

The
Dover
Society

Newsletter

No. 68

August 2010



Koniks on Clarendon Field

(Photograph by Paul Sampson)



THE DOVER SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1988

Affiliated to the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies
Registered Charity No. 299954

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| THE COMMITTEE | |
| CHAIRMAN | Derek Leach OBE, 24 Riverdale, River, Dover CT17 0GX Tel: 01304 823926 Email: derekriverdale@btinternet.com |
| VICE-CHAIRMAN | Jeremy Cope, 53 Park Avenue, Dover CT16 1HD Tel: 01304 211348 Email: jeremycop@willersley.plus.com |
| HON. SECRETARY | William Naylor, "Wood End", 87 Leyburne Rd, Dover CT16 1SH Tel: 01304 211276 |
| HON. TREASURER | Mike Weston, 71 Castle Avenue, Dover CT16 1EZ Tel: 01304 202059 Email: mike@weston71.freeseve.co.uk |
| MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY | Sheila Cope, 53 Park Avenue, Dover CT16 1HD Tel: 01304 211348 |
| SOCIAL SECRETARIES | Patricia Hooper-Sherratt, Castle Lea, Taswell St, Dover CT16 1SG Tel: 01304 228129 Email: castlelea@tiscali.co.uk Georgette Rapley, 29 Queen's Gardens, Dover CT17 9AH Tel: 01304 204514 Email: gmrapley@hotmail.com |
| EDITOR | Alan Lee, 8 Cherry Tree Avenue, Dover CT16 2NL Tel: 01304 213668 Email: Alan.lee1947@ntlworld.com |
| PRESS SECRETARY | Terry Sutton MBE, 17 Bewsbury Cross Lane, Whitfield, Dover CT16 3HB Tel: 01304 820122 Email: terry.sutton@route56.co.uk |
| PLANNING | <i>Chairman</i> Jack Woolford, 37 Albany House, Albany Place, Dover CT17 9AU Tel: 01304 202578 Email: a.woolford2@ntlworld.com <i>Committee</i> Mike Bayley, Margaret Robson, Alan Sencicle, Pat Sherratt, Sybil Standing, Mike Weston |
| ARCHIVIST | Dr S.S.G. Hale, 34 Church Hill, Temple Ewell, Dover CT16 3DR Tel: 01304 825670 |
| MINUTE SECRETARY | Barbara Stapleton, Email: bas99@ukonline.co.uk Mobile: 07910 123259 |
| WEB PAGE | Mike McFarnell, Email: mmcfarnell@hotmail.com |
| ADVERTISING SECRETARY | Jean Marsh, 31 Millais Road, Dover CT16 2LW Tel: 01304 206123 Email: jean.marsh7@ntlworld.com |
| COMMITTEE MEMBERS | Maureen Morris, 15 Samphire Court, Taswell St, Dover CT16 1AJ Tel: 01304 206091 Alan Sencicle, Email: lorraine.sencicle@tesco.net Pat Sherratt, Castle Lea, Taswell Street, Dover CT16 1SG Tel: 01304 228129 Email: ttt.castle-lea@tiscali.co.uk |
| WEB SITE | www.doversociety.org |

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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

I must report that Jack Woolford, chairman of the planning committee, is in hospital. Just after moving to his flat he suffered a fall and broke his arm. He is being well looked after and looking forward to leaving hospital and continuing his work for the Dover Society. We all wish him a speedy recovery and hope to see him soon.

The report of the AGM is reproduced in full for the benefit of members who were unable to attend the meeting.

To any member requiring a lift or anyone willing to provide one to our meetings could you please contact a member of the committee. We will endeavour to match your requirements.

Our chairman Derek Leach attended the service and laid a wreath, on behalf of the society, at the Zeebrugge memorial service on St. Georges Day. This service gains in strength every year.

The next indoor meeting will take place at St. Mary's Parish Centre on 18th October. The speakers will be Wendi Atherton "12th Century Life in the Constables Tower" and Alistair Gould "Renewable Energy at St. Margaret's".

Members are reminded that they can now book for this year's Christmas Feast with Patricia Hooper-Sherratt. The entertainment will be Quodlibet.

To avoid disappointment please book as early as possible as the number of tickets are strictly limited.

Following initial representations from the society to DDC a large crowd enjoyed the centenary celebrations of Charles Rolls non-stop return flight to France.

The society is again assisting in the Heritage Open Days event on the 11th and 12th September. This is a great chance to visit buildings that are not normally open to the public.

The new government has announced

that SEEDA will cease in 2012. Will this mean an end to the cable car project, surely mainly intended to boost English Heritage visitors and take car parking away from inside the castle. It would have been of very limited benefit to the town. Let us hope that the proposed new body, with a partnership of local interests will bring more benefits to the town.

The concrete waves on the sea front are well on the way to completion. If any member has any comments on the revamped area could you please submit them to the editor.

* * * * *

DEADLINE for contributions

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 69 will be Wednesday 6th October 2010. 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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MARCH MEETING

1st Talk

Kent Greeters

A talk by Peter Shaw reported by Terry Sutton

Increasing numbers of cruise passengers coming ashore at Dover are seeking the help of Kent Greeters and more volunteers for the group are needed.

This was the message given at The Dover Society public meeting at St Mary's parish centre on March 15th when one of our two speakers was Peter Shaw from Thanet, the director of operations of Kent Greeters. Mr Shaw told how the international Greeters organisation started in New York 18 years ago with the formation of the Big Apple Greeters group, set up to show visitors to the city the many attractions to be found there. The scheme was so successful that the idea crossed the Atlantic to Thanet (the first Greeters group in Europe) and from there to the White Cliffs Country (the Dover district).

The aim, said Mr Shaw, was for the organisation to grow countywide in time for the 2012 Olympics, when Kent can expect an increasing number of visitors. There were now about 60 members in Kent Greeters and it was hoped to increase membership to 100 by then. He explained that Kent Greeters, now

with links with Nord Pas-de-Calais, was receiving financial help from Europe through Interreg (Inter-regional) funding.

Just who are Kent Greeters? Mr Shaw explained they are volunteers. He said, "Basically Kent Greeters are people who love the area where they live and are proud to pass on what they love about the area. They are often the first friendly face of tourism," They are not professional tour guides added Mr Shaw. The volunteers have knowledge about interesting facts of their area and are delighted to pass on this information to visitors. They are also able to explain how the public transport system of their area operates, advise on restaurants, places of entertainment and historical centres such as castles.

Those requesting the free services of a Greeter have to give at least 14 days notice so that the administrator can locate the best Greeter to suit the requirements. Greeters must not accept payment or tips and any journeys must be by public transport and not in private cars.

Among the audience was Mrs Denise Smith of 4 East Cliff (01304 206458)

who told there were, at that time, 16 local members of Kent Greeters and that there were an increasing number of requests from cruise passengers arriving at Dover who had been able to give 14 days notice of their arrival at the port. She added more local Greeters were needed

because they had to bring other members to Dover from Deal and Sandwich to cope with the number of requests.

* More information about Kent Greeters can be obtained on www.kentgreeters.co.uk

2nd Talk

White Cliffs Countryside Partnership

A talk by Melanie Wrigley reported by Alan Lee

For the second talk of the evening Melanie outlined how the WCCP came into being in 1989, originally for three years, with three staff and seven funding sponsors.

Now it has grown to thirteen staff and thirty funding organizations. It has changed its name to 'Partnership' instead of 'Project' to

reflect its changing role in managing green spaces in the White Cliffs area.

The Heritage Coast stretches from Dover to Folkestone and Dover to Kingsdown and includes areas of beautiful landscape. These are the nearest Heritage Coast areas to London and have the richest biodiversity of chalk downland anywhere.



Dexters grazing on St Martin's Battery Field



Dover cliffs. Photograph by Alan Lee

The chalk cliffs are eroded in a different way at Dover from those at Folkestone. Here the chalk sits on gaunt clay with its junction below sea level. This results in large falls of chalk from the cliffs. At Folkestone the chalk joins the clay at sea level. From the 1850's pebbles from the Warren have swept round the coast to Dover and beyond.

Old post cards of Warren Bay show little islands of chalk, which have now been eroded away. Fossils found in Warren Bay are so good and consistent that they are used to date the age of sediments from around the world.

The WCCP qualifies for Interreg funding because it is twinned with two French regions, Cap Gris-Nez being one.

The Western Heights Nature Reserve consists of 200 acres of chalk land around the Western Heights. All chalk

grassland needs to be grazed by cattle or horses; this is why they have been introduced into the area. This has resulted in a vast improvement in the numbers of plants and wildlife seen.

