

The  
Dover  
Society

# Newsletter

No. 61

March 2008



*Frauenkirche Dresden*

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# THE DOVER SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1988

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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 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

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OUR NEXT MEETING will be the Annual General Meeting, at 7.30pm on Monday 21st April at St. Mary's Parish Centre. **We would like to remind members that any nominations for elected posts within the committee and all resolutions must be received by the secretary no later than 14 days before the meeting.** The speaker will be Terry Sutton talking about the Lords Warden at Walmer Castle. This will be the last indoor meeting until October, so we hope for the usual good attendance. Ever mindful of the rising cost of living, we are once again proposing to keep the subscription rate at its present level. This offers exceptional value as the last increase was back in April 1996, as we should point out when encouraging new members to join. If you need an application form please contact the editor.

Many thanks to all who contacted me about the cover picture on the last edition of the newsletter. It is St James' Lane, with the corner of St James' St on the left, looking down towards Townwall St.

Pat Hooper has once again been busy arranging the society's summer outings. As there have been some enforced changes to the previously published dates, please take time to look inside the back cover for the updates. In September the outing will be to Lille. As it helps Pat a great deal with the arrangements could you please register an interest or book up

as early as possible on 01304 2281289. If you know of anywhere that you think the members may be interested in visiting then please contact Pat, or any member of the committee, as she is always on the lookout for new venues.

This year we have the Dover Festival, with many events taking place throughout the year, including the return of the ever-successful favourites, the Dover Pageant, Heritage Open Days and the Dover Regatta. Many of our local societies are putting on events this year so keep an eye on the local press for details.

*Editor*

**Wanted**

Volunteers are required to assist in running the raffle, in making and serving the refreshments and with washing up at the Society's winter meetings. We only hold five ordinary meetings, plus one wine and wisdom, at St Mary's Parish Centre. Therefore, even if you can only assist at one or two of the meetings it would be of great benefit and help to the Society. If you are interested in helping out, or you know anyone else who may be, then contact the Chairman or any member of the committee, (see inside front cover of newsletter for contact details).

**DEADLINE for contributions**

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 62 will be Wednesday 4th June 2008. 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.

*Publication in the Newsletter does not imply the Society's agreement with any views expressed, nor does the Society accept responsibility for any statements made. All published material remains the copyright of its authors, artists or photographers.*

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# *20th Anniversary of the Newsletter*

*by Merril Lilley*

This year the newsletter will have its twentieth anniversary. The first issue appeared in June 1988 with Philomena Kennedy as Editor. The Society was only a few weeks old.

Budge Adams took on the unofficial job of what he described as 'producer, distributor and advertising executive', in effect an assistant to Philomena. Budge said, 'What a wonderful opportunity it was. I was happy as a lark.'

The Chairman of the Society was Jack Woolford and the Vice-Chairman John Gerrard. There were 110 members.

The first seven issues of the Newsletter were produced on A4 sheets, copied and bound. After this Budge and Philomena decided to introduce a new format. Budge took on the job of producing the booklet and in September 1990 with issue 8 the Newsletter appeared in its new look, which it still retains to this day, with its familiar cream cover with a black-and-white illustration.

Philomena continued as Editor until May 1991. In the summer of that year she was to visit America and would not be able to produce the next Newsletter. She asked me if I would take over in her absence. My first Newsletter as Editor was Number 11 in September 1991. Philomena did not continue on her return and I remained Editor for the next fourteen years.

Budge was still the producer of the booklet, printed at Adams Printers and we worked together to bring out each Newsletter until issue No. 27 in December 1997 when Budge, with great regret, 'retired from action', as he put it. Without Budge's help the job became a lot more time-consuming, the Editor now becoming the producer as well, collecting copy, liaising with Adams Printers and organising proofreading with May Jones and Pam Taylor, who had done this job from the beginning.

When I retired from the job in 2005 Alan Lee became the new Editor, stating in his first editorial in August of that year that he was pleased to be taking over 'one of the best society newsletters in print'. Having helped him with his first issue, I am pleased that I have been able to maintain contact by proofreading and contributing articles.

Alan has continued the tradition and is now approaching his third year as Editor. It is still said by many to be one of the best newsletters in print. This is due, I feel, to all those who have contributed to its success from its beginnings in 1988 to the present day, not only the three editors but the advertisers, distributors, proofreaders and, most of all the writers. May the Newsletter and the Society go from strength to strength!

# SOCIETY PROJECTS

Report by Jeremy Cope

## COWGATE CEMETERY

My report is simple. We have made solid progress through the winter with grass cutting and clearance work. However, we have had more instances of being rained off than has been the case hitherto; global warming? On one Thursday morning we were snowed on (it quickly turned to rain), but we called it quits at midday rather than our usual 12.30. I suppose this is a reflection of the addictive qualities of working at Cowgate.

### Working Party Dates 2008

Thursday	Saturday
3rd April	12th April
1st May	10th May
5th June	14th June
3rd July	12th July
7th August	16th August
4th September	13th September
2nd October	11th October
6th November	15th November
4th December	13th December



## RIVER DOUR

In the December newsletter, I reported that the Town Council was seeking a licence from Netto to allow them to take over and enhance the riverbank beside the B&Q building. I can now report a successful outcome to these negotiations. It is the Council's intention, with £10,000 set aside for the purpose, to turn this area into a public amenity transforming it from a litter trap. The river and its surroundings at this point have, I believe, the potential to become something of a beauty spot if only Dover has the imagination and, equally important, the energy and staying power to maintain the area.

I attended a meeting at the Town Council's offices. Chaired by Lyn Young the Council's proposals received the enthusiastic support of the Environment Agency, White Cliffs Countryside Project, Dover District Council, River Dour Steering Group and the Society. I said that I felt confident that the Society, in liaison with the Town Council and White Cliffs Countryside Project, would encourage its members to join a volunteer group to keep the site litter free with the Cowgate working party mowing the grass.

We take for granted the beauty of the river environment in River and Temple Ewell. Lyn Young wants to see some of these attributes brought to river stretches within the town area. These proposals are an excellent start - **Well done Dover Town Council!!**

Other than that, the winter months on the river are quiet for human beings. It is the spawning season and we must not disturb the fish with litter clearances and similar activity but with April....

For any member who wishes to work on our projects the phone number is 01304 211348.

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*The work of the*

# PLANNING

*Sub-Committee*

Report by  
JACK WOOLFORD, Chairman

I queried the number of retrospective applications for planning consents which, at the second or third attempt, seem always to be granted. The Chairman of Dover Town Council's Planning Committee replied: "There may be one exception." Help yourself!

Applications for change of use of houses to flats and maisonettes easily outnumber all other planning applications put together. Is this the answer to the problem of affordable housing?

In connection with the upgrading of A2 from Lydden we have for many years been nagging the Ministry of Transport, etc, etc, about the traffic signs in London which direct Dover traffic to A20/M20 rather than A2/M2. In connection with the impending resurfacing of A20, we have successfully suggested road signs at Maidstone redirecting Dover traffic to A2/M2. Persistence apparently pays: but although we applaud the Highways Agency's manifold and manifest efforts to avoid deadlock by diversions, our fingers remain firmly crossed against accidents, bad weather and French strikes ...

As to the proposed quintuple wind farm at Whitfield, we have decided to support the Langdon Action Group's campaign

against it because of its proximity to housing. Since the government now proposes coastal wind farms by the thousand we (and they) may be straining at a gnat.

We note the suspension of the conversion of the SE Kent College in Ladywell into luxury flats and the continuing delay to the 'Coming soon' promise of the redevelopment of Buckland Paper Mill. Could it be that the promised Dover Town Investment Zone demolition of Burlington House, etc, etc may be further delayed by the current international financial crisis?

Meanwhile we are pleased to agree with Dover Town Council that the new parking charges should be earmarked for road improvements and congratulate it on the prospective (and overdue) transformation of Charlton Green with green fences, benches and gates. We very much appreciated Dover Town Council Planning Committee's support for our opposition to the demolition of 12 Park Avenue and its conversion into three-storey flats.

We applaud Dover District Council's promise to replace our vandalized town centre trees and hope that they will also repaint the base of the cover of the Market Square fountain when it is dry!

