issues I must go. I will, however, hover in the background, available to help if required or to act as a consultant (how bumptious that sounds). Merrill and I have a good working relationship and we have built up confidence in each other and I am sure this will continue. I will miss the contact with our two most excellent proof-readers, May Jones and Pat Taylor – they are a delight to work with and my admiration for their erudition knows no bounds.

Thank you all for the confidence you have placed in my efforts. Before you have this *Newsletter* I will be eighty-eight but I'm not in the doldrums yet! – I have much to do and just a few more years will not be enough!



The work of the

# PLANNING

Sub-Committee

Reported by JEREMY COPE, Chairman

## CYCLE ROUTES AND TRANSPORT POLICY

Following up on the last report, Gwyn Prosser has been very helpful obtaining responses from the KCC and DDC to our request for information about the problems of getting a cycle network off the ground. It's all very clear. Both councils claim that whatever their aims they do not have money to make changes and that if anything is to be done then it is up to central government to provide funds.

Hence when John Prescott announced he wanted views on an integrated transport policy, and this includes cycling, we felt bound to respond. Our response will be not just about cycling but the future of transport generally, a matter of considerable importance to Dover. We shall shortly be finalising our views, to be set out in a letter prepared by Jack Woolford. The critical measure of the government's intentions will be the cash it is prepared to put into any transport system.

## YOUR LISTED BUILDING VANDALISING SOCIETY

The Society likes to think that it looks forward, supporting new ideas and that it is not just stuck in the past. However, when suggesting or backing change, listed buildings should be the subject of particular care as representing the best of the past. Dover has lost a wealth of buildings through the war and the subsequent attempts at modernisation. It is against this background that I have to report two cases of your committee standing on its collective head.

We did not oppose the proposal to demolish the old listed railway walkway on the Admiralty Pier. A group of members made an inspection and the universal opinion was that it was ugly and its removal to return to the outlook pre-1916 was far preferable. However, we wanted the entrance, which is a handsome building in its own right, to be retained. The ugly security fencing needs to be changed and the necessity for a public toilet was emphasised. The verdict on this application is awaited with some interest.

The castle is our most famous historic site. Last time I asked if any one had any ideas on a link between the town and the Castle, following an article in the *Dover Express*. there was a sense that English Heritage was against change. I was delighted to hear from Barry Smith (at one time our Secretary) and from Barry Sheppard. At the Members' Meeting in October they both joined discussion groups and explained their ideas. Barry Sheppard favoured a glass lift going up the face of the cliff which would provide spectacular views. Barry Smith reminded us that there is a tunnel from Moat Bulwark up into the Castle which could provide access, maybe even house an inclined escalator. It seems to me that both ideas have great merit and should be publicised. Such ideas, if properly thought through, need not damage the integrity of what is our castle, whilst providing a more dynamic link to the town.

## GENERAL PLANNING MATTERS

The August report noted our support of an application to develop the old Castlemount School site with good quality

6 housing. It seemed an excellent way to deal with, in a very constructive way, what has become something of a derelict site. There was provision to retain the extensive tree cover, safeguarding the view from the town. However, a new planning application had been made to build an additional 18 flats in three blocks. John Gerrard prepared a photo-montage which demonstrated how intrusive this additional development would be. The flats appeared a poor fit within the adjacent area and did not harmonise with the neighbouring Vic-

toria Park. the photo-montage was sent as supporting material for the objection.

The Society opposed the planning application for a business park development at Farthingloe on the site of "Stalag Maxton", more properly known as the Channel Tunnel workers village. We should not forget that it is within an area officially designated as an area of outstanding beauty. Other business parks make this an unnecessary development and the committee are firmly of the view that it should revert to countryside.

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# DOVER SOCIETY AND DOVER TOWN COUNCIL

— JACK WOOLFORD —

**T**HERE WAS A WELCOME NOVELTY at our Members' Meeting on October 20. Inspired by Dover Town Council's example at the Mayor-Making, we invited all the Secondary Schools in Dover to send their Head Boys and Girls and their Deputies. Only St. Edmund's Roman Catholic School responded but the contributions of Thomas Connolly and Jonathan Verrill to the Discussion Groups, notably (but not exclusively) on the adequacy of youth facilities in Dover, were splendid. They were informed, articulate, and a credit to their school. We look forward to a larger response from other schools next year.

A second surprise was the Chairman's production of the mayor's application for membership of the Society. This was received with appropriate applause.

The Dover Society campaigned for a Parish (Town) Council in the recent reorganisation of local government and has established friendly relations by attendance at Council committee meetings on common concerns. Permission to speak and to make suggestions on matters such as twinning with Calais, signposting, and the promotion of tourism is very much appreciated. The invitation to "them" to speak to "us" naturally followed.

## THE ROLE OF THE DOVER TOWN COUNCIL

ROBERT BAILEY, TOWN CLERK

**R**obert Bailey, Man of Kent and former Senior Civil Servant, now Town Clerk, emphasised his non-political role in advising on policies but his responsibility to implement them. For this, good relations with mayor, councillors, townspeople and local societies were essential.

Dover as a community had suffered for 20 years from the absence of effective local representation after the abolition of the Borough Council in 1974, and it was this gap that the (single) Parish (Town) Council, separate and autonomous, now fulfilled.



The Town Council had taken over and improved allotments and could act to promote the arts, footway lighting, the clearance of litter, car and cycle parking and tourism, etc. It must be consulted by Dover District Council on planning applications and may make grants to voluntary organisations. These had already included play schools, the Music Centre, the Bronze Age Boat Trust, the Boccia Club, the Dover Festival and the Regatta.

The Town Council was funded by a precept, currently £16.09, collected from local Council tax payers, which currently amounted to £190,000.

Matters of involvement included licensing, street furniture, trading consents, and appointments of school governors. Representations had been made on Channel Tunnel closures, French lorry drivers' strikes, Buckland Hospital, Coombe Valley access, bootlegging and asylum-seekers, etc.

It maintained historic ceremonials, notably those of the Cinque Ports, and planned to add twinning links to Zeebrugge in addition to those with Calais and Split. It had revived the Dover Day and Ball.

Links with Dover District Council, Town Centre Management, the Chamber of Commerce, the Police, the Citizen's Advice Bureau – and the Dover Society – were close and co-operative.

Prospective developments included decoration of the Aycliffe roundabout ("Welcome to Dover") on the A20, a rollerblading area, and a ten-pin bowling alley.

The Council Offices in Castle Street, as a focus for activities including meeting rooms and window displays, were an asset.

If new Regional Assemblies and the abolition of County Councils, as forecast by the Member for Dover, materialised, the role of the Dover Town Council might greatly expand.

## THE TOWN MAYOR'S VISION

### COUNCILLOR PAUL SHELDRAKE

The present government's commitment to Regional Assemblies and unitary authorities everywhere meant that Kent County Council would be replaced by a layer of government probably covering an area (excluding London) from Milton Keynes to Dover, and that Dover District Council would be replaced by an authority encompassing Canterbury, Thanet and Dover. Government commitment also to the devolution of power to as local a level as possible must mean Dover Town Council taking on greater responsibilities. He would expect it to deal with all but the largest planning applications.

Consequently Dover Town Council already used its powers in a more imaginative and responsible way than many

others, protecting our town's history and heritage but not stopping its progress or stifling its future. Like the Dover Society the Council believed that a good environment was a good investment. Only by listening to local people could many problems be solved.

Hence money had been put into the improvement of Bench Street's appearance, into events which should bring people to the town, to the Music Centre, the YMCA, the Dover Youth Theatre Project, etc. Lobbying for improved access to our main industrial estate and in connection with the influx of refugees and bootleggers had taken place. It was hoped to remedy the shortage of leisure facilities with a dedicated rollerblading area and a ten-pin bowling alley. Provision for the

8 disabled included access by ramp to the War Memorial and sports facilities.

The real vision of the future was a council that listened to what people said and then responded to their needs as quickly as possible. The machinery was in place and it was important that as many people as possible had an input to the democratic process. This included standing as Town Councillors - though not in Tower Hamlets!

History had shown that when the

people of Dover worked together they were unbeatable. Even with current problems there was a new spirit in our town that assured us of a great future.

Thanking the Town Clerk and Town Mayor for their addresses and spirited responses to questions, the Chairman expressed surprise and hinted at misgiving that Dover District Council, which the society had helped to save from extinction, was again scheduled eventually to disappear. A re-think would necessary.

----- INTERVAL -----

**A**fter the interval members divided into three discussion groups to give their opinions on a variety of topics.

The questions and responses were as follows:

**Question 1.** Is anything wrong with sign posting in Dover?

*Responses:* The sign posting for pedestrians in the town was approved, especially some of the new signs recently added. Some people thought there needed to be more pedestrian signs leading to the castle.

Signs for motorists entering or leaving the town were sometimes confusing and may need more thought and attention.

Some signs were out-of-date: e.g. Old sign to Transport Museum had not been removed.

**Question 2.** Should there be a ski lift ( or other link) from the town to the castle?

*Responses:* YES. - Most people in favour and many different suggestions. Most people did not favour a ski-lift - but preferred the idea of some kind of cliff lift or funicular. This could be cut into the cliff face and blended with the surrounding landscape.

Various sites were favoured, including the sites at the back of the Sports Centre Car Parks, or at the Henry VIII fort at East Cliff. Possibilities - a lift, water or electrically operated - a lift in a tunnel - a glass lift. Car parking was discussed - the old

Thompson's garage site seems the obvious answer at present - but is it ear-marked for future development?

It was felt that the desirability of this kind of link with the town was essential to bring visitors to the castle into the town.

One ambitious suggestion was for a cable car system to link Eastern and Western Heights.

**Question 3.** Should the White Cliffs have a public Art Trail?

*Responses:* This had been discussed at previous meetings. Answer still NO from the majority of members.

**Question 4.** Should the Society go on the Internet?

*Responses:* No, not necessary, apart from a mention on a list on the DDC page for the town.

**Question 5.** Are Dover's attractions and facilities adequate for young people?

*Responses:* No.

Members supported the Town Council's ideas for a Ten-Pin Bowling alley and for a space for roller-blading.

Other suggestions - small areas for activities like basketball practice. Making the Sports Centre more available to young people, perhaps with more realistic entry fees for school children. Also does it need up-dating?

**Question 6.** How should the Dover Society mark the Millennium?

Suggestions: Perhaps donate an object, like a clock, or contribute to a project, like restoring the Gateway water fountain, or provide a riverside walk ramp, or help to restore the beauty of Connaught Park in some way.

Alternatively to find out what plans the DDC have and contribute to those.

In addition maybe have a lunch time party for Dover Society members!

**Additional questions provided by the Town Clerk**

1. Where KCC and DDC budget cuts are threatening to reduce services in Dover,

should the Town Council concentrate on lobbying these bodies to maintain the services in question. (An example given was the provision of Salt for the Salt Bins) or should they take over these services themselves?

*Answer:* Continue to lobby for KCC or DDC to maintain the services.

2. Is there a project in the town which the Town Council should pursue in partnership with Dover District Council?

Suggestions:

- (a) Clean up litter in key spots in the town.
- (b) Tidy up Cowgate Cemetery.
- (c) Discuss making more of the Western Heights.