Dover and Shepway contain more than half of the chalk grassland in Kent, more than 2% of Britain's or about 1% of the world's.

Chalk consists of 300 types of plankton and 1 cm of chalk takes 100,000 years to form. It is a little known fact that plankton produce more oxygen in the sea than that produced from all of the world's trees. We should therefore ensure that we protect the seas of the world.

Our ancestors were good naturalists as they had to observe nature closely in order to survive. Herbal medicines evolved through the observation of animals eating plants to cure themselves.



Cowslips at St Martin's Battery



Pale Bee Orchid



Early Spider Orchid

A great many of the plants on the Western Heights have medicinal properties. Cowslips used for wine making and as a painkiller grow around St Martin's Battery. Before Victorian times they were known as the Cow Slop.

The word orchid derives from the Greek orchis (testis) because of the similarity of their tubers with a mammalian testis. In ancient Greece orchids were attributed curative and aphrodisiac properties. There are six different types on the Heights, including the Bee Orchid.

Horseshoe vetch is abundant on the Heights and is essential to the Adonis Blue butterfly as the female only lays its eggs on this plant. Ten years ago the Adonis Blue was on the endangered list but thanks to successful management of its habitat by 2009 it was removed from the list. Red Meadow ants help as they look after the pupae of the butterfly. They form mounds with about 20,000 ants in each colony. Wild thyme likes to grow on or

near these mounds that can have as many as forty different plants growing nearby.

Thyme, used in mouthwash and yarrow are natural antiseptics. The leaf of the hairy plantain relieves the pain of a sting. Salad burnet eases blood problems and reduces fever and the great napweed is used as a cough medicine. Hawthorn grows easily with its flower, May blossom. It smells of dead flesh and is named after the month it blooms. Its leaves are good for the heart. Blackthorn is a coagulant, primrose a painkiller and coltsfoot helpful for treating asthma, bronchitis and catarrh. During WWI soldiers used to smoke blackthorn leaves as a substitute for tobacco.

Wild cabbage with yellow flowers and sea kale with white flowers are both abundant in the area. The Early Spider Orchid is abundant at Samphire Hoe with at least 12,000 there now. Many plants that grow at the Hoe flower during early March, so a visit around that time is well worth the effort.

In 1960/61 there were not many bushes to be seen on the chalk grassland. Hopefully with the way the area is now managed it will return to something like that again.

It is home to many types of wild animals such as voles, shrews, moles, rabbits, badgers and the pygmy shrew. Among the wild birds in the area are sparrow hawks, ravens, peregrine falcons, goldfinches, lapwings and kestrels.

On the 9th of February 2010, the herd of Konik Horses was moved from High Meadow onto Whinless Down which is also the only place in Kent you can find the scarce iridescent green Forester Moth. Two foals have been born since the move, one on the 5th the other on the 12th of March. There are currently seven adults and two foals in the herd but more mares will hopefully foal by the early summer.

Wild horses once roamed throughout Europe and England and are returning to the South East after 7,000 years. The Konik horse is a direct descendant of the now extinct European horse, the Tarpan. The breed nearly died out 100 years ago. In the nineteenth century, Polish farmers captured the last Tarpan horses and crossed them with their own workhorses. The result was a strong, hard working and manageable horse, which they named the Konik. Now a century later, Kent's wildlife experts have

brought a dozen of the Koniks back from Holland, one of the main breeding centres for the wild horses.

The Konik is a particularly interesting breed of horse not much bigger than a pony. It has a hardy, robust and self-reliant character, with a quiet temperament, and has a large head, broad body and strong legs. The herd has its own hierarchy with every horse having its own place in the pecking order.

In ancient times wild horses did not interact very much with humans. Today, the modern Konik horses are settling into their new homes in Kent at Stodmarsh, Ham Fen and Whinless Down.

They are already proving to be a great boost for the ecology of the areas. Koniks help to keep the land open and give plants, birds and insects the chance to settle there. They love to eat weeds, reeds and grass, so helping to stimulate wildlife diversity in their fenland and grassland habitats.

Photographs by Paul Sampson



Konik foal on Whinless Down Local Nature Reserve

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APRIL MEETING

Annual General Meeting of The Dover Society, 2010

Report by the Chairman Derek Leach

This is my 6th annual report and I must say that the longer I stay in the job as chairman, the busier both the Executive and I seem to be. My boss used to say that I created work - perhaps I do but I don't think that it's just me! Unfortunately, there are many issues that need addressing in Dover today.

Membership

Regrettably there has been a net drop in membership in the past year from around 450 to 425. Whilst this is still a healthy number, it does not compare with Harwich, a similar-sized town, where its Society's membership is 1800. The more members we have, the stronger our voice becomes. So please encourage relatives, friends and work colleagues to join. Our thanks go to our membership secretary, Sheila Cope.

Now would you stand whilst we remember those members who have died in the past year.

Civic Trust

Something of a bombshell was the financial failure of the Civic Trust, which has provided a national voice for amenity societies for many years. The Executive has had to consider the purpose and financing of a successor

organisation called Civic Voice, looking for a much smaller outfit concentrating upon providing a national voice rather than supporting local societies like ours that are very much self sufficient. We shall debate an Executive motion regarding membership of Civic Voice later.

Planning

Our Planning Committee under its tireless chairman, Jack Woolford, continues to monitor and comment upon every planning application for Dover and the surrounding villages. We still await progress on providing a new health facility, the long-awaited redevelopment of Buckland Paper Mill and the St James' area - DT1Z now back in the melting pot (let's hope that an alternative with quality and style will emerge from the Asda ashes). The big screen in Market Square proved to be as ugly and as intrusive as we feared and has yet to attract an audience of any size. Another controversy was the bid put together for Dover by SEEDA, KCC, DDC, DHB and EH for grants under the Sea Change programme to improve coastal resorts. No consultation was held until grants had been received and ring-fenced for specific projects which had

to be match-funded locally. These included refurbishment of the Bleriot Memorial, the expensive and grand furnishing of Dover Castle's keep, a new reception building for the castle, renovating the officers' mess, a feasibility study for a cable car project and yet another improvement to the sea front. We objected to spending £2m on what is already an attractive promenade in front of Waterloo Crescent when so much of the town centre is in desperate need of a facelift. The money could not however be spent anywhere else. Concerned about the cost effectiveness of the DDC wind turbine at Whitfield we discovered that it will take 55 years to recover the capital and running costs! We fired a broadside at DDC for closing two of Dover's public toilets without warning in its attempt to transfer the cost to DTC and were pleased to see them reopened. DDC's Local Development Framework for the years to 2026 was approved by government including 14,000 new homes in the District and an expectation of 6,500 new jobs. We can but hope!

We welcomed the occupation of large empty premises by Peacock and then Morrison, but remain despondent about the 26 empty premises between Townwall Street and the Town Hall.

The unauthorised enclosure of some land, including an established public right of way, has resulted in the Executive taking steps to protect the path. A motion to that effect will be put to you later this evening.

Considering our response to the

formal proposals by DHB for redevelopment of the Western Docks (called T2) and for restructuring of the Harbour Board took up a great deal of time in the last three months. These proposals were considered so important that we consulted the membership by post (at a cost of £170) about the Executive's recommendations before finalising our submissions to the Secretary of State at the end of March. Thank you to those who commented. We had already agreed in principle the Western Docks T2 development with certain provisos, most of which have already been met. Our formal submission to the Secretary of State confirmed our support but with a number of conditions. Regarding restructuring of the Board, we covered all possibilities. Whilst preferring to retain the status quo, ie Trust Port status, we considered this unrealistic in the present economic climate with any government looking to sell some of the family silver and the need for the Board to borrow money for T2 development without increasing the national debt. In which case we suggested an amended Trust Port status with the ability to borrow money without increasing the national debt and enabling the Board to support the local community financially via a charitable trust. If the government opted for privatisation, then we would prefer retaining a 51% share in the new company with a number of provisos which applied equally to 100% privatisation, including guaranteed income for a charitable

trust managed by and for the community and an employee share scheme.

Initiatives

Frustrated with the state of the town centre with its empty and boarded up shops, litter, cycling in the pedestrian precinct and other antisocial behaviour, we have formed a Refurbishment Committee, which has quickly identified targets for lobbying and improvement. English Heritage is undertaking a survey of Dover's buildings to review listed buildings and whether other buildings should be listed. Our Refurbishment Committee is conducting its own review.

