

The
Dover
Society

Newsletter

No. 59

August 2007



St Mary's Church, Dover

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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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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, archæology, 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 Newsletters 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

The last indoor meeting was the eighteenth Annual General Meeting of the Society held on 16th April at St Mary's Parish Centre. Details of the meeting are given in the Newsletter together with the Treasurer's annual financial report. It is hoped that the members continue to support the "Gift Aid" scheme as this is of a real benefit to the society and at no extra cost for the individual, so please do sign the form.

By the time this edition appears most of our summer outings will have taken place. These as usual were well organised by Pat Hooper who puts in a lot of hard work making sure that all runs smoothly.

Later this month is the trip to St. Peter's Village Broadstairs, there are some seats still available but to avoid any disappointment please book with Pat as soon as possible on 01304 2281289. You will also find included booking forms for the September visit to Boulogne, in conjunction with our friends from Condette, and the Christmas Feast. These are all likely to prove very popular so it is advisable to secure your place by contacting Pat as soon as possible.

August also sees the Archery World Cup, the Dover Regatta and the Dover Rowing Club Regatta. October marks the return of our indoor meetings and in November we hope to have a talk on the future of Buckland Hospital and health care in Dover. There will also be an opportunity for members to have their questions answered, as we know you have many concerns on this subject.

Already this year Dover has been host to a number of events. The Dover Film Festival, the Carnival and the Multicultural Festival were all a success, all bigger events than last year and attracting larger attendances. The Dover Music Society, the Western Heights

Preservation Society, the Dover Operatic and Dramatic Society and the Blackfish Academy along with many others are all proving to be increasingly popular.

Next year will also see the Dover Festival, with many events throughout the year

and the return of the ever-successful Dover Pageant.

With many thanks to all who have contributed or helped in any way in the production and distribution of this latest newsletter.

Editor

DEADLINE for contributions

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 60 will be Wednesday 10th October 2007. The Editor welcomes contributions and interesting drawings or photographs. 'Paper copy' should be typed at double spacing. Handwritten copy should be clear with wide line spacing. Accurate fully proof-read copy on computer discs is acceptable; please ring 01304 213668 to discuss details.

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Summer 2007

At 467 our membership is the highest ever and 10 more than this time last year. The overall increase is due mainly to the efforts of our most recent Committee members who have all worked hard to increase our numbers.

Please remember that our membership year runs from April 1st to March 31st. Renewals are not therefore due on the anniversary of joining, as is the case with some organisations. Nevertheless those who join "late" from December onwards are given the benefit of an initial extra month or two.

We have welcomed:- Miss M Potts, Mrs Y Green, Ms R Parkinson, Mr J Burniston, Mr P & Mrs V Franklin, Mr S Millen, Mr N Hill, Mrs J Percy, Mr E Wheeler, Mr P & Mrs L Sullivan, Mr R & Mrs O Ford, Mr P Green.

Sheila Cope, Membership Secretary

Zeebrugge Day Ceremony 2007



Our Chairman Derek Leach OBE laying the Dover Society wreath at Zeebrugge Day Ceremony, 23rd April.

Every year on St George's Day we remember the sacrifice and outstanding valour of those involved in the Zeebrugge raid in 1918. After the service at the cemetery those present made their way to the Maison Dieu Hall where the Zeebrugge Bell was rung as a sign of respect.



Amis du Château Visit

In June the Chairman Derek Leach and 13 members of the Dover Society met with 47 members of l'association des Amis du château de Condette for lunch.

They were welcomed, in the Stone Hall of the Maison Dieu, on behalf of the society by the Right Worshipful the Town Mayor of Dover, Councillor Bob Markham.

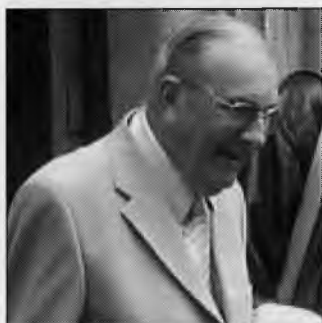
Daniel Dutertre, President of the Condette association spoke briefly about the aims for exchange links and other cultural activities between the two societies.

The Mayor of Condette Jean-Kaddour Derrar, who accompanied l'association des Amis du château, thanked the Dover Society and especially Pat Hooper for organising the lunch in such a magnificent venue. He concluded by saying that they were looking forward to the return visit by the Dover Society in September.



Mayor of Dover, Bob Markham

After an excellent lunch the Condette party, chaperoned by Pat paid a visit to Canterbury Cathedral before returning to Dover to catch the ferry to Calais.



President of l'association des Amis du château, Daniel Dutertre



Mayor of Condette, Jean-Kaddour Derrar



MARCH MEETING

Discovering Lost Dover

*A report by Alan Lee on a talk by
Brian Philp, Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit*

IN FEBRUARY 1952, the exams Brian was due to take were cancelled because King George V had died. At a loose end Brian started reading about Roman forts and from that began a lifetime of interest in archaeology. Seventeen years later he was involved when, originally only given eight weeks, the York Street area was being excavated for ancient finds.

Years before this Sir Mortimer Wheeler had suggested that a long lost Roman shore fort was located within the area, one reason being that this was the only gap in the cliffs for approximately twenty miles. Many experts of the day mocked this, having come to the conclusion that such a fort never existed, but Brian and his team were to prove them wrong. The fort was found and it turned out to be only seven feet from where Mortimer had said it would be.

An old burial ground was discovered adjacent to the site of the old National School; this was located about where the York Street roundabout is today. Originally locating eighty-two head stones the team ended up finding two thousand, the bodies discovered were reburied in Charlton Cemetery.

The well known public house, the Cause is Altered, once stood on the site of



Brian Philp

part of the Cow Gate, the old town wall and part of a vast military ditch.

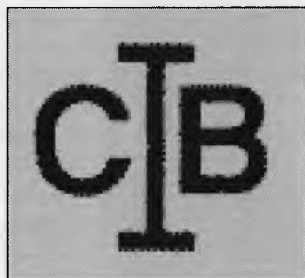
All this time the archaeology team was attempting to have these ancient sites preserved. After one hundred and forty days they won their battle against the contractors and the Dover Express at the time

described it as Dover's Pompeii. At least twenty buildings were preserved and these are still beneath the York Street roadway which was raised seven feet as a consequence. Whilst these were saved four public houses, two schools and some one hundred buildings were demolished as the area was redeveloped.

North of the Market Square the dig also found the Roman Painted House, now well preserved and open to the public. Built about 200 AD it formed part of a large mansio or official hotel, for travellers crossing the Channel. It stood outside the great naval fort of the Classis Britannica, demolished in 270 AD by the Roman army during the construction of the larger Roman shore fort. All told some 26,000 fragments of plaster were found in the Roman Painted House; this was the largest and the highest quality find in Britain, with over 400 square feet of painted plaster, the most extensive ever found north of the Alps. The wall



'The Roman Painted House



*The logo of the
Kent Archaeological
Rescue Unit*

C I B: The Cohors I Baetasiorum, the first cohort of the Baetasii was the garrison of the Roman fort at Reculver. Since Brian Philp's team started off as the Reculver Excavation Group, they adopted the name of the garrison as their insignia to show that they work with the discipline and precision of the Roman army!

paintings are considered some of the best in Northern Europe. Quickly £70,000 was raised to protect and house the finds. Finished in 1977 the building work took 404 days at a cost of £76,000. The most notable visitor has been the Queen Mother who stayed one and a half hours to view and talk about the site. A visit to the Painted House is a must for any visitor to Dover.

