

The  
Dover  
Society

# Newsletter

No. 64

March 2009



HOTEL BURLINGTON, DOVER.



# 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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# Contents

2	EDITORIAL	Alan Lee
	SOCIETY PROJECTS	
4	Cowgate Cemetery	Jeremy Cope
4	River Dour	Jeremy Cope
5	MEMBERSHIP NEWS	Sheila Cope
5	PLANNING	Jack Woolford
	SOCIETY MEETINGS	
	The November Meeting	
6	Local Stained Glass - talk by Dick Bolton	Alan Lee
8	Dover Lifeboats - talk by Captain Peter White	Terry Sutton
	The December Meeting	
9	The Christmas Feast 2008	Alan Lee
	The January Meeting	
10	Dover's Workhouse - talk by Derek Leach	Alan Lee
12	40 Years of the Legal Unexpected in Dover	
	- talk by Richard Sturt	Alan Lee
15	A TRIBUTE TO THE BELGIAN WORKERS	Alan Lee
17	WINE AND WISDOM	Jeremy Cope
19	EDITOR'S NOTE	Alan Lee
20	THE SCREAMING EAGLE	Charles W. Vulyak, Jr
24	REBUILDING DOVER, POST WWII - by Barry Vaughan	Merril Lilley
27	FRIENDLY FIRE	Captain GJG Francis MN (Rtd)
35	ROLLING BACK THE CENTURIES	Terry Sutton
37	WESTERN HEIGHTS PRESERVATION SOCIETY	Chris Taft
38	MAGIC AT THE DGSB	Jack Woolford
39	LETTER TO THE EDITOR	
44	APPLICATION FORM	

## *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

Our next meeting will be the Annual General Meeting, at 7.30pm on Monday 20th April at St. Mary's Parish Centre. I would like to remind members that all nominations for elected posts within the committee and any resolutions must be received by the secretary no later than 14 days before the meeting. The speaker will be Mike Webb talking about the post of Dover Town Clerk.

This will be the last of the society's winter meetings until October so I hope for the usual good attendance. Once more this year it is the committee's intention to keep the subscription rate at its present level. This remains exceptional value as the last increase was thirteen years ago, back in April 1996. This could be an added incentive for anyone contemplating joining the society. If you need an application form to sign up a new member contact the editor or Shelia Cope.

The summer outings have now been finalised with the first to take place on 20th May. This will be to the Museum of Kent Life at Cobtree and to the beautiful and peaceful Aylesford Priory. It helps Pat if you can register your interest or book as early as possible. Any ideas about venues for future outings then please contact Pat on 01304 228129.

July 25th this year is the centenary of the first powered flight across the English Channel by Louis Bleriot. It is also the date of the 50th anniversary of the first hovercraft flight across the Channel by the SR.N1. This was a small two man craft, on the day the pilot was

Mr J Chaplin with the inventor Mr C S Cockerell as the lone passenger. Dover District Council are at present busy clearing brambles and trees from the area around Bleriot's monument at the rear of the castle. There are also rumours that they have taken over the site from English Heritage and that they will be opening more of the area to the public. More details of this event, first proposed by our society, will appear in the local press nearer the time.

From the feedback that I have received it seems that the majority of people would like to see a bowling

alley in Dover. It was nice to hear that the pupils of St. Edmund's School discussed the subject and decided narrowly in favour of a bowling alley ahead of an ice skating rink. The three most popular sites are the old supermarket site by the entrance to the Charlton Centre, the B&Q site and the Woolworth site. Let us hope that something comes of this idea.

A special thanks to Muriel Goulding who after many years of helping at our meetings is stepping down and will now be able to relax and enjoy the talks.

*Editor*

## **DEADLINE for contributions**

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 65 will be Wednesday 3rd June 2009.

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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# SOCIETY PROJECTS

Report by Jeremy Cope

## COWGATE CEMETERY

We continue our work making good progress. Our provisional Working Party dates for 2009 are as follows:-

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

We start at 9.00am and finish around 12.30pm. Volunteers are welcome and should you be interested please contact Jeremy Cope on 01304 211348.



*Cowgate 2008*



*The new reciprocating grass cutter*

## RIVER DOUR WHITE CLIFFS COUNTRYSIDE WORKING PARTIES 2009

The working parties are an invaluable and rewarding way to help keep the river clear of rubbish and litter. There is a cheerful atmosphere but the work is carried out with a proper but sensible regard for safe working in the river.

Work starts 10.15 am at the B&Q car park, Charlton Green. We move from here to other locations along the river and although work carries on throughout the day, volunteers stay only as long as it is convenient to them. Tea and coffee are provided.

For further information please contact

either White Cliffs Countryside Project on 01304 241806, Jeremy Cope on 01304 211348 or by e-mail at: [mail@whitecliffscountryside.org.uk](mailto:mail@whitecliffscountryside.org.uk) Their website can be accessed at [www.whitecliffscountryside.org.uk](http://www.whitecliffscountryside.org.uk)

### Dates for the working parties

Tuesday	28th April
Thursday	21st May
Friday	26 June
Tuesday	28th July
Thursday	20th August
Friday	25th September
October	to be advised

# MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Spring 2009

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL - SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE

With 451 members we have maintained the same average for the last four years. Our Society's size is probably quite healthy for a town like Dover and new recruits just about keep up with the losses. New members are always needed and we trust are made to feel welcome, so please publicise us when possible.

When you are paying, the cost is still £6 single membership and £10 joint. Please remember the advantage to the member and to the membership secretary of subscribing by standing order. Also, if you have not already signed for Gift Aid and you are a taxpayer, please do so. Gift Aid is 'free' for the member but gains the Society nearly a third more from subscription income and helps to fund production of a newsletter.

My personal thanks go to Georgette Rapley who has kindly succeeded Adeline Reidy as raffle organiser and to all those who give prizes and sell tickets. The raffle is another source of income that helps to maintain our good value subscription.

Our new members are:- Mrs M J Robson, Mrs B M Park, Ms P Carr and Dr N & Mrs N Woolhouse. We send our sympathy to the families and friends of members who have died:- Mrs F L Todd, Mrs P Fargher, Mr J F Adams, Mrs D Harris, Mrs J Stoddart, Mr W Parry and Mrs A Mahoney.

*Sheila R Cope*

*The work of the*

## PLANNING

*Sub-Committee*

Report by JACK WOOLFORD, Chairman

Despite the economic downturn (recession? slump?), Dover Town Council praiseworthy goes ahead with the greening of Charlton Green, with its Fairtrade application, and looks not unfavourably on our suggestion that it take over and refurbish Dover's Historic Panels which are in a sad state and reflect poorly on the town's image. Furthermore, there may be an Irish and Chinese Art Exhibition in the museum or the Town Hall. We await response to our suggested conversion of Dover's Whitfield-bound B&Q into a bowling alley or ice rink. Our suggestion for the establishment of a fund for the refurbishment of the Town Hall, after the 2012 Olympic Games, has been accepted.

Our missing town centre trees are again going to be replaced but only once more, hardly surprising! Wetherspoons have withdrawn from the rehabilitation of Snoops in Castle Street for the second time. We have suggested the compulsory purchase of this, Dover's leading eyesore, and its transformation into a Community Centre. Commercial negotiations are in fact taking place.

We have expressed deep concern over the demolition of the Postal Sorting Office on Maison Dieu Road that appears to have occurred without planning permission. Dover District Council is investigating at our request. We have also strongly opposed DDC's approval for the construction of two 4-bed semis in the back garden of 106 Maison Dieu Road. We support the appeal of the neighbours in 105 to the Local Government Ombudsman for maladministration. We have also opposed construction of the Langdon Wind Farm at the Public Inquiry.

# SOCIETY MEETINGS

## November Meeting

### LOCAL STAINED GLASS

*A talk by Dick Bolton reported by Alan Lee*

Derek Leach, our chairman, commenced the winter season of talks by introducing Colonel Dick Bolton, a member of the Dover Society and of the Freemen of the Worshipful Companies of Glaziers and Painters of Glass.

Dick started his talk with some background details of Saxon and medieval glass. In medieval times many people thought that glass had mystical and magical properties. Examples from this period include windows in Canterbury Cathedral, one portraying the three kings following a star to find Jesus. This has three elements - clear glass itself, paint on glass and lead lines that hold the glass together.