Following an unsuccessful attempt by member Martyn Webster to have the Copt Hill cemeteries listed by English Heritage, we are now investigating the possibility of a conservation area instead and possibly listing some of the headstones. We have also taken an interest in St. Mary's Churchyard where all trace of the grave of Thomas Pattenden, a Dover diarist, was removed in the 1990's. To remedy this we are erecting one of our blue plaques on St. Mary's Parish Centre overlooking the churchyard.

Our efforts continue regarding the refurbishment of the 20 historic panels around the town, some of which are in desperate need. DTC has agreed to pay for three and we have offered to pay for another - about £400 each.

Another neglected area of our town is its Roman remains and we have taken the first step to raise awareness of their potential.

Consultation

We continue to be consulted on a range of topics by DDC, DTC, the Chamber of Commerce and, of course, DHB. We have welcomed the enthusiasm of our mayor, member Sue Jones for our move to restore the Town Hall, which is one of our long-term projects. We have discussed with Sue and the Museum a joint approach to provide guided tours to raise public awareness of the building, parts of which are not normally seen. We have agreed in principle to the possible erection on the Western Heights of a memorial to the 1,700,000 commonwealth troops from 54 countries who died in both world wars. During consultation about the state of some retail properties between Bridge Street and Beaconsfield Road it was agreed that conversion to residential use would be a significant improvement. We were also consulted about a major project to regenerate Ostend's East Bank with an interpretation centre and monument to the 1918 Zeebrugge Raid.

More of the same

Now I turn to what you may call 'more of the same' - regular activities which are part and parcel of The Society and perhaps taken for granted, but no less important for that.

Social programme

Our winter series of meetings continue to be well supported and I thank Patricia Sherratt, Jack Woolford, Georgette Rapley and the happy band of kitchen helpers - not to mention the wine waiter for all their hard work.

Once again support for most of the summer outings was disappointing and so we are only having one this summer although members will be welcome to join the Friends of Dover Museum on their outings.

Projects

Our regular working parties at Cowgate Cemetery, led by Jeremy Cope, continue to keep the whole cemetery attractive as a haven for wildlife and for people, both living and dead. There is always a warm welcome to new workers. The Society continues to play a leading role in the River Dour Steering Group and we continue to coordinate and publicise arrangements for Dover properties to be open free of charge on a weekend in September under the national Heritage Open Days umbrella. These are increasing every year and St Radigund's Abbey was added in 2009. Jeremy represents us on the Dover Heritage Group attempting to make the best of our heritage potential.

Publicity

Our Newsletter expertly edited by Alan Lee continues to be highly regarded by members and others. We are indebted to all the contributors, Jean Marsh our advertising manager and all our distributors for their efforts.

The excellent website, managed by Mike McFarnell, also keeps members up to date and helps to interest internet browsers not only in the Society but in Dover as well. Its popularity has increased this year with the extensive Dover History Scrapbook, making use of Kathleen

and Bob Hollingsbee's fascinating archive. Terry Sutton's regular press reports helps to keep The Society in the public eye.

Events

As usual I represented The Society at the St. George's Day commemoration of the Zeebrugge Raid and we also laid wreaths at the Remembrance Services at the Town war memorial and at The Society's plaque to the Unknown Warrior at the Western Docks. Having lobbied DDC several years ago to commemorate the centenary of the first successful flight across the Channel and to refurbish Bleriot's landing site, five of us were delighted to represent The Society on the day.

Conclusion

One administrative change was that Bill Naylor relinquished the task of Minutes Secretary when Barbara Stapleton kindly volunteered to take over. Thank you Bill for your many years of note taking, but you are willing to stay on the Executive and as Secretary. I have not mentioned the sterling efforts of our Treasurer, but Mike Weston will shortly dazzle you with his annual accounts. That concludes my report of a very hectic year for The Society except for thanking every member of the Executive and all those members who have contributed in some way to the work of The Society during the past year.

I submit my report for your consideration and welcome any questions.

The Dover Society

An extract from the Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2010

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

| | 2010 | 2009 |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| CURRENT ASSETS | | |
| Society Badges | 23 | 27 |
| Newsletter Binders | 66 | 66 |
| Debtors and Prepayment | 25 | 0 |
| Shares gifted to Society | 661 | 661 |
| Cash at bank and in Hand | <u>27,689</u> | <u>26,476</u> |
| | 28,464 | 27,230 |
| CREDITORS: Amounts falling Due within one year | <u>(1,654)</u> | <u>(1,918)</u> |
| NET CURRENT ASSETS | <u>26,810</u> | <u>25,312</u> |
| NET ASSETS | <u>£26,810</u> | <u>£25,312</u> |
| FUNDS | <u>£26,810</u> | <u>£25,312</u> |

The Society's Funds are represented by:

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| The General Fund | 19,935 |
| Rolls Memorial Fund | 50 |
| Projects Fund | 832 |
| Publication Fund | 5,123 |
| Town Hall Fund | 870 |
| | £26,810 |

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31st March 2010

| | General Fund 2010 | General Fund 2009 |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| INCOME | | |
| Subscriptions | 2,428 | 2,470 |
| Donations | 46 | 27 |
| Social Events | 621 | 648 |
| Gift Aid attracted by Subs etc to General Fund | 595 | 593 |
| Bank Account Interest | 49 | 964 |
| TOTAL INCOME | <u>3,739</u> | <u>4,702</u> |
| EXPENDITURE | | |
| Members and Meeting expenses | 33 | -62 |
| Administrative Expenses | 1,206 | 1,179 |
| Newsletter Expenses | 1,485 | 1,346 |
| Other Items [including donations] | 280 | 80 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | <u>3,004</u> | <u>2,543</u> |
| NET (OUTGOING)/INCOMING RESOURCES | 735 | 2,158 |
| Total Funds Brought Forward | <u>19,199</u> | <u>17,041</u> |
| TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD | £19,934 | £19,199 |

Capt. M.H. Weston

Dover Harbour Board

A talk by Mike Krayenbrink and Bob Goldfield

report by Alan Lee

Michael G Krayenbrink is a Chartered Secretary who since commencing with DHB in 1977 has held a variety of posts. Appointed to the Board on 13th June 2005 Mike is Director of Port Development.

Dr. Robert H. Goldfield joined DHB after a long career in the aviation industry. Appointed to the Board on 4th March 2002 Bob is Chief Executive and Register.

Mike opened with the updated plans for the port, Terminal 2 (T2) and the Western Docks. This will be the second largest ferry terminal in the country, the existing T1 being the largest.

The Harbours, Docks, Piers and Ferries, The Dover Harbour Revision Order 201[X] was placed with the Secretary of State for Transport and dated 23.12.2009. This work has to be completed within ten years of the order being signed. The need for T2 was given as the increase of mainly freight traffic through the port and the economics of geography, there is no suitable area for expansion locally. DHB will run out of capacity when the figure of 2.7 million trucks is reached. In 2008 2.31 million trucks passed through the port, in 2009 2.30 million. To do nothing is not an acceptable option as the freight would still come to Dover, the shortest and quickest way to the continent. This would lead to more congestion and queues along with an increase in air pollution. The volume of port freight is linked to GDP and the size of the ships. On current projections T2 will be needed between 2016 and 2020. Work will have to start three years before capacity is reached.

The scheme developed through three rounds of consultations spread over three years will include the provision of four new ferry berths. This will entail the shortening of the Prince of Wales Pier; conversely the Admiralty Pier will be lengthened. The Granville Dock will be infilled and the marina re-sited to the eastern side of the Prince of Wales Pier. The roundabouts at either end of Snargate Street will be redesigned to improve traffic flow. Full documentation for the scheme can be viewed, by appointment, at Harbour House and a summary of about 60 pages is available from DHB or via their website.

Not part of T2 but closely linked to the project and headed Work No. 13 is a £30 million marina. This will consist in part of a pier of solid construction 532 metres long and the relocation and reconstruction on the shore end of the Clock Tower and Clock Tower Building. Piled moorings with a pontoon system will be connected to the south face of that pier by a series of link bridges. It is envisaged that this will provide the catalyst for the waterfront development, improve road access and give a boost to tourism in the area. Headed Work No. 16

is a channel for vessels navigating to and from the Wellington Dock, having lock gates and an opening bridge over the channel.

Bob Goldfield then took over and started by telling the audience about his previous career from RAF Luqa, now Malta International Airport, to just prior to joining DHB.