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# MAKE-OVER for LORD WARDEN

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*by Terry Sutton*

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The historic but deteriorating former Lord Warden Hotel at the western docks is to receive a much needed £750,000 refurbishment, thanks to owners Dover Harbour Board. However, there are no proposals to re-open the large building, now known as Southern House, as a hotel.

Dover Harbour Board acquired the building from P&O. It had come into P&O's possession as the result of the merger with Stena which inherited the premises from British Rail.

Now members of the board of Dover Harbour Board have decided to spend £750,000 on a major refurbishment of the listed building including the re-roofing of it. At present the main occupants are freight and forwarding agents working at the port.

In its time the Lord Warden Hotel numbered among its guests crowned heads, millionaires, diplomats and writers

who slept there waiting for calmer seas to cross the Channel. Charles Dickens and the 19th century novelist William Thackeray were among the hotel's clients.

A blue plaque on the building, placed there by The Dover Society, recalls the fact that the Emperor, Napoleon III was reunited with his wife Eugene there when he landed at Dover on going into exile following his defeat in the 1870/1 Franco-Prussian War.

The Lord Warden Hotel was the venue for many showy Dover occasions, including banquets and balls, early in the last century, and it was there that the mayor of Dover gave a civic luncheon to Louis Bleriot in 1909 on the day he made his 37 minute pioneer flight across the English Channel.

During the last war the hotel was requisitioned as a centre for the Royal Navy and the WRNS (Women's Royal Naval Service). At the end of the war

in 1945 the property, looking rather run down, became offices for British Rail shipping staff and for the Customs and Excise.



*The Lord Warden Hotel, early 1900s*

# Connaught Park: 125 Years of Service

Graham Wanstall, Park Officer for the Dover Society

Our lovely Victorian park celebrates its 125th year this July. In 1883, the Duke and Duchess of Connaught opened our park and the Connaught Rooms in the Town Hall. In recent years, the neglect of these great local Victorian landmarks has been marked, with Connaught Park becoming secondary to Kearsney Abbey and our historic town hall to the council offices at Whitfield.

Things changed for the worst after the introduction of compulsory competitive tendering under the Local Government Acts of 1988 and 1992. This led to the sale of the old lodge house so for approximately the last 15 years there has been nobody resident in the park with any responsibility. Things became even worse under 'Best Value', part of the 1999 Local Government Act which came into force in 2000.

Dover District Council will be working on a grand strategic policy over the next few years so it is vital that we retain the park as it is. One councillor suggested we sell off half the park to save the other half while others want 10% or more to become a car park. Both of these would be a fundamental mistake and betray the original purpose of the park, to be a well-kept large peaceful public open space with excellent views of the town and its harbour for all to enjoy. In our small-



*The Lily Pond, Connaught Park, 1924*

polluted country, dominated by the motorcar, it is so important we retain such public areas as havens away from noise and pollution.

Talk to people over 40 and most say the park was so much better when they were children, it is well laid out, just the right size and is only a ten-minute walk from the town centre. More activities could be held in the park and so encourage more people to walk.

When did you last visit our park? It is a treasure we must use, respect, enjoy and safeguard for future generations. When you next visit Dover Castle, why not take a walk through Connaught Park and enjoy what Dover has to offer!

A tree will be planted in the park in July, donated by the Dover Society, to mark the 125th year of the opening with the District Council arranging events throughout the day. Watch the local press for details.



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# The Dover Society Website

[www.doversociety.homestead.com](http://www.doversociety.homestead.com)

*Please visit our site. Read and view video reports on meetings, check the programme of events.*

Your comments and observation would be appreciated.

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

More articles on the Daughters of Dover by Lorraine Sencicle have been published on the website.



## The Festival of Dover

Every four years events will be given a special boost with extra media exposure through the Festival of Dover. Fridge magnets are available free from the Town Council office. Details of events can be printed off the website.

[www.festivalofdover2008.co.uk](http://www.festivalofdover2008.co.uk)

## The Centenary of the 1908 Dover Pageant

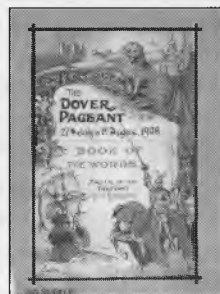
Including the following:

**8th June 2008** Dover Pageant lunch at Dover Town Hall followed by the 2008 Dover Pageant in Dover College

**22nd September 2008** 1908 Dover Pageant Music by H J Taylor played by Oliver Poole at Dover Town Hall

**February 2009** Premier release at the Dover Film Festival - Film on the life of L N Parker, Pageant Master of the 1908 Dover Pageant

[www.doverpageant.com](http://www.doverpageant.com)



*Dover Pageant 1908 programme cover*

*Kent County Council has its own television channel – check it out*

[www.kenttv.com/index.php](http://www.kenttv.com/index.php)

*Dover Civic Pride Campaign website is on*

[www.dovercivicpride.co.uk](http://www.dovercivicpride.co.uk)

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

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*From the Joe Harman files...*

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## *DOVER and the* **CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACTS**

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by Derek Leach

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On 19 January 1870 three Metropolitan police officers began duty in Dover to enforce the Contagious Diseases Acts of 1864, 1866 and 1869, designed to curb the high incidence of venereal diseases amongst the armed forces which was affecting military effectiveness. Apparently in 1864 290 of every 1000 soldiers suffered from VD. The acts only applied to garrison towns and provided for regulated inspections and supervised 'cures' of common prostitutes. Metropolitan police were brought in as a safeguard against corruption and a guarantee of impartiality, although this proved to be flawed in practice. It is true that members of Dover's own police force were sometimes reprimanded for consorting with prostitutes.

A report on the working of the acts stated that 'there is no comparison to be made between prostitutes and the men who consort with them. With the one, the offence is committed as a matter of gain; with the other it is an irregular indulgence of a natural impulse'. It was always assumed that this was a chosen profession and never the only alternative to starvation. Another quote was, 'women being the match that was ever lit and a threat to the gun powder of male sexual urges'. Transmission of the diseases was obviously from the women to the men and they were to blame, hence the action taken against women.

At this time Dover was a popular health

resort, thriving from its port and garrison with frequent royal and important visitors. Yet a health report commented that 'with the exception of Manchester, Dover was the foulest town of any from which statistics obtained'. In April 1869 the 91st Regiment stationed in Dover had 478 cases of VD. Why was there such a high incidence? Between 1864 and 1870 22 different regiments were stationed in Dover. Only a small proportion of men were allowed to marry - 6% in 1864 - since wives were considered by the military as a distraction! This policy encouraged camp followers and prostitutes. Departing regiments left behind substantial numbers of pregnant girls.

Soldiers were given routine medical examinations every six months, but regular examination of soldiers was thought distasteful with an effect upon morale and married men were assumed to be free from disease.

Under the acts notices were issued to known prostitutes asking them to submit to fortnightly internal examinations for a year. Failure to do so resulted in forced attendance and avoidance carried a three-month prison sentence. The examinations, taking three minutes, were painful and carried out without any sensitivity in the presence of a Met. Police officer. Those found to be diseased were detained for treatment for up to nine months. Those wrongly accused who wished to appeal had to prove they were

*Seven Star Street, in the Pier District*



not prostitutes. Since there was no definition of 'common prostitute' no woman of the 'lower classes' was safe from accusation. In 1870 Dover had 92 known prostitutes, but 392 women were stopped in the first two months and by the end of the year 1,654 had been examined at 7 Seven Star Street in the Pier District. The enthusiastic police officers were not so much identifying 'fallen women' as identifying women who in their opinion were not acting in a respectable manner. One such officer in plain clothes induced a woman to take a walk with him and then revealed his identity and denounced her. These officers were assisted by somewhat dubious informants: brothel keepers, diseased soldiers and women with a grudge. Suspicion only was needed, not proof. Compare this with the proof needed when accusing landlords of keeping a disorderly house. Whilst women in a licensed premises consorting with soldiers could be accused of being prostitutes, the landlord would not be convicted for keeping a disorderly house because how could he be expected to know what sort of women they were!

The officers kept detailed records, ensured accused women attended for

examination, arrested those who failed to appear, appeared in court to make a case against women and escorted them to the lock hospital at Shorncliffe Camp or to overflow hospitals in London. Many of those who suffered under the acts were soldiers' wives, especially those separated from husbands posted

overseas and forced to work for a living with only 'risky' jobs on offer such as pot girls deliberately employed by pub landlords to attract men.