## Plaque to the Unknown Warrior \_\_\_\_\_ BUDGE ADAMS

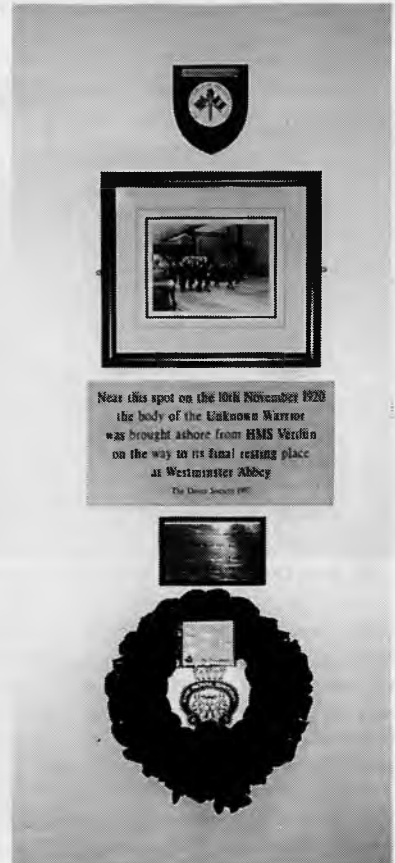
Readers may like to refer to pages 14 of *Newsletters* No. 28 and 9 of No. 29.

Two notable additions have recently been made to the assemblage that forms Dover's only reference to the home-coming of the Unknown Soldier- the plaque on the wall of the Cruise Terminal near to the spot where the body as landed. A few days before Armistice Day the photograph displayed on an easel near the plaque at the time of its dedication, now beautifully mounted and framed, was hung above the plaque by Dover Harbour Board.

On the 8th November members of the Federation Nationale des Combattants de Belgique (formed in 1922) and of the F.N.C. [London] (1945) were at Westminster Abbey at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier where the Dean lit the Torches which are the branches' sign and signal. The Torches were then taken to the Belgian Embassy where they rested for the night.

The following day the combined party left for Ostend and Brussels and stopped off at Dover, as it had for many years, for a ceremony which this time was in the Cruise Terminal. A shield with the insignia of the F.N.C. was fixed above the photograph and a wreath of poppies was laid below. Now with the status of a memorial the assemblage is formed from the shield, the framed photograph, the plaque recording the return of the Unknown Soldier and a smaller plate that gives credit to the Dover Society for its part in the implementation of the whole project.

The photograph was taken by John Gerrard



# PROJECTS *Update*

JOHN OWEN, Chairman, Projects sub-Committee

## THE DOVER SOCIETY LENDS A HAND IN LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE

The attention of the Projects Committee was drawn to the invasion of East Cliff by gargantuan weeds. Encouraged by the wet weather in late June their height was phenomenal, far out-stripping even the tallest of the carefully planted shrubs.

a prime position where it is clearly seen by all who enter or leave the UK via Dover Eastern Docks.

The contrast between this section of Dover Sea Front and that maintained so professionally by Dover Harbour Board is unbelievable. Likewise the new



L - R. John Owen, Merril Lilley, Bruce Lilley, John Gerrard, J. McKennen (DHB)

Yes, we have at East Cliff not only a widened A20 and improved sea defences but also carefully constructed raised beds with carefully selected shrubs and ground cover plantings. Species include ajuga, griselinia, buckthorn and roses.

Unfortunately there seems to be no ongoing management plan for the care and upkeep of this amenity, situated as it is in

A20 Dover roundabouts are scruffy and lacking the care and attention they deserve. The Department of Transport's response when the situation was pointed out to them was 'lack of resources' but it did agree to the Dover Society, the Dover Harbour Board and the KCC coming together to try to resolve the impasse without delay.



Gargantuan Weeds - many more in background

Within three days a volunteer group from the Dover Society and Dover Harbour Board was formed to clear several truck loads of dominant weeds from the planted beds, thereby immediately and substantially improving their appearance and saving the shrubs of the East Cliff sea-front from suffocation by their

rivals. The prompt action also meant seed heads were removed before the seeds were scattered.

It was a magnificent effort by the volunteers but much else needs to be done on the new stretch of the A20.

Interviewed by Bob Dale of BBC Radio Kent, the Dover Society spokesman said we were happy to help out on this occasion but those

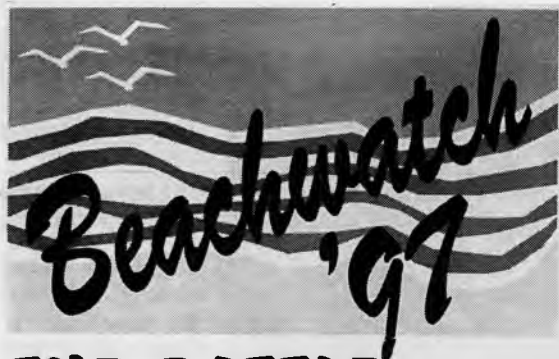
responsible need to have arrangements in place for an on-going maintenance schedule if this newly installed public amenity is to be sustainable as an attractive feature of the Gateway of England.

Following the completion of the three-and-a-half hour session of Saturday 5th July a further group was organised to complete the job on the following Saturday.

The project was sponsored by Dover Harbour Board.



Below L-R: Jeremy Cope, Terry Sutton, Joe Harman, John Owen, DHB Truck Driver



## THE BATTLE FOR THE BEACHES

**D**OVER'S SHAKESPEARE BEACH received the attention of the Dover Society on Saturday, 20th September, a beautiful sunny morning and just the ticket for a spot of beach-combing, chat and *joie de vivre*. Though very tempted we were far too busy to indulge in a 'dip'.

It will be remembered that the Society was last here in 1994, beachcombing with Aycliffe School during the Civic Trust Environment Week. This return visit was on the occasion of Beachwatch '97, an annual beach survey by the Marine Conservation Society, now in its fifth year of scouring more than 250 beaches in Britain and over ninety other countries: marine pollution is a global problem.

The survey gathers information that gives help to an international campaign to stop dumping at sea, to reduce leakage from sewage outfalls and to raise awareness of the impact of marine debris on wildlife, and human health and tourism.

The Dover Society, in partnership with Dover District Council

and Dover Town Council, fielded a team of thirteen member volunteers to give support to this worthy cause. BBC Radio Kent's Ian Harkness, whilst interviewing a Dover Society spokesman in a live programme on the morning of the event, kindly gave up-to-the-minute weather information as a sunny on-shore breeze, moderate sea and tide state – and so it was!



After this commemorative shot – all ready for the off!



Descending the steps at Sunny Corner and following a quick briefing, the syndicates were on their way, collecting, identifying and listing all the pollutants on the data sheet provided.

Not many people know it, but driftwood and seaweed are not classed as official rubbish as they provide a habitat for wild-life and together form an integral part of the beach eco-system.

Generally we agreed it was an enjoyable and thirst-provoking outing though (quite pleasantly) tiring. We collected about sixty bags of litter, approximately 350 kg (700 lbs, say) on an estimated 800m stretch of beach.

Additionally a fair number of large 'unbagable' items were also collected.

One enterprising syndicate did it's own thing, magnificently collecting no less than

420 plastic drinking containers.

This beautiful beach with its not inconsiderable history of work and recreation continues as a valuable though much under-used public amenity.



Work in progress!

As we approach the millennium the time has come for Shakespeare Beach, a Dover "lung" for hundreds of years, to be given a new and imaginative focus.



The end a most rewarding day

# *It's a Swale of a Time as members end Right up the Creek!*

JOHN  
McKECHNIE

**S**ATURDAY 20TH SEPTEMBER AROUND NINE IN THE MORNING eleven 'intrepid' mariners waiting by the Harty Ferry hard near Oare. They were Society members assembled for their trip aboard a Thames sailing barge.

The sight of the black-hulled barge with brick red sails brought back childhood memories of yearly trips that I took to the Royal Docks in London. In the late 50s and early 60s a colleague and myself made an annual pilgrimage to see the ships in the London Docks. Claspimg our treasured PLA dock passes we travelled by boat from Charing Cross to Woolwich. In those days both the Pool of London and the River Thames were a hive of activity with all the wharves full of ships. Once we had arrived in Woolwich we crossed the river and a bus ride took us to the Royal Docks, the tops of funnels just visible from the bus as we neared our goal.

Presenting our passes to the policeman at the gate we entered the world of 'commerce', where ships from all countries were busy loading and unloading. The sights, sounds and smells told you where you were in this vast complex. Ships were moored in some places three abreast. Tugs hooted in reply to the Pilot's whistle, pushing or pulling ships into or out of their berths. Tucked in amongst twentieth century bustle were the last survivors of the Victorian era, the Thames barges still plying their trade.

Little did I think that a few years later, I would, as a young apprentice deck officer be leaving my first ship here. Throughout my deep-sea career with Royal Mail, Lines and Shaw Saville I would

join and leave many ships at the 'Royals'. This was before I joined Townsend Car Ferries at Dover in 1980.

All has now gone and in place of the ships' whistles is the roar of aeroplanes at the London City airport and on the vast expanse of water in the Victoria dock recreational facilities replace the sweating dockers. Still, we are about to board a reminder of the past, the *MIROSA*. She will take us back through the years to the days when sail was 'King'.

Built in Maldon, Essex in 1892, she is 82 feet in length and the mast is 85 feet high. Her official number is 96485 with a cargo capacity of about 250 tonnes. Specially designed with a flat bottom and shallow draft these barges were able to go up many of the creeks on the Thames and its environs. At the turn of the century there were 8,000, now 30 remain and the *MIROSA* is the only left that is still a sail only vessel, no auxiliary power, only the wind.

The 'engine' comes in the form of a jib, sprit sail, main sail and a steadying mizzen aft. Sprit sail rig is easier to operate than the more conventional Bermuda or gaff rig. It allowed the barge to carry large deck cargo, the 'sprit' caught the wind that was shielded when in rivers by high warehouses and trees and was easy to operate with the crew of two. The sprit

could be used as a derrick for cargo operations if required.

The day dawned fine, with a keen easterly wind and our instructions to wear warm clothing proved necessary. The barge crew arrived at 9.30: Peter, the Skipper, Geoff alias 'Frog', the Mate and Meg, the ship's dog. We were ferried out in the jolly boat to a small tug, four at a time. The tug then took us all out to the MIROSA.

The tide was out when we arrived and vast areas of mud were exposed. The estuarial birds were having a field day on food sources seldom exposed. This was the lowest tide of the year and adjacent to the Oare Creek Bird Sanctuary observation centre at the top of the hard a mechanical digger and lorries were frantically working to reinforce the sea defences before the highest tide for forty years that evening. By the time we were all transferred to the barge the tide had turned, the first of the flood was making up the Swale. The Swale is the area of water between the Isle of Sheppey and the mainland from Queenborough in the NW to Whitstable in the SE.

We were welcomed by Sally, the Skipper's wife and went below to have hot drinks and warm croissants after a conducted tour and specific instructions on how to use the 'heads' (toilet). The noise of the anchor being hove up brought us out on deck and we got under way around 10.35, heading out towards Whitstable.

The wind was a 'dead muzzler' (right ahead) and the crew were soon working hard tacking back and forth across the Swale beating up against the wind. It was soon apparent that Victorian efficiency made the sail operation easy. The cries of



Geoff and Meg

'lee ho' from Skipper to Mate as we changed tack came thick and fast and with the help of the Mate 'backing' the jib we changed course with the modicum of fuss. We were unable to use the large lee boards to their full capacity because of the low water. These are large boards, one each side, which are lowered in the absence of keel to give the barge more grip when tacking.

Progress was slow: the Horse Sands to port were still an area of mud and the 'Receptive' wreck buoy seemed to take ages to pass. Once past it the channel opened out and we made better progress and the Shellness buoy could be seen in the distance. On the horizon a splash of red was identified as the sails of the Thames sailing barge 'Greta' which had left the Swale earlier for Brightingsea. Several smaller yachts kept us company as we tacked to Whitstable. They had overhauled us in the narrower channel, now with more room MIROSA showed her sail power and the gap between her and her smaller sisters soon closed.