He went into more detail of who delivers the project and the background to the last government's guidelines for trust ports. They had instructed all trust ports to consider if they are fit for purpose. The only way finance could be raised was set out in a published document 'The Requirement of Modernising Trust Ports' Edition 2. This meant undertaking comprehensive analysis to cover all eventualities from a complete sell-off to part sale and partnership deals.

The objective is to attract private investment to raise the capital, about £450 million, for T1 and T2. DHB has at present an annual turnover of about £60 million and a £10/12 million operating profit. The three main options facing the board were:

1. Saving and borrowing - this would take too long and the last government refused permission to raise money on the open market.
2. Sell 49% of the port - this would not attract investors and government would keep proceeds of the sale.
3. Sell 51% of the port - more attractive investment as it would give the buyer overall control. The estimate is that the buyer would want a 12/15% return on their investment. This

would be attractive to the government, especially in today's financial climate, as they would retain all receipts from the sale.

DHB has proposed a trust fund for employees and another for the local community. The aim of the funds would be to maximise Dover's strong growth potential by providing the necessary investment. They would also enable the port to deliver tangible benefits whilst diversifying and increasing jobs locally. A split of 80% of the profit to the investor and 20% to the rest would seem acceptable.

In answer to questions from the audience Bob made the following points. The trust local fund should just be for Dover and not the whole district or Kent. Safeguards will be in place to stop the buyer selling on to an unacceptable third party. The Admiralty Pier is now a grade 2 listed structure. There would be a loss of angling on the Prince of Wales Pier. Disabled and junior anglers might be able to fish from the new pier. An order, placed on the wreck sunk in the Western Entrance, states that all parts higher than eight and one half metres below the low water mark are to be removed from the wreck. The work to be carried out during this summer. DHB holds a great many old documents and art works dating back hundreds of years. It is hoped that these can be preserved and kept locally.

Bob thanked the Society for their input in the consultation process and donated £150 as recompense for the postage incurred in notifying the membership about our reply to these proposals.

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REGENERATION

* * * *by Jeremy Cope* * * *

Following last issue's report we have received a response from Dover District Council on the use of powers available to them to enforce repair orders upon owners of neglected properties. The Council are trialling a scheme with three properties, regretfully none of which are in Dover. If successful the intention is, we understand, to "roll out their use across the district. This will of course include Dover Town as this is the centre of our regeneration aspirations." Dover more than other areas is run down and needs its buildings to look cared for and not neglected. A cared for look will not only lift our spirits but do wonders for tourism.

A related matter: On behalf of the Society I attended a meeting of the London Road Community Forum. The principle matter discussed was the state of the properties owned by Dover Municipal Charities situated from Bridge Street towards Beaconsfield Road on the right hand side. The buildings are used for shops and are, in several instances, sadly neglected but possessing facades that have some style and seem well worth improvement. The Forum have permission from the Charity to decorate empty premises and a grant from the Town Council to provide for materials. The purpose of the Charities attendance was to tell us of their intentions and the limitations on any action they may take in connection with the buildings. We were told that the conservation area status restricted the use allowed and imposed costs that rendered a conversion to charitable housing impractical. The cost of

new build is two thirds of the cost of restoration and conversion. I came away with the depressing thought that Dover will end up destroying much of its character because of poor regulation and a lack of money. Other wealthier towns would not think twice about making the best of such buildings. But well done London Road Forum!!

Looking at both issues Dover runs the risk of being regenerated but end up losing much of the buildings that give it its character and uniqueness. Do we want a Dover that is indistinguishable from any other town? I don't. I am not against good modern buildings; trouble is we do not seem to get very many built - certainly not in towns like Dover.

We have now started on a survey of our listed buildings and conservation areas. Our surveyors have been both impressed by the underlying quality of much of the building and examples of care and pride but depressed by the grotty. Our web site is being redesigned so that it is data driven which means that it will be much better suited to record the survey results. We should also be able to keep records updated with notes of improvements and of neglect. There should also be a facility for both members and the public to make their comments. The hope is that we shall all be able to be engaged and hence there may be many more lobbyists.

It is early days but I feel an excellent start has been made by some very committed members of the Society.

A Young Person's View of Dover

by Denise Lee

So what do you think about Dover? Well I think that Dover needs a lot more work put in to it. Dover is unclean and untidy. Dover is meant to be a historic and touristic town, so let's take pride in it.

When tourists visit they want to see a nice, clean, tidy and interesting town not somewhere unpleasant, smelly and unclean.

Dover needs to be a bit more colourful with no rubbish on the ground, so what do we need to stop this? I think that we should have more rubbish bins around the town, and hire people to plant more attractive colourful flowers around the town as well. The planters in the town should be full of bright coloured flowers around the trees. At present they look drab and untidy. All the lampposts should have hanging flower baskets and be watered every day. One person could be employed to do this and he or she could be helped by people who are out of work. More roundabouts could be sponsored by businesses to have flowers on and to be kept tidy.

Some of the historic buildings and old shops need to be cleaned, tidied up and painted. The streets need to be cleaned every day and washed regularly. People should be encouraged to keep their gardens and house fronts neat and tidy and take pride in where they live. Those who have been sentenced to community service should be made to do the clearing up, tidying and watering. They could also do up the front gardens of old or disabled people who cannot do it for themselves.

All dog owners should pick their dog waste up and not just leave it on the ground for people to step in it. I think that we need more dog waste bins in Dover not just the odd one or two. The ones we have now always seem full and overflowing: they need to be emptied more often.

People should be helped to start new shops that sell what people want. There are too many charity shops. We need a proper hospital and a bowling alley in the town.

I think that we should get more police on the streets on foot patrol. Why do so many top police need posh cars and drivers? Can't they drive themselves?

With a little bit of effort we can all make Dover a nicer place to live in.

Society Outing

LEGAL LONDON - *The Inns of Court*

26th May 2010

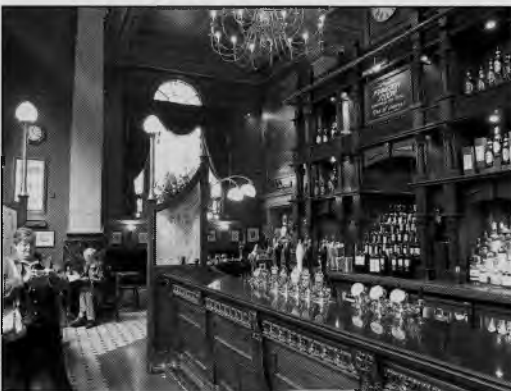
Reported by Joan Liggett

Between royalty at Westminster and commerce in the City, mediaeval lawyers found a quiet niche in which to practise their craft. They are still there in a part of London that remains hidden to many Londoners and most visitors. Under the guidance of our wonderful guide we toured this area tracing the history, traditions and peculiar practices of English Law.

Our first stop was for coffee in Fleet Street at 'The Old Bank of England' Pub, formerly the Law Courts' branch of The Bank of England. The Bank traded here for 87 years until 1975, when the premises were sold to a building society. In 1994 the premises

were taken over by London brewers who began a major refurbishment, restoring this splendid building to its former glory. The basement still contains the original vaults used to store bullion and some of the Crown Jewels during the First World War.

A gentle walk took us from busy Fleet Street to Middle Temple - one of the four Inns of Court exclusively entitled to call their members to the English Bar as barristers; the others being the Inner Temple, Gray's Inn and Lincoln's Inn. Middle Temple has at its heart Middle Temple Hall where the Inn's student barristers are still required to dine for a minimum



Old Bank of England, Fleet Street

Photo by J. Pople



Dining hall, Middle Temple

Photo by J. Pople

number of nights for several terms. In recent years it has become a much-used film location - the cobbled streets, historic buildings and gas lighting giving it a unique atmosphere. The Hall itself is a magnificent Elizabethan building with a double hammer beam oak roof and heraldic shields around the walls recording names of the Readers. The High Table consists of three 29 feet planks of a single oak, reputedly a gift from Elizabeth I to the Middle Temple, cut down in Windsor Forest and floated down the Thames to be installed in the Hall before the building was completed. The Benchers of the Inn still dine at it as they did that evening in August 1586



The high table

Photo by J. Liggett

when Francis Drake, just back from a successful expedition, was rapturously congratulated by Benchers and members. The hatch cover of his ship the Golden Hind was later used to make the present Cup Board, which since medieval times has been the centre of ceremonies. This stands beneath the Bench Table and on it is laid the book which members sign when they are called to the Bar and by it the Readers stand when each Lent and autumn they give their lectures. Those early lawyers rented the land on which the Middle Temple stands from the Knights Templar whose round Norman church was our next stop.