The vestry window in Temple Ewell church is part metal glass and part stained glass; this method dates from the start of the 13th century. Flemish and German glass, from the 16th or 17th century, form the upper part of the window. A great deal of the glass we have from this period had been brought back by people who travelled abroad and on their return had sold it in London. On the south side of the chancel there are four windows made from Swiss glass, also likely to be from the 16th or 17th century.

Dick then moved on to local windows containing Victorian glass; three typical examples are in St Mary in Castro. In the west end of the Dover College Chapel is a memorial window to Lieutenant R W Bell Royal Engineers who died in 1900 in South Africa. The south side of the nave of St Paul's Roman Catholic Church has glass from earlier windows. In the 1860 memorial window Clare Astill rearranged this glass as the figure of St George.

Buckland church has a 1923 window by Anne Lewis, wife of Alderman Lewis. The council chamber of the Maison Dieu has





three high quality memorial windows by Walter Lonsdale of the U.S.A., while above the entrance are Richard II and Hubert de Burgh both by William Wales of Newcastle. In the main hall are six windows each 10 feet across and 21 feet high that depict the history of Dover. They were designed by Edward Pointer and the architect was Burgess who at the time charged only £20 for each design. One shows a relief of Dover Castle in 1816 and Hubert de Burgh whilst another depicts Henry VIII arriving along with details of a Cinque Ports ship.

Dover's old buildings contain many superb windows; some show the history of the town, others commemorate events and still more are memorials to fallen heroes. A large number of these, in public places, are available for viewing by everyone, with a great many being

situated in churches. So next time you visit an old building remember to glance up as the majority of these old windows are well worth looking at.

The talk ended with the usual question and answer session. One question asked was, "How do glass colours react over the years to uv light (sunshine)?" In a detailed reply Dick stated that pot metal, stained and enamelled glass will keep their colour and will hardly fade at all over many hundreds of years. Painted glass however, if applied incorrectly, will sometimes peel or flake over the years. Many times the cause of the dullness of the glass is everyday pollution and gentle cleaning will usually rectify the problem. It is best to carry this out under the directions of a qualified glass conservator. The chairman then thanked Dick for a most informative talk.

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## DOVER LIFEBOATS

*A talk by Captain Peter White reported by Terry Sutton*

Captain Peter White, Dover Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) operations manager, was the second of our guest speakers at the well-attended meeting at St Mary's parish centre on November 17th.

He told us that never in the 173-year history of the Dover lifeboat had the crew had so many call-outs as in 2008. Already they had gone to sea on rescue missions 59 times, the last that very same day, to rescue three people in a leaking Dutch barge five miles off the port.

Captain White recalled the history of life saving at sea from the birth of the RNLI in 1824. It was in 1835 when the Dover Humane Society set up a charity to establish a Dover lifeboat station. This was taken over by the RNLI in 1857.

The early Dover lifeboats were carriage-mounted and were launched from the beach in front of the promenade where a winch still marks the spot. The Clock Tower building at the western end of the promenade was an early lifeboat house. At one stage, because of the lack of work, the RNLI took away the Dover lifeboat. It was reinstated in the 1920s because of the need to rescue aviators who had been shot down in the Channel. During the 1939-45 war, the Dover craft was commandeered by the RAF for use as a fast rescue craft.

The present lifeboat, costing £1.5 million, is packed with experimental facilities including a fixed camera that filmed rescues for training and publicity

purposes. It costs £450,000 a year to finance the Dover lifeboat station, but that includes depreciation of the craft and the boathouse.

At Dover, they have 28-trained crewmembers, virtually all of them volunteers, and they never put to sea on a rescue without at least five on board and no more than seven. There are 232 lifeboat stations in the UK and Ireland and these will cost the RNLI around £145 million this year.

Captain White told of an unexpected phone call he received from an unnamed Dover woman who wanted to contribute something to the local lifeboat. He suggested a few reasonably priced items, such as a pair of binoculars, but she offered more. She eventually settled on £513,000 that paid for the cost of the boathouse on Crosswall Quay.

\* One little known fact our speaker told us about was that Samuel Plimsoll (1824-98), the campaigner for the safety of seafarers, was buried in Hythe churchyard.



*Brownies enjoy trip round harbour*

## December Meeting

### THE CHRISTMAS FEAST 2008

*Reported by Alan Lee*

On Saturday 13th December members and guests of the society gathered at the refectory, in the grounds of Dover College, for their customary annual feast. As on previous occasions, this once again lived up to everyone's expectations.

Upon arrival members and guests were offered a welcoming drink. Whilst enjoying this first tippie of the evening Quodlibet entertained all present to festive songs. Included in this selection was *O little town of Bethlehem*, *Hark the herald angels sing* and *Once in royal David's city*.

Those present then enjoyed a meal of fine and plentiful food accompanied by red and white wine, fruit juice and coffee. Congratulations to the college chefs and staff for preparing, presenting and serving the excellent food.



*The Christmas feast*

After the meal the main concert by Quodlibet commenced with a selection of traditional international carols. *Deck the halls with holly* (Welsh), *The boars head* (English), *El noi de la mare* (Catalan) and *Ding dong merrily on high* (French).

Then a short break was taken to enable the raffle to be drawn. I must give special praise to Georgette Rapley, Sheila Cope and Denise Lee who, during the sweet course and first part of the concert, gave up their time and through their hard work ensured such a successful raffle.

Quodlibet then continued with *Gaudete*, *The holly and the ivy*, *A babe was born* and, my highlight of the evening, a most marvellous rendition of *Stille nacht*. Then followed *The goslings* and a most humorous adaptation of *Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer*.

Invited to participate all present then threw themselves wholeheartedly into Good King Wenceslas. I am sure the men managed to out sing the women, by volume if not quality.

Quodlibet then sung *We wish you a merry Christmas*. A most heartfelt round of applause then ended the concert at about 10pm.



*The members of Quodlibet were:  
Ruth Hoskins – soprano; Jane Farrell – mezzo-soprano;  
Richard Pond – tenor; Jon Williams – bass and Director;  
Peter Giles – countertenor.*

## January Meeting

### DOVER'S WORKHOUSE

*A talk by Derek Leach reported by Alan Lee*

Our Chairman Derek Leach began the evening by going back many centuries to the time when mainly religious houses provided care for the poor and needy. These included the Priory of St. Martins, the Maison Dieu, St. Radigund's Abbey along with St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Buckland who cared for the lepers. Back in 1535 individual parishes were responsible for their poor with provision for *Indoor* relief in specially built houses and *Outdoor* relief in people's houses.

As a consequence of the 1723 Workhouse Test Act, the then Mayor, Charles Smith, ordered the old corporation store in Limekiln Street to be leased to St. Mary's Parish as a poorhouse. It remained as such from 1725 to 1795. It was then replaced the following year by a new workhouse by the river at St. Catherine's Place, Charlton.

In 1793 the River Union poorhouse covered six parishes, which then increased to thirteen. River House is now

a private dwelling. Many parish workhouses were in existence at this time: St. James' in Woolcomber Street, Charlton's at St. Peter's in Bridge Street and The Gilbert Workhouse at Elham. This is also now a private dwelling and still named The Poor House.

By 1832 there were 373 Unions dispensing *Outdoor* relief nationally at the cost of £8 million. By 1835 there were two new large workhouses established by the River and the Eastry Unions. On 1st May the River Union held its first meeting to set the relief for the able-bodied poor in all their parishes. They agreed on a day rate of 10d for a single man, 1/- for a couple plus 1d for each child, but not exceeding 1s 6d for children! Half of this amount was to be in kind.

In 1835, realising the need for larger premises, they purchased three acres and three roods of land in Buckland from George Hatton at £80 per acre. A further one acre, one rood and eight perches was leased for 21 years at £2 10s an acre. Work proceeded quickly with building tenders invited for 11th July, only eight days later. One further week later the clerk wrote to the parish ordering all able-bodied labourers on poor relief to report to Mr Land's farmyard opposite Buckland Brewery. Some 50 men turned up at 8am the next Thursday ready for work. In February 1836 five more acres of land at £80 an acre was purchased to allow additional buildings to be erected. The new workhouse opened on 24th April



*River House, formerly River Workhouse - drawing by Jane Leach*

*River House*



*Dover Workhouse 1935*

1836. It had taken only nine months and one week to complete at a cost of £6,374 4s 11d. In July the Guardians of the River Union had gained permission from the Poor Law Commission for St. Mary's Parish to join them.