Just after midday Peter said "enough of the hard work" and then turned the wheel to put tide and wind astern, this started our run 'down wind' towards Emley and Ridham Dock. We would anchor for lunch

16 around 12.45, our position dictated by wind and tide. It was during this part of the trip that the more adventurous members were allowed a turn at the wheel.

In what seemed like seconds our starting point was passed, Fowley Island Spit buoy slid by and so did the entrance to Conyer Creek. Conyer was a port frequently used by barges to load bricks, alas no longer. Progress was good and MIROSA turned into the wind around 12.35 and tacked up to the anchorage off Bells Creek on the Sheppey side of the Swale. The mud flats were now being quickly covered by the flood and once we had 'brought up' it was time for lunch. The horizon was being filled by the many structures that form the gaol at Eastchurch.



Mariners' lunch

Sally had prepared an excellent spread for lunch, the hot soup to start being very welcome. What was noticeable as we enjoyed our food was the total absence of sound bar the slap of waves against the hull. The saloon where the meal was laid out was part of the barge's cargo space and the galley would have been the Mate's cabin, the Skipper living aft. It must have been a hard life, especially in winter time. Some barges even made voyages as far as South America, a true testament of their versatility.

Activity above meant the crew were preparing to get under way and at 15.00

the anchor was 'aweigh'. We set off upstream towards Ridham. During lunch the tide had come in fully and the estuary was now full of water. Sailing was now much easier as there was more room to manoeuvre. There was a special event for yachts in the Medway and while we were below having lunch the Swale had filled with a myriad of yachts hurrying along with tide and wind, making a good speed, sails well filled. Off Wellmarsh Creek at 15.25 the wheel was put 'hard over' and it was time to tack back to MIROSA's anchorage. Look behind us a small coastal vessel could be seen making its way out to sea. "A rare sight" commented the Skipper as most commercial shipping uses the Medway route. The radio crackled into life as Peter

spoke to the LEONIS from Kingston, Jamaica, discussing who would keep clear. Before long power overtook sail and the LEONIS was ahead and away to ports unknown. As we approached the anchorage around 16.20 it was apparent that the wind and the high tide had kicked up quite a sea and as we took afternoon cream tea the barge was moving about — we were 'at sea'. Peter and Geoff were busy stowing sails and securing the gear

whilst we lazed below and then it was time to leave. The small tug (built in Holland in the 1930s) we had used in the morning was alongside, however the Hard we had boarded from in the morning was awash and a lumpy sea was crashing ashore. It was obvious that landing here was impossible, the Skipper decided to go round the entrance of Faversham Creek and put us ashore on the bank.

Once everyone was safely on the tug we bade farewell to Sally and the MIROSA, the tug swung slowly head to the sea which was by now quite noticeable and proceeded towards the Creek. Once into the

entrance the sea was less, but despite several attempts to find a suitable landing area the tug kept grounding. There was no alternative but to go right up the creek to the small boat yard near the Shipwrights pub on the junction of Faversham and Oare Creeks. Here landing was safe and we had to resort to modern transport in the form of a Landrover and a taxi to return us to the car park we had started from, thus ending a very enjoyable day somewhat later than anticipated. Thanks to Joan Liggett for once again organising an excellent day out. Members who require further information about sailing barges can apply to Sailing Barge Association, Docklands Business Centre, 10-16 Tiller Road, London E14 8PX.



Leonis passes Mirosa

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## Visit to FORDWICH TOWN HALL

JUNE DYER

**O**N SATURDAY 11TH OCTOBER a small group from our Society joined up with a party from the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings (SPABS) for a visit to picturesque Fordwich, recorded in the Domesday Book and now described as "the smallest town in the country".

We assembled outside the tiny Guildhall, now the Town Hall, built in 1544 during the reign of Henry VIII. In Roman times an arm of the sea ran in as far as Canterbury and was navigable as far as Fordwich, which thus became the port for Canterbury. The crane house can be seen at the rear of the Town Hall on the bank of the now somewhat smaller

River Stour. Here stone from Caen in France was unloaded for the building of Canterbury Cathedral.

Inside the Town Hall we ascended steep wooden stairs to the panelled Court Room, where we were welcomed by Andrew Claque (former Inspector of Redundant Churches) who introduced our lecturer, Michael Beck, a Town Hall Trustee.

We heard how Fordwich, which became a corporate limb of the Cinque Port of Sandwich in about 1050, was self-governing and thus had such an important building as the Town Hall. We were shown the "Pleading Bar", where prisoners stood (hence "prisoner at the bar"). The judge or chief magistrate was the Mayor, with six Jurats each side, seated on the "bench". A very small Jury Room led off the Court Room.

We saw handcuffs (with screws – possibly this was the origin of the term "screw" for jailer), also a truncheon used by the last constable and a branding mark for convicted felons (thus "branded a thief"). The brand mark itself would have been "R" for Rex or Regina. A jailer would receive two shillings for branding. An ancient chest, believed to be over 800 years old and used for the storage of town documents, records, charters, etc., had been made from a large, rough piece of tree trunk, and from that came the use of "trunk" for a storage chest. The chest had three locks with three different keys, so that, for security reasons, three people had to be present each time the chest was opened.

On the main cross beam two drums were displayed, one decorated with the Mayor's coat of arms and the other with the arms of the Cinque Ports. These drums had been used to call the townsfolk to hear proclamations or for warning of danger – thus "drumming up volunteers".

In one corner of the Court Room hangs a list of Fordwich Mayors, from John Maynard in 1292 ( Founder of Maynard's Hospital, Canterbury) to Charles James Fox in 1885, when the Town Hall lost its corporate status. Town Status was restored under the Local Government Act, 1972, and the property passed into the hands of a body of trustees. Mayor-making takes place annually in the church, where in past times the older and frailer people propped themselves against the wall – hence the expression "weak to the wall".

Originally the elected Mayor had to accept the post, otherwise he would be

fined or his house could be pulled down! In early times mayoral duties included checking measures used by bakers and brewers, etc. Fishing rights had originally been given to the town by King Canute. Fish were caught by net each night and the first catch of the night went to the Mayor.

As a 'limb' of the Cinque Port of Sandwich, Fordwich originally provided Sandwich with money for half a ship, ten men and one boy, but this was later commuted to money and each July this Ship Money (40 old pence) is paid to Sandwich. In fact, the same 40 old pence are used each year, when 17½ new pence are actually kept by Sandwich and the old pence handed back. This delightful ceremony involves sherry and a banquet!

It is recorded that the Town Hall was built in the twelfth century, repaired in 1474 and rebuilt in 1544 during the reign of Henry VIII. The 1996 inspection of the building showed it to be in good order but with a small amount of attention needed, including, for example, a cracked fillet to be repaired. We were shown some very interesting slides depicting how this particular repair had been carried out.

During our inspection of the outside of the building we were able to see the little jail, exercise yard and jailer's quarters, also in the opening through which the prisoners were fed we saw a very efficient arrangement of spikes which protected the jailer from attack. Felons could be kept in jail for up to a year and a day. Women judged to be scolds or gossips were subjected to the ducking stool, suspended on the town crane, and then dried out in the small area, more like a cupboard, above the Jury Room.

Lunch had been arranged for us in the Fordwich Arms, close by, and a leisurely meal was much enjoyed, before the afternoon visit to Fordwich church. By that time rain had set in but we shall certainly look forward to visiting delightful Fordwich again on a fine day. Grateful thanks to Joan Liggett for once again arranging an excellent visit.



# A VISIT TO BUCKINGHAM PALACE

----- JOHN OWEN

A SMALL PARTY OF SOCIETY MEMBERS joined the coach on Saturday, 27th September to take part in one of Joan Liggett's mini-excursions; this time to Buckingham Palace which has been open to the public in recent years.

On arrival in London we had a lunch break at Convent Garden before moving on to the palace where we entered on schedule and without fuss or bother. As the Queen's official home it also serves as a centre for state ceremonies and official entertaining and it is one of the few remaining working Royal Palaces left in the world today.

Buckingham House, the property of the Dukes of Buckingham until the mid-eighteenth century, was acquired by George III as a private residence on his marriage to Charlotte of Michlenburg-Strelitz. It was George IV who had John Nash re-design it as a palatial residence where, in preference to St. James's, he could conduct his courts and official business. Our viewing of the palace showed how progressively enriched the interiors became under George IV, who was advised by the artistic guru, Sir Charles Long; this to meet the demand for opulence and grandeur.

Further practical alterations occurred during Queen Victoria's reign, including the addition of a new east wing facing the Mall, designed by Edward Blore and built by Thomas Cubitt between 1847-50. In 1913, owing to stone decay George V had Blore's façade refaced in Portland stone to a new design by Aston, giving the palace its present look.

We entered by the ambassadors' entrance, passing through the grand hall and up the sumptuous gilt bronze staircase,

through the green drawing rooms to the throne room with its magnificent chandeliers and the thrones, one with the royal cypher EIIR, the other a solitary P.

Next the picture gallery with its fine collection, including works by Vermeer, Zuccarwlli, Frans Hals, Rembrandt, van Dyck, Rubens and Canaletto.

Then to the state dining room, flanked by the blue drawing room and the music room, all facing west and overlooking the garden, landscaped by Nash and the head gardener at Kew, William Aiton, where the famous afternoon garden parties annually take place; they were started by Queen Victoria who spoke of them as 'breakfasts'!

Many fellow visitors felt the expanse of water beyond the garden appeared to be greater than previously envisaged. Therein lay the strength of this visit for it enabled one to actually experience and amplify those glimpses of the palace seen through media coverage of important events.

An abiding memory is of the unhurried quiet perambulation as one attempted to assimilate the grandeur of the whole experience of furniture, fittings, pictures, porcelain, sculpture, tapestries, silver-ware and gilt; and, of course, what an experience it was to look out towards the Mall on the many, many people who were looking in!

Our journey, both there and back, was comfortable, on schedule and relaxing, thanks to Gillies, the coach people.

# *A Journey along the Silk Road and a Visit to Hall Place*

JOAN LIGGETT

**O**n 21st June as we drove through torrential rain along the M20 towards Crayford. Would it be a repeat of our 1995 Arras drenching? Fortunately our luck changed as we reached the David Evans Craft Centre of Silk and in the dry we walked the few yards to the entrance.

The site of the silk-printing works beside the River Cray was chosen in 1829 to satisfy the need for large quantities of clean water. The old buildings now house a craft centre with museum exhibits telling the story of silk production in graphic detail, from the cocoon spinning by millions of silkworms to the unravelling of the strong, fine threads after a boiling water bath and the spinning and weaving of the natural fabric ready for its shipment to England.

A retired worker, now one of the guides, demonstrated the original processes of colour mixing and careful building up of the pattern on a length of silk with heavy, hand-held blocks carved from hand-drawn and printed designs. He could remember the time when the river was coloured by the various dyes as the silk was washed – a practice no longer permitted.

We had a brief taste of current conditions in the modern processing sheds where the heat and humidity, noise and smell were overwhelming. Printing of the computer-drawn designs is still controlled by hand before the screen is mechanically lowered to cover a square metre at a time. A keen eye and a steady hand are still necessary for touching up if the dye fails to take at pattern junctions. It is skilled work and buyers must be prepared to pay craft prices. Most of the production goes for scarf- and tie-making in the USA and Japan, where exacting customers will reject a whole order, worth thousands of pounds if there

is the slightest deviation from the stipulated colour or design.

After a visit to the factory shop – to buy inexpensive remnants rather than top quality garments! – we repaired to the little restaurant for a tasty made-to-order snack eaten during a deluge which pounded the glass roof over our heads.