Cuthbert John Ottaway, born Dover 1850 and England's first football captain, was called to the Bar by the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple on 17th November 1876. He was officially a barrister-at-law and took up Chambers at Lamb Building, Temple, London. For more information on C. J. Ottaway see book review. Editor



Double hammer beam roof, dining hall, Middle Temple
Photo by J. Pople



Royal Courts of Justice

Photo by J. Pople

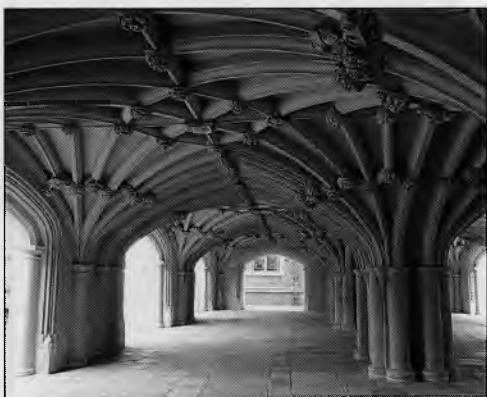
To finish off the morning, we entered the Royal Courts of Justice housing both the Court of Appeal and the High Court. The main entrance in the Strand has two curved porches fitted with iron gates leading into a huge hall designed to reflect the majesty of the Law. Over the Judges' entrance there are carvings of a stone cat and dog representing fighting litigants. Here we saw Legal London at work: Barristers in wig and gown conferring with their clients or with lawyers. After lunch many returned to the Courts of Justice to attend one or other of the many Court Rooms. Each Court has an interior unique to itself as they were each designed by different architects.



Hall entrance and lane

Photo by J. Liggett

Then back to our coach for a brief tour which included the Old Bailey and Staple Inn before stopping at Lincoln's Inn which is situated on Chancery Lane. Led by our Guide we went along lanes and through buildings, sometimes on cobbles, to the Medieval Chapel which was built on pillars forming an undercroft. Standing there under the Chapel in a rather dark place it was easy to imagine we had gone back in time. This place was used for meetings (sometimes by dissidents) but was also a place of recreation. Lincoln's Inn consists of three Courtyards around which the chambers were built. Old Square, built in 1525 with its magnificent Gatehouse is the oldest existing part



Fan vaulting in the undercroft, Lincoln's Inn
Photo by J. Pople

of the Inn. New Square was built in 1693 but altered in the 1800's when the open area in the middle was replaced by gardens and lawns. Stone Buildings was built in 1775 and houses today the headquarters of the Inns of Court and City Yeomanry, part of the Territorial Army.

Our Guide then led us round corners and through lanes to Chancery Lane where we found an imposing establishment, Ede and Ravenscroft, Wigmakers. Wigs were formerly made from human hair with the consequent problem of vermin - ladies purchased small silver mousetraps to put into their wigs whilst gentlemen shaved their heads to enable discreet scratching with the little finger under wigs. Humphrey Ravenscroft whose father was a tailor solved this problem with the patenting of horsehair wigs in 1834 and 285 years later Ede and Ravenscroft are the world's largest makers of lawyer's wigs.

Sadly, it was now time to rejoin our coach. Many, many thanks to Georgette for organising such a splendid day.



Middle Temple

Photo by J. Liggett

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Summer 2010

Thanks once again to all those members who have paid their current subscriptions.

Copies of our Newsletter have now been distributed to most local surgeries for their waiting rooms. Perhaps this will introduce the Dover Society to a wider range of potential members.

Elizabeth Dudley has given up her Newsletter delivery to members at the Gateway flats, currently numbering 17. We are very grateful to Elizabeth for contributing over 20 years of reliable distribution and thank in anticipation her successor, Jean Luckhurst.

Due to the sterling work of Derek, our Chairman, we have a record number of welcome new members:-

Mr D & Mrs J Moynan,
Mr H & Mrs M Hutchison,
Mr D & Mrs N Sheasby,
Mrs A Walker, Mr D Hall,
Mr B & Mrs M Gardner,
Mrs J Taylor, Mr D & Mrs J Fagg,
Mrs L Leach, Mr G Scrivener,
Mrs V Jarvis. Membership is 435.

Sheila R Cope

SOCIETY PROJECTS

Report by Jeremy Cope

COWGATE CEMETERY

The cemetery looks well after the winter - it's a lovely spot even allowing for my bias. If you are nearby it's well worth a visit. Dare I say it but I feel we as up to date with our care of the area as we have ever been.

Thanks are due to all of those who have worked as volunteers over the years of the Society's involvement

and to the support given by White Cliffs Countryside Partnership.

I am delighted to report that member Deborah Gasking joined us last month. If you would like to try volunteering don't hesitate to contact me (phone 01304 211348) or you could just turn up to one of our work sessions.

THE RIVER DOUR

The White Cliffs Countryside Partnership working parties recommenced their work in April after the winter. The break allows for the spawning of fish. The Dour is such a lovely river but so in need of rubbish litter clearance. Anyone interested in joining the working party should contact the Partnership on 01304 241806

The Dour Steering Group met in April and learnt of the Environment Agency's work including its restoration of the river in Temple Ewell to a more natural state through creation of low water flow channels and planting of native species. Further work is being planned for Russell Gardens. The Agency is working with Dover Harbour Board to

ensure that any changes that may come with the T2 development will allow for migrating fish. It is also working with District Council to upgrade the river from A20 towards Castle Street. Dover Town Council hopes that the improvements at Charlton Green will be completed by this summer with seating and an information panel.

I e-mailed members with details of the proposals to create a cycle path that "shadows" the Dour. Any route can only run alongside the river for short distances but has to use nearby roads. The idea is a route from Buckland to the sea with the first section from Buckland to Charlton Green. We await the outcome with interest.

The Western Heights Preservation Society

The Western Heights Preservation Society (WHPS) is pleased to announce the success of their annual Open Weekend on 5th and 6th June 2010 when over 1,800 paying visitors took the rare opportunity to explore the tunnels and casemates, and enjoy the views from the Drop Redoubt on Dover's Western Heights.

Many more people enjoyed the free opening of the Grand Shaft triple-spiral staircase, Napoleonic living history re-enactments displays and others stalls in the Grand Shaft Barracks area.

Monies raised from the event will be spent on future projects and events on the Western Heights, including tools for work parties that take place at the Drop Redoubt on the 3rd Sunday of every month

Disappointingly the event was marred by the graffiti that was daubed on the Drop Redoubt, a Scheduled Ancient Monument on the Saturday night of the event.

The WHPS would like to thank English Heritage for allowing access to the Drop Redoubt, Dover District Council for the use of the Grand Shaft and Barracks site, and the Town Council who provided the bus service between the Heights and the Rolls Royce Anniversary event on the

Sunday. WHPS are also grateful to the Kent Community Foundation who helped fund the weekend with a grant from the Grassroots fund.

Note:

One of the most important and impressive fortifications in Britain and Europe, the Western Heights are a series of strong-points linked by miles of ditches on the western hilltop above Dover. They were originally begun during the American War of Independence, were strengthened during the Napoleonic Wars and updated and strengthened again in the mid-nineteenth century. The Western Heights are now also designated as a local nature reserve, providing a haven for some of Britain's rarest and most protected plants, butterflies, birds and reptiles. Further details can be found on the Society's website:

www.doverwesternheights.org



Dexters on Drop Redoubt field

(Photo P. Sampson)

DOVER PRIDE

— by Denise Lee —

In April this year St Edmund's Catholic School, Dover held a two-day musical workshop. This was for the benefit of some of the pupils from years 8, 9 and 10 with the aim of coming up with a song about Dover.

Bob Kenwood who has already composed and recorded some of his own songs ran the workshop. During the first day we learnt about music, including how to arrange words that go together.

During the second day the students were asked to compose the words for a song to be called Dover Pride. Meanwhile Bob was working on the tune. Finally after much hard work and many changes 'Dover Pride' was finished.

About a month later, on Tuesday 18th May, all those who had taken part in the workshop met in St Edmund's recording studio, one of the largest in the southeast. After about ten attempts the group managed to record the song 'Dover Pride' to Bob's satisfaction. As the session broke up everyone had a feeling of pride in their achievement.

The CD will be used to help people feel proud of the town of Dover and St Edmund's School. It will be sent to other schools to be played to let them know how interesting our town is.