In April 1837, as the greatest population in the Union was in the Borough of Dover, they would change the name to the Dover Union. The dinner that Christmas was baked beef, plum pudding and a pint of porter to drink the Queen's health.

There were four types of inmates: casuals or tramps, the able-bodied, the aged and the sick. A tramp could apply for admission between 4pm and 9pm. He had a bath, a meal of bread and soup, was kept for one day and employed by the Labour Master. He would be dismissed the next day, with a chunk of bread and cheese and a way ticket, which entitled him to a free drink at a specified place halfway to the next workhouse.

There were 286 inmates by 1843 who if they refused to work would be committed to jail. They were also encouraged to migrate to the north or to emigrate to Canada or Australia.

The number of inmates in 1902 had reached 427 but their conditions had improved markedly. The dormitories were clean, some had separate rooms and there was a nursery. There was a large modern kitchen, a pleasant workroom with good views of Dover's hills and the large efficient laundry was handling 12,000 items each week. Now taught locally, the girls were at Buckland School and the boys at Charlton. The cost of running the workhouse was now £9,491 per year but by 1924 this had risen to £50,000.

The Board of Guardians ran the workhouse until 1930 when the responsibility fell to Kent County Council. They had most of the original buildings demolished but by 1936 it had been rebuilt and renamed the Public Assistance Institution.

The Second World War saw the able-bodied inmates transferred. Operating and X-Ray theatres installed and members of the Volunteer Auxiliary Detachment (VAD) directed to work at the newly named Emergency Medical Services Hospital. It became the Dover County Hospital when the Public Health Department of Kent County Council took over in 1943 and on the setting up of the National Health Service in 1948 it was renamed Buckland Hospital.

Derek ended his most enlightening talk with the following thought: Many of the old workhouse buildings remain today on the Buckland Hospital site and although Buckland is not included in the provision of future hospital care in Dover many people of Dover and District will mourn its demise. They will also wonder what lies ahead.

## 40 YEARS OF THE LEGAL UNEXPECTED IN DOVER

*A talk by Richard Sturt reported by Alan Lee*

For the second talk of the evening the society welcomed back Richard Sturt for what would be his fourth talk to the members.

When Richard first arrived at Dover Priory Station in April 1963 he had an office in Castle Street. Many times stories would be recounted from the past along with the unconventional characters who appeared in court, especially magistrates and chairman of the bench. The following are just some of them.

In the early days one of Richard's clients had been accused of grievous bodily harm following an argument and the boatswain had stabbed the other party. His client had intervened and bit the boatswain's nose off. As his client was appearing before the judge his justice Lord Melford Stephenson, a harsh man, Richard feared the worst for him. However, surprise, surprise! The judge, on hearing the evidence, was so amused that he handed down a fine of only £25.

Historically our territorial waters were 3 miles wide, the distance that a cannonball could be fired. In 1964 after the Fishing Limits Act HMS Soberton, an old wooden minesweeper, intercepted a small French trawler fishing off the North Kent Channel. It was the *Gloire à Marie* from Etaples. The French refused to stop and zigzagged their way across the channel to just off Dunkirk where the Soberton gave up the chase. Thirty-six hours later the Soberton was patrolling off Rye Bay and found a boat fishing illegally. It once again turned out to be the *Gloire à Marie* who again ran. Again they set off in pursuit and



*Dover Straits*

closing in they fired their 1 inch Bofors gun, but after three rounds it jammed. The captain as they came along side, ordered the crew on deck. They then threw everything at the French. He threw his binoculars whilst one of the crew started to throw potatoes. One spud broke a window on the trawler, the French captain then surrendered because he thought that live rounds were being fired at them. They were arrested, charged with nine breaches of the law, fined £2,000 and had their nets confiscated. If only people knew - our greatest ever naval engagement was ended by a King Edward potato!

The *Struma*, a tanker of the Bulgarian Stat Marine, en route from Oslo to the Black Sea in 1970, for some reason altered course after passing the North Goodwin Light and ran aground. The Dover tugs *Dominant* and *Diligent* pulled her off but were awarded a miserable amount of money by the Lloyds arbitrator.

The *Brave Enterprise* was Panamanian registered with a multinational crew and bound for Jeddah. She had broken down in the Channel and was then towed to Dover by Dover Harbour Board tugs. The crew sold parts of the ship, including the ship's wheel to pay the fine. Tied up in the Wellington Dock she sprang a leak and was saved, but the cargo of Carnation Milk was condemned and dumped on the quayside. Writs were issued by the crew, an Oslo shipyard and Dover Harbour Board amongst others. The ship was sold by the Admiralty Marshal to Turkish Cypriots and renamed *Happy Times*. She was last seen chugging slowly away from Dover and sitting very low in the water.

At 4am on 11th January 1971 near the Varne Light the *Texaco Caribbean* was in collision with the *Paracas* and eight lives were lost. The next day the *Brandenburg* struck the wreckage and twenty-one lives were lost. In April another ship, the *Niki* ran into the wreckage and a further twenty-two lives were lost. It was these three incidents that led to the Dover Straight Traffic Separation Scheme becoming mandatory in 1972.



*Texaco Caribbean*

In 1978 Richard attended the signing of the Western Docks Hoverport four-sided agreement between British Railway Board, British Rail Hovercraft Limited, Dover Harbour Board and Société Nationale des Chemins de fer Français.

He recounted two near collisions both caused by car ferries, with in 1987 the *Silver Reefer* and in 1988 the *Sirius Highway*.

Another case was that of the capsizing of the *Herald of Free Enterprise*. The company was tried and found guilty of manslaughter and non-compliance with maritime law.

One case Richard prepared, but lost, involved the ban on shipping live animals for slaughter. The court held the ban to be unlawful, even though the purpose was to avoid disruption to the rest of the ferry traffic.

Calvin Hoffman, Broadway critic for the *New York Times*, threatened to shoot himself and insisted that he would only talk to Richard, so he flew out to Sarasota, America. Later he threatened the same thing, and Richard said, "go ahead," but he didn't.

The outcome of these strange meetings was that Calvin offered a scholarship and a prize to anyone who could prove that Christopher Marlow was the true writer of Shakespeare's plays!

Richard ended his sometimes sad, sometimes amusing talk with a story about a judge and a barrister.





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# A TRIBUTE to the BELGIAN WORKERS

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*by Alan Lee*

Following the restoration of the plaque by the Dover Society, mentioned in the last newsletter, this article is intended to reinforce our thanks to the Belgian workers who unselfishly helped in the rebuilding of Dover after WWII.

It was 1945 and Dover had suffered much damage during the war. In 1946 to thank the townspeople for their stand against the oppression of the Axis powers the people of Belgium decided to offer their help in repairing some of the damage.

The first fifty men arrived at the port of Folkestone, from Ostend, on the afternoon of Monday 6th May 1946. A further fifty arrived on each of the next four Mondays, bringing the total workforce up to 250.

They proceeded to the National Service Hostel at the old Hougham Camp on the outskirts of Dover. This is now part of the Dover College playing fields just off the Folkestone Road close to where the Hare and Hounds once traded. This was to be their home for the next year.

The following evening they were given an official welcome at the Maison Dieu Hall by the Mayor, members of the council and officials. In his welcome speech the Mayor Arthur Thomas Goodfellow said that Dover people appreciated their visit, particularly in view of the fact that the people of Belgium themselves had suffered as a result of the war, and there was plenty of rebuilding to be done in

their own land. The visit showed that there was still, in the hearts of their people and the British, the feeling of comradeship that existed during the years of the war and it was that sort of friendship which would ensure the peace of tomorrow. He also hoped that they would settle down and enjoy themselves during their six months stay. In fact many were to stay for about a year. There then followed music, magic and song with refreshments served during the interval and at the end of the concert.