Women sent for hospital cures did not know where they were being sent for months at a time, they lost their jobs and carried the stigma for years. In addition to medical treatment moral and religious instruction was given in these 'lock hospitals' as they were known.

Public protests soon began with various opinions such as the oppression of unfortunates from some quarters and the threat of embarrassment to respectable women forced to submit to medical examinations or to appear in court to defend their reputations as well as the acts allowing men to be free from blame.

In 1878 there were 5453 signatures on a petition for repeal of the acts in Dover, helped by the case of Elizabeth Burley who was pursued through the Pier District by the Met. officers. In desperation she threw herself into the dock and the police left her to drown. Fortunately, others rescued her. Elizabeth wrote to the press protesting her innocence supported by the Chairman of Magistrates whose home

she had lived in for three weeks and the clergyman who had cared for her after her ordeal. The Home Secretary had to answer questions in the House and as a result the police modified their behaviour somewhat.

With opposition growing stronger and evidence that the acts had not reduced venereal diseases since there was an even higher incidence, the government, in 1883, discontinued compulsory examinations and the Met. presence in Dover was reduced to one man. This was not welcomed by Dover Town Council which wrote to the Home Secretary regretting the end of compulsory examinations and hoping that the acts would not be repealed in view of the

benefits 'in the suppression of vice and immorality and in diminishing the spread of disease'. Repeal came, however, in 1886 and 7 Seven Star Street closed for business.

These acts epitomise the class and gender inequalities of the period where some were automatically thought impure and others innocent and pure. Let Elizabeth Burley have the last word, 'I am only a poor girl, but my character is as much to me as the character of a lady'.

*PS Compiled by Derek Leach from a Womens' Studies MA thesis entitled 'The Hateful Ordeal at Seven Star Street' by Deborah Cheney whom Joe Harman assisted in her research.*

## The Western Heights Preservation Society

*Report from Chris Taft, Publicity Secretary*

### Open Weekend 2008

The Western Heights Preservation Society (WHPS) is deep in the throws of planning the 2008 open weekend. This year there is



*Working progress at the Drop Redoubt*

to be some slight behind-the-scenes changes as the 2008 event will be led and managed directly by the WHPS, instead of through the White Cliffs Countryside Project as in the past. This naturally means there is a great deal of work to be done by the Society but happily many aspects are under way.

The open weekend will take place on Saturday 31st May and Sunday 1st June 2008. The Drop Redoubt and Grand Shaft will both once more be open, with a small charge being made for the Drop Redoubt. Other events are planned to work alongside the opening although it is anticipated that once more the Drop Redoubt will be the main attraction.



*The Barracks, Western Heights*



## **Constitution Changes**

The planned changes to the Society constitution, reported in the last issue, have now been approved at the Extraordinary General Meeting held back in December. They will put the Society on a more professional footing for registration as a charity, which can strengthen its case when it comes to fund raising.

## **Hotel Proposal**

During a recent committee meeting the WHPS heard from a member of the team behind the planned hotel development at the Heights. This plan has been much discussed in the local press and the WHPS continues to monitor and consider the proposal. The Society welcomed the opportunity to talk through plans and maintains its view that the protection and preservation of the Heights must remain at the fore during these discussions.

## **Publicity and Funding**

The publicity arm of the Society has been sending out press releases on a national basis for the 2008 open weekend. Further details will be published nearer to the event in the local press and other publications.

Articles are currently being written promoting the Society to interested audiences on a local and national scale. It is hoped in the coming year further targeted marketing can take

place to promote the Society, the Heights and its history more widely.

The WHPS is also considering improving its range of retail stocks. Over the years a number of new lines have been added but in this year it is hoped to increase them further.

## **Getting Involved**

We are actively seeking to expand and develop, so if you think you would like to get involved and help with this please contact us at the address below. The work need not be strenuous and is very rewarding. Please contact the Publicity Secretary for more details or to have an informal chat about what may be involved.

The workdays are on the 3rd Sunday of each month, from 10.30 am, at the Drop Redoubt. We hope to be able to continue to clear the parade ground area, the cells and also the gunrooms inside the sallyport door. This will hopefully allow us to expand the areas open to the public.

## **Contact Us**

WHPS Box 366 DEAL Kent CT14 9XY  
[publicity@dover-western-heights.org](mailto:publicity@dover-western-heights.org)

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# SOCIETY MEETINGS

## November Meeting

### RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

*A talk by Nadeem Aziz reported by Derek Leach*

Nadeem Aziz, Chief Executive of Dover District Council, made a packed audience sit up and take notice from the outset of his presentation, stating that, despite its natural assets and huge potential, Dover had failed to deliver following its post war decline. He followed this with a string of negatives: Dover is the only town in the south-east declining in population; our people have low aspirations; there is a low wage/low skill economy; earnings are 80% of the south-east average despite the presence of Pfizer; less than 20% possess NVQ Level 4 (or its equivalent) and above; there are health inequalities; our schools perform well, but we export our talented youth; we suffer from inadequate further education opportunities; two-thirds of our jobs are filled by people commuting into the area and spending their money out of the town and we have an increasingly large ageing population with falling numbers of those of work and school age. This was not the picture of a sustainable community.

In Mr Aziz's view Dover was at a crossroads with the choice of further decline or working for a better future with regeneration. Regeneration had been tried before, but this time external key players were on board with essential investment, presenting an opportunity for Dover to optimise its

assets with a number of major projects in the pipeline. This would create jobs that are needed to produce economic benefits: the fast rail link expected in 2009 would give talented, young people the opportunity to live locally and commute rather than move away; the St. James' area redevelopment would begin in 2008; the next phase of the White Cliffs Business Park was underway; the Seaports Centre was under construction; the Harbour Board's ambitious plans for the Western Docks would include links to the town centre; South Kent College would have new buildings and facilities on the same site; many more houses would be needed for these plans to succeed, including the redevelopment of the Buckland Paper Mill and Connaught Barracks sites.

Following the showing of an impressive DVD illustrating these schemes, Mr Aziz tackled a number of questions, including the problems of Townwall Street, the failure to dual the A2 and the lack of any leisure facilities such as a cinema, bowling alley or ice rink, in any of the plans.

We reached the interval wondering whether this was all just a dream or was Dover really on the verge of long overdue, major change. When Burlington House is demolished perhaps we shall start to believe it!

## HEALTHCARE IN DOVER

*A talk by Lynne Selman & Sue Brown reported by Lorraine Sencicle*

Our health, its treatment and the way we receive it is one subject that understandably arouses strong feelings. It was therefore with great interest that we awaited the presentation by Lynne Selman and Sue Brown of our Primary Care Trust (PCT).

Lynne first described our Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT, its work and aims. It must engage with us to improve our health, fitness and wellbeing. It has to commission or directly provide appropriate quality services within its budget (it is currently financially stable). It does not run hospitals but buys from them some of the services we need.

What is the background against which the PCT has to decide how best to serve our health needs? Nationally the changes in health technology and medicine seem to be driving hospitals to centralise into specialisations. Greater patient expectations of outcomes would also push things in this direction. Locally we are an ageing population with, compared to the national average, more cancer deaths, obesity, mental health needs, child poverty and a greater number of accidents.

Apart from involving local organisations such as Dover District Council it looks to involve us in assessing priorities and learning what we consider important. This was a vital part of the message given throughout the meeting. PCT plans include better primary care, lower technical care close to our homes, and less time spent in hospital. Areas for investment include improvement in areas of most need, more outpatient facilities locally and end of life care at home.

In the summer of 2006 the PCT consulted local people in a review of health and social care services. Some of the major concerns were the need for adequate transport, lack of parking at hospitals, location of services and strong support for the preservation of Buckland Hospital. The PCT believes that it is starting to make progress in implementing changes based upon consultation and they are now delivering increased health care for older people.

Questions followed and can be broadly divided into the following categories:-

### *Dealing with complaints and problems:*

It is clear that if we have bad experiences or are dissatisfied we should contact the PCT and make our concerns known. If we don't then we have only ourselves to blame if nothing is done. Following a question one member was asked to join the patient's forum.