Dover Pride

Words by students of
St Edmund's RC School 2010
Music by Bob Kenwood 2009-10

Dover Castle, always seen
We will walk, side by side
Humpback hills of chalky green
We have Dover Pride

Chorus:

*Maison Dieu to harbour wall
We will walk side by side
Like the waves we're one for all
We have Dover Pride*

We live on a dockland shore
We will walk, side by side
Every day we hear ships roar
We have Dover Pride

Chorus:

When the country was on edge
We will walk, side by side
Winston Churchill was a lege
We have Dover Pride

Chorus:

Charlton, River, Snargate Street
We will walk, side by side
Buckland round to Jubilee
We have Dover Pride

Chorus:

M·R·JAMES *and the* LORD WARDEN HOTEL

by Sherifa Rashidally

Ghost stories, abbeys, churches and castles - what more could conjure up a perfect description of M. R. James! MRJ, as he was known to his associates, was born Montague Rhodes James in 1862 at Goodnestone near Wingham, Kent the son of a clergyman and destined to become one of the great English writers of ghost stories. A collection of such stories without one by MRJ would simply not do! He was the quintessential writer of stories that revolved around old manor houses, deserted seashores and the crumbled ruins of old abbeys and churches.

However, MRJ was also a revered authority on abbeys, churches and castles, having written many books on lovely old and historic buildings. One such book entitled *Abbeys*, written in 1925 and published by the Great Western Railway of Paddington, London, was quite superb, showing all the abbeys and cathedrals on the route from Paddington to the West Country and Wales. A map showing these and castles on this route is included in a pocket at the back of the book. Recently I was most fortunate enough to acquire a copy

Though MRJ was a son of Kent he moved with his parents, his two brothers and a sister, to Suffolk while still in his childhood. He was educated

at Temple Grove preparatory school then at Eton from 1876 to 1882. When at King's College he took a first and in due course became Fellow, Dean, Tutor and in 1905 a Provost. In 1895 he had been awarded a D.Litt. degree, and had published his first catalogues, manuscripts and, in magazine form, two ghost stories *Canon Alberic's Scrapbook* (spooky to say the least!) and *Lost Hearts*.

In 1904 *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary* a collection of eight stories, which included his first two, appeared. Many more of his works followed, not only ghost stories but also on abbeys, churches and castles. There was *The Five Jars* a fantasy for children (1922), a book on his recollections of Eton and King's (1926), one on Suffolk and Norfolk (1930), and a translation of forty Hans Christian Andersen stories (1930), for MRJ was proficient in the Danish language. In that same year, 1930, he received the Order of Merit, for earlier in 1918 he had accepted the Provostship of Eton, the place so close to his heart.

MRJ frequently visited the continent including visits to St. Wulfram's Church at Abbeville in France which is mentioned in his famous ghost story *Casting the Runes*. Incidentally in 1957 this was made into a film entitled *Curse of the Demon* (*Night of*

the Demon in the UK). It was on these visits to the continent that MRJ stayed at the Lord Warden hotel, which, as those familiar with Dover know, has accommodated many of the famous on their way to and from England and the continent.

MRJ died in 1936 but his stories live on. They are unique in that sometimes only a bleary or vaguely described figure or image conjures up more fear than if it had been described with more clarity of form. Surely things half-hidden and shapes not clear make the mind wonder what

dreadful objects they really could be and it is this which makes MRJ such a master of the classic ghost story. Moreover, it is we from Dover who can add yet one more of the famous to our list of those who stayed at the Lord Warden.

Though he spent his childhood in Suffolk and travelled far and wide might we not think that when MRJ stayed at this Dover hotel and looked across towards the lighthouse, with its shadows on a foggy night, this must have conjured up a perfect theme for the ghosts of antiquity!

* * * * *

Zeebrugge Service on St George's Day



Photographs by Mike McFarnell

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Saturday 11th & Sunday 12th September 2010

Once again The Dover Society is coordinating arrangements in Dover for Heritage Open Days, organised by English Heritage nationally every year. This event celebrates England's fantastic architectural heritage by encouraging free access to buildings that are usually closed to the public or would normally charge an admission fee. Dover has a great wealth of historic buildings, but only some are normally open to the public such as Dover Castle and the Roman Painted House. This year seven buildings will be open to the public free of charge.

1 Maison Dieu House:

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

town's regalia will also be on show.

2 St. Edmund's Chapel:

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

3 Dover College:

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

4 Church of St. Mary the Virgin:

this prominent building in Biggin Street, dating from Saxon times, was built originally by the secular canons of St. Martin Le Grand, but was rebuilt by the Normans. At the Dissolution it was saved from demolition when Henry VIII granted it for use as a parish and civic

church. Unfortunately, because of its weak foundations, it was rebuilt in 1843, although its original arches and columns were reinstated. The magnificent tower survived this restoration.

4a Bell Tower of St. Mary the Virgin:

in the gallery of this Norman tower visitors will see how the bell-ringers operate and in the clock chamber they will see the clock workings and various artefacts.

5 Unitarian Church:

this brick-built octagonal church sitting above York Street was constructed in 1820 and its worship area reflects the shape of the building. The origins of the church go back to 1643 to a local community of Baptists who established a meeting house in 1655, but were persecuted following the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. In 1692 Samuel Taverner made part of his house available for worship and part of the garden as a burial ground. Freedom of belief and form of worship as a Unitarian Church was agreed by members in 1916. Following Second World War damage, the chapel reopened in 1952. There will be an art exhibition, music played on the 1855 Holdich pipe organ and refreshments.

6 Grand Shaft Staircase:

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

entrance is in Snargate Street.

7 St. Radigund's Abbey:

this Premonstratensian abbey founded in 1191 was visited by several monarchs. Following its Dissolution in 1538, the great abbey church was demolished and the remaining buildings with its lands were leased to tenant farmers by the monarch. Today the refectory is the farmhouse surrounded by abbey ruins. A gatehouse and a guesthouse survive.

Opening times will be:

- 1 Maison Dieu House – Saturday only 10am to 4pm
- 2 St. Edmund's Chapel – Saturday 10am to 4pm
- 3 Dover College (Guided tours only) – Saturday 11am and 2pm
- 4 St. Mary the Virgin Church – Saturday 10am to 4pm
- 4a Bell Tower of St. Mary the Virgin – Saturday 10am to 4pm and Sunday 12.15 to 4pm
- 5 Unitarian Church – Saturday 11am to 4pm
- 6 Grand Shaft Staircase – Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm
- 7 St. Radigund's Abbey (Guided tours) – Saturday 10.30 to noon and 2.30 to 4pm

Publicity leaflets

These are available from the Tourist Information Office behind the Town Hall, Dover Town Council Offices (Maison Dieu House), Dover Museum and Dover Library.

To find out about other buildings open in the region call 020 7539 7921 or visit www.heritageopendays.org

Local contact for more information: Derek Leach on 01304 823926 or email derekrivervdale@btinternet.com



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B.O.O.K R.E.V.I.E.W

England's First Soccer Captain

Review by Derek Leach

Who can name the first captain of an England soccer team? If you can, do you know where he was born? The name is Cuthbert Ottaway who was born in Dover in 1850. The story of his short life is told in a book called *England's First Football Captain* by Michael Southwick.

Cuthbert was born at 5 Hammond Place on 19 July 1850. His father, James, was a surgeon, a Justice of the Peace and Mayor of Dover 1859/60. By 1861 the family was living at 7 Camden Crescent. Cuthbert went to Eton in 1863 as a King's Scholar - a scholarship which meant that the family paid only 75% of the fees. Cuthbert was soon involved in many of the sporting activities at the college including the Wall Game. He excelled at cricket, playing for the Eton First XI against the MCC. In his last year at Eton he scored nine centuries and also at the age of 19 played for Kent, being bowled out twice by W. G. Grace. Cuthbert played for Eton against Harrow at rugby and the Wall Game.

He went on to Oxford in 1869 where, in addition to reading Classics, he represented the university at five different sports: cricket (as captain), rackets, real tennis, athletics and soccer. Opening the batting with W. G. Grace, he toured the USA in an England XI and played in the annual Gentlemen versus Players match.

Despite not having played soccer until he went to Oxford, he was soon in the team. The University team, including Cuthbert, entered the FA cup for the first time in 1872/73 only losing in the final! He was selected for the England team to play Scotland in November 1872 and was made captain. In 1874 he played again for England.

After university and whilst studying to be a barrister Cuthbert played cricket for Middlesex and football for the Old Etonians, reaching the FA Cup Final twice. Damage to his ankles, however, ended his football career, but not cricket - he played for Middlesex until 1876. After corresponding for five years with a Canadian girl, he married her in August 1877, but their happiness was short-lived. After only a few months Cuthbert died, probably of pneumonia, at the age of 27. His wife, Marion, was pregnant with their first child.