On Wednesday 22nd May the Rt. Hon. George Alfred Issacs, Minister of Labour and National Security visited Dover to meet the Belgian Minister of Labour and Social Security M. Leon-Elie Troclet. They were accompanied by Mr JW Stephenson President of the National Federation of Building Trades Operatives and M. I. Smets General Secretary of the Belgian Builders and General Workers Union. During the day they visited the hostel at Hougham and toured some of the war damaged areas of the town.

In the late afternoon the Belgian Minister unveiled a tablet on the Effingham Street wall of the last house in Saxon Street. The tablet reads, "On May 14th 1946, M. Leon-Elie Troclet, Belgian Minister of Labour and Social Security, unveiled this tablet to commemorate the arrival of Belgian workers who as a token of gratitude and admiration, came to help in the rebuilding

of Dover, outpost of freedom from 1939 to 1945." The ceremony was broadcast by the Belgian Radio Service and was attended by members of the local council and officials. Mr Issacs paid tribute to the people of Belgium and said that in some ways they had suffered more than the people of Britain because whatever we had dropped on us by the enemy, at least we did not have the Germans walking our streets as victors. He added that in spite of the amount of rebuilding needed in Belgium they had spared some of their craftsmen to help the people of Dover. That evening a dinner was held in the Maison Dieu Hall and toasts were drunk to Belgium, Dover and the British and Belgian building operatives.

By June 1946 there were 200 Belgians repairing twenty-seven unoccupied houses in Saxon and Norman Street. Two of these would be ready for occupation by the 29th June, then two more each week thereafter. At the same time there were thirty Belgians re-erecting eight flat houses (those demolished by bombs).

On Sunday 21st July Belgium's Independence Day was celebrated at the hostel at West Hougham. The day commenced with a Special Mass and a ceremony around the flag, both broadcast by the BBC in their overseas programme. Miss Margaret Goodfellow represented her father, the Major of Dover. That afternoon was devoted to a sports programme. During the dance that evening Miss Goodfellow presented the prizes, donated by the *Fairy Godmother* of the hostel, Mrs Hastings-Ord OBE. She also read out a telegram from HM the King sending his sincere greetings and desire that they would spend a happy day celebrating.

By September ten houses had been

completed in Norman and Saxon Street and the remainder were ready for decoration. They were also rebuilding eight in Barton Road and now also ten at Stanhope Road.

By the end of December 1946 there were about 125 Belgians working on these last two sites. To enable them to have a week's leave at New Year, to visit their families in Belgium, they carried on work throughout Christmas Day and Boxing Day. After work on Christmas Day, at their hostel, they enjoyed a typical English Christmas dinner with turkey and plum pudding followed by a film show and party with games and dancing. Each worker received a present from Madame Hastings-Ord. At the time she lived in Surrey but was very active in welfare work for the Belgians in this country. For this work she was later awarded the Order of Leopold.

By the end of May 1947 the work had been finished and the Belgians were returning home with heartfelt thanks from the people of Dover. The Minister of Works Mr CW Key MP sent the following letter to each of the Belgians who worked in Dover. "On behalf of the British Government, I express to you our sincere thanks for the great help which you, personally, have given in the restoration of one of our most heavily bombed cities. The excellent work you have accomplished at Dover, while working with my Ministry's Mobile Labour Force, will long stand as a symbol, not only of the high standard of Belgian craftsmanship, but also of the maintenance in peace time, as in the bitter days of war, of firm comradeship and close alliance between the Belgian and British peoples."

A tablet was also erected on the wall in the centre of the eight houses in Barton Road. It reads, "This tablet was erected as a

Barton Road plaque



token of the gratitude of the people of Dover to the Belgian workers who rebuilt these houses and assisted in the

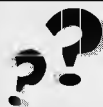
rehabilitation of the town after the war 1939 - 1945. Arthur T. Goodfellow, Major. May 1947."



## Wine and Wisdom

16th February 2009

Report from Jeremy Cope



The Society's Wine & Wisdom evening was its usual success attracting 90 competitors. We owe Clive Taylor and his team of wife Jill and scorer Andrew our grateful thanks, for the skill with which they select questions that particularly suit us and for allowing us to demonstrate our knowledge rather than our ignorance. Clive runs the questioning with good humour and a sense of fun.

Our thanks are also due to Patricia and her husband Pat for organising the event and to their helpers. The food was excellent. Mike Weston organised the wine which I noted gave us all a real sense of wisdom and before you all scoff in disbelief I must report Clive's commendation of the general level of scores achieved. The results were:

- Best team:** Enigma with a score of 83 points.
- Second:** Finn with 82 points.
- Equal third:** Smith's Crisps, Hughies and Silly Billies. All with 80 points.

We lesser mortals may take comfort with a lowest score of 72 points (all scores out of 100)

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## Editors Note

The following article was originally sent to the Dover War Memorial Project by Charles (Chuck) W. Vulyak Jr. after he found the Virtual Memorial on the internet at [www.doverwarmemorialproject.org.uk](http://www.doverwarmemorialproject.org.uk)

He also sent a message of thanks that read, *"Thank you so very much for putting the Dover War Memorial Project together Please tell your volunteers - from the son of a Yank who helped to defend your town during the buzz bomb attacks, thank you from the bottom of my heart."*

In tribute to his dad, now deceased, Chuck is finding out about the 127th AAA Gun Battalion US Army with which his father served during the early part of WWII. He has managed to contact nearly forty of the surviving veterans. Chuck's mother was a nurse, who during the War helped tend returning wounded GIs. Chuck later served in the US Air Force.

If any Dover Society members have any information about the battalion, even reminiscences or memories, he would appreciate the information. Please contact the editor on 01304 213668.

In the Maison Dieu Hall, Dover there are two plaques about the 127th.

The first states: *127th AAA - The 127th Anti Aircraft Artillery Gun Battalion US Army salutes the people of Dover for*

*their courage in the defence of Great Britain. We shared with them against German flying bombs and shells in 1944.*

The second plaque, placed alongside a piece of shrapnel, states:

*Shrapnel from 15in German gun fired at Dover from Cap Gris-Nez, France, September 10, 1944, killing Pvt Robert Nisewonger, US Army, while on guard duty. Found by PFC James D Jones, A Btry, 127 AAA Gun Bn US Army. In WWII Dover was called Hells Fire Corner. Presented to the people of Dover August 16 1944 as a memento of the shelling they endured.*

On 25th September 1994 the veterans placed a plaque, near to the entrance of the wartime tunnels at Dover Castle, to commemorate the AAA Gun Battalions, US Army who served here during the war years.



The commemorative plaque

# THE SCREAMING EAGLE

## *Dover's Adopted Battalion*

4th August to 17th September 1944

By Charles W. Vulyak, Jr

Son of Corporal Charles W. Vulyak US Veteran of the 'Diver Defense Belt'  
Dover, England

On 1st July 1944, the HMT Scythia set sail for England from a New York harbour. Below her decks were about 700 men of the US 127th AAA Gun Battalion and other military personnel. Her destination was Liverpool, England. During her 14 day voyage, she was accompanied by Naval War ships and other troop transports. As the days went by, many of the soldiers aboard became seasick as the convoy zigzagged across the northern Atlantic to out manoeuvre possible enemy U-boats. On 15th July, the HMT Scythia dropped her anchor safely in Liverpool harbour. The soldiers with their personal gear disembarked for about a mile march to waiting troop trains that would take them to their first encampment. Destination: Anzio Camp at Blackshaw Moor, Staffordshire. A day later the Battalion received their new equipment: 90mm guns, ammunition, radar and communication equipment, trucks and tractors.

From 15th to 29th July they degreased, cleaned, checked and prepared all of their equipment for the future fire missions to come. Many briefings were held to instruct the soldiers on their next assignments. On the night of 29th July, the battalion began



Charles W. Vulyak, Jr

their movement from their camp to the White Cliffs of Dover. Within three to four days, the battalion was in position at Camp Swingate to start their task of defending southeast England and London. During their month and a half assignment at Dover they shared slit trenches, foxholes, anti-aircraft defence tactics, firing missions and numerous

enemy shelling events with the British anti-aircraft soldiers positioned alongside their batteries. The Screaming Eagle Battalion engaged 188 V-1 bombs and fired 6,105 rounds of 90mm shells. They claimed 89 V-1 bombs and were allowed 56 kills. During their time on the cliffs four members of the battalion were killed, seven were wounded from enemy shelling and one wounded from friendly fire. The battalion had more casualties while defending the southeast of England and London than during any battle campaign on the continent of Europe. On 27th September, the battalion crossed the Channel from Southampton to Omaha Beach to begin their next big assignment of helping to free continental Europe of tyranny.