Contact details:-

Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT,  
Brook House, John Wilson Business  
Park, Chestfield, Whitstable CT5 3QJ.

Telephone: 01227 795061.

Email [communications@cantpct.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@cantpct.nhs.uk)

### *Transport:*

There is wide concern about the need to travel to Ashford, Canterbury or Thanet for treatment, the lack of public transport and inadequate and expensive parking facilities. The PCT is working on improving public transport but it requires the co-operation of other public bodies to produce results. Going green and generating less carbon dioxide does not even get a mention. 3 out of 10 on this one!

### *Buckland Hospital:*

Nadeem Aziz told us earlier of plans for Dover to become a world-class town, but no hospital! It seems to me that Dover people and the PCT are like the deaf talking to each other, neither comprehends what the other is saying. The PCT tells us Buckland is not suitable as a hospital building and it is seeking to provide us with an up-to-date alternative. However, that alternative will not be a hospital. Dover people want their hospital and resent travelling long distances either for treatment or to visit patients. If you do not have a car or are poor, and the statistics emphasise local poverty, then distance certainly does not lend enchantment. The matter was further heightened when Lorraine Sencicle asked that the statistics detailing a decline in outpatient visits to Buckland be explained in the light of the PCT's attitude to the

hospital's future and plans for more local outpatient treatment. There was no clear answer and it is to be hoped the PCT will provide a full explanation. Judging by what was said Buckland's chances of survival look slim indeed.

Many of us understand the need for specialist treatment centres. We have good experience of the treatment we receive from NHS. Nevertheless, we are rightly suspicious of plans handed down to us that take away the services we are used to without any proven replacements. Most of us resent the travelling involved, both time and cost, brought about by the current centralisation. Is it too much to ask for a policy of the maximum treatment provided at local level, with statistics and information to prove that the policy is working? Why not a local hospital for post-operative care?

## *December Meeting*

### **THE CHRISTMAS FEAST 2007**

*Reported by Alan Lee*

The feast was held, as is now the usual practice, in the Dover College refectory with our Chairman Derek Leach acting as the Master of Ceremonies.

The chefs and college staff once again arranged for a most sumptuous buffet with the organisation first rate. Jeremy and Shelia Cope, Jack Woolford, Denise Lee and Ken Tranter the raffle ticket sellers ensured by their gentle persuasion that the sum of £234 was raised.

The entertainment was provided by Elspeth Robertson, the Marlow Young Musician of the Year, accompanied by

Kate, Pandora and Marion. Incidentally, Kate had travelled down from Edinburgh University that day and only arrived late in the afternoon.

The ensemble started off with the *Waltz of the Flowers* from the *Nutcracker* by Tchaikovsky followed by the selection of three dances from Bach's *Orchestral Suite No. 2*. The music then changed dramatically with Elspeth and her mother Marian playing two jazz duets by Brian Bonsor. This led on to a solo by Elspeth playing some ragtime. Both pieces were written by Scott Joplin, *Pine Apple Rag* published in 1908

and *The Entertainer* in 1902. The mood changed once more when the ensemble played the first movement (the allegro) of Vivaldi's *Concerto in G*. Again finding something completely different Elspeth, accompanied by Marian, brought the evening's entertainment to a close with a fine rendition of a traditional English ballad *Greensleeves*.

We had enjoyed an exceptional evening's entertainment, which had

something for everyone, with the music ranging from classical to traditional ballad to jazz and to ragtime all played with seemingly effortless ease.

Many thanks must go to Pat Hooper for organising the feast and to all who helped. The only problem Pat has now for the 2008 feast is that having set such a high standard in 2007 she will have difficulty in finding entertainment to exceed it.

## January Meeting

### WEIMAR AND DRESDEN

*A talk by Lea Oakley reported by Alan Lee*

The January meeting saw the return, of Lea Oakley, as a speaker, this time to talk about Eastern Germany illustrating her account with slides. In June 2005, Lea and her husband Chris took a short holiday in Germany, staying with their friends Manfred and Barbara who live close to Dortmund and Essen. A fascinating couple they are full of enthusiasm for the history, culture and art of Germany.

They set out bright and early and as they drove eastwards, they learnt how the arts had been encouraged so that composers, artists, writers and scientists flourished. They passed the discoverer of aspirin Bayer Pharmaceuticals; the Museum of Neanderthal Man; the house where Roentgen, the discoverer of X-Rays lived; the home of communism, where Friedrich and Marc Engels lived; the birthplace of Bach and the forests where the brothers Grimm wrote their stories. The further east they travelled the more noticeable was the modernization and rebuilding that had taken place, since 1989 and re-unification.

Later that day they reached Gelmeroda and the B&B that was to be their base for three nights. Close by in the village stood a church with a tall steeple, wonderfully illuminated at



*Church at Gelmeroda*

night. This had been made famous in the 1920s by an American artist, Lyonel Feininger, who had gained international fame.

The following day they visited the small city of Weimar, by the River Ilm, which had become a leading centre of culture in the 18th century. The Duchess Anna Amalia who was married to the Duke of Weimar had greatly encouraged the arts and after his death in 1754, and until 1775, she was Regent to her son Carl August and she had passed on her love of art, music and literature to him.

He had housed his literary collections which included works by Goethe, Luther Bibles and the largest collection of Shakespearean manuscripts in Europe, within the Anna Amalia Library. In 2004 this was severely damaged as a result of a horrendous fire, the roof was destroyed and 40,000 books were damaged. These collections are now housed in a new state of the art building which cost 25 million euros, ironically opened just five months after the fire.

The city's most famous resident was Johann Wolfgang Goethe, who lived from 1749 to 1832, the inventor of the glass barometer and an avid collector of fossils, minerals, butterflies and insects. He completed over three thousand works of poetry, literature and design. His house on the Frauenplan remains much as it was and it was there that he wrote Faust. Nearby lived Friedrich Schiller, writer of William Tell and Maid of Orleans, whilst yet another local famous resident was Franz Liszt.

In the late 1920s and the 1930s during the rise of the Third Reich Weimar was the hub of the Nazi regime and Adolf Hitler often addressed the people from the balcony of the famous Hotel Elephant.

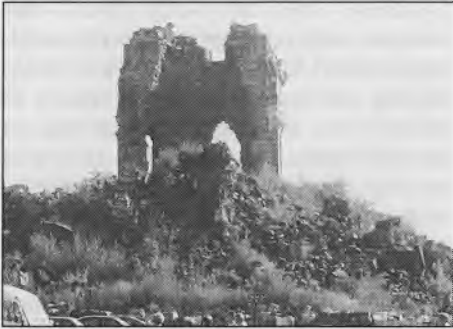
Close by the city was the concentration camp of Buchenwald. More than 50,000 people died there, mainly German intellectuals, many of them Jews, although this was not an extermination camp. After the war, during the occupation the Russians built a huge war memorial overlooking the city to serve as a constant reminder of this dark period.

Maybe the golden ages are now returning, as in 1999 Weimar became the European City of Culture, 150 years after the birth of Goethe.

The second part of the couple's trip saw them visit the world famous Meissen porcelain factory as they moved on to Dresden. Known as *Florence on the Elbe*, after a painting by *Canaletto*, Dresden had grown in wealth and became the most beautiful baroque city in Europe, during the reigns of Friedrich August I and II, 1694 - 1763.

During WWII, on the nights of the 13th and 14th February 1945, British bombers, followed the next night by American planes dropped thousands of firebombs on the city. These raids caused the destruction of a great deal of Dresden and killed about 40,000 people. Since 1989, the restoration of much of the damage has taken place, but there is still much to do.

The *Church of our Lady* the *Frauenkirche* had been destroyed and the Russians fenced it off and stacked the remains where they had fallen. Since reunification, it has cost almost £200 million to rebuild it. A cross sent from Coventry as a symbol of peace was dedicated by the Queen in 2005. Some of the figures have been left in a blackened state which adds contrast and poignancy to the finished building.



Frauenkirche, Dresden 1991



Inside Schloskirche, Wittenberg



Schloss Pillnitz

Other prominent features of the city include:

*The Catholic Church*, in a Protestant city, has a stunning white interior and a Silbermann organ. The heart of August the Strong is buried here and legend has it that, even today, the heart starts beating when a pretty woman passes by.