Apart from damage caused by the piles in the foundations which support the Discovery Centre (formally the White Cliffs Experience) all of the buildings uncovered by excavation work have been successfully protected and backfilled.

Many thanks must go to Brian for a most fascinating talk, illustrated by many interesting pictures; this gave his audience an insight into what treasures lay beneath our town.

Roman Painted House Opening Times

April to end September:

Tuesday to Saturday 10am - 5pm.

Sunday 1pm - 4.30pm. Closed Monday

October to March:

Open for pre-booked groups.

Bletchley Park and the Enigma Machine

A report by Alan Lee on a talk by Audrey Wind

SHORTLY AFTER THE END OF WWI, Arthur Scherbius, a German inventor, developed a rotary electro-mechanical enciphering machine for commercial use, thus Enigma was born. This was later removed from sale, modified and used widely by the German armed forces.

In 1932 Poland was determined to break Enigma's codes. They were helped a great deal by receiving, via the French, documents stolen by a German cipher clerk given the code name ASCHE (Ashes). He was later discovered, arrested and shot for his treachery in 1943.

By 1933 the Poles had broken Enigma and had invented a machine, named

Bomba, after the ice cream, to assist them.

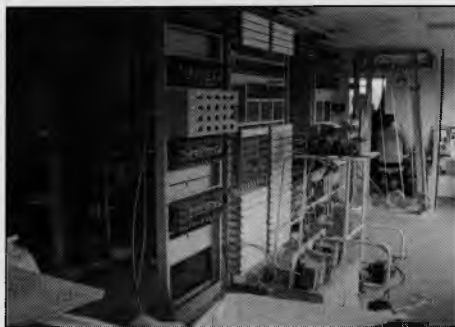
The Germans had by 1939 increased the sophistication of Enigma which at the time stopped further analysis of the codes. Fearing the worst the Poles handed over their secret research to



Enigma Machine



Lorenz Machine



Colossus - world's first electronic computer

the British and the French.

At that time Bletchley Park was the world's first large scale codebreaking centre, Britain's best kept secret and Churchill's secret passion; he called the codebreakers there the *geese that laid the golden eggs that never cackled*. By 1940 they were using their own *Bombe* machines to crack the codes.

About 8,500 people worked at Bletchley during WWII in total secrecy and were sworn never to reveal details of the work there and it was not until 30 years after the war that these secrets came to light. One couple who married kept the secret from each other, longer than the 30



Bletchley Park House

years, not even telling each other they worked at Bletchley.

Ultra was the name given to Allied Intelligence obtained from cryptanalysis. This played an important role in many major battles, most critically in the battle of the Atlantic.

Being one of those engaged in the secret Ultra work Audrey let us into some

fascinating details of her time there with plenty of personal stories to enliven the talk. She bought along an Enigma machine in a wooden case and many books on the subject.

The members present were entertained by a most enlightening talk on a most unusual subject. Many congratulations go to Audrey.

* * * * *

The work of the
PLANNING
Sub-Committee

Report by

JACK WOOLFORD, Chairman

The news that Connaught Barracks could soon be transformed into a carbon neutral "eco-village" with local building materials and solar panels (etc) by English Partnerships and EcoCities would be a breath-taking follow-up to Dover's victorious anti-Open Prison campaign. Dover would become even more famous. Bearing in mind, however, the years-long gaps between proposals and fruitions - witness, for example, DTIZ and Asda, the Slip Road from the Eastern Docks, an alternative to Operation Stack, the opening of the White Cliffs Business Park Phase 2, the widening of the Crabble Road junction, a visible start to the transformation of Buckland Paper Mill ... one may be forgiven for crossing one's fingers.

Although not quite on the same scale, Dover's impatience with the continuing uncertainties on the future of Buckland Hospital has been emphatically expressed as was concern for the future of Connaught Barracks. We trust that the two portable

buildings to be erected on the Health Centre site are not the eventual answer. In the same context we are pleased to have taken part in the successful Dover-wide condemnation of the proposed Burlington House Megaposter. We also note that, after more years of waiting, the conversions of the United Reformed Church, the Salvation Army Citadel and the Churchill Club into housing are at last visibly proceeding.

As to the Harbour Board's 30-Year Plan, our reservations, notably about the Wellington Dock, which, as already in Hythe, Southampton and Chatham etc, could offer superior quayside housing with marina mooring alongside, have been strongly, expressed and acknowledged.

We have sent vivid pictures of litter behind Biggin Street, outside the Telephone Exchange, Effingham Passage, etc to Dover District Council's Environmental Protection Officer and await her response. We also await DDC's Development Control Manager's response to our photographic evidence of unauthorised building at Rix Scaffolding in 2006.

We congratulate Dover Town Council on the impending new Pavilion at the Western Heights Sports Ground.

We hope that the Transportation Study may eventually materialize.

We have to admit that the Dover Earthquake was not the fault of Town, District, County or even Regional Councils.

The Chairman's Report

Annual General Meeting

of the Dover Society, 2007

◆ ◆ ◆ by Derek Leach ◆ ◆ ◆

Your Executive tries to keep members up to date on most issues via the Newsletter and so only a brief review of the past 12 months activities is necessary, although, as always, it conceals considerable activity.

Membership

Membership remains healthy around 460 and we are grateful to Sheila Cope, as membership secretary, for her hard work and members who recruit friends. As always, unfortunately, we have lost some members through death.

Planning matters

The Planning Committee under its enthusiastic chairman Jack Woolford was busy as usual monitoring planning applications and other issues. Several important matters were referred to the Executive. We resisted plans for an open prison at the vacant Connaught Barracks and are keeping a watchful eye on any plans for the site, including Fort Burgoyne. We have raised concerns about local air quality caused by shipping and heavy lorries and gave a cautious welcome to plans for a lorry holding area between Dover and Capel. After due consideration, on balance, we welcomed Dover Harbour Board's Western Docks



Chairman Derek Leach

redevelopment proposals to cope with the expected doubling of freight traffic over the next 30 years, but expressed a number of concerns. Plans for the St. James' redevelopment area, including the controversial Asda superstore, have moved forward and we have had to accept, albeit reluctantly, that it is the best on offer. Our concerns about the

quality of any development may be alleviated by the news of a regional grant to improve the appearance of this important site.

We supported plans for redevelopment of the Buckland Paper Mill site over the next five years and welcomed occupation of the Co-op supermarket site. We also welcomed the refurbishment of Priory station and news that the high-speed rail link will be extended to Dover, although whether we shall be able to afford the fares is another matter! Concerns were expressed about proposals for thousands of extra houses in the District over the next 20 years unless accompanied by appropriate infrastructure and employment opportunities. We note that after much dithering Wetherspoons intend to redevelop the Snoops nightclub site, which can only be an improvement and we have backed efforts to save

Buckland Hospital, although the writing does appear to be on the wall. We were able to compliment Dover District Council for its refurbished skateboard park in Pencester Gardens coupled with the hope that skateboarders would refrain from using the bandstand and other facilities. Recently, we have also given support to the outline plan for a segregated cycle and footpath from Crabble Athletic Ground into the town centre.

Thank you Jack and your committee for your sterling efforts throughout the year.

Social/educational programme

As always, Joan Liggett produced a varied and interesting summer programme. She also attracted a record 122 people to our Christmas Feast, although we have decided that in future we should not exceed 100. Jack Woolford, as ever, arranged an excellent winter programme of speakers.

Our sincere thanks are due to Joan and Jack and the team that prepares this hall, organises the refreshments and the raffle. The Christmas Feast was Joan Liggett's swan song as social secretary and we were pleased to welcome Pat Hooper as her successor. Pat started as she means to go on with a record attendance at our February wine and wisdom evening, but is worried about the lack of bookings for an excellent day trip to Greenwich in May. Please book soon. Forms are available tonight.