The weather relented for our afternoon visit to Hall Place only a mile away. This attractive sixteenth century rubble masonry house with its seventeenth century red brick addition is a Grade I listed building standing in extensive grounds. It was originally owned by a succession of wealthy London merchants, but it is now the property of the London Borough of Bexley and houses Bexley Museum, Bexley Local Studies Centre and several exhibition galleries. What a wonderful place for employees and students to work in – a haven of peace and tranquillity set in 160 acres untouched by noise and pollution of the adjacent A2!

Some of the party explored the interior, viewed the current displays and admired the bridal party being photographed against a backcloth of the house. Others enjoyed the afternoon sunshine in the grounds, appreciating some of the 4000 roses, the colourful bedding plants, the herb garden with its Braille labels and the rock and heather gardens across the river. The apiary section with heraldic animals from the Royal Coat of Arms planted in 1953 for the Queen's coronation provided an interesting and unusual feature. A few of us even had time for a fleeting visit to the glasshouses and model gardens beyond.

Combining two such different visits made for a most satisfying and enjoyable excursion, even enhanced perhaps, by the absence of flaming June temperatures.

# A Trip to Le Touquet

A. MERRICK

**T**HIRTY-ONE MEMBERS OF THE DOVER Society boarded the P&O ferry *Pride of Burgundy*, at 7.30. on Saturday, 19th July for the trip to Calais, arriving at 10.00 a.m. (French time) after a pleasant crossing.

Our escort for the day on our Cardinal coach was Dave. We were soon on our way, with Dave pointing out interesting sights, marble quarries and pottery centres.

We joined in a £1 coin raffle, organised by Jeremy and Sheila Cope. As the Society could not attend the annual fete this year, it had been decided to donate the proceeds of raffles on summer outings to the Buckland Hospital Fund. Our Chairman, Jack Woolford, won the first prize of £10 with the first coin out of the hat and told Jeremy to put it back, but when a second attempt revealed Jack's name once again we told him he was meant to win! The raffle raised £25.00. With £52.00 from previous outings this made a total of £77.00 for

the hospital. (It was later decided that the Society would donate a further £23.00 to bring this figure to £100.00.)

By this time the views were becoming greener and soon we were passing through pine forests and approaching Le Touquet.

We had some time to stroll around the town before meeting for lunch at *Auberge L'Arlequin*, chosen for us by our Social Secretary, Joan Liggett, - menu 90 francs, traditional food and good service.

Afterwards we had two-and-a-half hours to ourselves to explore the town, sit on the promenade surveying the miles of white, sandy beaches and, if we wished, paddle in the sea.

At 4.15 p.m. we returned to the coach to be whisked off to Eurocity, which has 150 shops and the cheapest wine ever in Tesco's Wine Store. An hour there sufficed before we boarded the coach for our homeward journey.

# Emmaus Update

TERRY SUTTON

**A**n important new stage in the St. Martin's Emmaus project at Archcliffe Fort, Dover, has just been reached, with the bringing into use of the ground floor of the large Victorian barrack block, following extensive work.

The ground floor of the block now provides an excellent community dining room, three residential flats, a large kitchen and other facilities.

It means that there is now pleasant living accommodation for three more companions, taking the total to a dozen, towards the final target of twenty-one residents. Next will be the repair and refurbishment of the first floor above, to provide the rest of the residential accommodation.

Fund raising continues. The latest details show that only about £32,000 remains to be raised towards the original target of £400,000 - although the Trustees accept that a little more than the £400,000 will be required to complete the venture.

The shop at the fort continues to be busy, with average weekly takings of around £540. The Companions, who have been working hard bringing into use the Victorian barrack block, and the Coordinator, Kendal Beasley would welcome more visitors to the shop and to the fort, which is undergoing such a dramatic transformation.



## FEDERATION of Amenity Societies

*Reported by*  
LILLIAN KAY

# *The 25th Annual Conference*

AT THE OLD COLLEGE, WYE. KENT 13th-14th SEPTEMBER 1997

Having had my arms gently twisted by Jack Woolford, our Chairman, who is also Chairman of the K.F.A.S., I rather reluctantly agreed to represent the Dover Society at this conference. Waste disposal, pollution and Channel Tunnel Rail Links do not make an immediate appeal, but after two days of excellent speakers and discussion one could get really enthusiastic about the potential improvements which amenity societies can promote.

The first subject was HOUSING; in the next ten years the Kent Structure Plan allows for 87,000 more homes, 6,100 in Dover. This is partly due to changes in social trends, for instance young people moving away from home. In over 20 years it is reckoned that 6% more people will need 20% more homes. At present about 5% of houses are unoccupied, which in Kent amounts to 30,000.

We went on to consider WATER for Kent. We have an average of 600mm of rain per annum, of which 570mm evaporates!! Our permeable rocks give us three-quarters of requirements from wells and bore holes. We have 170 pumping stations in Kent, two reservoirs, managed by six water companies and each of us uses 150 litres of water per day. Although any firm abstracting water must be licensed, half our river

water has disappeared this century and the Environment Agency (formerly the National Rivers Authority) is urgently considering schemes such as metering and is transferring water from Hampshire and other sources.

After a good lunch, we had a most interesting afternoon on Kent's WASTE CRISIS. In 1989 Richard Boden, of Wye, formed a not-for-profit business called "Wyecycle Limited", to protect the environment and create employment through the reduction of waste. The citizens of Wye sort their rubbish into different containers :- paper and cardboard, glass bottles and jars, tins and cans, textiles and simply. These are collected weekly from the kerbside. Organic kitchen and garden waste are also collected weekly. Re-usable items are collected monthly, anything from

armchairs and washing machines to paint pots and crockery. Wood is sifted by a local carpenter and distributed as firewood. The only material not accepted is plastic. The town has a refill system for house cleaning products and urges that carrier bags should be reused and over-packaged goods rejected.

We were taken to the 'Wycycle' depôt in some large sheds in the country and to a nearby organic farm. The whole enterprise does not pay for itself and, at present, is subsidised by the K.C.C., but securing this involves almost a war, between "community-based waste reduction" and the K.C.C.'s preference for "technology-based waste management" - i.e. chiefly incineration, which needs constant feeding and still leaves ash to be dealt with. A really interesting afternoon!

We returned to CHANNEL TUNNEL RAIL LINK UPDATE, which will cost £3 billion and has 100 workers at present, and ARCHITECTURE IN KENT, telling us about the formation of an Architecture Centre in a disused building in Chatham, where all are welcome at discussions and consultations.

I had wondered how I should sleep in a student bed after all these years. I need not have worried. I could hardly keep awake in the Wheelwright's Bar at the end of the day.

Sunday morning began with a survey of the Kent Federation, undertaken by our own Mrs. Snezena Lawrence. The federation has 2,000 members and most societies number between 100 and 600. The survey is ongoing, focussing on communication between societies, sharing events and suggested contacting of sixth form pupils.

Judge Babington then gave an account of the CHILHAM ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SOCIETY, formed when Lord Masserine encouraged ear-splitting groups to use Chilham castle as a venue.

After many unavailing skirmishes the death of the owner put an end to the battle!

HOW POLLUTED IS KENT? a talk by the Environmental Manager from the K.C.C. drew our attention to Kent's shore line; pollution from passing ships and 47,000 complaints per year about dogs! Unbelievable.

This led on to Kent's TRANSPORT PROBLEMS presented by Gary Thomas of the C.P.R.E. He traced the history of transport from horses, canals, railways (1850-1950) to the present environmental problems of cars - 160,000 a day on the M25 at Dartford. The roads, he said, are necessary for economic growth. He did not give me a straight answer when I decried the use of huge lorries on the roads of our small island.

After lunch on Sunday we had two very interesting talks on RECYCLING. The first was by Alan McKendrick, Chief Executive of Aylesford Newsprint, where the input is 100% recycled. They have a way of de-inking newsprint, using water from bore holes; they have a combuster which produces ash to make roads and they have a railway siding from which one-third of their produce goes to Europe. Roger Thorn of Pfizers described their "Waste Beater" group which has saved £50,000 in costs, donated £5000 to charity and been presented with an award for saving one million plastic cups (approx. 4,700 a day). There are 3,500 people on this 100 acre site. Other recycling involves cans, cards, stamps, envelopes, paper, cardboard, rubber bands, toner cartridges, footwear and batteries.

After tea I drove home through the beautiful countryside of Kent in glorious weather, much encouraged by the work of societies like ours and hoping that other members will decide to enjoy next year's conference - perhaps without having the arm twisted.

# Marsh and Hoe: THE NOVEMBER MEEETING

MERRIL LILLEY

ON 17TH NOVEMBER Dover Society members were fortunate to hear two excellent speakers on local places of interest.

Dick Bolton entertained us with a talk on the churches of Romney Marsh. he made an introductory sweep through history, explaining the development of the Marsh and the founding of the earliest churches, before moving on to a detailed examination of churches to be visited on the Marsh today. There are 14 ancient churches, of which only one is redundant and, in addition, there are 9 ruins.

"Evil in winter, grievous in summer  
and never good" *William Lambard*  
and

"As Egypt is the gift of the Nile  
This level tract has by the bounty of  
the sea  
Been by degrees added to the land

So that I may not without reason call it  
- A Gift of the Sea".

*William Camden*

Similarly, in the second half of the evening, Matthew Shepherd, of the WCCP, gave an overall history of the site before focusing on the wonder of Samphire Hoe today and treating us to a "year of flowers" on slides.

From 31 species of local plants originally introduced to the site, there are now 118, the greatest surprise appearance being the orchids, a profusion of common spotted and just 3 rare spider orchids. Their exact location remains Mathew's secret!

A few shrubs have appeared, not always welcome; buddleia, willow dogwood and sea buckthorn. Wildlife increases gradually; butterflies, spiders, dragonflies, moths, grasshoppers and crickets. Countless birds make migration stops. The occasional vole or weasel is sighted.

Since April 1997, the official opening, Samphire Hoe, now with toilets, office, maps, signs and seats of driftwood, has attracted 40,000 visitors.

Matthew, too, ended with a quotation,

"Enjoy the earth gently, for if it is  
damaged, it cannot be repaired".

Our chairman welcomed Matthew, a newcomer to Dover and thanked him for his graphic, enthusiastic and knowledgeable address.



OLD ROMNEY CHURCH, from the East

Dick gave a fascinating account of 13 churches, with lots of local anecdotes and references, details of architecture, stonework and interiors, spending a little more time on his favourites, like New Romney, venue for film-makers (Dr Syn) and Lydd, the "Cathedral of the Marsh", where he also included intriguing snippets from the tombstones. In all cases he illustrated his points with appropriate slides and, where possible, followed these with a John Piper painting of the same scene.

He ended with a dramatic Piper painting of one of the ruins and with two opposing quotations about the Marsh.





# A Résumé of D.H.B.'s Development Proposals

25

JOHN GERRARD

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First of all I would like to give an interesting statistical backdrop to the port and its activities. I recently had occasion to give a Radio Kent interview about the changes seen in the port over the last thirty years and took the opportunity of checking the traffic volumes that have passed through Dover during that period.

Our members may be somewhat amused by the following:

Passengers – 357 million      Cars– 54 million  
Freight Lorries – 19 million

If we put the cars and freight vehicles into a straight line it would be 360 miles long, Some queue!!

## Development

### 1. Western Docks

#### a) Wellington Dock

##### De Bradelei- Phase 2

The new £1.8 million 2nd phase development constructed by Ballast-Wiltshire will open on programme towards the end of November. The shop will provide extended shopping for clothing goods and in addition will cater for glass, chinaware, kitchen goods and other household items.