My father was a member of the 127th AAA Gun Battalion, Battery "B" as the gunner.



*The gun crew*

Many times when I was a boy, I would ask him about his experiences in Dover and on the European continent. Many times he would not want to talk about it. When I was older, he would mention how terrible the shelling was on the Cliffs. While he was on guard duty on the Cliffs, he would use the high-powered military binoculars to scan the Channel and the air for enemy movement and watch for flashes of fire coming from the enemy's 16-inch guns 20 miles across the Channel near Calais, France. Once he spotted the flashes, he would then alert the battalion about incoming shells. It took the projectiles approximately 60 seconds before impacting on the White Cliffs. On a very clear and quiet night, he said he could see the clock tower in Calais, France. Considering all of the ugly faces of war around him, he told me that the White Cliffs of Dover was the most beautiful area he had ever seen in his young life. It was a very different vista compared to the sights of his small steel mill town in Ohio. When off duty, he would go into Dover and get something to eat and drink at the Red Lion pub on St. James Street. He mentioned that the residents were very kind and friendly to him and the rest of the G.I.s that were stationed in the Dover area, but it was a completely different picture as the battalion moved

across Europe. When they crossed the western border of the enemy's country, he said as their convoy would roll through small towns, the residents, from their second floor windows, would throw garbage and waste on them. Somewhere in this area, he was injured by a large enemy shell that landed and exploded near him rupturing one eardrum and damaging the other. His war had come to an end. For about the next five months, he was treated at a hospital in England. After his recuperation, he was shipped back to the States for further treatments.

My interest in my father's war history is very important to me because of the great courage and sacrifice shown by the battalion during dangerous and difficult times during WW II. I am happy to see people in the Dover area keeping up the spirit, sacrifice and proud tradition it has shown the world so many times in the past. It is important that our future generations always be aware of the sacrifices experienced by their loved ones of the past. On behalf of my late father and his battalion, thank you Dover for your kindness, friendship and understanding shown towards the Screaming Eagle Battalion so long ago.



*The Screaming Eagle*



*The proposed TV screen in the Market Square*



# *Rebuilding Dover* ~ Post WWII AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

By Barry Vaughan reviewed by Merril Lilley

Three years ago Barry Vaughan embarked on a degree course in Archaeology at Canterbury University and in 2008 was awarded a First Class Honours Degree. For his thesis Barry chose to examine the subject of Rebuilding Dover in the post war years, looking at the opportunities, choices, visions and realities in re-making a modern town. This has been recommended for publication and the author is presently working on a number of revisions with this in mind. Anyone wishing to read the document in full should get in touch with the author, Barry Vaughan.

The paper aimed to identify and discuss similarities and differences between re-building policy as it affected buildings of different functions and status; to study the choices made by planners and see if these changed over time; and to see how sympathetic the re-building was to the original structures, surrounding environment and sensitivities of local people. It also aimed to see if the social structure and spatial arrangement of the town was affected. Lastly it looked at the memorials that relate to Dover's history.

This was obviously a daunting task and one that had been undertaken in part by other local writers. However, the author has focussed on the post war period, with a useful introduction to pre-war Dover and then the damage suffered by the town from 1940 onwards when it was under constant attack for four years. A

large section is devoted to valuable pictorial evidence, with many 'before and after' pictures showing war damage and subsequent re-building. A document entitled 'Dover Reconstruction Proposals' by Philip V. Marchant, Borough Engineer and Surveyor (1947) is a useful reference throughout.

The section of the thesis called 'summing up' does not pull any punches and is followed by a substantial section on items for discussion. Objections to plans and opposition to buildings are all highlighted. Many objections revolved around the plans for the road that was to run along the sea front to Eastern Docks, necessitating the demolition of many properties. There was much opposition to the construction of the Gateway flats. In the central area of the town some damaged residential properties were demolished, some turned over to industrial use and some council properties either demolished or repaired with little new development. Some privately owned





task, the focus of the planners and rebuilding policy and the fact that great care was taken with sympathetic restoration of civic buildings and high status residential properties. He stresses that overall policy of rebuilding was centrally controlled and directed by the Council. The inhabitants of the town had very little input but the Dover Harbour Board significantly influenced decision making in the dock and sea front areas.

properties were initially left as they were with owners repairing as they saw fit. Some large Regency houses were compulsorily purchased and subsequently replaced by flats. The area to the north east of the town had several hundred prefabricated properties built until permanent structures could be erected. Religious buildings, which suffered anything other than the most superficial damage, were demolished and the land put to alternative use.

There had been plans to redevelop Dover before the outbreak of war, and the size of the rebuilding task had been anticipated very early on during the war by both local and central government.

The rebuilding policy was dictated and controlled by the council with, it appears, little consultation with local residents regarding the future of the town. It seemed that industrial development took priority over residential development and historic monuments and tourism were regarded as largely unimportant. Provision of roads and car parking was a high priority. In the main it was civic buildings where trouble was taken to restore them in a manner sympathetic to the original.

In conclusion the author attempts to bring together all the issues raised including the need to redevelop, the magnitude of the

It was envisaged that the plans would take twenty years, by which time a significant amount of new housing had been constructed, much of the road building achieved, the car parks in place and the seafront area rebuilt. However, the author comments, the centralisation of civic buildings did not occur and the massive industrialisation of the town had not materialised. He says 'the archaeological and historical evidence reveals much about Dover society in the immediate post-war years a great deal of which was reflected nationally.'

He concludes, 'With hindsight it is easy to criticise those who planned and redeveloped Dover but the size of the task was enormous and it is probable that those responsible, by and large, acted with the best of intentions'. However, the author does point out that decisions relating to reconstruction were almost exclusively taken by the elite minority with almost no meaningful consultation with ordinary people. From an archaeological perspective it is the richness of the surviving evidence that is of most importance; Dover provides a window on past scenarios (such as London after the fire of 1666 and Pompeii after the earthquake of AD 62) where less of a record remains and interpretation is reliant on a far greater degree of speculation.

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# FRIENDLY FIRE

*The sinking of the British Submarine, HMS J6  
by the Q-ship HMS Cymric on 15th October 1918, outside Blyth*

By Captain G J G Francis MN (Rtd)

The following Government report was published in 1919 under the title "Submarine Losses 1904 to present day".

Sunk in error off Blyth by Q Ship HMS Cymric.

"On 15th October 1918 HMS J6 was lying on the surface outside Blyth. The Q-ship Cymric was also in the area. At 1600 a submarine was spotted closing to have what the Cymric thought was a good look before attacking. The Cymric at once went to action stations believing the submarine to be the German U-boat U6. As shells poured into the submarine the signalman attempting to hoist a recognition signal was killed. J6 attempted to lose the Q-ship by entering a fog bank. Cymric followed and found the submarine settling in the water. It was only when survivors were picked up that the mistake became clear."

It followed that a careful enquiry into the loss of H.M. Submarine J6 on the 15th October 1918 at about 1540 was held on board the submarine's Blyth based mother ship HMS Titania on the 16th October 1918 by the Captain (S) Blyth, Captain HMS Vulcan and Commander H.M. Submarine M1.

This report was submitted to the Senior Naval Officer H.M. Naval. Granton Naval Base and the Secretary of the Admiralty, Whitehall, SW1. A communication dated the 19th January 1919 giving a decision

was sent to Lieutenant Frederick H Peterson. All papers were stamped PRIVATE in bold red letters.

The following small obituary concerning Dovorian Ellis Charles Adams appeared in the Daily Telegraph on the 29th March 1984. "E C Adams, who has died at Dover aged 84, was a survivor of a naval disaster of the 1914-1918 War. When the submarine HMS J6 was sunk by fire from the Q-ship Cymric. Only 29 of the crew of 45 survived. The mistake occurred on October 15th 1918 when the J6 was carrying out a surface patrol in poor visibility. The Cymric, on patrol nearby, on sighting the submarine mistook the letter 'J' on the conning tower for a "U" and opened fire. Since the disaster no British submarine has carried the letter "J".