Newsletter

Thanks are due to Alan Lee, our Newsletter editor, and all the contributors for an excellent Newsletter, which contributes significantly to the reputation of The Dover Society. We are also most grateful to the envelope stuffers, the proof readers and all the volunteer distributors.

The lack of an advertising manager for the Newsletter was causing concern until Jean Marsh volunteered to fill the vacancy and we have made good any lost ground. Thank you, Jean for stepping into the breach.

Website

An activity easily overlooked is the work of Mike McFarnell, our website manager, who makes the work of The Dover Society available to the whole world via the internet. Thank you Mike, not only for the website but your other efforts for Dover: the annual Film Festival, the European Archery Event in August and the Pageant next year.

Projects

Maintenance of Cowgate Cemetery by a small, dedicated team continues almost as a matter of routine now. The fortnightly work parties show no signs of flagging, but reinforcements are always welcome for this open-air exercise. Thank you Jeremy and your team - strimmers anonymous. Jeremy represents us on the River Dour Steering Group set up to improve this valuable facility. The Group suffered a setback with the withdrawal of Dover Town Council from the Group, but much progress has been made in the last 12 months with monthly litter clearances outside the fish breeding season, the installation of riverside walk signs, training for volunteers and ten initial projects funded by the Environment Agency. Jeremy has used his diplomatic charms to revive the Steering Group in revised form. Once again, thank you Jeremy.

A disappointment during the year was to see most of our ten town centre trees vandalised soon after planting after all the difficulties that had to be overcome. Fortunately, Dover District Council has

now replaced them with more robust specimens.

Once again The Dover Society coordinated national Heritage Open Days in Dover with four historic properties opened free last September. This year St. Mary's Church will also be open and I am hoping that Dover College will also open the Norman refectory and chapel of the old priory.

With the centenary of Bleriot's historic flight in 1909, the Society is lobbying to make something of this. As a minimum we expect a suitable ceremony at the Bleriot Memorial, but also want some improvements to the site and better access and parking. English Heritage, which owns the site, is supportive but cannot fund anything. Dover District Council leases the site and has joined with us in trying to make it a great occasion. Since Bleriot's flight marks the beginning of international air travel an air show with sponsorship from airlines is being explored.

During the year we were approached by les Amis du château de Condette, a village history society near Boulogne, who suggested a twinning arrangement as we had similar interests. A small group has visited us and we have been there and agreed exchange visits for members this year. Our members will be able to join them for lunch at Dover Town Hall during their visit on 6 June. Our visit to them will be on 22 September.

Finally, another new venture for the Society were packs of Society Christmas cards, using images of old Dover from Budge Adams' collection. They were very well received and attracted orders outside the Society. Our thanks are due to Adeline Reidy and Alan Lee for producing and selling them.

Grants

Your Executive has also given away some money during the year to further the aims of the Society. We donated £250 toward the cost of publishing the report of the 1996 Townwall Street archaeological dig by the Canterbury Archaeological Trust. With the Roman Painted House in dire straits financially, we also donated £300 to the Trustees and we supported the international Bronze Age Boat Conference in Dover in October by donating £200 toward the cost.

Chairman

As your Chairman I have represented the Society on a number of occasions, including the Zeebrugge ceremonies on St. George's Day and the Remembrance Day service at the war memorial for rail employees at the Cruise Liner terminal. Terry Sutton laid a wreath on behalf of The Society at the Dover War Memorial. I also attended the dinner last October to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the granting of the royal charter to the Harbour Board.

This concludes my report on behalf of the Executive whom I should like to thank for all their efforts during the past year and particularly Joan Liggett who is not standing for re-election. After such a long and valuable stint as social secretary we would normally make a suitable presentation, but Joan refused. However, we could not let Joan go without expressing our gratitude in some way and so the Executive Committee recommends that Joan Liggett should be elected a Vice President of The Dover Society. As Chairman I propose this to the meeting. (This was passed unanimously.)

Perhaps, before he presents his financial report, I can also thank at this point another hard working member of the Executive, our treasurer, Mike Weston, for his meticulous book-keeping.

The Dover Society

An extract from the Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2007

The following extract from our accounts represents the statement of financial activities and the balance sheet. The supporting notes to the accounts are not reproduced due to lack of space. However, the complete accounts are available for inspection upon request to our Treasurer, Capt. Mike Weston (telephone 01304 202059) or Email (mike@weston71.freemove.co.uk).

CURRENT ASSETS

Society Badges
 Newsletter Binders
 Debtors and Prepayments
 Cash at bank and in hand

2007
27
88
0
<u>23,072</u>
23,187
(990)
<u>22,197</u>
<u>£22,197</u>

2006
49
124
0
<u>22,406</u>
22,579
<u>(1622)</u>
<u>20,957</u>
<u>£20,957</u>

CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year

NET CURRENT ASSETS

NET ASSETS

FUNDS

The Society's Funds are represented by:

The General Fund	15,209
Rolls Memorial Fund	50
Projects Fund	1,685
Publication Fund	5,253
	<u>£22,197</u>

Statement of Financial Activities for the year Ended 31st March 2007

	General Fund 2007	General Fund 2006
INCOME		
Subscriptions	2,534	2,484
Donations	46	107
Social Events	463	306
Gift Aid attracted by Subs etc to General Fund	547	590
Bank Account Interest	930	750
Christmas Cards	224	0
TOTAL INCOME	<u>4,744</u>	<u>4,237</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Members and Meeting expenses	-123	-131
Administrative Expenses	1,099	806
Purchase of lapel microphone	0	700
Newsletter Expenses	950	1,062
Other Items (including donations)	115	950
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>2,041</u>	<u>3,387</u>
NET (OUTGOING)/INCOMING RESOURCES	2,703	850
Total Funds Brought Forward	<u>12,506</u>	<u>11,656</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>£15,209</u>	<u>£12,506</u>

Capt. M.H. Weston

APRIL MEETING

Dover Harbour Board

A report by Alan Lee on a talk by Bob Goldfield

The April meeting hosted the Port of Dover's Chief Executive Bob Goldfield who started by giving the audience a potted history of his life and an account of how he arrived at Dover.

He described the plans for the new £300 million Ferry Terminal 2 at Western Docks as an historic opportunity to regenerate the area and hopefully create over 2,600 East Kent jobs. "This project presents an excellent opportunity to kick-start the regeneration of Dover specifically but it also represents an employment boost for East Kent," he said.

At the Western Docks, once the port's commercial hub, four ferry berths are proposed together with a relocation of the port's 400-berth marina to a location off the promenade. A development of restaurants, shops, offices and a hotel are also proposed around the marina. These are needed because capacity is running out at the eastern end where there is a

ferry arrival or departure every ten minutes.

The record for lorries using the port in one day, on 12th December 2006, is 9,878 and that of coaches, on 7th December 2007, is 1,514.

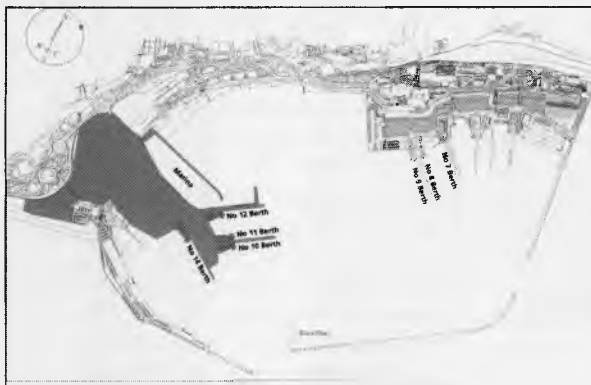
Bob pointed out that the traffic flow is expected to grow substantially over the next 30 years and that to do nothing is not an option, plus there is a significant opportunity to aid regeneration by developing the waterfront area.