The *Semper Opera House* originally built in 1841 took 40 years to restore. Kings and princes, from the 18th and 19th Centuries, are portrayed on the *Wall of Tiles* one hundred metres long and covered in 24,000 Meissen tiles.

The *Zwinger*, built as a festival ground with spectacular fountains and baroque buildings, including the *Glockenspiel Pavilion* with its forty Meissen china bells is also noteworthy. *Cassel's Palace*, the home of the mistress of August the Strong is now a splendid tearoom and restaurant.

The *Statue of August the Strong* (1670 - 1733) which became a symbol of the city.

*The Treasure Chamber of August the Strong*, a part of this is the *Delhi Court* which has one hundred and thirty seven golden and enamelled figures, 5,000 diamonds, rubies, emeralds and pearls.

The couple took a boat ride on the Elbe to the *Pillnitz*, the summer palace of August, and were lucky that a wine festival with music was taking place. On their return westwards, they made a visit to



*Wartburg Castle, Wittenberg* where Martin Luther translated the Bible into German. He wrote 95 Theses and in 1517 he nailed them to the doors of *All Saints' Church, the Schlosskirche*. This is commonly viewed to be the beginning, or at least the spark which led to the beginning of the Protestant Reformation in Germany.

At the end of the visit as the four friends relaxed over a German beer they agreed that they felt stimulated and inspired by all that they had seen and learnt.

Lea, with her most enlightening talk, gave us just a taste of the treasures of Dresden and Weimar, where there is so much more to see. The area would make a wonderful holiday destination for us too.

*Schlosskirchenturm, Wittenberg*



## THE PINES GARDEN & CALYX CENTRE

*A talk by Olivia Clark and Edmond Rube reported by Terry Sutton*

The history and progress of the six-acre Pines Garden at St Margaret's Bay was described to our members at a meeting at St Mary's parish centre on January 21st.

Guest speakers at the meeting were Olivia Clark, general manager of the St Margaret's Bay Trust, and her colleague Edmond Rube, the technical manager of the iconic Calyx conference centre that graces the gardens.



*The lake at Pines Gardens*

Olivia explained how the late Frederick Cleary CBE, who founded the gardens and the trust, first visited and enjoyed St Margaret's Bay when he was a boy and his father, a soldier, was stationed at Dover Castle. After a successful career in property Mr Cleary moved to live at St Margaret's and in the mid-1960s bought the six acres of the valley near his home (the former Napoleonic era military training ground) to prevent it from being built on. Mr Cleary died in 1984. (Alistair Gould, his grandson, is the chairman of the trust and was to have given the talk but he had another appointment in South America).

Olivia described the large monument in the gardens to Sir Winston Churchill, created by Oscar Nemon, and how the plinth on which it stands was changed and softened from black marble to rocks to make it more natural.

*Winston Churchill's statue*

Other initiatives were the creation of a labyrinth, designed in 2000, for reflection and contemplation by visitors to the gardens and a 'climate change' garden where exotic plants were grown to demonstrate to visitors what they would be able to cultivate in their own gardens.

Olivia, who paid tribute to the volunteers who helped man the gardens, said another innovation was a shell carpet (made out of seashells) that crunched as one walked on it.

*The Labyrinth at Pines Gardens*

She also told us about Rippledown Environmental Education Centre at Ringwold, owned by the trust, that provides education for urban primary school children, some of whom have never been to the countryside or seaside before.

The Calyx was also the venue for nine weddings in 2007. It was claimed to be the most energy efficient building in Europe she said.

Edmond provided technical details about the construction of the rammed chalk block conference centre, explaining that it was provided in an attempt to demonstrate to others how global warming could be tackled by using local resources. The chalk to build it came from the site.

He claimed that, so long as it was looked after, the chalk block built Calyx could last for 400 years. It required just 15 per cent of the heating normally used in a building of its size and, when in full use, needed no external heating at all because it captured the heat from people's bodies.

*\*The Pines Garden, at the foot of Bay Hill is open to visitors (daily all year from 10 am to 5 pm) and well worth a visit.*

*The Calyx*



# Wine and Wisdom 2008

## *An Enjoyable and Popular Evening*

Report from Jeremy Cope

On the evening of the 18th February, over eighty of the wise gathered at St. Mary's Parish Hall for our Annual Wine and Wisdom Evening. We have to thank Clive Taylor and his team (wife Jill and Andrew) for the success of this good humoured but competitive event. As always, Clive set the questions that bring out the best in us. However, dingbats and abbreviations revealed those less able to think outside the box.

We must also thank Pat Hooper and Pat Sherratt for organising an evening that provided such very good value for money. The evening was as always, underpinned by members who helped with chores and by Mike Weston who dealt with the wine.

*Congratulations to the winners in reverse order:-*

Tying third were Good Companions and Enigma with 80 points.

Second were the BJ's with 83 points winning a prize of chocolates.

Brainiest of all, for the second year, were Smith's Crisps with 84 points who were awarded inscribed glasses.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Spring 2008

### **SUBSCRIPTION TIME!! SUBSCRIPTION TIME!!**

From time to time the topic of subscription increase is raised in committee especially as this has happened only once in our 20 year history. For the time being most committee members feel that the amount should remain at its present level of £6 single and £10 joint, relying on Gift Aid to add its supplement of about one third in value. One obvious benefit of a modest subscription is that we can appeal to as wide a membership as possible. Our finances are in surplus with a healthy bank balance enabling us to further our objectives, to earn interest, which also keeps subscriptions low and to maintain a prudent financial policy, which helps secure the Society's future.

Because we are a charity we are permitted to spend only a limited percentage of our subscription income for the benefit of members, apart from the newsletter. Quite rightly, the Charity Commissioners are becoming ever more vigilant in their supervision. While we can cover our permissible expenditure by means of the subscription we see no need to ask our members for more.

Nevertheless we are well aware that many committee members and others do generously contribute to our finances in a variety of ways either in kind or by their efforts, all of which enable the Society to function effectively. A good example of this is the raffle which keeps meetings in surplus overall, permits free entry to all and ensures that non-attendees do not subsidise those who are able to come to meetings. With a special cause, such as trees for Dover precinct, members are given the opportunity to support a cause that is of particular interest to them.

We now have 461 members and welcome new ones include:- Mr M Faulkner, Mrs J & Mr M Pope, Mr N Late, Mr P & Mrs J Hart and Mrs B Stapleton.

We send our condolences to families and friends of members who have recently died:- Mrs C Mackintosh, Miss J Wells, Mrs A Knott, Mr P Cook, Mr J Ullmann, Mrs A Sly (aged 101).

*Sheila R. Cope*

# FORT BURGOYNE & CONNAUGHT BARRACKS

*By Jon Iveson*

During the sixty years following the Battle of Waterloo, British popular and political opinion suffered three periods of alarm with regard to imagined French aggressive intentions.

The first of these, in 1847, was triggered by advances in technology. Explosive shells had increased the power of artillery, and steam power for naval vessels threatened to render obsolete overnight the Royal Navy. It was feared that the French might gain a temporary command of the channel and, no longer reliant on wind or tide, land a considerable force on British soil. This view was put most forcibly by General Sir John Fox Burgoyne, Inspector General of Fortifications, and was strongly backed by Lord Palmerston the Foreign Secretary. The revolutions of 1848 forced Louis Philippe, the French king, and his son to take refuge in England and the panic subsided.

In 1851 and 1852 the coup d'état and subsequent re-election of Napoleon III caused another panic, which was only dispelled when France and Britain allied themselves against Russia.

The third, more serious, alarm was generated once again by technological advances. France launched an ironclad steam warship - *La Gloire*, and new rifled guns increased the range and accuracy of artillery fire to such an extent that bombardment ranges

increased from 4,000 to 8,000 yards. Despite the recent alliance during the Crimean War fears about French intentions were increased by Napoleon III declaring himself Emperor and by building work beginning on the Suez Canal. The development of a large fortified harbour at Cherbourg was inspected by Prince Albert and Britain's defences suffered in the comparison. Britain, it was felt, was falling behind, and this feeling became apparent with the growth of Rifle Volunteer units up and down the country.