I knew Mr Adams, the father of my wife Mary, for 25 years and as he had spent a lifetime in the Royal Navy covering two world wars and I was then completing my career of fifty years connected with the Merchant Navy we had a great deal in common to discuss.

On the few occasions that any mention was made by Mr Adams of his war service, he would remember having served on the submarine M I that had possessed a 14-inch gun. Occasionally he would mention the disaster when the submarine that he was serving on as a



*Ellis Charles Adams*

telegraphist, HMS J6, was sunk by friendly fire by the Special Services topsail barquentine HMS Cymric, approximately fifty mile off the North East coast.

He recounted that prior to leaving the harbour on that fateful day to commence a ten-day patrol off the Dogger Bank in the North Sea, hoisting a large White Ensign size 4 breath to the top of the 40 foot wireless mast before taking his departure station in the motor room. When, following instructions from the bridge telegraph, he altered the motor switches which controlled a series of locking arms that had to be pushed home. There was a giant rheostat for speeding up and an equally giant switch for reversing. This responsibility ensured the smooth movements of the engine

whilst the Captain manoeuvred the submarine from the harbour jetty and out of the harbour.

Clearing Blyth harbour at 1200, HMS J6 proceeded at fifteen knots out into the North Sea when the Captain handed over the bridge control to Sub-Lieutenant Brierly. Also on the bridge were two lookouts and a signalman, the latter with a rifle at the ready to fire a coloured signal grenade in reply when challenged by a surface vessel firing their signal grenade first to a submarine, as required by H. M. Regulations.

At 1520 the starboard lookout reported a sailing ship ahead without an ensign at about 1500 yards, as HMS J6 drew away from the sailing ship, which had turned out to be the British Q-ship HMS Cymric. Without challenging the submarine with a coloured grenade it dropped its hinged bulwarks and opened fire with its 4" howitzer and two 12 pounders. Obtaining direct hits on the conning tower, injuring Sub-Lieutenant Briely and knocking the rifle out of the signalman's hands, another shell punched the waterline and further shells exploded in the control room. As the stricken submarine increased its distance to over 4000 yards and about to enter a fog bank HMS Cymric started up its auxiliary engines in order to chase the submarine while continuing to pound it into oblivion.

Meanwhile, down below Adams joined others including the Captain to try to stem the flooding, when this failed they hurriedly abandoned the compartment and shut the watertight doors. Salt water had entered the batteries and chlorine gas was seeping into the room. Electric circuits shorted and smouldered into flame and there was a serious of minor

but frightening explosions. To make matters worse, the boat was in complete darkness and the crew were knee-deep in water. The level of carbon dioxide built up more rapidly than expected and by the time it was decided to pump out the flooded bow compartments most of the officers and men were too befuddled to think coherently.

There was no time, or need, for an order to abandon ship the submarine sank within minutes. The Captain led the remaining crew into the engine room where the after escape-hatch was situated and the crew managed to climb out onto the submarine's side. There the captain instructed Lieutenant Robbins RNR to get the hands fallen in on the disengaged side and to take off his white shirt and wave it.

Adams sucked down beneath the sea tried to swim upwards. There was then a sudden surge beneath him, which shot him to the surface like a cork, he turned and 100 yards away he could see the bow of the J6 vertical in the sea. Somehow the berthrone collapsible boat had been removed from the submarine and with other survivor's he swam over and they hauled themselves on board. The sea was littered with dead bodies some, wounded from shellfire, clinging to woodwork while those living were close to death from hypothermia or wounds.

One of the last to be seen alive was Sub-Lieutenant Brierly who had been the Officer of the Watch during the moment the Cymric had opened fire, while attempting to swim towards some woodwork he was seen by Adams to wave and then disappeared. At this moment the Cymric, arrived out of the mist onto the scene to discover the

carnage they had caused was in fact to one of their own Royal Naval submarines.

Upon the completion of collecting the survivors and bodies from the sea, the Captain of HMS Cymric reported to the Captain (S) Blyth the destruction of HMS J6 with the loss of sixteen lives and was returning to the submarine base.

Whilst on passage to Blyth, Adams, together with all the other survivors questioned themselves how the Cymric had arrived at the decision to open fire on their submarine without establishing its identity, the J6 being in full buoyancy, men on the conning tower, mast up, White Ensign flying, gun unmanned and not acting in any way suspiciously.

Over the days and years that followed the survivors of the J6 would never come to learn the full final out-come of the enquiry in their lifetime. All reports were marked SECRET, such as the following examples that have been recently released.

The following day in the Courts the Commanding Officer of the Cymric was to defend his action to fire on HMS J6 because he "mistook the submarine for U6 and formed the opinion that at a distance of 1500 yards that she was German." The Courts however suggested that as HMS Cymric had visited the base of the J Class submarines the previous month in Blyth and had been provided with the silhouettes of the J Class submarines the previous June and September, that Lieutenant Peterson should have recognised the shape of the J Class submarine. Further to that the German submarine U6 of the Flanders Flotilla had run aground on the Dutch

coast in thick fog on the 12th March 1917 and had been arrested by the Netherlands Government.

The Court also pointed out that the circumstance that apparently decided Lieutenant Peterson to open fire was the sighting of the number, it should have been well known to him that all British submarines have their numbers painted in bold black letters on their conning towers. As far as is known this practice was not altered during the war or since. More information indicates that enemy submarines never show their number outside the boat, this shows in all photos of German submarines issued for I.D. Further the J Class submarine is 275 feet long with a 4" gun on a revolving platform forward and as high as the conning tower and the German U 6 was only 166 feet long with one 4 pounder on the upper deck.

An interesting statement at the Court of Inquiry was made when the following member: - Captain Elam James Taylor, skipper of the Cymric was called and cautioned.

Q "Are you the Sailing Master of Cymric? If so state what you saw of Submarine J6."

A "Yes sir, when I saw the submarine first it was abreast of the fore rigging on the starboard bow. When it got abreast of the wheelhouse I heard an officer say it's a U-boat and

give the order to fire. I then stood by the engine telegraphs."

Q. "Was the submarine flying a flag at her masthead and could you make out what it was?"

A. "Yes Sir, I made it out to be a White Ensign."

Q. "Was this before guns opened fire or afterwards?"

A. "Before Sir."

Q. "Did you tell anyone of your opinion?"

A. "No sir."

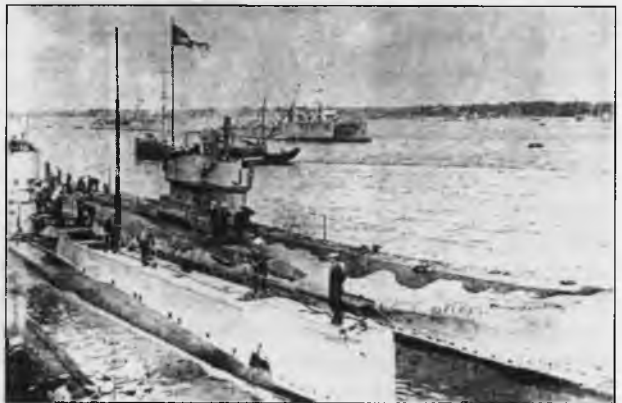
Q. "Did you see any smoke signals?"

A. I saw some black puffs but did not know what they were sir."

Witness then withdrew.



*Submarine J5*



*Submarine J6*

How did a teenage boy from the depths of Kent find himself on a submarine in the middle of the North Sea in one of the navy's most tragic incidences of the war involving serious life-threatening circumstances?

We must start on the 25th September 1899, Ellis Charles Adams was born in Tunbridge Wells into a family of market gardeners. Young Charles was educated locally and according to custom left school at the age of fourteen to make his way in the world. He applied to the Post Office and passed the physical examination, the written tests in arithmetic, geography and where-about's of the area to become a Boy Telegraph Messenger.