Sadly the Granville Dock is to be filled in and the end of the Prince of Wales Pier will go, both of which will be a great loss. The Wellington Dock, although to become land-locked, will present opportunities for more retail facilities, offices, a hotel, and along the landward side, residential development.

The development of this area with the marina is planned to start as soon as possible following consultations,

preparation of detailed plans and obtaining the necessary approvals. This is because the relocation of parts of the existing marina is necessary to allow the Terminal 2 development to commence.

Other issues of particular concern were the availability of car parking and the provision of boat yard services. The preliminary layout drawing shows a multi-storey car park located in the landward area of the of the



Preliminary berth layout

current Prince of Wales Pier. It is intended that this car park would also serve the needs of the marina, other leisure users and possibly some commercial users. In regard to boat yard facilities, the need to provide for these is understood.

The Board will continue to support angling from at least one of the piers. The Prince of Wales Pier currently has easy access for disabled anglers. They are trying to find an alternative in the new development and are considering providing for angling from the new structure, which will form the eastern pier of the proposed new marina.

The next steps are to refine the plans and produce a draft Harbour Revision Order and planning applications towards the end of 2007. Bob pointed out that the proposals were affordable and deliverable within the Board's resources and he would like to see Terminal 2 completed and



Bob Goldfield, DHB and Derek Leach

operational before he retires in January 2013.

Overall, although regretting the lost of some historic parts of the harbour, the mood of most, although not all, seemed to be optimistic. We shall watch the development with great interest.

Many thanks to Mr Bob Goldfield for his most enlightening talk.

* * * * *



Dover Music Society

Kotov Memorial Recital
by Jack Woolford

More and more magic...

In our March Issue (Newsletter No. 58) Robert Poole, creator of the Dover Music Society, announced that "internationally famous and outstanding cellist ... regarded by many as the best in the world", Nina Kotova (who now has Jacqueline Du Pre's legendary Stradivarius) would perform in Dover Town Hall on Friday March 30. This more than answered my query in Dec 2006 (No. 57): Robert, what next?

As the excellent programme notes explained and as the tall and beautifully robed Nina herself announced (in perfect English), her father, Ivan Kotov was a virtuoso double-bassist but was persecuted to death in the then-Soviet Union. The recital was fittingly dedicated to his memory.

Suitably it started with the profound Mozart Adagio in B Minor, followed, even

more fittingly, by Beethoven's Op 81a ("Les Adieux") Sonata which powerfully, indeed tragically, laments the 1809 farewell and absence of his patron from Napoleon's invasion of Vienna, before finally rejoicing, equally powerfully, on his joyful return. This was played by Oliver Poole on his superb Fazioli piano with all his incredible 15-year-old virtuosity and maturity.

Oliver is a world-class concert pianist, which is remarkable enough. Even more remarkable is his performance as accompanist, when he must sensitively subordinate himself to the needs of his soloist. That soloist was the violin virtuoso, Yehudi Menuhin's pupil Alexander Sitkovetsky, making a most welcome return to Connaught Hall. They performed Brahms's unusually joyful Violin Sonata No 2 in A as though its formidable technical demands on both were trifles, and with obvious mutual delight and admiration. I must not fail to add that Oliver's pages were deftly and unobtrusively turned by Dover's other concert pianist Yurih Tykonenkh.

After the interval the beautiful Nina displayed her total (and unhistrionic) mastery, first with Cassado's 1920s - ie

modern - Cello Suite. To my surprise (and pleasure) it started in Bach's Cello Suites' style, played without vibrato, but went on in Spanish style to include more dazzling double-stopping harmonics than I have ever heard before. The Stradivarius became a violin.

And so at last it most suitably came to Rachmaninov, first with his vocalised song setting and then with the earlier (and more familiarly passionate) Andante in G Minor, accompanied to perfection by Oliver.

The climax of the ensemble came with Rachmaninov's incredibly early Elegiac Trio, (mourning Tchaikovsky's death) which, after more deft piano and music stand arranging by Yurih, at last brought together Nina, Alexander and Oliver onto the platform. More superlatives would be superfluous. Ivan Kotov was immortalized. After the encore - Astor Piazzolla's "Verana Porteno" - the crowded audience went suitably wild.

Robert Poole, creator of the Dover Music Society, now seeks charitable status for it which requires Society membership at £10.00 per annum. What worthier cause for Dover could there be?

To enrol as a member of the Dover Music Society please send the following details to the address below:

Name:

Address:

..... Tel No:

E-mail Address:

Signed:

The Dover Music Society, 26 Park Avenue, Dover, Kent CT16 1HD

Tel: 01304 213035 E-mail: concerto@supanet.com

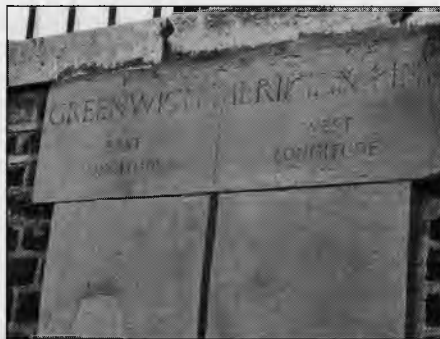
Visit to Greenwich

by PAT HOOPER

The trip to Greenwich proved to be most enjoyable and weather wise it was a very pleasant day. Some members were dropped off in the town where they were able to browse around the many antique shops and take a look or shop in the bustling market place. Others decided to be driven to the top of the hill and work their way down, where they were able to visit The National Maritime Museum, The Royal Observatory and The Queen's House. There were many other attractions for both groups of visitors as well; all remarked that they had a lovely day.

We were unable to go onto the Cutty Sark, because of the refurbishing work taking place, but we did manage to peek through a hole. That was all. Unfortunately, that weekend there was a fire on board, and much of it was destroyed. I hasten to add, "It was not one of us," (or if it was, no one has owned up to it)!!

Greenwich is designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site because of its architectural, scientific, maritime and royal associations. As the home of the world's Prime Meridian - Longitude 0° - and of Greenwich Mean Time, its scientific importance in the development of navigation is inestimable. Greenwich has played a key role in the story of Britain's seapower for over 400 years. These attributes, combined with close links to England's Tudor and Stuart sovereigns give Greenwich a unique identity. This, along with Greenwich Park, the oldest of London's royal parks, means that there is much to see, as it really is an interesting place but it needs more than one trip to take in all its treasures.



The Line Marker outside the Royal Observatory



A view of Greenwich

General Wolfe statue



The group arrived back in Dover weary but happy, having spent a wonderful day out and would like to thank Pat for her skill and hard work in organizing the trip.

Editor

SOCIETY PROJECTS

Report by Jeremy Cope

COWGATE CEMETERY

The cemetery is, in my opinion, looking at its very best at this time of year. The wind sways the grass, now about two feet tall, with such grace. It is all so green with the trees and shrubs in full leaf, very well worth a visit.

We welcome to our working group Paul Sullivan who has recently set up Sullivan & Son Funeral Service in



Cowgate strimmers on parade!



Is it true - Cowgate sold?

Beaconsfield Road. Paul is well aware of the humour that may be found in a funeral director having a hobby helping to maintain an old closed cemetery. But most importantly we have a very willing pair of hands whose owner can laugh.