#### b) Marine extension – Tidal Harbour

A project team is busy working up proposals for extending the number of yacht berths in the Tidal Harbour area and it is hoped to make a decision about this early next year. 1997 has been a good year for visiting yachts with numbers up to 875 compared to 595 last year.

#### c) New Cruise Terminal

Spurred on by our great success with the station conversion and ever-increasing demand from cruise operators the Board is hoping to be able to justify a major investment in a second cruise terminal. If constructed the £20 million terminal will be located at the outer end of the Admiralty Pier inside the harbour. It will certainly need a good strong roof!! Tenders will be invited shortly.

### 2. Marine Court

Such has been the success of the Churchill Hotel that the company that operates it has asked the Board to join them in a joint venture to develop the Marine Court site into a medium price modern hotel. A planning submission has now been lodged and we await the outcome.

## 26 3. Eastern Docks

Work on the sheet-pile perimeter wall to the new £7 million Eastern Docks reclamation located adjacent to Jubilee Way is now well advanced and we hope shortly to be able to fill it with Goodwin Sand. The area will be vital to the port for the storage of unaccompanied freight vehicles.

## 4. Roundabouts and cycle routes

The Board is working closely with the Dover District Council and others to develop sponsorship of all of the roundabouts and planters on the approach roads to Dover. In addition, it is also developing new safe cycle routes at the Eastern Docks which in the fullness of time will link with the Sustrans national cycle network route to Inverness. This work demands and receives close assistance from our friends at the District Council.

## 5. Old Park Barracks site

The Board is committed to helping those freight companies who work out of Dover and who provide jobs for local people. One such firm is Murfitts who currently work out of the Old Park site. This large, important site is currently up for sale by the Ministry of Defence and it is hoped that the Board will agree to its purchase to safeguard the Murfitt jobs and to develop new freight and other commercial industries on a limited section of the site.

This site has huge potential for a wide range of activities and if we do purchase it there will be some fine challenges ahead to make the very best use out of it to the benefit of town and port alike.

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## Newsletter Binders

With the co-operation of Members we will be able to supply "Cordex" Binders for the *Newsletter*. The Burgundy coloured binders have a capacity for 13 copies and are lettered on the spine "The Dover Society Newsletter" in gilt foil.

The minimum order we can place is 100 and a list is being compiled of those who would like to have one. (At the moment we have fifteen names). When the list has, say, eighty names the binders will be placed on order. The cost, (likely to be a few pence more than last time's figure of £3.00) does not include postage for out-of-town members.

To add your name to the list write a note to the Secretary, Leo Wright, at "Beechwood", Green Lane, Dover CT16 3AR.

## Society Badges



The wearing of a Society Badge reminds the general public (who really do have eyes to see) that the Society is a viable and energetic non-political voice for Dover. The beautiful little enamelled Lapel or Brooch Badges are to Philomena Kennedy's original design, in black on a white ground, surrounded by a gold line defining the shape of the badge and are available from the Treasurer, in either type, for £2 post free.

Just contact the Treasurer, Jennifer Gerrard, at 77 Castle Avenue, or phone her on 206579 (with a cheque or P.O. if possible) and she will very quickly ensure that a badge is in your hands.

# WOT - *Sleaze?* - IN 1886?

TERRY SUTTON

- with the aid of a London printer - contributes another interesting article

THE DAYS when political infighting over membership of Dover Harbour Board caused such a row in Kent that questions were asked in the House of Commons are revealed in a document that has been lodged in the port authority's archives. The details, contained in a pamphlet published by a London printing house in 1886, were given to me by an old Dovorian and handed on to Dover Harbour Board.

The dispute involved the sacking of Dover Conservative councillor William Henry Crundall, a local timber merchant, from his seat on Dover Harbour Board at the request of the chairman, Lord Granville, a leading national Liberal and Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports.

We complain about political sleaze now but the pamphlet shows how dirty were politics more than a century ago. Even the Liberal-minded *Dover Express*, a friend of Lord Granville, attacked the sacking of Councillor Crundall by the Liberal coterie. The Conservative's two local newspapers, the *Dover Standard* and the *Dover & County Chronicle*, were even more bitter in their condemnation.

What happened was this. At that time Dover Harbour Board, under Lord Granville, was in the hands of the Liberals. One of the members of the Board died and the Conservative government then in power appointed Councillor Crundall to the vacant place, representing the President of the Board of Trade.

A few months later there was a general election and the Liberals were returned to power. Councillor Crundall had been sitting at Board meetings biding his time to come up with a series of suggestions that he believed would benefit the town of Dover.

But with the Liberals in power the Liberal chairman Lord Granville, saw his chance to get rid of the troublesome

Mr Crundall before he could cause any real bother. He wrote to his friend, Mr Mundella, by then the President of the Board of Trade, suggesting Mr Crundall should be removed from the Board.

An excuse was needed. Lord Granville pointed out that the Crundall family had contracts to supply timber to the two railway companies that sailed ships out of Dover. Both railway companies had representatives on the Board.

Without saying so, Lord Granville was suggesting that here was a clash of interest between Mr Crundall's wood business and his responsibility to the Board. That was sufficient for the President of the Board of Trade who wrote to Mr Crundall thanking him for his few months of service but adding he was being replaced by a man from Shropshire who then moved to Dover.

What the Liberal President of the Board of Trade had probably not realised was that another member of Dover Harbour Board was also a wood merchant. Mr Steriker Finnis, a Liberal, also had contracts to supply wood to at least one of the railway companies.

Mr Crundall's dismissal was first debated by Dover Town Council and condemned with all councillors, Conservative, Liberal and Independent, calling for the reinstatement of Mr Crundall. It did no good. The newspapers took up the issue, condemning the Lord Warden in very strong terms.

28 National newspapers joined in the row, all backing Mr Crundall.

Eventually past and present Members of Parliament wrote to the President of the Board of Trade asking for Councillor Crundall to be returned to the Board. But to no avail.

So Major Dickson\*, one of the two Members of Parliament for Dover, tabled a question in the House of Commons when the President of the Board of Trade admitted he did not realise Mr Steriker Finnis, vice-chairman of the Board, also had contracts with the railways. But the President pointed out that Mr Steriker Finnis was not appointed by the Board of Trade so his continuing to sit on the Harbour Board was nothing to do with him.

Again the Liberal government did nothing and local feeling against Lord Granville grew apace over the insult offered to the popular Councillor Crundall.

So much so that a big dinner was held in Dover Town Hall when Councillor Crundall was the chief guest and many

were the tributes paid to him. Mr Crundall revealed he had hoped to persuade Dover Harbour Board not to hand over a £4,400 surplus to the government to help pay for a larger Dover harbour, to open up Board meetings to the press and the public, and to sell the leases of sea front houses to the tenants and give the revenue to Dover in order to widen Biggin Street.

No wonder the majority of the Board was not in favour of that!

Many suggestions were made in Dover, in the national press and in Parliament that if the Liberal's decision was not reversed there were likely to be sweeping changes in the membership of the Board if and when a Conservative government returned to power.

\* Major A.G. Dickson and Mr C.K. Freshfield (Conservatives) were joint MPs for Dover until the Parliamentary Re-distribution Act which reduced Dover to a one-Member constituency. In 1885 Major Dickson was elected, defeating Mr R. Murray Lawes (Liberal) of Old Park, while Mr Freshfield retired.

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# Membership News

S. R. COPE  
*Membership Secretary*

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## AUTUMN 1997

Our membership stands at 430, slightly more than this time last year. We have both gained and lost about 30 members but the overall trend is upward. While it is inevitable that many members can maintain contact only through our Newsletter, we continue to hope that all members who come to meetings will feel equally at home. Name badges are being worn by the committee members, so please introduce yourselves, especially if you have recently joined.

Warm thanks to those who supply prizes and buy tickets for our raffles; proceeds in winter contribute largely towards the hire charges of St. Mary's hall. We also organised raffles on our three main outings

this summer, raising £77.50, which the committee agreed to make up to £100, as our contribution to the Friends of Dover Hospital. We were unable to man a stall at the fête because the date clashed with our outing to Le Touquet.

Congratulations to Mrs. Janet Johnston who was awarded the MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list. Members who have received similar honours in recent years are Mrs. Joan Dobby, Mr. Derek Leach and Mr. Terry Sutton.

We welcome to our membership: The Rev'd Father Gary Gill, Mr. D. Iron, Mr. J. Aylen and Mrs. S. Allen, Mr. & Mrs. W. Worsley, Mr. & Mrs. P. Sheldrake and Mrs W. T. Westwater.

# Living in a Listed Building

CLIVE ALEXANDER

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**I**T IS DIFFICULT to imagine living in a society which has no historic buildings. Perhaps the nearest one could get to this would be living in one of our "New Towns" developed in the 1950s and 60s. It is some of the faceless environments like these which have helped to fuel public pressure to save the best of what we already have.

Historic buildings give us a valuable link with the past, they enrich our lives and provide an established background for life today. In order to ensure that our most important historic buildings are kept for future generations to enjoy, they are protected by law. Government inspectors identify buildings which are of "Special Architectural or Historic Interest" and these are commonly known as "Listed Buildings".

Owning a listed building can be both a privilege and a burden, for whilst owners have something considered to be of national importance, they are expected to keep their property in good repair and to preserve its character. For the owners of listed buildings, it may seem that everyone is against them, trying to stop them doing what past generations took for granted. What has happened is a change in priorities. Now the law asks us to think a little more about the special qualities of the building and less about our own comfort and convenience. There are many misunderstandings about the legislation surrounding listed buildings and the remainder of this paper tries to set the record straight!

## How are Listed Buildings Chosen?

Listed buildings are identified by inspectors from English Heritage working on behalf of the Department of National Heritage. The criteria used for selection include:

- architectural interest: this considers architectural design, decoration and craftsmanship. Additionally, important examples of particular building types and techniques that display technological innovation will be taken into account.
- historical interest: these include buildings which illustrate important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural or military history.

Generally all buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition are listed; and also most buildings between 1700 and 1840, although selection is necessary. After that period only buildings of definite quality and character are listed. Buildings less than thirty years old are not normally listed. The approach taken for twentieth century buildings is to identify those from a range of building types, e.g. industrial, educational, residential, etc.

Should you wish to try to get your building "listed", anyone can write to the Listing Branch, Department of National Heritage, 2-4 Cockspur Street, London SW1Y 5DH. Any request should include as much information as possible on the history of the building, together with photographs and a location plan.

## How do I find out if my building is Listed?

The easiest way is to ring up the local authority and ask for the Conservation

30 Section, they have details of all the buildings listed in their area. If you buy a building that is listed then the searches made by your solicitor will identify its listing status. If, on the other hand, your property has been listed since it was bought, then the Local Authority will send a letter informing you and giving information on what it means. The local library also normally keeps this information.

### **Are there Different Grades of Listed Buildings?**

There are three different grades of listed buildings. Grade I listed buildings are those of exceptional interest, and tend to be large country houses, churches or castles.

Grade II listed buildings are buildings of special interest. This grade, however, has a sub-group known as Grade II\* (star) which is awarded to buildings with some extra merit, for example a fine interior, which is not quite good enough to be Grade I.

Despite the different grades it is important to remember that the legislation is exactly the same for them all.

### **What is Listed Building Consent?**

Any alterations or additions to a listed building, which affect its character, require listed building consent from the local authority. This includes internal as well as external alterations. In reality, unless it is a repair using identical materials, it is likely to require consent. It is also worth remembering that all buildings within the curtilage of the listed building, built before 1948, are also afforded the same protection.

In order to make a listed building application to your local authority, detailed drawings and plans will be required, together with completed application forms, however the good news is that there is no fee, unlike that required for planning applications!