Telegrams were delivered on foot and by bike in the days before telephones were widespread and a telegram was the only way of getting a message to someone on the same day. Each day Adams signed on duty and the first message could be for a very rough neighbourhood, while he waited at the door crowds of squalid children would crowd around him. Another time it could be to a rather prosperous merchant, who would give him two-pence and wish him good morning, thus from poor to rich. The daily life of a messenger could be one official monotonous duty if it was not for the different sights that one had contact with in the course of the day. At the Post Office base a kitchen was supplied for the boys throughout the day over which an overseer presides.

Then there was the little known weekly rifle drill that the boys had to be trained in. When a dignitary visited a platoon of boys would turn out on parade in front of

the head Post Office building to be inspected by, possibly by royalty or a military high official.

Early in 1916, aged sixteen and a half Charles volunteered to join the Royal Navy in the middle of a world war of hitherto unparalleled destruction. On the 23rd May he reported to the shore establishment, HMS Vivid in Devonport with the rank of Boy 2nd Class Seaman to complete fourteen weeks of seamanship on sixpence a day. Time at this barracks included assessments and selection board tests to assist in measuring leadership and intelligence.

The accommodation blocks were long rooms in which hammocks were slung in four rows and when seen with the men sitting at mess-tables in the room had the appearance of the deck of an old-fashioned line-of-battle-ship. There were electric lights, lavatories on each floor and water taps in each room. On the ground floors were capacious rooms for dining, smoking and billiards. Boy 2nd Class Adams shared this accommodation with four thousand other sailors.

Adams proved to be of above average intelligence by being selected to go to the Royal Naval wireless school HMS Ganges at Shotley on the 9th September. On the 1st November 1916 he was promoted to boy-telegraphist and began serious training in receiving and transmitting wireless signals, the decoding and coding of letters and cipher codes. His training included operating the Fessenden underwater sound-signalling apparatus, listening on hydrophones for sound waves, from ships in his vicinity, raising and lowering the telescopic radio mast on the bridge and learning valve reception and Poulson arc transmission.



Sometime during this period Adams decided that he wanted to join the submarine service, or boats as they are referred to by submariners. Whether it was the prospects of the excitement or bonus payments is not known but on 15th April 1917 he was posted to HMS Dolphin, the submarine base and school at Fort Blockhouse, on the Gosport side of Portsmouth harbour, for submarine training. He found it an exclusive service as only submarine ratings were allowed in a submarine and they got more pay after passing a very stiff medical examination. One's character had to be perfect to get in and discipline was quite comfortable. The officers and men mixed easily although there was a ruthlessness towards any sort of incompetence or slackness in the performance of duty and a warm hearted and very real fraternity resulted amongst all ranks and ratings.

While in port submarine crews slept in the parent ship and worked in the boat, which had no cooking or sleeping arrangements by day. When on passage or during exercises the crew members dossed down where they could find a billet and subsisted on tinned food. These handicaps as well as primitive sanitary arrangements and strictly rationed fresh water did little to offset the youthful enthusiasm and early responsibility that infused the branch.

Throughout the war, to enable submarines on patrol to keep in touch, three depot ships on the East Coast, the HMS Maidstone at Harwich, the HMS Titania at Blyth, and the HMS Lucia at Middleburgh used to transmit to each other at ten minutes past each hour and submarines would intercept. To enable radio traffic to be maintained at an even

volume, if no messages were to be sent, dummy signals were transmitted in four letter code or five-figure cipher. Reference would then be made to a codebook this had eight ounces of lead in the cover, so that in an emergency, the book could be dumped into the sea and kept out of enemy hands.

Each of these ships would also be a mother ship to the submarine crew who lived on board when in port. If the officers took all the accommodation, on HMS Titania for example, then the rest of the crew lived in the old herring-drying sheds near the main gate. The crew would tell the coxswain where they had slung their hammocks, so that he could call them, if required to put to sea at night.

On the 5th June 1917, Adams was ordered to report on board HMS Titania at Blyth the following day and to be available for duty to join the submarine HMS J6 at the first opportunity. HMS Titania was a merchant ship of 5250 tons being built in England for the Austrians when war broke out. She was commandeered and converted for use as a submarine parent ship and was appointed as depot ship to the 9th and 10th submarine flotillas which included J1 to J6.

The British J Class Submarines were built under an emergency war program, seven J Class were ordered and six built. They were unique to British submarines being designed with a triple screw making them the fastest of their time with a surface speed of 19 knots. Equipped with a powerful long-range wireless they were ideally suited to reconnoitre in enemy water. The J6 had been built in Pembroke Dock in 1916.

On the 25th September 1917 Adams was promoted to Ordinary Telegraphist and signed into the Royal Navy for twelve years.

On that fateful day of October 15th following the departure of HMS J6 no one on board would have realized that within four hours the patrol was to end in tragedy with loss of life, injury and the sinking of the submarine. Only recently the secret papers covering the findings of the Court together with the final decision by the Commander-in-Chief, East Coast of Scotland have been released.

### **Conclusions of the Court of Enquiry**

It could be reasoned that men worn out and exhausted by the rigours of extended patrols, under war conditions are prone to mistakes insignificant in detail and trivial in extent, but for a Special Services Captain almost invariably fatal. However, security and the safeguarding of moral often demand the concealment of accident details and this was shown at the Court of Enquiry held on board HMS Titania on the 16th October 1918.

1. As Lieutenant Fredrick Henry Peterson, DSO and bar, DSC and bar RNR Commanding Officer, H.M. Special Service Vessel Cymric left the Court after giving evidence, the submarine men came to attention and saluted this officer.

2. Ref 2903/H.F.0022. Date 25th October 1918. SECRET.

**Subject.** Circumstances attending the sinking of the submarine J6 by Special Services Ship CYMRIC on 15th Oct. 1918. "It is considered that this regrettable accident was due to over-zeal on the part

of Commanding Officer of Cymric; he should have recognised the friendly character of J6. At the same time the Officer of the Watch of J6 who was unfortunately lost, appears to have approached Cymric unduly close and to have been somewhat over confident."

"It is not proposed to submit that Lieutenant Peterson, Captain of the Cymric, be tried by Court-Martial; this Officer has done excellent service and the fact that Officers and Men of HM Service have lost their lives through his action is sufficient punishment. No useful object will be achieved in pursuing this matter further." Commander-in-Chief 25 Oct. 1918 East Coast of Scotland.

Following the sinking of the submarine J6, of the original crew of 45, there were 16 casualties. 12 ranks and ratings attended the Court of Enquiry of whom 10 were fit to be called and cautioned prior to being questioned.

The remaining crew including Adams were taken immediately to hospital upon the arrival of HMS Cymric at Blyth, where Adams eventually made a full recovery and reported back at HMS Dolphin on the 30th January 1919 to continue his career on HM Submarines.

On November 21st 1918, there remained one wartime duty for many British submarines when the might of the Imperial German Navy steamed to surrender. Behind it, as a precaution against any trickery on the part of the German ships, there patrolled British submarines.



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# Rolling Back The Centuries

by Terry Sutton

The centuries are to roll back some 350 years at Dover Castle as Henry VIII makes way for Henry II in an English Heritage multi-million pound makeover. The transformed attraction is scheduled to be open to visitors in August.

The massive keep of Dover Castle is now to be renamed the Great Tower. From a depiction of preparing for a visit by Henry VIII in the 16th century, it is to be transformed to what it was like in the earlier days when the Plantagenet Henry II (1133-1189) was master minding the construction of the fort that has dominated the town for 800 years. It is all part of a wider £5 million English Heritage investment programme designed to attract more fee-paying visitors.

Tracey Wahdan, English Heritage's visitor operations director for the South East, says that although Dover Castle welcomed some 300,000 visitors in 2008 the numbers were dropping and it was considered necessary to make the huge investment in order to boost interest.

However, she admitted adult admission to the castle would have to increase to around £13-40 to help finance the investment. She insists it will be "very good value for the money" with the average time spent in the castle grounds four-to-five hours.



Mrs Wahdan also reported that in 2008 the number of visitors included 47% who pay. The rest are English Heritage members and 70,000 free entries for educational purposes. English Heritage considers Dover Castle second only to its top visitor attraction of Stonehenge.

One of the problems experienced at Dover Castle, she said, is that there is not sufficient capacity in the wartime underground tunnels for the numbers who want to visit them while there is capacity at the Great Tower (the keep) for those who want to tour that attraction.