A major piece of news: Jack Woolford, who regularly attends on Thursdays, celebrated his 90th birthday on 12th June. We toasted Jack's health and wishes for a happy birthday with champagne at our June Thursday session. WELL DONE JACK!! The message from this is clear - working at Cowgate with a Dover Society maintenance party means a long life. So don't hold back. Come forward and volunteer.

Congratulations Jack Woolford



90 years young

THE RIVER DOUR

The River Dour Steering Group met in April after a long period of inactivity. During this time Dover District Council, The Environment Agency and White Cliffs Countryside Project had been working away on the river, but the Group was not there to help make the voice of other concerned organisations heard.

It was agreed that the Group should be seen as influencing the work of those carrying out the task of maintaining the river and of voicing local concerns.

Among reports given to the meeting was the Environment Agency's work on 10 projects last year with plans being drawn up for a further 6 this year. These projects are primarily for biodiversity purposes although it is hoped that they will improve the appearance of the river, particularly where the natural banks have been replaced by concrete walls. We also heard that the river is considered the best in Kent for brown trout (which just shows its potential)!

FRIENDS OF CONNAUGHT PARK

by Graham R. Wanstall

I am very concerned at the deterioration of Connaught Park in recent years. A new group is to be formed to try to rectify this and to attempt to improve the floral displays, tidiness, the pond and general layout of the park.

The White Cliffs Countryside Project has continued to inform the public about the river and is running clearance parties in the summer months outside of the trout-breeding season. It is open to the public to join the working parties, so the message is loud and clear, "DON'T MOAN ABOUT THE RUBBISH JOIN A VOLUNTEER PARTY AND HELP CLEAR IT". (phone 01304 241806)

The District Council continues to clear those areas of which it is the riparian owner and I think that their work coupled with that of volunteer working parties is showing positive results.

Dover Town Council has plans for a major Dour project and displays a continuing keen interest in the river's welfare.

However, one of the major concerns is the lack of funds, particularly to support the work of White Cliffs Countryside Project. Perhaps this is something for the Group to lobby for?

Anybody who shares these concerns and wishes to help in any way please telephone Mr Graham Wanstall on 01304 242493. Let us get together and improve the park for the people of Dover. This is a much neglected and underused asset.



A Dover Family History

by **Merril Lilley**

In Newsletter 44 I wrote an account of Marion Leila Griffin who was born in Dover in 1930 and now lives in New Zealand. She visited Dover on a two-week holiday in 1992, when she met 'Budge' Adams. On her return to New Zealand Budge sent her two newsletters and she joined the Dover Society. She has received our newsletters since then and has corresponded with me and with Sheila Cope over the years.

The article in issue 44 tells some of her history but since then Marion has sent to me a large package of all the material she had kept relating to her family history. This includes many photographs and letters. She had decided that it was not of interest to people in New Zealand and that it should be in archives in Dover, where it would be accessible to anyone who wished to undertake research. Before handing Marion's package to the Kent History Society for safe keeping I thought I would write another article for the newsletter telling her story.



James and Myra Leila Harmer

Marion's grandmother was Myra Leila Sartain, a midwife. In 1902 she married James Harmer, who worked as a gas and water fitter. Marion's mother, Irene Myra Harmer, was born on 11th January 1904 at 157 Buckland Avenue. The family subsequently moved to Lascelles Road and later to Bartholomew Street and Irene had many happy memories of her childhood in Dover. In 1918 she went to Harrow-on-the-Hill in Middlesex to help a relative with young children and while she was there she met her husband, Mervyn Charles Holmes, at the Wembley Empire Exhibition. They were married in Hendon in 1924 and spent their honeymoon in Dover before travelling to India where Mervyn was stationed at Peshawar, near the Khyber Pass.

In 1930 Irene and Mervyn visited Dover and stayed with Myra at Bartholomew Street and there Marion was born. At the end of that year the family returned to India. Irene had four more children, two boys and two girls, all born in India.

As she grew up Marion was conscious of



James and Myra Leila Harmer. Armistice Day, 1918

Mervyn and Irene Holmes and family, Peshawar 1938



the fact that she was the only child born in England. Her parents were always trying to arrange a holiday in Dover but fate was against them. They planned a holiday in 1934, which had to be cancelled because there was an outbreak of smallpox on the ship. After the outbreak of war in 1939 they were unable to visit England and when the war was over they were told they could not return unless they had sick and dependent relatives there. Many British citizens decided to go to one of the Dominions and in 1946 the Holmes family made their home in New Zealand and from there sent food parcels to England.

Many years passed before any of the



Nelson South Island, New Zealand

family visited England. At last Mervyn, Irene and their daughter Ruth came to Dover for a holiday in 1972. Marion Griffin (née Holmes) did not see the land of her birth until 1983 when her work took her to London on a course. She only managed a brief visit to Dover then, she returned in 1992 for a two-week holiday.

Marion's father died in 1985 and her mother, Irene in 1997, aged 93. On the front cover of Irene's funeral sheet is a photograph of St. Peter and St. Paul's Church in Charlton. One of the photographs in Marion's collection shows her mother in 1995 surrounded by some of her keepsakes and holding a copy of Ivan Green's book on Dover. All members of the family, Harmer, Holmes and then Marion Griffin kept a great many records. In the package I received from Marion there are six carefully labelled envelopes containing items as follows.

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 1. 1880-1906 | Dover |
| 2. 1910-1920 | Dover |
| 3. 1924-1927 | Dover and India |
| 4. 1930s | Dover |
| 5. 1931-1946 | India |
| 5. 1948-1990s | Nelson, New Zealand |
| 6. 1972 | Mervyn, Irene and Ruth on a visit to Dover. |

In these envelopes is a wealth of family history: family letters written from India to England and vice versa, old postcards sent from Myra to Irene, a copy of the National Ration book from 1918, a letter from a friend describing the bombing of Dover and Chitty's mill in 1945.

Marion felt that many of these original items would be of interest to local historians or archivists and therefore sent them to me as I was editor of the Dover Society Newsletter. I hope members will find them of interest. For anyone wishing to find out more about the family the collection will in future be lodged with the Kent History Society.

Heritage Open Days in Dover 2007

Thursday 6th to Sunday 9th September

Derek Leach

Once again The Dover Society is coordinating arrangements in Dover for Heritage Open Days, organised by English Heritage and the Civic Trust every year. This event celebrates England's fantastic architecture by encouraging free access to buildings that are usually closed to the public or would normally charge an admission fee.

Dover has a great wealth of historic buildings, but only some such as Dover Castle and the Roman Painted House are normally open to the public. This year six properties will be open to the public free of charge, including two for the first time.

Grand Shaft Staircase: this unique triple staircase was started in 1804 and finished in 1807. It connected the barracks and fortifications on the Western Heights through the 250 foot high cliff to sea level, Snargate Street and the Pier District, enabling troops to move quickly up or down its 140 steps within the cliff plus another 59 into the barrack yard. In 1812 a Mr Leith of Walmer rode a horse up the staircase for a bet.



Church of St. Mary the Virgin: dating from Saxon times it was built originally by the secular canons of St. Martin Le Grand, but rebuilt by the Normans. At the Dissolution it was saved from demolition when Henry VIII granted it for use as a parish and civic church. Unfortunately, because of its weak foundations, it was rebuilt in 1843, although its original arches and columns were reinstated. The magnificent tower survived this restoration.

St.Edmund's Chapel: this tiny cemetery chapel in Priory Road was consecrated by St Richard of Chichester in 1253 in memory of his friend, St.Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury 1234-45, and was probably used as a cemetery chapel for the Maison Dieu close by. Hidden for many years by development around it and used as a workshop, it was revealed again following war damage to the surrounding buildings. The chapel was restored and reconsecrated in 1968.