These various alarms caused money to be spent once again on fortifications and armaments throughout the 1850s, but it was not until August 1859 that a Royal Commission was instructed to enquire into the "present state, condition and sufficiency of the Fortifications existing for the defence of our United Kingdom..."

Work was already underway on the Western Heights at Dover but when the Commission reported in February 1860, amongst their recommendations was the construction of a new fort to the north of Dover Castle "in order to prevent an enemy establishing his batteries on the high ground, which overlooks the castle in that direction."

Although this fort was originally called Castle Hill Fort it was quickly renamed Fort Burgoyne in honour of the General

who had pushed so hard for new fortifications.

In November 1860 approval was granted to acquire the land and the outline design approved by the Secretary of State for War. In June 1861 work began on the construction of bombproof casemated barracks to house 1 Field Officer, 6 officers, 217 men and two horses. These barracks were built by civilian contractors at a total cost of £29,508 but the remainder of the work was completed by military labour.

The fort was designed by Captain Edmund Du Cane who was also responsible for the reconstruction of the defences on the Western Heights. The completed form of the fort is polygonal reflecting other forts engendered by the Royal Commission, such as those on Portsdown Hill at Portsmouth.

Fort Burgoyne is surrounded by a dry ditch 35 feet wide and revetted with concrete and flint in places due to problems with the structure of the underlying chalk. In the centre of the north face, hidden in the ditch, is a double caponier to give flanking fire along the ditch floor in both directions. At both the northeast and north-west corners of the fort are single caponiers with another on the west flank to give cover to the remaining ditches. On either side a ditch stretches across the crest of the hill to give two wings to the fort, each with its own emplacements for guns. The battery at the west wing was protected by a caponier to defend the ditch.

Within the fort bombproof casemates provided the accommodation and also acted as platforms for the guns, some of which were housed in Haxo casemates.

Ramps led up to the top of the casemates to enable guns to be positioned. The casemates along the north side of the fort were intended as men's barracks, flanked on either side by officers' quarters. In basements beneath the officers' quarters were rooms for servants, officers' kitchens, larders, scullery and cellars for wine and beer. At either end of the casemated barracks, and adjoining the officers' quarters, were the main magazines with passages sloping down to give access to the northeast and north-west caponiers.

Water tanks beneath the centre casemates provided water in case of siege and the fort's main gate to the south was flanked by guardrooms and cells. The access bridge and ditch at this point was protected by gunrooms in the ditch wall.

By the end of 1868 the fort was complete at an estimated total cost of £88,053 although its guns and the racer tracks on which to mount them had not yet been fitted. The fort had been constructed for 29 guns along the rampart, six of which were to be protected by Haxo casemates. In the caponiers and flanking batteries there was room for 26 smaller guns or carronades, and two guns on the parade level protected the ditch to the east wing battery. East wing battery was to be equipped with five guns and west wing battery with four.

The total capacity of the magazines, including the expense magazines in the Haxo casemates, the caponiers and the wing batteries, was 3,672 barrels of powder.

Despite the confident assertion in 1874 by the Deputy Director of Works

(Fortifications) Lt. Colonel Jervois, that "so long as it is held (Fort Burgoyne), an attack is impracticable either upon the castle or along the northern front of the Western Heights", the fort still had no guns.

By 1886 Fort Burgoyne was equipped with six 7 inch Rifled Breech Loading guns (RBLs) seven 40 pounder RBLs, two 32 pounder smooth bore guns and, in the caponiers, sixteen 24 pounder carronades. It was proposed that these should be replaced with one fixed 5 inch breech loader (BL) and one mobile, four 64 pounder Rifled Muzzle Loading guns (RMLs), fourteen 24 pounder carronades and four mobile 8 inch RML howitzers. In addition these guns were to be supplemented by a machine gun.

The proposal to change the armaments at Fort Burgoyne also recommended that the Haxo casemates be blocked as they were now obsolete. In 1888 this report was accepted. Also in 1888 it was realised that the 24 pounder carronades providing flanking fire along the ditch towards east wing battery were useless as they were blocked by the brick piers of the entrance bridge and the carronades were removed.

In 1892 it was recommended that two 6.6inch howitzers and a 4inch BL replace the four 64 pounder guns intended to be fitted in place of the 7 inch RBLs, and that the number of carronades be reduced to seven, with the remainder of the guns being replaced by nine machine guns. This work was carried out and in April 1893 only the 4 inch BL remained to be fitted.

In 1897 a hutted camp (Fort Burgoyne Huts also known as the red huts) was

constructed adjacent to the fort on land previously occupied by Castle Hill Farm.

By 1906 all the guns in the fort had been removed and replaced by three machine guns in the fort itself and three in its wing batteries. Fort Burgoyne now became a defensible barrack and a base for mobile guns rather than a permanent defence.

In 1912/13 Fort Burgoyne Huts were replaced with Connaught Barracks.

During the First World War brick gun emplacements were constructed in the fort and during the Second, when it was home to two batteries of 25 pounder field guns, concrete emplacements were added. A concrete blast wall was built on the parade ground across the front of the casemated barrack fronts during the Second World War and other concrete walls built in the main magazines.

In 1962 Connaught Barracks were demolished and new barracks built on the site by Messrs. C. Jenner and Son, of Folkestone, at a cost reported in a local newspaper of £750,000.

Today Fort Burgoyne remains virtually unchanged from its original layout and is part of Connaught Barracks. It is not accessible to the public. The Barracks were declared redundant in 2006 and were closed and mothballed.

A proposal by the Home Office to turn them into an open prison was defeated by a local campaign and the site was, on 16th October 2007, acquired from Defence Estates by English Partnerships with a view to demolishing and developing the barracks and finding a future use for the fort.

Notes taken from record drawing 1935 amended to 1952 on O.S. Survey plan of 1933.

Description	Date of Erection	Cost	Remarks
Casemated Barracks	About 1864	Unknown	
Coal Store Block	Unknown	Unknown	
Guard Room and Detention Rooms (disused)	1867	£400	
Officer's Stables (2 Stalls)	1881	£196	
Officers and Transport Stables	1929	£2330	
Ammunition Store	1880	£289	Formerly laboratory converted 1931-32 at a cost of £39
Miniature Rifle Range	1914	Unknown	
Vehicle Shed	1902	£681	
30 Yards Rifle Range	1921	£342	
Gymnasium	1926	£4557	
Squash Racquet Court	1931-32	£768	Cost of building borne by Eastern Command Sports Board. This building forms encroachment no.2042
Water Supply Tanks	1913	Unknown	
Miniature Range, Rifle, Brick			
24,000 Gallons Water Tank			
48,000 Gallons Water Tank			

The plan appears to have amendments at 30.6.35, 30.6.37, 30.6.47 and 30.6.52

## *An Enduring Local Trust*

*By Peter Sherred (Clerk of the R.V.Coleman Trust)*

If one studies a map of the Borough of Dover, as determined by the Commissioners appointed by the House of Commons in 1832 and incorporating all improvements to 1835, one sees the key features of the town at the beginning of the 19th century. In particular opposite the Maison de Dieu (as it is called), beside the road from Folkestone adjoining York Street, one comes across Priory Farm with its buildings, while moving northwards through the parish of Buckland, adjoining the Canterbury to London Road and located opposite where the now empty Buckland Mill buildings stand and just south of what was the Crabble Gate, one comes across a large area of land upon which is a significant building identified as The Shrubbery.

Meanwhile, at the same time, if one ventures in the direction of Deal and passes through East Langdon one comes across a building the origins of which go back some 800 years from the date of the map of Dover. This building in the early 19th century was mostly neglected with its roof needing repair and an important item of its interior thrown outside the building. This was St Augustine's church East Langdon, and the piece of furniture concerned? None other than its font, neglected in the graveyard with its pedestal broken.

