

The  
Dover  
Society

# Newsletter

No. 71

August 2011



*Dover Town Hall*

© Alan Lee



# THE DOVER SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1988

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

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## *The Objectives of the Dover Society*

*founded in 1988.*

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

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

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

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

# Editorial

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I would like to remind all members that the last of the summer outings this year is a trip to the Geffrye Museum on Friday 14th September. Details are inside the back cover. This is a most unusual museum and well worth a visit.

The Chairman's report from the AGM has been published in full for the benefit of the members who were unable to attend the meeting. An extract from the accounts for the year ending 31st March 2011 is included in the newsletter. If any member requires more detailed information then please contact Mike Weston our treasurer.

Our chairman Derek Leach, along with other members of the society, attended the Zeebrugge memorial service on St George's Day. It was heartening to note that this was one of the best for many years, thanks to the attendance of the Koninklijke Scoutshamonie Sint-Leo band from Brugge. After the service the 65 plus strong band played for the public in the precinct between Priory Street and the Dover Town Hall.

Our next indoor meeting will take place at St Mary's Parish Centre on Monday 17th October at 7.30pm. More details are on the inside of the back cover. The subjects of the talks are quite varied so it should be an interesting meeting. The same applies to the November meeting so please try to attend if possible.

Members are also reminded that bookings are being taken for the Christmas Feast. Details and booking arrangements are inside the back cover.

The Society is once again taking a leading role in this year's Heritage Open Days event. Details of the premises that are taking part are included in this issue, although there may be some that will be added later.

The Dover regatta was blessed with some really nice weather this year and was a resounding success.

Dover District Council still seems intent on cutting down trees by the roadside. They say they will replace them but they only seem to plant a fraction of the number that they cut down.

The pond in Connaught Park still has not been repaired. It is supposed to have

a leak but it is half-full of stagnant water and looks disgusting. This is a very sorry advert for DDC. It has been like this for over eighteen months. How much longer must this go on? Perhaps if all the councillors gave up their community allowance then maybe it could be repaired. The estimate for the cost is between £20,000 and £50,000.

I hope that soon we will know what has been decided about the sale of the Port of Dover, the development at Buckland Mill, at Whitfield, at Connaught Barracks and Fort Burgoyne, Buckland hospital and the St James's area development. Does anything ever move forward swiftly in Dover?

\* \* \* \* \*

## DEADLINE for contributions

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 72 will be Wednesday 5th October 2011. 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

### Inside Stories of the Local Council

A talk by Cllr David Hannent, Town Council Deputy Mayor  
reported by Alan Lee

David began his talk by outlined his early life in Dover up to the time that he left for the 'bright lights'. After working with Camden and Bromley councils he returned as a 29 year old and obtained a post as a surveyor with the Borough Council. Later he was to become the Chief Surveyor with the newly formed Dover District Council, being responsible for all the building work in the area.

At the time of the local government reorganisation the old Dover Borough Council went on a spending spree. They had decided to use up their cash reserves instead of handing them over to the new DDC.

David then controversially stated that at this time he considered that a third of professional people should not be in practice, mainly through their incompetence.

He found that DDC had inherited a fragmented surveyors department with many small offices spread around the district. This necessitated a lot of extra work and time having to visit multiple offices for each building application



David Hannent

(resolved when the Whitfield offices opened). Looking to centralise their offices DDC first considered the old gas works site in Coombe Valley Road but decided on Whitfield as the land was cheaper with better access. David was the project manager for the council and was pleased with completing the building on time and within the budget. (This had looked in doubt until the Gypsies illegally occupying the site, were somehow evicted). A little known fact is that many of the interior walls have been constructed as demountable partitions. This means that they can be moved so that the number and the size of the individual offices can be changed. He mentioned that during this period he had his job re-evaluated and his salary increased by three times as much. With a twinkle in his eye he stated that although slightly embarrassed he reluctantly accepted the increase.

David's first large project was to oversee the building of 159 basic concrete homes by Wimpy the construction company. Without any insulation or

double glazing, normal for the period, and with only electric heating this left the residents with very high fuel bills.

He then played a major part in re-negotiating better terms for the lease of the St James's multi-storey car park. Originally held on a long full repairing lease this had always led to very expensive repair bills. To deter vandalism he had wire mesh fitted over the ground floor openings. An office was built by the entrance and leased to a local taxi firm which ensured there was a 24-hour presence on the site. These and other innovative measures meant that Dover became the leading exponent in multi-storey car park management. He oversaw the Dover Swimming Pool, built by Jenner's, sadly designed too short for official swimming competitions.

Dover's street development over the year's had not taken enough account of the fact that the River Dour was only three feet below the surface. David discovered that the basements of the houses in Ladywell are well below water level, damp and prone to flooding.

While their Chief Architect he had a major disagreement with DDC. Sticking to his principles he walked away from his job and started his own consultancy company, P.M.C. Now 27 years later he still has no regrets about leaving, although the job was professionally rewarding and a lot of fun.