So ended the short, sporting life of the first ever captain of an England soccer team who was born in Dover.

Copies of the book price £8 are available by post from Tony Brown at 4 Adrian Close, Beeston, Nottingham NG9 6FL (or see www.soccerdata.com). Please make your cheque or postal order payable to Tony Brown and include postage and packing of £1.50.

A DOVER MAYOR *who Broke Centuries of Tradition*

The first female Mayor of Dover, Councillor Mrs Dorothy Bushell

by Fr Peter Sherred

In a ceremony held at Maison Dieu House attended by the Mayors, Town Clerks and other Officers of the Confederation of the Cinque Ports on the 21st May 2009 Dover's newly elected first citizen, Cllr Sue Jones, The Right Worshipful the Town Mayor of Dover became the Speaker of the Cinque Ports for 2009/2010. The Speakership passed from the Town Mayor of Hythe and during the year Dover's Mayor will chair meetings of the Cinque Ports and on 3rd October 2009 the annual Speaker's Day will be held in the town. An event that comes round every seven years is a ceremony not to be missed. However, Councillor Jones is not the first female Mayor to hold such a prestigious and historic post and we have to go back to 1960 to find the first female Mayor of our town to hold such post. So who was this person?

To answer that question we can reflect on another event that took place in Dover in 2009 under the previous Mayor, Councillor Diane Smallwood, the Speaker of the Cinque Ports in 2002 and Mayor of Dover three times. Konik horses, which originated from a Polish breed, have been introduced into the town on the chalk grassland behind

Buckland Hospital for the dual function of grazing the hillside and, thereby, encouraging the return and growth of flora and the attendant fauna. At least two foals have been born from the breed on the hillside and one was named Dorothy by Councillor Smallwood after, and in honour of, the first female Mayor of Dover, Councillor Mrs Dorothy Bushell.



[Interestingly it was subsequently ascertained that the filly was a colt and may now be called Solomon but the first filly to come along may still be called Dorothy! It could only happen in Dover!]

Dorothy Bushell was born in Dover in 1908 at 45 Wyndham Road, the daughter of Mr and Mrs Henry Peal. She was one of eleven children and was to become the longest-lived, eventually dying in 2004 from a heart attack while

resident in Alandale residential home in Whitfield at the good age of 95. She attended school locally but it appears she did not stay at school, being required to look after her siblings and also become engaged in service. In 1920, Dorothy was just 12 years of age, when her father died after an appendectomy operation. Her mother died, aged 75, from a brain tumour when Dorothy was 43, by which time she was married to Edmund Bushell MBE. Born in Peter Street, Dover in 1903 he was a great grandson of the parish clerk of Dover and was made a freeman of the town by birthright on 3rd July 1931. Apprenticed with Flashman and Co. he became a French polisher for Southern Railway working on the wooden fittings of the ferries and Lord Warden Hotel. He was to become a Charge hand Painter for British Railways. From 1935, representing the Labour Party, he became a Dover Borough Councillor and an Alderman in 1945. He was awarded the MBE for his work as chairman of the local employment committee from 1945. Elected Mayor in 1964 he died, while in office, at home in 1 Churchill Road on 27th January 1965. He and Dorothy had been married three months short of thirty years.

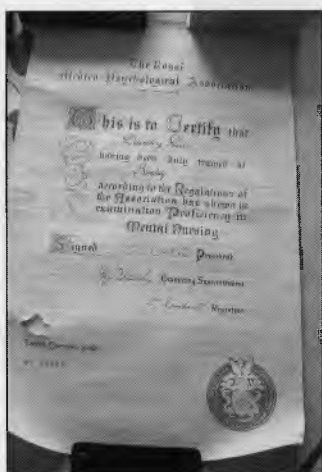
Edmund Alfred Bushell and Dorothy Peal were married in the Wesley

Hall, St Martin's Hill, Folkestone Road, Dover on 17th April 1935. On the marriage certificate he was described as French Polisher (Railways) and she as a Nurse, Mental Hospital, resident at St Augustine's Chartham. They were destined not to have any children and she was to be a widow for nearly as long as her married life with her husband.

Dorothy entered the nursing profession in 1930 when she became a Registered Mental Nurse undertaking additional training in the Royal Victoria Hospital, Folkestone. She served time as a theatre nurse during the Second World War having volunteered in 1938 and being called up in 1939. On duty when the first injured soldiers arrived from Dunkirk, she ministered in a ward for Dutch, French and Belgian soldiers. She eventually went off duty at 2.30am and returned at 8am and repeated this commitment for the subsequent days of the Dunkirk emergency working alongside, among others, the surgeon

Dr Gertrude Toland. It is said she once had to saw off a finger from an amputated arm to enable a soldier's wedding ring to be returned to him. She became a State Enrolled Nurse in 1963.

During the latter part of the war years she was co-opted onto the Borough Council as a councillor for St Bartholomew's Ward



and was subsequently elected in 1947. Her specific interests were the post war reconstruction of Dover and health issues for the poor and underprivileged. She was Chairman of Dover's Maternity and Child Welfare Committee and a keen supporter of the introduction of orange juice and dried milk for children and expectant mothers. She broke the mould of a male-only preserve when, on 23rd May 1960, she was elected the first woman Mayor of Dover in over 900 years, enabling many other women to follow her example. Her Mayoral year coincided with the Speakership of the Cinque Ports vesting in Dover and it is believed she was only the second woman Speaker. She was the 302nd Mayor of our town and only the third Labour or Socialist Mayor. In 1957 she had been elected as the second female Alderman and by the time she was



elected Mayor she had served two years as Deputy Mayor. She was also to represent Dover North on Kent County Council for three years and was deeply committed to the life and community of Dover.

She followed Alderman Eckhoff as

Mayor. Conscious of breaking the all male tradition in her Mayoral speech she said "Dover is a progressive town moving with the times" adding "The town of Dover has made history today but it is making history all the time in the sort of town it has become even since the war and in the services it provides for its people". She expressed concerns over redundancies in the mines and on the railways adding, "The redevelopment of Dover has at last speeded up...!" [Judging by its state today the pace of development prior to her Mayoral year must have been very very slow!]

As Chairman of the Housing Committee she recognised that housing was a problem and expressed concern over high interest rates. About 25% to 30% of all rented property in the town was organised by Dover Borough Council who indicated they were looking for properties for conversion and rebuilding on blitzed sites. She added, "Of all the improvements we would like to see in the town a swimming bath is most often mentioned. In giving this our full support we are well aware that it is all of us, as ratepayers, who must "will the means" for it to be a lasting project. However, the benefit of many things cannot be measured in terms of money. The decisions will have to be made with courage and, I believe, during this civic year".

What year it turned out to be! It was so successful that at the annual meeting on 23rd May 1961 it was unanimously

ordered that the Council place on record its appreciation of the outstanding services "rendered by Alderman Mrs Dorothy Bushell in the office of Mayor to which she was elected on 23rd May 1960" and that the record of appreciation be "illuminated on vellum in book form for the ex-Mayor's acceptance".

The tribute recorded highlights of her year beginning thus: "Alderman Mrs Bushell has enjoyed the unique distinction of being the first woman to occupy the office of Mayor in all the long history of Dover, added to which, during the greater part of her year of office, Alderman Mrs Bushell has held the no less exalted office of Speaker of the Confederation of the Cinque Ports. Alderman Mrs Bushell has discharged her many duties with consummate ability and infinite grace and charm thereby fulfilling the high expectations not only of her colleagues on the Council but also of her multitude of friends in Dover and beyond." Events recorded included: Opening of King Charles II Walk, on 25th May 1960, by the Lord Cornwallis to mark the tercentenary of the arrival at Dover of King Charles II on the occasion of the Restoration in 1660. The consecration, on 27th May 1960, by His Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury of the Church of St Nicholas on the Buckland Estate. The presentation of new colours to the 5th Battalion The Buffs by the Colonel in Chief, King Frederick IX of Denmark and a visit to Dover by HRH The Duke of Gloucester. The visit of the President of the District of Split,

Yugoslavia and the goodwill visit in return. The civic tribute ended "in recording its unqualified gratitude for services splendidly performed the Council extends to the Ex-Mayor and to Alderman E. A. Bushell its best wishes for long life, good health and continued happiness together". Sadly, within a period of just over three years Mrs Bushell was to find herself a widow.