Deciding on what needs consent can sometimes be difficult. Some things are obvious, e.g. taking down a partition or wall, altering a window or adding an

extension, but relatively small alterations, like changing an internal door or inserting a balance flue for a gas heater will also require consent. If you are in any doubt it is always best to contact the Local Authority before starting work. If your application for listed building consent is refused by the local authority, then you have the right to appeal to the Secretary of State.

### **What are the penalties for doing work without Consent?**

Anyone who alters a listed building without consent can be taken to court, as a well-known Essex M.P. has recently found out! The legislation allows courts to impose substantial fines and even imprisonment!! This underlies the need to always consult your local authority before carrying out work to a listed building.

### **Are there any Grants available for Repairing Listed Buildings?**

Limited grants are often available from the local authority for carrying out structural repairs to listed buildings, however these grants are normally quite small, and are aimed at ensuring that repairs are carried out using good quality matching materials in the traditional manner. English Heritage can also offer grants for the repair of Grade I and II\* listed buildings.

Fortunately the pendulum of public opinion has now swung in favour of conserving our historic buildings. Their presence adds to the quality of all our lives and they help to sustain a sense of local identity which is important, as so many of our towns now look the same. I would like to conclude with a quotation from William Morris, which for me says it all, "A place without old buildings is like a person without a memory".

*Clive Alexander is the Conservation Officer for Dover District Council, however it should be noted that the views expressed in this article are those of the author and not of the District Council.)*



# SAINT MARTIN – *Dover's Patron Saint* 31

TERRY SUTTON

**W**HO WAS THIS GUY, St. Martin, Dover's patron saint, whose name is so much to the forefront in our town? In the Great East Window in St. Mary's Church he is depicted as a warrior saint with a goose clucking around his feet. Yet he was more a conscientious objector than a warrior.

Martin was a native of Sabaria, a town of Pannonia, born in the fourth century, the son of an army officer. Because he was the son of a veteran, at the age of fifteen he was forced to join up himself - a sort of early-day conscript. Yet he disliked the life of learning to kill.

It was while Martin was stationed at Amiens that he made a name for himself in an incident which is depicted on our Coat of arms, 1,500 years later.

One freezing morning, at the gate of Amiens, he noticed a poorly-clothed, old beggar pleading for alms. Rather like today, the passers by tried to ignore the old man. But not Martin. He had no cash at hand, only his armour, sword and cloak. Jumping from his horse he slashed his own cloak in two and gave one half to the beggar, while wrapping himself in the remaining section. Those who saw this generosity were ashamed. That night, so it is told, Martin had a dream in which he saw Jesus dressed in the half of the cloak that he had given to the beggar.

Martin did not immediately leave the army. Probably men could not buy themselves out in those days. But when he was about twenty there was a barbarian invasion of Gaul. With his comrades, Martin paraded before his commander-in-chief to collect his war bounty. When it was his turn to go forward, Martin told his commander, "I have served you as a soldier. Now let me go to serve Christ. Give my bounty to the others who are going to fight for you but I am a soldier of Christ and it is not lawful for me to fight."

Martin was accused of cowardice but he

responded by saying that he was willing to go into the battle line without arms and advance against the enemy in the name of Christ. Instead he was thrown into prison but shortly afterwards was honourably discharged from the army. His killing days were over.

He went from the army to Poitiers where St. Hilary welcomed him into the church. For his beliefs he got into further trouble, after converting his mother to Christianity. For years he lived in virtual isolation on an island in the Gulf of Genoa. Eventually he returned to Gaul, where he tried to pursue his vocation in solitude, but about A.D. 371 the people of Tours demanded Martin as their bishop. He wanted none of it but they tricked him into visiting Tours and he was acclaimed bishop by the local clergy and people.

He lived in a cell near the church but had so many visitors that he retired to an isolated abbey where, it is claimed, he carried out many miracles.

He was no member of the Green Party, judging by the number of trees he had chopped down. This was because many people in Gaul worshipped trees as idols. One of his reported "miracles" was to have himself tied to a tree, on the dangerous leaning side, and then order the woodcutters to get to work. The tree, so we are told, always fell the other way!

Saint Martin had a knowledge about his approaching death. His disciples pleaded with him not to die but, on 8 November 397, in a remote part of his diocese, he departed this life and was buried a couple of days later at Tours, where a chapel was built over his grave.

Why Martin should have been adopted as Dover's patron saint is difficult to understand, especially as Dover was a garrison town and Martin was not a particularly good PR story for the army.

But perhaps, through his vocation, he was.

# *Dendrology Ho!*

## REMARKABLE TREES IN KENT

— OWEN JOHNSON —

*We are deeply indebted to Dr Johnson and to the Editor of the "International Dendronology Yearbook" for 1996 for permission to reprint this captivating article.*

THE FASCINATION OF TRAVELLING the countryside and visiting gardens and stately homes searching for and measuring spectacular specimen trees, needs no elaborating. Among the benefits can be counted the opportunity to protect trees by alerting their owners as to how big or unusual they are. Britain's trees too – not only wild ones but everyday street or garden trees, or the big conifers of Victorian parks – make an impact on the landscape out of all proportion to the research which has not yet been conducted into their abundance or variety. The atmosphere of dignity and peacefulness, for instance, in a scene with many trees thirty metres tall, is quite different to the impact of one where, owing to exposure or poor soil, the trees are only fifteen to twenty metres in height.

### *Tree Register of the British Isles:*

The process of discovering where and how big different trees can and do grow in Britain, which was the life work of the late Alan Mitchell, is now being pursued by the Tree Register of the British Isles, for which I am one of a number of volunteer recorders. In the summer of 1995, thanks to funding from the Merlin Trust, I found myself in Kent – scouring the horizon through binoculars for tell-tale foliage and promising crown shapes, marching onwards through cemeteries and sleepy hamlets, peering through hedges and probably alerting numerous

Neighbourhood Watch schemes, and knocking everywhere on the front doors of the good and the great. In the case of the better-known collections, the process was one of updating existing records of growth-rates and likely lifespan. Everywhere else, it was also one of discovery.

Kent, like much of the British Isles, is remarkable for its variety of soils and landforms, packed into a small area. Climatically, too, it is a battleground between the mild, moist air off the Atlantic which penetrates up the Channel, and the influence of the adjacent Continent with its hot dry summers and harsh winters... One product of the Kentish survey has been a clearer picture of just how much these variations are mirrored in the pattern of tree growths within the county. Kent's tallest tree, a grand fir of 46 x 126<sup>1</sup> at Bedgebury National Pinetum, grows among other conifers from the western seaboard of North America, such as douglas fir and sitka spruce, which find the conditions here, in the intricate valleys of the High Weald, just cool, moist and sheltered enough to thrive and reach dimensions exceptional for south-east England. This well-watered sandstone country in the south western fringes of Kent, with its rash of Victorian mansions and their well-treed parks, provides generally the most rewarding conditions for tree-hunting.

<sup>1</sup> Measurements are of the height in metres x the bole diameter in centimetres at, unless stated, 1.5m. All are 1995.

## Bedgebury, Mote Park, Wateringbury

A few miles north of the narrow clay plain of the Low Weald, the Lower Greensand forms another sandstone ridge. Here, however, the soils tend to be richer, sometimes alkaline, the rainfall is ten to twenty per cent lower and the summers are marginally hotter and sunnier. Suddenly the giant American conifers cease to play any part in the landscape. Instead, heat-loving trees thrive, such as the east-coast American black walnut, which after fifty years at Bedgebury remains thin and stunted. Mote Park, Maidstone, has one 190cm in bole diameter planted around 1910 and dead above twenty-seven metres, and all seven others are ten times the size of the largest at Bedgebury. A few miles away, in a private garden at Wateringbury, the largest example found in Britain of the heat-loving American honey locust is 25 x 75. So fertile is the ragstone of this part of the ridge that the small garden contains the tallest recorded "Prinz Handjery" sycamore, 12 x 42, possibly the best *Acer negundo*, 15 x 75, and a number of other outstanding trees.

### North Downs

North and east of the greensand again, the chalk of the North Downs forms a third range of hills. The demanding conditions offered by raw chalk are ameliorated over much of the downs by cappings of acidic clay, particularly south of Canterbury where heat-loving trees also grow well and nearly every isolated village – Elmstead, Stowting, Nackington, Upper Hardres, Bossingham, Waltham – has its huge old churchyard yew, but where parks and gardens are generally far-flung. Some of the most notable trees in this region are totally unexpected: the tender red beech *Nothofagus fusca* of 21 x 75 at Goodnestone Park, almost within sight of the North Sea, or the clean-boled Monterey cypress at Waldershare Park, 28 x 194: Monterey cypress thrives in the rain of the western

seaboard but is too tender to be grown at Bedgebury. Sweet chestnuts, again, hate chalk, but the clay is deep enough for most of the Kentish giants to be clustered in this patch of the Downs. The biggest is at Howlett's Zoo, east of Canterbury, 23 x 327 at 0,5m under massive boughs – a youthful tree which has increased in diameter by nine per cent in the space of fifteen years

### Named Trees in Nonington

But the most astonishing of the trees here are the English oaks on the site of the old house at Fredville Park, Nonington no other big oaks being reported from these Downs. By the eighteenth century, the largest of these maiden oaks had been given individual aims. "Beauty", 20 x 197, was commended in 1821 for "the regularity of its bark" being beautiful beyond conception – a notable feature still on its long cylindrical trunk, which bears only light branches, many of which have now died back. "Stately" is larger though far less shapely, at 17 x 241. "Majesty", at 19 x 384, is probably the finest though not quite the largest English oak in Britain, having a trunk hollow but entire which runs for 6m with very little taper and still bears high boughs larger than most mature trees. Measurements made since 1821 suggest that all three trees are in the range of 500 years old. "Majesty" in particular continues to increase its diameter at the standard rate for healthy trees in their prime – a little under 1cm per annum.

### Tunbridge Wells, Kent's Tree Capital

As nine trees out of ten measured on any recording trip are likely to be planted ornamentals, it is inevitable that record specimens will cluster around centres of population. In old settlements, nutrient accumulation and the constant shelter of tall buildings also sponsor good growth. Kent's tree capital is Tunbridge Wells, ideally situated on the northern fringe of

34 the High Weald. Because of the moist and sheltered microclimate, several of the outstanding trees here are conifers which generally are too pollution-sensitive to be at their best in town air. A bushy but gigantic Grecian fir in the small garden of "Creggans", is 28 x 233 at 0.4 between the boughs. An example of the rare larch *Larix x pendula*, growing in front of the Spa Hotel at Manor Park, is much the largest found, at 24 x 88, whilst a weeping wellingtonia in a back garden in Birling Road, at 9 x 82, is second only to one at Bodnant in Wales and has thrown out monstrously snaking branches as far as the house. Other Tunbridge Wells "Champion Trees" include *Acer cappadocicum* "Aureum" in a Warwick Park back garden, 13 x 76 at 1 m and *Prunus avium* "Plena" in the Grosvenor and Hilbert Recreation Ground, 15 x 79.

### Miracles in Maidstone and Canterbury

One of the biggest wellingtonias in Kent, 35 x 226, grows, most unexpectedly, only a kilometre from the heart of Maidstone in the grounds of Turkey Court. What has overridden the crippling effects of town air in this case is the high water-table in this remarkable "secret garden" behind the Ashford Road, with its series of lakes and cascades.