Just after the Dover Town Council was formed they were paying £2,000 per year in rent for their offices in the old Martin Walter showrooms in Castle Street. After David was elected to the

DTC he was one of the prime movers in getting them to purchase the old library for their offices. The roof needed major repairs and the building was totally refurbished, but some timbers are still cracking and the basement is still damp and prone to flooding. This will require treatment at a cost of £10,000 to £20,000, but the work is essential.

He became 65 years old, in February, and hopes to slow down a bit and devote more of his time to his family. This year also sees him step down as Deputy Town Mayor.

Many things have not changed in the district over the years. David believes the following suggestions for improving Dover would start to get the basics right and ultimately lead to a smarter, tidier and cleaner town - one we could all be rightly proud to live in.

1. Target areas of the town to ensure that they are kept clean and tidy.
2. Involve local people in more consultations about plans affecting the town.
3. Award 70% grants to have the frontage of properties in the town painted.
4. Award grants to help defray the cost of scaffolding to carry out repairs to the frontage of properties.
5. Get the Dover District Council to be more open with their plans for the town.

Following a question and answer session the Chairman thanked David for giving the members an interesting insight into some of the unknown workings of local government.



# MARCH MEETING

## 2nd Talk

### The Secret Wartime Tunnels

A talk by Deborah Newman, Head of Visitor Operations Dover Castle  
reported by Terry Sutton

The crucial role of Dover in the 1940 Evacuation of Dunkirk is set to be highlighted when the "secret" wartime tunnels under Dover Castle are re-opened this summer.

This was told to members of The Dover Society in March when Deborah Newman, English Heritage's head of visitor operations at Dover Castle, was our guest speaker. Miss Newman said the tunnel complex will be re-opened to visitors on June 10 but, questioned, she added that the admission cost to the castle would be increasing by about 20 per cent to around £16 to help pay for the massive investment.

Deborah, using a PowerPoint presentation, explained that the number of paying visitors to Dover Castle had been declining and a five year market research investigation had resulted in recommendations designed to increase visitor footfall at the castle.

There were, she said, five phases in the planned upgrade of Dover Castle. The first was the new venture at the Great Tower (known to Doverians as the Keep) which was already reaping rewards in visitor numbers. The second phase was the current upgrade

of the wartime tunnels, due to open in June.

Visitors to the tunnels complex will be able to see how the Battle of France was fought in 1940; how it led to the Dunkirk Evacuation designed and implemented by Operation Dynamo headquarters in the castle's tunnels; how the majority of evacuated troops arrived at Dover and the part played by the town in that massive movement of troops. "Visitors will be able to see and hear the human stories of those based in Dover who witnessed the safe landings of the returning soldiers from Dunkirk at Dover," explained Deborah.

Other improvements were to the underground hospital and displays showing how the new work on the tunnels had uncovered a number of previously hidden historical features. Other work in progress including improving access to the tunnels, extending a lift, and improving ventilation in the tunnels.

One of the aims, said Deborah, was to persuade visitors to make Dover Castle a two-day experience with tourists remaining in the district longer, thus helping the local economy.

# APRIL MEETING

## Annual General Meeting of the Dover Society 2011

reported by the Chairman Derek Leach

### **MATTER ARISING FROM 2010 AGM**

Following the financial failure of the Civic Trust last year and the setting up of Civic Voice, you voted last year not to join Civic Voice but to seek affiliation. However, this proved to be impossible and, whilst the Executive reconsidered our position, we continued to feel that we should not join at least for the time being.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

This is my 7th annual report and The Society has been busier than ever. A few years ago a member said 'The Society does not do anything'. I leave you to judge the accuracy of that after this report. Time means that I concentrate upon the main issues of the year but this should not devalue the hard bread and butter work that goes on year in and year out.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Dover Town Council exercised its regained right to appoint honorary Freemen during the year and we were delighted that 2 of the first 3 were Society members - Jack Woolford and John Turnpenny. Our membership shows a slight net increase from last year 425 to 444. Whilst this is still a healthy number, 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 may I invite you to stand whilst we remember those members who have died in the past year.

### **PLANNING**

Our Planning Committee and indeed your Executive has missed the valuable input of its tireless chairman, Jack Woolford, for most of the year due to bad health and we are fortunate that Patrick Sherratt has acted as a very effective and energetic chairman. With yet another scheme for the St James area we met DDC Director of Planning to discuss it and all the other regeneration schemes that are apparently 'bubbling away'. We still await some evidence on the ground of progress!

The future ownership and development of the port again took up a great deal of time. We met the Chairman and CEO of Dover Harbour Board twice and made several submissions to the Secretary of State. Once the Dover People's Port Trust and its bid were launched we

examined the scheme and met its Chairman to satisfy ourselves about the viability of the scheme and the benefits for the town. Finally, we urged the Secretary of State to give the bid serious consideration. With a referendum for the electorate of Dover Town only, we decided to give our members wherever they lived an opportunity to express their views in a Society 'postal referendum'. 68% of members responded (compared with 25% turnout in the DTC vote) with 94% of them in favour of opposing the sale of the Port of Dover as proposed by DHB and support its transfer to the Community of Dover instead.