After the dissolution of the Dover Priory, which had been in place since the early 12th century, its lands were from time to time let to various people. At the end of the 18th

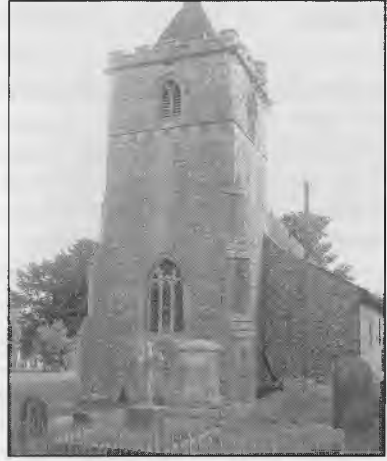
century the lands were worked by John Coleman, and this family continued to occupy the lands until dates in the 19th century when much was acquired for the purposes of Dover College. An interesting view of the farmland opposite the Maison de Dieu, dating from 1807, is found as a frontispiece to the book "Dover" by John Bavington Jones (1907).

The Shrubbery was the house of Vice Admiral Sir John Bentley in the 17th century. It was the oldest and largest house alongside Crabble Hill. Bentley was given command of a ship he had helped capture from the French, renamed *Invincible*, which was one of the finest 74 gun ships in naval service. He was knighted after the defeat of a French squadron in the Mediterranean, participated in a great victory in Quiberon Bay and died at Buckland on 3rd January 1772 where he had lived since 1763. The house and grounds were subsequently owned and occupied by various people and at the beginning of the 20th century were in the ownership of the Coleman family who had moved from The Priory.

The connection between the Priory Farm, The Shrubbery, St Augustine's Church East Langdon and the Trust? A man, Richard Vincent Coleman. Born on December 13th 1831, in the old farmhouse at Priory Farm, he owned The Shrubbery at the turn of the 20th century and died there on 5th July 1909. Buried in the family vault at St Augustine's churchyard in East Langdon, he had established by his will dated 27th September 1906 a charity which was eventually to be called The R V Coleman Convalescent and Nursing Home Trust.

In 2007 a group of local people, known as the Trustees of The R V Coleman Trust, met as is their custom, three times to consider various types of help, to people who qualify, they had given or could give to assist 'persons in need resident in the area of benefit who are sick, convalescent, disabled or infirm by relieving their suffering or assisting their recovery'. The trustees are the modern

*Family tomb at East Langdon*



representatives of the charity established by Coleman when he signed his will 101 years ago and now regulated by a Scheme of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales dated 4th December 2000. Many thousands of people have benefited from the generosity of one man over the years. The Chairman Dr Walter Mason, a retired general practitioner, and the trustees also consider the work of the welfare officer Mrs Barbara Godfrey, a former probation officer, who is the 'front line' representative of the trust along with the writer who has been privileged to have served as Clerk of the Charity for 16 years. The area of influence for the trust in practice has meant benefits to patients living in the urban area of Dover and the parishes of Alkham, Ashley, Capel, Coldred, Denton, Kingsdown, Lydden, Ringwould, River, St Margaret's, Shepherdswell, Studdal, Sutton, Swingfield, and Waldershare - effectively an arc around the northern boundary of Dover. Most trustees are appointed for a five-year term but forfeit their position if they do not attend meetings for one year. They are empowered to make grants of money and provide or pay for goods, services or facilities for patients. Their ability to do so rests on the rental income from the R V Coleman Home (now



located in Brookfield Avenue on the site that was once The Shrubbery and its grounds) and from their investment portfolio, which enables the trustees to meet the object of the Charitable Trust. Most grants are devoted to residential and nursing home referrals. In 2006 they funded some 87 cases to a total of £43,889 and between 2000 and 2005 assistance for 612 referrals. These referrals come predominantly via general practitioners and, as a registered charity, details of its finances are notified to the Charity Commission once a year. However, the trust does not limit its response to residential care cases but has provided assistance for convalescent aids such as a special car seat for a child, donations to the Pilgrims Hospice and the Demelza Hospice for children, (in both cases following inquiry on patients being treated from within the area of benefit), wheelchair assistance, provision of a scooter shelter, Aspen Unit for a hydrotherapy pool, a recliner-riser chair, four wheeled walkers and the purchase of a specialist tandem cycle for a blind autistic person. These are just some of the ways this charity has helped improve the lives of those who make application to it and who fall within its object. Because of the demands upon its resources applications are carefully scrutinised. The trustees can refuse assistance and have total discretion on their response to requests for help and this is necessary to preserve the funds of the charity and ensure its purpose is continued into the future.

The current trustees, Dr W Mason, Mrs B Harrison, Mr B Lawrence, Mr T Gould, Mr R J Tant, Mrs M M R Pain and Mrs M Mee, supported by Mrs B Godfrey as welfare officer and the writer as clerk, 98 years after the death of Richard Vincent Coleman, are still able to give assistance and relief in the

spirit intended by him to those who qualify and are referred to the trust. Where residential care is provided and funded by the trust a weekly contribution is required from a patient and the maximum period currently funded, due to the demands on its resources, is two weeks. For many people those two weeks are a lifeline in terms of respite care and it is wonderful to know that the generosity of a man from the 19th and 20th centuries is still available to needy people in the 21st century.

The original minute book, which was meticulously completed by hand in manuscript form from the first meeting of the proposed Trustees on the 10th June 1914 to the 26th January 2000, when the book was full, is a treasure trove of the historical record of developments of the trust from its inception; of the history of Dover, of well known local and other names and of other developments as the 20th century developed and merits separate attention to that given in this article.

Richard Vincent Coleman was described as 'public spirited' who 'out of his ample means was kind to the poor' yet he did not take part in public affairs although being well known and highly respected in the town at the time. His memory deserves to live on and does so in the sterling work of the trust which carries his name and forms an integral part of the public affairs of the town today.



*Rear view of R.V. Coleman Home*

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# ST NICHOLAS DAY



Fr. Peter Sherred

The Church of Our Lady of Dover may not figure highly, if at all, in the annals of Dover in terms of history but it does provide arguably the most significant Christian building on the Buckland Estate serving the Roman

Catholic community there and from a wider area. Located on a road junction where Old Park Avenue, Old Park Hill and Rosevelt Road meet it provides a prominent brick footprint that dominates the immediate neighbourhood. It was designed by F G Broadbent FRIBA and built by the local firm of R J Barwick & Sons. Fr. Terence Tanner was the Roman Catholic priest of Dover when it was completed, enabling it to be opened by Bishop Cowderoy on 11th November 1960. This was a significant date for not only is it Remembrance Day but it is also the Feast of St Martin of Tours, the patron saint of Dover. Visitors can admire its internal layout, in particular the main focal point, the Pieta, carved by Robert Forsyth who was responsible for the statue of St Richard in the Maison Dieu.

It was at this church on 6th December 2007, the Festival of St Nicholas, that civic dignitaries, members of the Emergency Services, the Pharos Choir and members of the public gathered for an evening of Christmas Word and Song in thanksgiving for and celebration of the work of the Emergency Services. The evening had added poignancy in view of the death of the female police officer knocked down



*The Church of Our Lady, Dover*

by a person she and others sought to detain and of course the tragic loss of life of four fire fighters in a Warwickshire warehouse fire, both incidents occurring not long before the

evening function was scheduled to take place.

The evening of carols and readings was deliberately designed not to be a traditional service. Lessons were introduced that not only led up to the nativity of Christ and the Incarnation but took people beyond to help understand the meaning of the divine birth and to be able to reflect on what they understood to be the Kingdom of God as proclaimed by Jesus Christ. Additionally, the readings were to help people understand, through poetry and prose, the impact of Christmas on their lives. Various people read lessons which were interspersed with readings, from *A Visit from the Christ Child* by Père Robert, *A Christmas Carol* by Dickens, *St Nicholas* by The St Nicholas Society and *Christmas* by John Betjeman, the former Poet Laureate.

The Pharos choir began the proceedings with the church in semi-darkness, processing with candles and singing the first verse of *O come, O come, Emmanuel!* The only other light was from a camera belonging to Meridian Television. The programme continued with a reading from the gospel of St John, where he unfolds the great mystery of the

Incarnation, and continued with carols. The choir sang *Alleluia, a new work is come on hand, The Infant King, Nativity Carol, Coventry Carol* and *Hodie Christus natus est*. The congregation sang with gusto some of the old favourites: *Once in Royal David's City, Away in a Manger, While Shepherds watched their flocks by night, As with gladness men of old, Once upon a long ago, Good King Wenceslas looked out, finishing with O come, all ye faithful.*

A timely visitor St Nicholas (John Crowley) arrived during the evening and along with Val Crowley he read about the life of St Nicholas and distributed gold



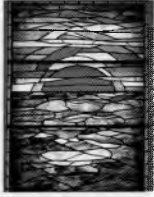
chocolate coins to the children, the mayoresses and members of the choir. He departed before the end, adding a sense of mystery to the occasion. Following a blessing by Fr. John Panario the choir rounded off the programme with a rousing rendition of *Jingle Bells*.