She says the transformation of the Great Tower is estimated to cost in the region of £2 million while another £500,000 was being spent on the provision of a new visitor centre. Dr Edward Impey, English Heritage's director of research, is engaged in the detailed work in progress to recapture accurately the days of Henry II, his royal court and castle construction workers. This would be brought to life by the use of electronic "ghost" projections on interior walls.

In another part of the castle, Arthur's Hall, there is to be an exhibition depicting medieval times including a depiction of what life in Dover was like in that era.

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# EXPLORE DOVER'S HIDDEN FORTRESS

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Western Heights Open Weekend  
Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2009  
10am till 5pm



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ENGLISH HERITAGE



Western Heights Preservation Society

# The Western Heights Preservation Society

*Report from Chris Taft, Publicity Secretary*

## Open Weekend 2009

On Saturday 30th and Sunday 31st May the Western Heights Preservation Society (WHPS) will once more be presenting the now annual Western Heights Open Weekend on the hilltop above Dover. Each year this event grows larger and this year promises to be no exception. With the expectation of re-enactors recreating 19th century battle skirmishes, stalls and attractions, the weekend promises to be an event for all the family.

As last year it is hoped a number of events, including guided walks, tours and other attractions, will take place across the site. Of greatest interest will be the opening once more of parts of the historic fortress. One of the principal forts on the site, the Drop Redoubt, will be open to visitors for a small charge and the Grand Shaft, linking the hill top with Snargate Street below, will again be open free of charge.

Planning is still underway and so it is not too late for anyone who wants to help to get involved. Those interested are encouraged to contact the Society through the details below.

## Work Parties

Work parties continue to work hard across the site taking major steps towards the improvement. Regular visitors will have seen the work progressing and at weekends

throughout the year volunteers working on behalf of the Society undertake some fantastic work to make real improvements to the Heights. Anyone travelling along the main road through the site, Military Hill, may have noticed the original access to the site, the North Entrance. Once heavily overgrown and with weeds pulling the brickwork apart the Society volunteers have now made huge progress in clearing the rubbish and vegetation. This not only helps improve the appearance of one of the most public-facing parts of the site, but also most importantly helps to safeguard the fabric of the building, one of the principal aims of the Society. The WHPS is really grateful to all the volunteers who have helped at these work parties and are happy to welcome new volunteers.

## Getting Involved

The WHPS is actively seeking to expand and develop, if you think you would like to get involved and help move the WHPS forward 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.

## Contact Us

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

# Magic at the Dover Grammar School for Boys

by Jack Woolford

Dover Grammar School for Boys self-evidently works many kinds of magic upon its pupils, witness their scholastic, professional and sporting achievements, but on the evening of Thursday 29th January, the magic was musical. In the gracious presence of the Headmistress, in the handsomely plain (and acoustically splendid) Hall, on the 1921 Steinway grand piano, Oliver Poole gave a recital for which the only word (as always) is "magical".

Oliver has matured from a child to a teenage prodigy. Not only has he retained and developed his amazing technical skills, prodigious memory and musical insight, he has added a relaxed charm and friendliness to his audience, talking to and, indeed, entering into a dialogue with its members.

He began, in proper chronological sequence, with the Bach Partita No 2 in C Minor, a mighty set of variations on a majestic theme. Although written for the harpsichord, in skilful pianistic hands its interwoven themes can be, as they were, highlighted, and the powerful thunders of the bass harnessed in full measure. All the more piquant, therefore, was the contrast with the (comparatively) delicate Mozart Sonata No 11 in A which followed, which (rather unusually) starts with a wondrously extended set of variations and closes with the well-known (and loved) rondo in the Turkish style. I have heard it played as a child's party-piece: but not as Oliver brilliantly

climaxed with it. Such was the Classical first half of the recital.

Again in due chronological sequence, the second half was Romantic: no less than Schumann's early (Op12) but characteristically original "Fantasie-stucke", followed by Chopin's third (final) and most powerful Sonata No 3 in B Minor, again skilfully contrasting the more delicate (not-to-say wayward) sequence of linked light fantasies with virtually symphonic splendour.

I could not name the encore that naturally followed, but the merciless audience would not let Oliver go and someone was inspired to shout "Auld Lang Syne", whereupon Oliver improvised a fantasia on that hackneyed theme, plundering every pianistic resource of scales and key-changes in a positive frenzy. How appropriate was the Dover Grammar for Boys motto "Fiat Lux" - though instead of light there was lightning.

And all for £5.00!



The hall at the Dover Grammar School for Boys

# Letter to the Editor



The Editor  
Dover Society Newsletter

Sir,

The question has been posed as to the future of the Burgoyne fortifications adjacent to the Castle, which until recently have remained included within a military encampment. Neglected for more than a century these redoubts and ditches are in very bad structural condition and much overgrown – worse than the Western Heights.

Dover does not appear to appreciate what a magnificent assets it possesses in the form of its Castle, nor does England realise the full potential of Dover as a tourist destination. English Heritage may be a satisfactory guardian regarding the physical protection of historic monuments but it has certainly no idea of how to exploit them commercially. Yet it is only income from "heritage tourism" which can in the long run ensure the preservation of such monuments and their enjoyment by future generations.

Dover Castle is probably unique in Europe as a fortress that has been continually in operation from the dawn of history right until the atomic age. It possesses relics from all these periods as follows:

an earthen rampart dating from the Iron Age,  
a roman lighthouse,  
an Anglo-Saxon Church,  
a Norman Keep,  
Medieval curtain walls and gatehouses,  
Tudor outworks,  
barracks and redoubts of the 17th/18th centuries,  
tunnels and gun emplacements of the Napoleonic Wars,  
Second World War command centre and hospital.

The only period under-represented is the Nineteenth Century when Dover's defences were re-centred on the Western Heights, plus the Burgoyne redoubts protecting the castle on its vulnerable landward side.

It seems evident that the Burgoyne fortifications ought to be repaired, re-united with the castle and made accessible to visitors. While it may be impracticable to divert the Dover-Deal main road, which cuts through one of the ditches, it should be possible to re-excavate the ditch on each side of the road, and provide a tunnel under the road for access by visitors.

On completion of these works, Dover should be advertised throughout Europe as the remarkable complex of fortifications and the "Key to England" which indeed it is. One might even hope to attract some of the tourists to see the Bronze-Age Boat and the Roman Painted House, two of the most important and spectacular relics of their periods in Europe, yet which today are entirely unknown to everyone outside archaeological circles.

Dover should be as unmissable as a tourist destination as the Pyramids – or at least as Mont St Michel. Instead, it struggles to compete for visitors with any Lancastrian town full of cotton mills!

Yours Truly  
A. N. Turns



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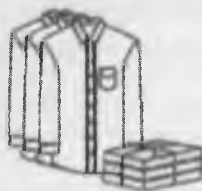
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I/We could sometimes give practical help with the following *(please tick boxes)*

Social events  Writing for newsletter

Projects e.g. clearance, surveys, photography

Any other interests or expertise .....

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# PROGRAMME 2009

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

APRIL 20  
Monday 7.30

## **Annual General Meeting**

**Speaker:** Mike Webb: "Dover Town Clerk"

MAY 20  
Wednesday  
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## **Museum of Kent Life and Aylesford Priory**

The Museum of Kent Life occupies part of the Cobtree Estate which opened in 1985. Its principle objective is to preserve Kent's countryside and rural heritage for the future. There will be a guided tour of Aylesford Priory. This beautiful 13th century priory is home to a community of Carmelite friars and welcomes visitors and pilgrims. There are peaceful grounds and picnic areas, beautiful works of art, chapels and an open-air shrine, a working pottery, a gift shop and a tearoom. Lunch may be taken at either venue as required, or you may bring a picnic.

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## **Down House and Tunbridge Wells**

Down House - the home of Charles Darwin reopens this year with an exciting new exhibition to celebrate the 200th anniversary of his birth and the 150th anniversary of *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* which he wrote at Down House.

Before heading home, time permitting, the driver will take us into Tunbridge Wells where you may browse the shops or take tea.

Pick-ups: Railway Bell 0815; Frith Road 0825; Brook House CP 0830

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