Maison Dieu House: this fine Jacobean house in Biggin Street is the oldest domestic building in Dover. It was built in 1665 as the Agent Victualler's residence close to the Maison Dieu, which Henry VIII had requisitioned as a store for the Navy Victualling Office following the Dissolution. In 1834 it became the residence of the commander of the Royal Engineers in Dover before becoming a private residence. The Kingsford brewing and milling family and the Mummery family who owned the Stembrook tannery lived here during the 19th century. Bought by the Corporation in 1899, the house became council offices until after the Second World War when it became the public library. Following the move of the library to the Discovery Centre, the premises were purchased and beautifully restored by Dover Town Council for its use.



Unitarian Church: this brick-built octagonal church sitting above York Street was constructed in 1820 and its worship area reflects the shape of the building. The origins of the church go back to 1643 to a local community of Baptists who established a meeting house in 1655, but were persecuted following the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. In 1692 Samuel Taverner made part of his house available for worship and part of the garden as a burial ground. Freedom of belief and form of worship as a Unitarian Church was agreed by members in 1916. Following Second World War damage, the chapel reopened in 1952.



Dover College - the remains of St. Martin's Priory: built in the 12th century it was suppressed in 1540 as part of Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries. The site was leased for farming and most of the buildings fell into disrepair. Fortunately, the grand Norman refectory was used as a barn and survives today. Dover College opened on the site in 1871 when the refectory and gatehouse were restored and the king's hall became the college chapel. Part of the cloister also survives.

Opening times will be:

ST. EDMUND'S CHAPEL - Thursday to Sunday 10am to 4pm

MAISON DIEU HOUSE - Saturday only 10am to 4pm

UNITARIAN CHURCH - Saturday only 11am to 4pm

GRAND SHAFT STAIRCASE - Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm.

DOVER COLLEGE - Saturday and Sunday. Guided tours only at 1pm and 2pm each day.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH - Saturday 10am to 4pm

If you would like to find out about the other buildings open in the region call 020 7539 7921 or visit www.heritageopendays.org

Contact for more information: Derek Leach 01304 823926.

St Mary in Castro

- *plays host to special visitors*

by Fr Peter Sherred

NOTWITHSTANDING the vacation of Connaught Barracks, by the army, the ancient church of St Mary in Castro remains a continuing Christian witness as the garrison church for the military and for others who attend services held there. Its Christian history has been punctuated by a long spell of secular use ending as a coal store before being reconstructed and restored in the 19th Century under the influence of Gilbert Scott and Butterfield since when worshippers and tourists alike, from far and wide, have visited the church to take in its unique atmosphere. On May 21st it played host to a meeting of the members of The St Michael the Archangel Chapter of the Guild of Servants of the Sanctuary who, for the third year in succession, were able to come together to sing their Guild Office in the beautiful setting of the chancel and sanctuary of this place of worship. The evening was overseen by the verger of St Mary in Castro, Chris Harpham, who had prepared the church for the event and the service, attended by five clergy, was presided over by the chaplain to the Guild Chapter, Fr Paul Christian of Temple Ewell. Chris Harpham had just received news of his appointment as verger to Romsey Abbey in Hampshire and the Senior Chaplain of the St Mary in Castro clergy team, Padre Paul Wright, was present for the last time for a Guild Office before his posting away from the castle church. Also among those attending was a person special to the Guild Chapter and a long time visitor to



the town over 70 years, Fred Palmer.

The Guild has its origins in the 19th century - in 1897. It comprises an association of altar servers in the Church of England representative of lay people. Its objectives are to help raise standards of altar service and make those who are members to be conscious of their duties and obligations in the expectation that their attendance and service will add to the spirituality of a service in the Catholic Tradition of the Church of England. Area groups cover the country and East Kent falls into Provincial Group 2 covering Canterbury, Ashford and Margate, Dover coming under the umbrella of the Ashford Chapter of the Area Group. This Chapter includes some 17 parishes from Charing to Dover with churches in Ashford and Dover providing a very good representation. Servers from St Peter and St Paul Charlton, Temple Ewell, Lydden, St Andrew's Buckland, among others, are members. Chapter members meet a minimum of four times a year to sing their office, share in the Mass (Eucharist), admit members and retain fellowship. In fact Chapters probably meet monthly with the exception of key holiday periods and approximately 50 members comprise the Ashford Chapter with both male and female servers. Sadly, in 2007 the weather precluded an outdoor procession as in other years, but members and visitors alike enjoyed the plainsong chant of the Guild Office.

Much of the continuing success of the local Chapter is the work of one man - Fred Palmer from St Mary's Ashford - who has been a frequent visitor to Dover over the years. His connection with Dover stretches back to 1937/38 as a member of the summer staff at the Western Docks where he would receive messages from London of the train loadings to be communicated to the connecting ferries and vice versa, so he could advise Victoria Station of the train loadings bound for the capital as notified from the ferries. Fred travelled by train in those days and has done so all his life although he drives himself to Guild meetings. He started as a junior clerk with the railways in 1936 and by the time he retired he was the senior stores inspector for British Railways, Southern Region, based at Croydon, responsible for an area from Thanet to Weymouth including Dover. Born in Ashford and living in Kennington he has been a visitor to churches in Dover for very many years. Serving in the RAF during the war he became involved with The Guild in 1948, after demobilisation, at the encouragement of his parish priest. He immediately became Secretary, a post he still holds nearly sixty years later! He is also Councillor for the Provincial Group. Belying his 87 years he acts as Cantor for the Guild Office as well as making it his business to telephone each Guild member with a reminder of a meeting and its venue - no doubt the reason for good turnouts of members. After 50 years of service as



Fred Palmer

Secretary, at a special service at Temple Ewell Church, he was presented with an embroidered coter (small surplice) and a crucifix. Fred first became a server at the altar of the Lord in 1937, so this year he celebrates 70 years service in that role. This faithful servant and frequent visitor to Dover is a role model for

service and commitment in an age when, perhaps, commitment is deemed too much of a challenge for many. Married to Kathleen for 48 years he has two sons, living in Aberdeen and Fleet in Hampshire respectively. In 2008 Fred will celebrate 60 years as Secretary of The Guild Chapter, which has, through its members, enriched worship in the town's churches as well as in neighbouring villages and towns. Dover would do well to remember that anniversary as he comes back to it from time to time in the next twelve months. Well done you good and faithful servant and well done St Mary in Castro for inviting the Guild to share its special place in the wider worshipping community, not isolated on the hill behind the castle walls!



St Mary In Castro

KNIGHTS TEMPLARS

commemorate St George's Day 2007, in Dover

• • • *by Fr Peter Sherred* • • •

*"I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
Straining upon the start. The game's afoot;
Follow your spirit; and, upon this charge
Cry God for Harry, England and St George!"*

(HENRY V ACT 3 SCENE 1)

The Shakespeare quote highlights the link between a Saint and our Country yet, increasingly, there seems to be a feeling the English do not acknowledge or celebrate their Patron Saint.

The Kent Preceptory of the Knights Templar decided to do both and with the kind hospitality of the proprietor of Cullins Yard, Jim Gleeson, a party including Preceptor Michael Kennedy, Emeritus Grand Prior Denys Le Fevre and his wife Barbara, Fr Paul Christian of Temple Ewell Church and his wife Hilary, Fr Peter Sherred (chaplain) and his wife Mary and others sat down to a traditional English lunch on the nearest Saturday to St George's Day (April 23rd).