In the context of those plaudits how did the ex-Mayor approach her year in office?

In her "Random recollections of my "year" May 23rd 1960 to May 23rd 1961" she wrote - "The Day 5.30pm on a warm evening. Edmund and I walking down to the bus stop at Elms Vale corner to take the bus to the Town Hall much the same as we have done for the last 15 years together, only this time I was wearing a new green and white tricolour two piece and a special hair do for the occasion. Arriving at the Town Hall we robed and at 6pm promptly we filed into the Connaught Hall to take our places, facing the general public seats, with all the chairs and desks arranged as in the Council Chamber, the Mayor's chair in the centre on a plinth, and behind us the platform massed with the most beautiful array of flowers I have ever seen; the perfume almost overwhelming and the colours blending beautifully. The first item being "To elect a Mayor for the ensuing year". I sat there quite detached while my nomination was proposed by Alderman Mrs Coatsworth and Alderman Snelgrove in somewhat glowing terms.

I found myself moving off behind the Mayor to the robing room, dressed by the Town Sergeant in all the Mayoral regalia, the cravat feeling the most strange, the new hat slightly uncomfortable, mostly on account of it not being paid for yet (cost £8/18/6d) and then re-entering the hall to meet a sudden blaze of light. I paused, this moment of history was being filmed in colour, then proceeded to the Mayoral Chair and took my seat.

Rising to take the oath and signing the long scroll of parchment in a hushed silence, was for me a most solemn and moving moment, then calling upon the Rev'd S. Roberts for the prayers, giving my speech, standing there in a blaze of light to about 500 people, apart from the Council, was an ordeal, which, however, was not obvious since someone said to me afterwards "as if you had been doing it all your life"! the burst of applause at the end of it, and then looking down the agenda and quite suddenly feeling everything was going smoothly, and it was alright... the business proceeded without error and finally we went out to disrobe and on such a warm evening I was indeed glad to shed the fur trimmed cloak and the hat... Edmund was pleased and proud. The weight of the chain felt for the first time through the thin silk was an ever-present reminder of my responsibility. Could I, ordinary Mrs Bushell, the very first woman Mayor of Dover in almost 900 years of recorded history, measure up to the standard set by my predecessors? What amount of support would I get? Would I be able to stand

the pace so soon after a major op? Only time could answer all these doubts which beset me, once it was a fait accompli; but I am determined to do my best and I pray constantly for wisdom to know what is right and the courage to carry it out"

By New Year's Eve she was writing "Of all the things I hope to achieve this year one is to leave the office of Mayor with the dignity I hoped to acquire when accepting it and to have made it possible for other women to be so honoured." On New Year's Day her entry reads "New Year's Day and a lovely sunny one, we robed at the Town Hall and proceeded on foot to St Mary's Church where the Rev Hewlett Johnson (the Red Dean) was the guest preacher. I read the second lesson... We attended St Andrew's Church for lessons and carols in the evening. I love this service but the church was so gloomy and cold I was glad to get home."

Her log of events following is a fascinating personal insight into the workload of the Mayor and her reactions to events. For instance on 5th January she wrote, "Reception for 56 guests before the Panto of Dick Whittington, quite good, but I loathe those front seats! One might as well be on the stage."

On the 24th February she was in Court "11am Court, where a smuggling case enlivened the proceedings, 4,223 watches and 5 pieces of jewellery were involved value £41,000! Depositions took until 5.30pm, almost a "cloak and

dagger" epic was unfolded, involving a 500 mile journey through the night, an interlude in Paris and capture at Dover with the loot, which had been ingeniously concealed in the heating system of the car. I think the woman will get off, I believe she is just a tool in the game. The courtroom looked like Aladdin's cave with all the samples about. We sent them to Kent Assizes". [She recorded later in March "Mr Leppard told me the woman in the smuggling case has been discharged not guilty"]

In April on Easter Sunday she records "Church, it was so packed that I could hardly find a seat my usual one being taken... I did not know whether we were supposed to put extra in our envelopes and anyway I had last week's as well so I didn't though I have always made Easter one of the special ones"

At an event on 8th April the host "said he did not quite know how to address the Mayor's husband since she was "Mr Mayor" and to our surprise Edmund said in a stage whisper "call me Madam" which came out so unexpectedly we all laughed"

On Wednesday 12th April she recorded "1st spaceman went into orbit. Radio announced that a Russian Yuri Gagarin had returned safely"

She records calls for her to fight in the elections for Town and Pier Ward which she rejected and made comment about an anonymous letter and articles in the press that had poisoned the atmosphere for her. From her journal and

comments in it one is left with the impression of a determined lady who was unafraid to speak her mind even to the extent of rebuking her own husband and another councillor in committee. Such directness may not have endeared her to some of her Council colleagues and others!

Then, on 17th April, she records "My 26th Wedding Anniversary and Edmund shamed me by remembering it and I didn't!" On 23rd April she officiated at the Zeebrugge Day service attended by Lady Keyes, her son Lord Keyes and her grandson the Hon Charles". She rang the eight bells on the Zeebrugge bell.

Her record is a testament to the commitment and industry she gave to the Mayoral Year and contains all manner of interesting thoughts and memories. April 30th was when she set off with her husband and the Town Clerk to visit Split, leaving Dover on the 'King Albert' to sail to Ostend and then take a train on a very long and not too easy journey to Zagreb arriving at midnight a day later. Her journal ends on 4th May some three weeks or so before relinquishing the Mayoralty on 23rd May 1961. Her year had been an outstanding success and her journal reminds us of the personality behind the official façade. She was a Christian lady who approached the office of Mayor with apprehension but acquitted herself with distinction.

She continued to live in Churchill Road for a while after her husband died then moved to Park Street, then Snelgrove

House before a residential home in Herne Bay. This was not the end of her travels for she then went to Abbeyfield in Walmer before asserting her independence and moving to a flat in St Margaret's at Cliffe but ending her days in Alandale in Whitfield where she died. She did, however, during the Mayoral year of Diane Smallwood, come down into town and watch the switching on of the Christmas lights in the Market Square by sitting with the Mayor in Dickens Corner and following events from behind the window of that café.

She was a very clever lady, developing much of her learning late in life, was also an active member of the Methodist chapel and a fluent French speaker. While she learned how to swim in her 60s she never drove a car. She shone at poetry, obtaining a merit award in America in 1999 for one of her poems from 1980, "Lexically Speaking", and having published a recollection from the 'England of yesteryear' entitled "The Real Father Christmas". As she approached the end of her life she was still providing samples of poetry:-

Samphire Hoe

*I marvel that the mind man
Dared to emulate the Creator
Devising a landscape in the sea
The cliffs arising from its base
Protected now from the sea's embrace
How strange that we now can walk
Where no foot trod before
On the Channel Tunnel's elemental chalk*

Dorothy Bushell, a Mayor to remember and in whom the town should have considerable pride, led the way for subsequent female Mayors.

This completes a trilogy, being the contribution of three female Dover Mayors to the history of Dover, submitted by Fr Peter Shered.



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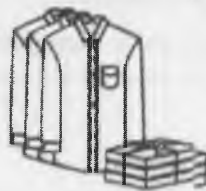


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Social events Writing for newsletter

Projects e.g. clearance, surveys, photography

Any other interests or expertise

PROGRAMME 2010/11

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

2010

OCTOBER 18
Monday 7.30

Speakers: Wendi Atherton: "12th Century Life in the
Constables Tower"
Alistair Gould: "Renewable Energy at St Margaret's"

NOVEMBER 15
Monday 7.30

Speaker: Derek Leach: "The Streets of Dover"
Brainstorming Session: Expect a lively session with some
interesting subjects.

DECEMBER 18
Saturday
7.00 for 7.30
£22.50

Christmas Feast

This year we will revert back to a cold buffet, which gives a wide selection of food with the addition of hot potatoes. As usual the Christmas Feast will be held in the Refectory at Dover College. The entertainment will be by the unique style of "Quodlibet". Price includes a sherry reception, wine, soft drinks.

To book please contact:

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2011

JANUARY 17
Monday 7.30

Speakers: To be announced

FEBRUARY 21
Monday
7 for 7.30

Wine and Wisdom: A light-hearted quiz with Clive Taylor and his team. Price to include refreshments and soft drinks. Free wine will be provided on each table. Prizes for first and second places.

MARCH 21
Monday 7.30

Speakers: To be announced

APRIL 18
Monday 7.30

Annual General Meeting
Speakers: To be announced

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