In the pocket-handkerchief front garden of Vernon Grange in the Old Dover Road, Canterbury, a judas tree was planted in 1927. Fortuitously, this did not, as do most judas trees, grow in a largely horizontal fashion, but has remained tall and straight and is now the finest in the country at 11 x 64. The discovery of this tree was capped almost immediately by recording the largest *Prunus sargentii* in Britain in front of the Kent County Constabulary Nationality Department office opposite, 9 x 85. This cherry is dwarfed, however, by the larger of two *Prunus x yedoensis* on the golf course at Mote Park, 9 x 109 and still growing with wild abandon.

### Knole Park, Sevenoaks

The tallest native trees in any county are found as likely as not in deer parks, where over many centuries trees have been left to grow to their full stature and draw the next generation ever taller, without this being simply due to unfarmably poor soil. Half of the trees over thirty-seven metres tall in Kent (the other half being nearly all Victorian wellingtonias) still grow in the greensand at Knole Park, Sevenoaks, despite all the losses sustained here in the storm of 1987. Among these trees are the tallest sessile oak currently recorded in Britain, 40 x 188 with 10m of clean bole, and the tallest and finest hornbeam, a tree like a forest beech which, despite the loss of its central crown, is 29 x 130.

### Elms: Maidstone, Rolvenden, Benenden, Petham, Cranbrook

The Dutch elm's close relative, the Huntingdon elm, is a much tougher tree, and specimens still grace many town parks, particularly near the east. The best, at Chaucer House, Maidstone, was 25 x 112.

The eastern North Downs is one of the heartlands of the smooth-leaved elm, *Ulmis minor*, a variable species of which some examples can be guaranteed to survive. The biggest noted was not on the generally windswept Downs but near Rolvenden - a large-leaved form of 17 x 114. The variety *subarosa*, a corky-twiggled tree was grown by Collingwood Ingram at Benenden Grange from seed collected in France, and a tree of 12 x 46 survives there, with a scion making good progress at Hemsted Tbl nearby. The golden "Wredei" is another resident clone, with the finest tree at 23 Warwick Park, Tunbridge Wells, 15 x 47, and at Kenfield Court, Petham, 15 x 48. "Sarniensis", the Wheatley elm, was noted only at Cranbrook and at Chaucer House, 23 x 79.

## Elms: Sandwich, Saltwood, Wateringbury, Canterbury, Maidstone

Little research has been conducted into the varieties of elm growing wild in East Kent before Dutch elm disease struck. Some trees seen last summer appeared to be *Ulmus minor plotii*, a nominally Midlands form – the largest, 18 x 77, in a hedge near Knowlton Park, west of Sandwich.

Like *Ulmus minor*, the wych-elm is genetically variable enough for the occasional resistant survivor to be found. Being the elm of more acidic soils, these are mainly in the Weald, with the best being on the greensand at Saltwood, 24 x 93. The weeping cultivar "Camperdown" is disease resistant and still planted: the biggest, at Wateringbury, is 6 x 66. Much rarer now is the less weeping and more elegant "Horizontalis", which has survived at the Dane John Gardens, Canterbury, 13 x 83.

The largest surviving example of a rarer elm grows at Mote Park. This is the Siberian elm, *Ulmus pumila arborea*, 22 x 66.

## Oak, Ash, Wingnut, Bean, Crack Willow.

Let me end by mentioning a few other favourite finds. Much the largest scarlet oak yet found in Britain grows in a lane-side hedge opposite Kenfield Court, 24 x 118, with a fine bole. At Bedgebury School, the biggest recorded weeping ash

is 12 x 136. The largest known *Betula lenta*, among some outstanding trees at the Red House, Crockham Hill, measures 12 x 57. The wild service tree makes particularly good growth on Kentish clay, and an exceptional tree at Hall Place, Leigh, with a long columnar bole, is outstanding at 19 x 124. Other remarkable trees at this lovely garden include the biggest example of the normally tiny *Pyrus salicifolia* in the country, 9 x 69.

The hybrid wingnut, *Pterocarya x rehderiana*, is one of the most vigorous trees known. How long it can keep up this vigour has been shown by a tree at Frensham Manor, Rolvenden, a spontaneous cross which was planted in 1928 and has grown to 21 x 148. Another tree showing hybrid vigour is the bean tree, *Catalpa x erubescens*, of which the largest in Britain is a tree of 17 x 123 below Chilham Castle.

*Salix x Meyeriana* is an exceedingly rare hybrid between the native crack and bay willow, combining the latter's glossy foliage with the vigorous growth of the crack willow. A grove of apparently spontaneous trees found near Hunton includes one which has reached the previously unsuspected size of 20 x 70.

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Tree Register's huge fund of information about large, rare and historic trees is accessible to anyone interested in the subject: donations welcome. Please contact the Secretary, Mrs P.A. Stevenson, 77A Hall End, WOOTTON, Bedford, MK43 9HP

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## Spotted by Margery Wright in a recent issue of the *Dover Express*:

### CLOSURE OF

#### WELLARDS WAY FOOTBRIDGE

Notice is hereby given that Railtrack Southern will be carrying out essential maintenance works to Wellards Way Footbridge which carries the footpath over the Dover to Folkestone railway lines and on to Dover West (sic) Beach. In the interests of public safety it will

be necessary to close the footbridge for the period of 29 November 1997 to 29 March 1998.

WS Atkins Rail Ltd are managing the works in (sic) behalf of Railtrack and any queries relating to the closure should be addressed to Mr A Dean, WS Atkins Rail Ltd, Floor 18, Network Centre, Wellesley Grove, Croyden (sic) CR9 1DA.

*Editorial comment:* Does work on the footbridge portend the permanent closure, after the completion of the adjacent sewage pumping station works, of the now 'temporarily' closed but much more convenient Pilot's Crossing, near the foot of the Admiralty Pier?

And have you ever heard of "Wellards Way"?

# *Sir Edward Poynter's Stained Glass*

AT THE MAISON DIEU ALAN BROOKS

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**D**OVER IS FORTUNATE TO POSSESS a magnificent series of stained glass windows designed by one of the most eminent of the classical painters of the Victorian period, Sir Edward Poynter. These windows were designed when he was only twenty-one, and are by far his best work in stained glass. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that the windows rank among the best in the country for glass of that period.

In his career, Sir Edward Poynter reached the pinnacle of artistic achievement. He became Director of the National Gallery in 1894, and then President of the Royal Academy in 1896 a post which he held until 1918, the year before he died. He was perhaps the most distinguished of several painters who had an early involvement in stained glass. A few, such as his brother-in-law, Burne Jones, continued their involvement in stained glass design as a major part of their artistic career all their lives.

Poynter first received commissions for stained glass designs when he was studying in Paris in 1857. He produced work for the important firm of Powells of Whitefriars between that date and 1863, at which point he ceased designing for glass because he was beginning to achieve success as a painter. His work can be seen notably in churches at St. Ives, Cornwall and Hitchen, Herts.

The Maison Dieu in Dover dates originally from 1253 and has had a varied and fascinating history. When it was purchased by the Corporation of Dover in 1834 it needed much restoration. A major phase was commenced in 1859, when sufficient funds had built up. Ambrose Poynter was appointed as architect, but was soon after forced to

retire through failing eyesight. He handed the job over to William Burges, now known as one of the most exceptional of Victorian architects. Burges was responsible for obtaining stained glass work for the young Edward Poynter, Ambrose's son, while in Paris, and it was he who undoubtedly put forward Edward in 1860 for the job of producing a design for a window in the Maison Dieu in memory of a Mr Bass, a relative of a former Town Clerk. The subject was 'The Embarkation of Henry VIII at Dover for the Field of Cloth of Gold, 1520'. This design was so admired that the Restoration of the Hall Committee quickly resolved to obtain five more designs from Poynter of historical events concerning Dover. The matter went to the full Council who, after debating whether it was reasonable to pay Poynter the sum of £20 on production of the designs (about £650 in today's terms), approved it.

In the event, the Council got a bargain. The composition, figure design and historical detail in all the windows, is of the highest quality. Poynter later became known for a meticulous attention to detail in his paintings. In these window designs he was assisted greatly by his father Ambrose, who settled in Dover and was active in local archaeological work, and the

Town Coroner, George Thompson, who himself is commemorated in the second window of the series, having been killed by the accidental explosion of a gun at Archcliffe Fort. This window was installed in 1861 and its subject is 'The Landing of Charles II at Dover on his Restoration in 1660'.

The making of the other four windows followed as commemorative funds became available. 'The Landing of the Emperor Sigismund Opposed in 1416' dates from 1864, 'The Relief of Dover Castle by John de Pencester in 1216' in 1865, 'Henry III granting the Charter of the Maison Dieu to Hubert de Burgh, 1277' in 1872, and 'The Embarkation of Edward III at Dover, 1359' in 1873.

Having designed the original water-colour sketches for the windows, Poynter was subsequently actively involved in the cartooning of the full-scale designs in the studios of the stained glass makers in the case of the first two windows, which he signed along with the makers, and also the 1871 window where the *Dover Express* felt impressed enough to report the fact. His involvement is likely in fact with all except the last, the 1873 window, whose

figure work is noticeably not as strong as the others.

The series achieves a remarkable unity considering that it was made over a period of thirteen years by two different stained glass firms. The first two windows were produced by the prolific William Wailes of Newcastle, who had also made the west window of the hall in 1858 and the following four windows by the London firm of Heaton, Butler and Bayne, who picked up a reputation for fine glass in the early 1860s and who had designed a notable window in 1864 for the nearby new St. James's church (demolished as redundant after WW2). It was they who made the later series in the adjacent Connaught Hall and Council Chamber.

With the revival of interest in Victorian stained glass, Poynter's windows today should be seen once again as a gem of artistic achievement of which Dover can be proud.

(This essay is a much reduced version of that which won the Pevsner Memorial Prize for 1996 awarded by the Victorian Society and which is published in their Annual for this year.)

#### POSTSCRIPT

Heard on the B.B.C. programme "Sunday" on Radio 4 on the morning of 2nd November 1997:

*(paraphrased)* William Wailes of Newcastle, the old established firm of stained glass makers, suffering from an almost total lack of orders, will close down at the end of November.

The firm said *(still paraphrasing)* they had many potential orders that were to be, or might be, financed through the Millenium Fund, but the wheels of the Fund turned so slowly that they could not survive the waiting period. .

#### and POSTSCRIPT II

On 16th November during the same serial programme the B.B.C. said *(para-phrasing)*

The possibility of helping the firm out of its difficulties is being examined and there appears to be a good chance that there will be a successful outcome. B.A.

**MICHAEL JOHN SARTIN.** We are sad to have to record the death of Mike Sartin who recently took on the post of Archivist to the Society. Though he had not spent all his life in Dover he was well respected and well loved and all who knew him, especially in H.M.Customs, will miss him greatly. At his cremation the chapel was full to overflowing.



# *Index to the 1851 Census Return for Dover*

MARTYN C. WEBSTER

CENSUSES OF THE POPULATION have been taken in the United Kingdom every ten years since 1801 (with the exception of the Second World War year 1941). Originally the purpose was to assess the numbers of fighting males available during the Napoleonic Wars and also to obtain accurate figures of the size of the population to be fed and defended in the threat of invasion. In peacetime other considerations and requirements came to apply.

After the period 1801-1831 when only numerical and sex figures were collected, it came about that in 1841 names, addresses, occupations, ages and whether or not people were born in their county of residence were compiled.

The 1851 census was a first, in that apart from recording all the extra information taken in 1841, it then recorded the actual place where everyone declared themselves to have been born. Although unappreciated at the time of course, and it must be admitted unintended for that purpose, it now serves as a vital tool for all family history researchers and students of social history.

The schedules of census returns are released for public scrutiny only 100 years after the information was first collected. Those for the years 1841-1891 are available to enquirers at the Public Record Office, the original folios now all converted to microfilm or microfiche. Many of these are also located at the places to which they apply. Dover Library Local Section holds such records as fall within its ambit.