There was then a reception that included mulled wine, mince pies and two superb themed cakes made by Chrissie Whitnall. They were in the form of St Nicholas and an ambulance and were much admired by all present. The St Nicholas cake was eaten quite rapidly, with the Dover ambulance station staff and crews having the benefit of the three dimensional vehicle cake in service colours after the evening.

A retiring collection, taken for the benefit of the Warwickshire fire fighters' families, raised the sum of £200. The next of kin of each of the dead fire fighters would then receive £50 as a modest token of remembrance and thanksgiving.

Despite the adverse weather, it was satisfying to see the church full, of people enjoying the evening and contributing to a benefit for the fire fighters' families. We are grateful to Fr. John Panario for making this beautiful church available for the occasion and for the support given by him and his congregation. This was the second evening devoted to the members of the Emergency Services who go about their work throughout the year confronting

all manner of difficult challenges and often with little appreciation or acknowledgement. It is hoped that by holding such evenings public awareness of their contribution is raised and the men and women involved feel valued and appreciated.



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Jan 08



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# *The Challenge of Old Buildings*

## PARTICULARLY IN REFERENCE TO THE MAISON DIEU

### From a talk given by John R Clayton at the Dover Film Festival 2008

I am a Chartered Civil Engineer, not specifically qualified to pontificate on ancient buildings. However as, for 14 years, Director of Planning and Technical Services to Dover District Council I led a team which was responsible for the care and maintenance of the Maison Dieu and similar buildings.

Additionally, for the last ten years, I have been a member of the Canterbury Diocesan Committee, which advises the Commissary General, His Hon. Judge Richard Walker, on all church building and maintenance proposals within the Canterbury Diocese.

My aim today is to rehearse some of the challenges ancient buildings pose and then invite you to join in a discussion. It must be understood that the opinions expressed are my personal views.

When, in 1985, I arrived in Dover, this wonderful building, the Maison Dieu, a scheduled monument and grade 2 listed building, was not in a good condition. It had been built by the Constable of Dover Castle, Hubert de Burgh, in 1203 as a rest house for foreign pilgrims travelling

to Canterbury. This religious use was discontinued in 1534, after which, for the next 300 years, it served as a brew house, bakery and finally a naval victualling yard.

The building was bought in 1838 by the Dover Council and they appointed one of the leading architects of the day, Ambrose Pointer, to turn it into a town hall. Sadly the Council could not raise the funds to proceed, and by the time they had, Ambrose had disappeared.

The Dover Council of the time obviously was prepared to pay for the best and the Architect William Burges was appointed in Pointer's place. Burges was an architect of the highest renown, an associate of the architect Pugin who



*The Town Hall*

worked on the Houses of Parliament. His fame was probably partially due to having as patron and friend the Earl of Bute. The Earl was fabulously wealthy, owning the majority of the South Wales Coal Field, and he funded a number of incredibly extravagant works by Burgess including Cardiff Castle and Castell Coch.

As a result, we have in the Maison Dieu, a unique building which has only undergone minor "improvements" between the wars.

When I arrived in 1985 the Maison Dieu was rundown; the roof leaked, paint was peeling off the walls in the Stone Hall due to the wrong type having been used in the past, abrasive dust from High Street traffic had led to erosion of the stonework, the historic wall painting designed by Burgess had been over-painted, awful toilets, no access for those with disabilities, moving chairs around was causing damage to architraves and the Organ required a refit.

I was lucky and the threat of the Channel Tunnel caused government to look more kindly on appeals from Dover, so monies were found to:-

*Replace the roof.*

*Repaint the walls of the Stone Hall.*

*Repair stonework on the High Street frontage, where necessary replacing stone with stone from a similar source.*

*Provide new toilets.*

*Provide a lift for the disabled.*

*Provide a lift to enable the chairs to be lowered directly down into the area vacated by the Museum.*

All of this work received approval and subsequent compliments from English Heritage. However, when a few years later the Council wished to carry out further restorative maintenance, the application for Scheduled Monument Consent was blocked by English Heritage. Why?

In the few years following our original works, many new groups had come into play. "Conservation" had changed into "Preservation". No longer were we expected to maintain the building, now we had to go out of our way and preserve the original materials.

An example was the Council's wish to continue the repair of the exterior stonework facing Ladywell - English Heritage was adamant that only in extreme cases should new stone be used, instead they proposed that worn stone should be removed and turned round by 180 degrees to allow the original stone to be kept in place for a further 25 years.

Not surprisingly the authority took the view that, if the proposed works were



*The Town Hall and Ladywell*



not to have a life of 100 years, it would not waste the rate payers' money. Hence minimal making good was carried out on the Ladywell frontage and nothing on the frontage facing the then library where, now, one does not need to be an expert to see the deterioration.

This building benefits or suffers from its historic status in the same way as many of the old churches in Canterbury Diocese.

The churches are faced with falling congregations. Of the 290 or so churches, over 100 have a "Usual Sunday Attendance" of 20 or less and about 50 have 10 or less.

Church of England "market research" has identified that there are many more people in England who have no experience of church attendance but who would be interested if certain circumstances pertained. These include the building being welcoming, multi-use, warm, comfortable (not hard pews built for small Victorians) and with good loos and catering facilities.

In short they want, not unreasonably, a building that is fit for purpose and that can be used for a range of events so enabling it to be cost effective and not a continual financial drag. (Ironically in the 1980s some churches successfully adopted this approach but the more rigorous "preservation approach" has tended to limit churches adopting this approach)

Unfortunately, most proposals of this nature lead to fierce objections from conservation groups such as Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Georgian Society, the Victorian Society

and, more significantly, existing and long serving members of the church.

The result is clear. Increasingly, active church groups are forsaking the old churches for worship elsewhere such as church and village halls where constraints on use do not apply. As a result a vast proportion of the ancient church buildings of Kent could be poised for redundancy over the next couple of decades.

Redundancy nowadays, at the best, is conversion to a secular use or at worst, in extreme cases, being given the status of managed ruin. (Ironically, currently, redundancy is only being delayed for many churches due to impenetrable ecclesiastical legal procedures. Such delay leads to abortive short term expenditure which in turn hastens the closure of more buildings due to lack of funding.)

Which should have priority - preservation or use of the building? How do you think our historic buildings should be managed? How do we balance the competing and often opposing demands of preservation and use?

There followed fifteen minutes of interesting discussion. Suggestions included one that the Maison Dieu should receive more financial support from the Council and that if more events were staged in the building it would become more self funding.

Ironically we all decanted to the Connaught Hall to see the "Dover Film 2007" where the very poor level of support at events of all types was evident. There are only a few notable exceptions such as the Dover Regatta!

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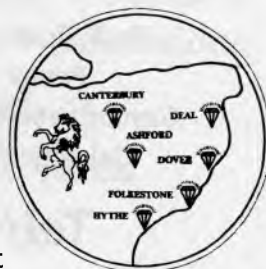
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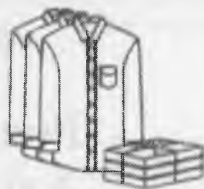
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# PROGRAMME 2008

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

APRIL 21

Monday 7.30

## **Annual General Meeting**

**Speaker:** Terry Sutton "Lords Warden at Walmer Castle"

MAY 20

Tuesday

£14.00

**Eltham Palace.** A 1930 Art Deco Mansion, a masterpiece of 20th century design, surrounded by 19 acres of beautiful gardens, which include modern and medieval elements. There are tearooms, or bring a picnic to enjoy in the grounds.

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Friday

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Wednesday

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SEPTEMBER 20

Saturday

£25.00

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OCTOBER 20

Monday 7.30

**Speakers:** Ruth Parkinson: "Pavilion & Lord Warden Hotel"

Jon Iveson: subject to be announced

Bookings for trips have to be booked and paid for 3 weeks prior to the date of the trip in order to confirm or cancel the coach.

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

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