At a table decorated with the flag associated with St George and England (and miniature standards of the same) the party enjoyed a 'traditional' English menu of homemade soup, roast beef and seasonal vegetables, followed by apple pie and custard with suitable associated beverages. So enjoyable and successful was the event it is intended to repeat it annually.

However, what of the Saint and the connection between the Templars and the St George's commemoration and the Templars connection with the locality?

Little is known for certain about St George save that he appears to be

associated with a Roman tribune, of noble birth, who was beheaded on the order of the Emperor Diocletian on 23 April 303 after identifying himself as a Christian and raising a protest about the Roman Emperor's treatment and persecution of the group known as Christians, followers of "The Way", Jesus Christ.

Following martyrdom, St George became the subject of stories and legends the most famous of which, arguably, being that of the slaying of a dragon, as depicted by the Royal Mint on a half sovereign. St George became venerated for his chivalry, his courage and his principles, for being a protector of the poor and followers of the Christian faith. How this person from the Middle East, believed to be buried in Lod, became the Patron Saint of England, (for which we do not have exclusivity), is still unclear although it is likely this was due to the influence of the Crusades and in particular those returning from them for, by the fourteenth century, during the reign of Edward III, George seems to have supplanted Saint Edmund as the Patron Saint and the rest is, as is often the case, "history".

Numerous aspects of our country's life are associated with Saint George. Windsor Castle chapel is dedicated to this Saint and soldier and is the setting for the Order of the Garter ceremony each year founded to

honour knighthood and chivalry. Shakespeare promotes the image of St George as a national figure and the scouting movement has had a close association with the memory of the Saint from the days of Baden-Powell, its founder. Medals such as the George Cross and George Medal, civilian awards for gallantry, perpetuate the Saint's legend of the dragon. Most significantly, in the days of devolution, an emblem of St George (in the form of a white flag with a red cross on it) has become almost iconic especially at sports events and on his day of commemoration in April. Certainly, from the late thirteenth century it became the national flag of England though, perhaps, supplanted in seventeenth century by the Union flag. Some but not many such flags were to be seen in and around Dover on 23rd April this year. The flag of St George is also that of an Admiral in the Royal Navy about which the Senior Service is very protective. The St George Cross was thought to have been adopted (again at the time of the Crusades) for soldiers and in particular, a special group known as the Knights Templar so we can begin to knit together a reason for a commemoration of the Saint by the Knights Templar.

With the publication of books like *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*, *The Da Vinci Code* and *The Last Templar* there has been a revival of interest in the Knights Templar with inevitable embroidery and mystery attached to them. Their origins lay in a chivalric Christian association founded, in the twelfth century, to protect those travelling to the Holy Land and for the defence of the Holy Land itself. St Bernard of Clairvaux provided the Rule of the Templars who derive their name from the fact they were installed on part of the



Knights Templar

site of Solomon's Temple hence Knights of the Temple (or Templars) and papal recognition was given to the Order with a twelfth century pope granting the Templars their white cloak and another pope the distinctive eight pointed red cross representing purity of intention and personal sacrifice respectively. After the fall of Jerusalem and Acre the Templars initially withdrew to Cyprus then established a head quarters in Paris. They became very powerful and affluent and in the fourteenth century a jealous king of France (Philip le Bel) exerted pressure on the papacy to suppress the Order, the last Grand Master being burnt at the stake in Paris. The nineteenth century saw a resurgence of the Order in Europe and in

the 1960s the modern Order was re-established in England and Wales, based on chivalric notions of the earlier Christian Order, with a view to increase an understanding of other faiths, to assist people making pilgrimages, preserving Christian holy sites in the Holy Land and providing humanitarian relief to those in need among other objectives. In essence the Knights and Dames of the Order strive to uphold, in an increasingly consumer orientated and secular world, standards of Christian morals, ethics and principles. So the Templars and the Saint are identified, in symbolic terms, by red crosses on white backgrounds and with an underlying foundation of chivalry in the context of Christian principles. But why a celebration in Dover by one for the other?

The modern Order of Templars (which has no connection with Freemasonry) is centred on the Grand Priory but local arrangements are organised by Preceptories one of which, the South East Preceptory of St Augustine, covers Sussex, Surrey and Kent as well as the Channel Islands. Another is the Templar Pilgrimage Trust (which provides grants to the young and the disabled to travel on pilgrimages) the Guild Church is St Peter and St Paul Church in Temple Ewell. This fine local church has had a connection with the Knights Templars for over 800 years (other local Templar connections are associated with the Western Heights). The church was in the manor of Ewell and seems to have been accorded its prefix of Temple (Templar) from the twelfth century. Soon after the suppression of the Templars in Europe Edward II took all English Templar property into Royal ownership and the Templars were ruthlessly suppressed.

The manor of Temple Ewell passed, in history, through numerous hands but evidence of the Templar presence and

connection with the church is found in an engraved Templar cross on an upright stone slab just inside the south porch door where it was placed during the nineteenth century when it was removed from the chancel. A contemporary connection with the modern Order of Templars is evidenced by the annual presence of Knights and Dames of the Order in a procession with the choir, congregation and vicar, through the village to the church on Palm Sunday. In 2007 Members of the Order were joined by the Grand Prior, Simon Le Fevre, in the procession commemorating Christ's entry into Jerusalem. The Preceptor of the St Augustine Preceptory, Michael Kennedy, is a worshipping member of Temple Ewell church.

So it was felt appropriate that members of a chivalric Order, (who cut impressive figures in their white cloaks (mantles) with the large red eight pointed cross emblazoned on them), having a close association with the local church of St Peter and St Paul Temple Ewell should meet together to commemorate a Saint identified in history with chivalric standards. The commemorative lunch, in the presence of the vicar of the church that has such long association with the Order, was an attempt to raise awareness of both the Patron Saint and the Order in Dover by acknowledging and celebrating, in public, the identity of the former. Appreciation goes to Jim Gleeson and the staff at Cullins Yard for entering into the spirit of the occasion. Members of the Order and their guests look forward to a like celebration in 2008. Will you be there to join them?

"Non nobis, Domine, non nobis; sed nomine tuo da gloriam."

"Not to us, O Lord, not to us; but to your Name give the glory" (Psalm 115 v.1)

King Harold and a Dover Legend

by Sherifa Rashidally

Harold Godwineson, was the son of Earl Godwine, a name that surely evokes thoughts of what was without doubt the most momentous event of English history - *The Battle of Hastings*.

The Godwine family were the wealthiest thegns (high-ranking landowners having at least five hides of land) in England controlling all of Wessex, Kent, Sussex and beyond. Much of this land had been acquired by raiding and young Harold Godwineson was no newcomer to these means of acquiring wealth and land. With the Godwines it was something of a regular habit, in fact a habit of many of the thegns of the day. This was considered perfectly normal practice by them which held no shame or guilt.

Earl Godwine came from a long line of Anglo-Saxon thegns and his sons were to have a place in English history but there was one son who would exceed in a way never imagined. Firstly there was the eldest son Swein who would achieve little but notoriety, a wayward son who even murdered his own Danish cousin Beorn, and who eventually died at Constantinople on his way to England after visiting the Holy Land to pay penance for his assortment of crimes. Another son Tostig was to become the Earl of Northumbria, hated by the people he ruled for his unjust treatment, in particular the extreme taxes he imposed upon them causing much suffering. Two other sons Leofric and Gyfth were both to die on the battlefield at Caldbec Hill on that fateful day in 1066. Another son was Wolfnoth (named after Earl Godwine's

father) and then there was Harold who was to become a legend as the last Anglo-Saxon King of England. After his rise to the kingship, having been crowned on the 6th January 1066 at Winchester Cathedral by Bishop Stigand (the previous day on the 5th Edward the Confessor had died and Harold ascended to the throne) little did he know that he was to be king for just nine months and nine days for the cruel hand of fate was to decide this on the 14th October 1066.