For those interested in genealogy, local and social history surname indexes of these census returns, especially those of 1851 where birthplace was given for the first time, are an invaluable asset. It was for this reason that I, as an expatriate Dovorian, and one who helped to produce other records of Dover people, decided to compile at my own initiative and expense a surname, first name and birthplace index of all those listed in the 1851 Dover census. This is shortly to be made generally available through the auspices of the Kent Family History Society, although the completed project has already been deposited in microfiche at Dover Library and Museum.

Thanks to the hard work of Ruth Nicol and Kathleen Hollingsbee, such indexes for East Kent are already in place for most of the parishes all around Dover (with the exception for the moment of Deal, Walmer and Sandwich). Once these have been achieved, genealogy in this area, aided by all the other indexes of people, trades, etc. that already exist, will be really well served.

It is true that partial transcripts of the Dover 1851 census returns have been made. They are: a 2% national sample taken by Cambridge University (brief extracts from Dover Castle and Heights Barracks); the Dover Mariners' Index by Ruth Nicol (covering 1941-1891); and a list of Kent-born Sussex "Strays" plus twenty-five German musicians staying at hotels in the Pier District by Philip Hudsmith of Canada. However these are but the tiniest

selection of the whole. As far as my Dover index is concerned, I have produced it in seven parts, 1-5 consisting of the constituent parishes of the borough. That is:

Part 1 -  
Guston-in-Dover (East Cliff) pop. 771  
Charlton pop. 2,513

Part 2 -  
Extra-Parochial- (Dover Castle and East Cliff) pop. 862

Part 3 - Hougham pop. 2,639

Part 4 - Buckland pop. 1,893

Part 5 - St. James pop. 3,699

Part 6 - St. Mary pop. 19,116

Part 7 - Overall surname index to parts 1-6, Street Index, Maps, Post Office Directory, Enumeration Details.

The population of the borough of Dover in 1851 was therefore well over 20,000 persons. The total number of different surnames was 3,587 of which the top ten were Smith (227), Clark[E] (222), Marsh (172), Jones (137), Wood (128), Baker (121), Taylor (119), Williams (110), Beer (101), Johnson (101).

The overall impression gained however from this fascinating snapshot glimpse of Dover nearly 150 years ago is the extent to which the fortunes of our historic town have been almost totally reversed. Take for example the gracious marine residences on the sea front occupied by mainly retired, titled or holidaying gentlefolk, many of them of military or foreign background. Little hint now survives of the former prosperity thanks to the demise of the old social order, and the ravages of time and a war that destroyed so much of the fabric of the town, both human and material. In 1851 it was a thriving community drawn from every corner of these islands and abroad that was as diverse and unique for a provincial town as almost anywhere outside London. It might be said that although the people did not have all the modern sophistications we enjoy today, everyone except the old or infirm, appeared to have a job of sorts and the impression was that the quality of their lives in the context of their time was that much the richer than ours. With the

feature of the town being the major cross-Channel port, a military garrison, a market town as well as a watering place of some fashion, Dover could well have rivalled a resort like Brighton. It is sobering to see how much has been lost.

In transcribing the census I had to read through the handwriting, some immaculate but occasionally virtually illegible, of the twenty-seven enumerators (whose occupations included those of parish clerk, tax collector, schoolmaster, beer seller, confectioner and builder, among others) from 682 folios of manuscript. The average number of persons enumerated by each enumerator was 828. My process of doing this involved reading from each folio, line by line and frame by frame from the microfilm copy, writing down the requisite information on delineated pro-formas and in due course sorting all the information by computer into alphabetical order, giving a final total of 22,293 lines. A laborious and time-consuming enterprise which has taken four years to achieve fruition, undertaken around a full-time job.

The major difficulties in the operation were basically that of bad handwriting and poor quality of either the original folios or film copies. Some names proved very difficult, if not impossible, to decipher. Also it was clear that quite a few people could either not write their own names down or could not spell them correctly. My particular favourites are the landlady of the "Bell" in St. James's Street, Mrs. Susannah Handsumbodie, and a Polish commercial agent named Sochaszewski whose spelling completely defeated the poor enumerator.

There is much more I could add but space forbids. This project is at last complete. I cannot say that I and my advisors have got all the difficult or illegible names right but the results have been arrived at to the best of our ability. It has been a most rewarding and fulfilling experience to associate my name with the original twenty-seven enumerators, without whose diligent travails this wonderful human extract from Dover's glorious past would never have been possible.

# 40 *Cruise Welcome Group*

## *Meeting on 20th August 1997* MERRIL LILLEY

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THE MEETING WAS HELD at the Town Council Offices, Castle Street. It was reported that various new contacts had been made with nearly all the shipping agents and it was hoped to try to increase our presence on the ships next year. It was also suggested that early next year these new contacts be invited to Dover for familiarisation trips.

Next year there will be fewer ships overall. This is due mainly to the fact that some of the ships using Dover as their home port are going on long haul cruises and will thus be away for much longer periods. 115 ships are expected, the majority in the summer months, as has happened this year, so in fact the difference is minimal. It was felt that every effort must be made to attract ships to the port as the cruise ship industry is for ever fluctuating.

One of the major items for discussion was the provision of a promotional information pack. This would need enormous resources, not least the filling of 25,000 envelopes. Questions of help, logos, funding, sponsorship, design and printing were all discussed. The package would have to be ready by April 1998.

A trial day for the use of Horse & Carriage from the docks was to be held on 30th August, when the *Maasdam* was in port. Results are awaited.

Colin Sawyer reported the success of the Dover Guide which appears to have had a great impact on the town, not only for

passengers and crew but also for local people. The current monthly print was 4,000 copies and it was felt this could be increased. Colin agreed, saying all that was needed was a small increase in the number of advertisers. The idea of translations into other languages (French, German, Italian, Dutch) was also discussed.

It was suggested that the group now needed a paid co-ordinator and that this was evident from the time Miranda had spent on cruise work this summer. The group needed someone to be in charge of keeping in contact with agents and tour operators. It was thought that contributing parties to the salary for the post might include Dover Harbour Board, D.D.C., T.C.M. and Dover Town Council. The post would be for a short term contract covering the cruise ship season. The idea would be explored further before the next meeting.

Tina Pullinger, from Town Centre Management, was elected as the next chairperson of the group.

Under AOB the question of access for taxis to the Eastern Docks, when cruise ships were berthed there, was discussed at length. Drivers felt that a new system should be introduced a.s.a.p. Also discussed was a liaison with the new Radio Station, Neptune Radio.

Lastly, Miranda of Dover District Council, who was leaving at the end of September, was thanked for all her hard work.

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### THE BRONZE AGE BOAT

The Society recently made a donation of £1000 to the Fund for the Restoration of the Bronze Age Boat and an acknowledgement has been received from the Museum Curator, Miss Christine Waterman, on behalf of the Fund.

THE 4TH JULY 1997, AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY, was celebrated in great style in Dover aboard the luxury liner, the *Crystal Harmony*, which berthed at the terminal that morning. She is the largest cruise ship to use the new terminal, being 241 metres in length - ten metres longer than the *Royal Princess* which set the record a year ago.

It was agreed by the Cruise Welcome Group that we should mark the occasion and I suggested presenting the lady passengers with a red rose buttonhole. With the blessing of the Dover District Council, I managed to obtain sponsorship, not only from the Council but also from the Town Centre Management, De Bradelei Wharf and the Churchill Hotel. The roses were ordered from "Ann and Pam" the florists in Cherry Tree Avenue. Pam really "rose" to the occasion and delivered 450 buttonholes to my home late in the evening of July 3rd, ready for me to take to the Cruise Terminal the following morning.

At 8 a.m. on the 4th July we set up our stand in the terminal. Mr. John Turgoose, General Manager (Shipping), Dover Harbour Board, was the first to be presented with a buttonhole, together with the Captain of the *Crystal Harmony*.

The gesture was much appreciated and the Captain mentioned this in a radio interview on Radio Kent later that morning.

At 10.30 a.m. the Dover V.I.P.'s and members of the press - including our own Dover Society member, Terry Sutton - arrived and were taken on a conducted tour of this elegant vessel. Needless to say, the cabins are really sumptuous and so they should be at over 1,000 dollars a day!! The tour concluded at 12 noon and we were all entertained by the Captain at a Welcome Reception, with Barbara Sturgeon of Radio Kent giving a running commentary. It was indeed a really successful morning. I was unaware, until then, that Americans call "Bucks Fizz" a "Mimosa" - I think I still prefer "Bucks Fizz" -

By mid-afternoon passengers began to embark and were greeted at the terminal by a string quartet, champagne and a red rose buttonhole for the ladies. It was a most happy occasion. One lady passenger remarked to me, "The Colonists have come back home"...

We in Dover have every reason to be proud of what Dover Harbour Board has achieved. The potential is tremendous for the future of the cruise terminal - long may it continue.

DAPHNE DAVIS

## DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue No. 31 will be **Monday 16th February.**

The Editor welcomes contributions and interesting drawings or photographs. "Paper copy" should be typed at double spacing - if it must be handwritten please write clearly and at wide line spacing. Accurate, fully proof-read "copy" on computer discs is most welcome - almost all types can be handled - but a prior phone call to 01304 208008 to confirm would be helpful.

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I/We agree to abide by the Constitution of the Dover Society.

Signed (1)..... (2).....

(A copy of the Constitution may be read in the Reference Department of the Dover Public Library. It is based on the model constitution published by the Civic Trust)

MEMBERSHIP: Individually - £6 annually. Joint Membership - £10 annually.

Please make cheques payable to the Dover Society and forward the cheque or cash to the Membership Secretary; Mrs Sheila Cope, 53 Park Avenue, Dover CT16 1HD.

*It would help us in our planning if you would please complete this section.*

I/We could sometimes give practical help with the following. (please tick boxes)

SOCIAL EVENTS  WRITING REPORTS

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If you have changed your address since your last subscription payment please tick this box  and please tick the next box if you are willing to assist, occasionally, with the distribution of the Newsletter.

# PROGRAMME

## **DECEMBER 13**

Saturday 7 for 7.30

**Members and Guests  
1998**

## **CHRISTMAS FEAST – £17.00**

In the Refectory at Dover College

*Entertainment:* RODERICK SPENCER AND FRIENDS

## **JANUARY 19**

Monday 7.30

**Members and Guests**

## **MEMBERS' MEETING**

*Speakers:* MR C. WADE on "SAXON WAY"

MR MIKE DAWSON on

"PLANNING FOR DOVER – PROBLEMS and  
OPPORTUNITIES"

St. Mary's Parish Centre

Parking at Stembrook

## **FEBRUARY 16**

Monday 7.30

**Members and Guests**

## **WINE AND WISDOM – £4**

*Presented by:* CLIVE TAYLOR

St. Mary's Parish Centre

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## **MARCH 16**

Monday 7.30

**Members and Guests**

## **MEMBERS' MEETING**

*Speakers:* MISS LILLIAN KAY on "DOVER"

JON IVESON on "THE WESTERN HEIGHTS"

St. Mary's Parish Centre

Parking at Stembrook

## **APRIL 27**

Monday 7.30

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

*Speaker:* DR PERCIVAL

## **MAY**

EXCURSION

## **JUNE**

EXCURSION

## **JULY**

FRENCH EXCURSION

## **SEPTEMBER**

LONDON EXCURSION

## **OCTOBER 19**

Monday 7.30

MEMBERS' MEETING

## **NOVEMBER 16**

Monday 7.30

MEMBERS'S MEETING

## **DECEMBER**

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