Besides his brothers Harold had a sister Edith and it is her marriage to King Edward which no doubt contributed greatly to Harold's prestige for he thus attained much influence and power. After all due to Edith's marriage he was now the king's brother-in-law, something he could use to his great advantage. After the king himself Harold was now the most important man in the kingdom. He was to have many favours bestowed upon him though one request from Edward was to become Harold's final downfall - the request to pay a visit on behalf of the king to Duke William in Normandy for at one point during a tumultuous time Edward had been sent into exile and it was none other than William who had given him refuge. Supposedly Edward had, before returning to England after a considerable time in Normandy, made a promise to William that he was to eventually ascend to the English throne, this being a repayment for the refuge given, one may say a somewhat over-generous reward, if ever such a promise was really made. This has frequently been doubted and questioned. The year of Harold's visit was

1064 and much was to transpire between this time and 1066. Rumours purported that Harold was to pay this visit to try to get the release of some hostages and not to verify the supposed promise from Edward. We should consider that at this stage Edward's cousin Count Walter had been imprisoned by William and shortly before Harold's visit, had been found dead, believed poisoned, so it would surely be somewhat dubious that such a promise from Edward was ever made at all. Suspicions were flying high and much was to be questioned on this matter. It is indeed likely that Harold's visit solely to try to get the release of hostages was seen by William as an opportune moment and forced Harold to take an oath which he took under great duress. No doubt he consented, fearing that if he did not then he might be imprisoned or even killed. It can be assumed that William took advantage of Harold's visit and no doubt engaged some of his Norman knights to falsely testify so as to meet his own end. We shall never know but can only speculate at the events between 1064 and 1066.

After Harold's return to England, Edward found himself with ailing health and since he and Edith had no children there was now a serious problem - who would succeed to the throne. A decision had to be made - and quickly. The young Atheling Edgar was Edward's preferred choice but he was a mere lad of 14 years old, inexperienced in ruling and warfare and further debates clearly showed that the odds were in favour of Harold. Shortly after on the 5th January 1066 Edward's final hour came and Harold became king. He was crowned the following day at Winchester Cathedral by Archbishop Stigand - news which would hardly please Duke William! Now revenge must be

sought and this would be his invasion of England! William lost little time in making his plans and calculating the best time for the final blow.

On the 28th September 1066 Duke William landed at Pevensey (it has been said that he intended to land at Dover but due to the wind his boat reached the shores of East Sussex at Pevensey instead.) From Pevensey he and his army headed for Hastings where they made camp. At this time Harold had been away fighting. On the 20th September he fought a battle at Fulford then on the 8th October the battle at Stamford Bridge. He lost many men in both battles and the remaining were tired and weak. The long trek back to the south made matters worse. Many of his remaining men were fyrds (reserves who were not as well trained as his huscarls - skilled soldiers many of whom had been killed), but Harold held his usual determination and pressed on. By the time Harold had arrived back at Hastings, William and his men had had time to rest and prepare for battle but Harold did not give his men chance to do likewise. He met William at Caldbec Hill on the 14th October where that fateful arrow decided all - Harold had lost. It is said that the arrow was in fact a stray one but it achieved what William wanted. Harold had acted hastily in not delaying his meeting with William on the battlefield. If he had postponed this a little longer then William's men would have run low on supplies and become weaker also it would have given Harold more time to gather more men and given a chance for the men to regain their strength. With this delay William's men would have run low on moral, and with this on Harold's side he could have then struck the final blow. We shall never know what the outcome would have been, we can only

The Dover Society Website

www.doversociety.homestead.com

Please visit the site.

Read reports on meetings, check the programme of events.

Your comments and observations would be appreciated.

Already by July of this year the number of people viewing the website has exceeded the figure for the whole of last year.

Links to other Dover websites are listed on our website and give valuable information about our town.

Most major events in the town are recorded on the site with the majority of them featured in their own video clip. This also applies to the Dover Society meetings. Other events include the Dover Film Festival - 4th and 5th February, the Walk of Witness - 6th April, St George's Day and the ringing of the Zeebrugge Bell - 23rd April and Dover Carnival - 7th July.

THE FESTIVAL OF DOVER 2008

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THE DOVER PAGEANT 8TH JUNE 2008

This will be held in the grounds of Dover College, Effingham Crescent from 2.30pm to 5pm. Tickets are available from

The Dover Pageant Society, 4 Harold Street, Dover. Tel: 01304 201711
 Adults £5 Senior Citizens £4 Children £3

SOME INFORMATIVE SITES

Dover District Council.	www.dover.gov.uk
Dover Town Council.	www.dovertown.co.uk
Dover Civic Pride Campaign.	www.dovercivicpride.homestead.com
Dover Pageant.	www.doverpageant.com

Contact Mike McFarnell, the editor, or a member of the committee if you want more information about the Dover Society.

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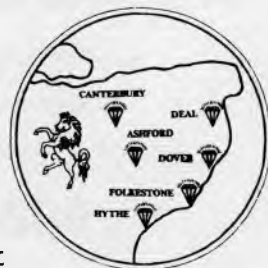
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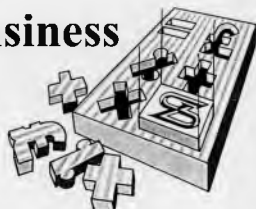
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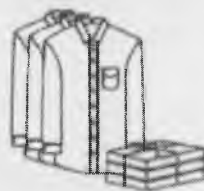
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PROGRAMME 2007 - 2008

Guests are welcome at all meetings except the Annual General Meeting which is for members only.

2007

- AUGUST 16
Thursday
£10.00
(does not include lunch)
- St Peters Village, Broadstairs. A morning guided tour of the village. The Red Lion Pub has been booked for lunch (optional).
Pick-ups: 0815 Railway Bell; 0825 Frith Road; 0830 Brook House Car Park
- SEPTEMBER 22
Saturday
£29.00
- Boulogne - Coach Tour (am) and tour of Old Town (pm).**
Morning: Visit by coach of the lower town, the port, the dockyard the sailor's Calvary the halieutic zone (related to fishing and fishing industry). Your guide will be Mrs Tonnel (patrimony delegate).
12.30hrs: Lunch at the restaurant - Les Pêcheurs of d'Etaples in the town centre.
Afternoon: Visit to the old town - the Castle Museum, includes the Earl's room, gothic medieval room, the basements and the remains of the ramparts. Then on to Boulogne Cathedral and crypt. This has been arranged in conjunction with the friends of l'Association Culturelle des Amies du Chateau.
- OCTOBER 15
Monday 7.30
- Speakers:** John Clayton "South Foreland Lighthouse"
Richard Sturt "Water Matters"
- NOVEMBER 19
Monday 7.30
- Speaker:** Nadeem Aziz "Dover Retrospect and Prospect"
Brainstorming Session
- DECEMBER 15
Saturday
7 for 7.30
£19.00
- Christmas Feast.** Celebrate the Christmas festivities in the splendid surroundings of the Refectory within Dover College. Price to include sherry reception, a sumptuous buffet, wine, soft drinks and entertainment by local singers.
Please note that this year the numbers will be limited to 100 to ensure your comfort.

2008

- JANUARY 21
Monday 7.30
- Speaker:** Details in next Newsletter
- FEBRUARY 18
Monday 7.30
- Speaker:** Details in next Newsletter
- MARCH 17
Monday 7.30
- Speaker:** Details in next Newsletter

All indoor meetings are held at St Mary's Parish Centre

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