The planning application for the first phase of the Whitfield expansion was scrutinised and we raised a number of concerns including traffic congestion and possible adverse impact upon shopping in Dover, DDC sought views on over 100 new sites offered by owners for development. We objected to the possible loss of Crabble Athletic Ground and gave conditional approval to some sympathetic development on the Western Heights and at Farthingloe.

The government's Localism Bill exercised our minds and the views that you expressed at our public meeting were put to a regional meeting attended by the minister responsible. During the year we also submitted views on the government's plans to change the planning process.

A grave matter was the siting of a new cemetery at Elms Vale, which

appeared to be the most suitable of those available.

Bearing in mind that we scrutinise planning applications for not only Dover but also the surrounding villages, we would like a representative from River, Whitfield and Temple Ewell to join the Planning Committee.

### **REFURBISHMENT COMMITTEE**

Our Refurbishment Committee, chaired by Jeremy Cope, is making an impact with its survey of the condition of our many listed buildings, conservation areas and empty properties. Unfortunately, the prospect of getting DDC to take enforcement action in the present financial climate is doubtful. The state and lack of public toilets continue to give concern especially on the seafront.

### **HERITAGE**

The success of Heritage Open Days in Dover continued with the Town Hall and the Painted House joining the scheme last year making 10 properties open free of charge for the September weekend. Providing guided tours of the Town Hall for HODS has led to a programme of regular guided tours this year from April to October with guides provided by The Society and Kent Greeters.

The Society has also initiated a group to consider the feasibility of restoring the Town Hall with the aid of a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, making its history better known and increasing access to the building.

Progress is being made, although it is a very big challenge to consider.

During the year we erected a new Dover Society plaque to commemorate the life of Dover diarist Thomas Pattenden. We also replaced the plaque commemorating the site of Charlton Boys' School in Granville Road, destroyed by enemy action during World War II. Following our successful attempt with others to have listed the rare Air Raid Warden's Post by Priory Station, we met with the KCC Heritage Team to suggest ways of improving the building. As a consequence we have agreed to adopt the site and to cooperate with improvements.

A disappointment was the sudden demolition of one of the Swingate WW2 radar masts, leading to us lobbying for listing the remaining two. Another disappointment was the English Heritage decision, due to substantial cuts in government funding, to restrict winter opening of the Castle to the weekends.

### **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.

### **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.

The Christmas Feast was a victim of the weather and had to be cancelled. Our summer outing to the Inns of Court was well supported and we are offering two outings this year plus the opportunity 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. Barry Late must be thanked for covering for Jeremy whilst he was indisposed. There is always a warm welcome to newcomers. The Society continues to play a leading role in the River Dour Steering Group.

### **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, the envelope stuffers and all our distributors for their efforts.

The excellent website, managed by Mike McFarnell keeps members up to date and helps to interest internet browsers not only in the Society but in Dover as well. Its popularity has soared with the extensive Dover History Scrapbook, and Lorraine Sencicle's 'Dovers around the world'. Mike is changing the website to data driven making it far easier to use and providing much more space.

Terry Sutton's regular press reports helps to keep The Society in the public

eye. A new venture is providing a Dover Society page in the free Dover Life magazine.

### 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.

As Chairman I was invited to the Rolls Centenary celebration and the opening of the refurbished Charlton Green pond area. We also arranged a ceremony to mark the provision of a new bench by Riverside in memory of Jack Hewitt.

### CONCLUSION

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, including Maureen Morris who is not seeking re-election, our minutes secretary, Barbara Stapleton, our Audit Committee, 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.

\* \* \* \* \*

## COWGATE CEMETERY

Jeremy Cope

Things are ticking along rather well, the paths are mown and the piles of waste resulting from our mowing and pruning over many years have now all been taken away by DDC's contractors. The grass is summer tall and wild flowers, trees and shrubs a joy. A couple of young adders were seen. The general appearance continues to improve, whilst the amount of litter has dropped to a minimum, hopefully the result of walkers realising the cemetery is cared for. I would judge we have got it where we want it after about 10 years work. Our

thanks are due to all those who have worked or helped us over the years. All I hope is that we are able to keep up the effort to maintain the cemetery in its present state, so if you have just a few hours to spare each month, a warm welcome, a cup of tea and a chocolate biscuit await.

Over the last few months Barry Late has taken over not only as tea maker but also as organiser. Anyone wishing to join us please contact Barry on 01304 826286 or email [barry@late697.plus.com](mailto:barry@late697.plus.com)

# THE DOVER SOCIETY

## An extract from the Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2011

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, tel 01304 202059 or email mike@weston71.freereserve.co.uk

### CURRENT ASSETS

Society Badges  
 Newsletter Binders  
 Debtors and Prepayment  
 Shares gifted to Society  
 Cash at bank and in Hand

### CREDITORS:

Amounts falling due within one year

### NET CURRENT ASSETS

### NET ASSETS

### FUNDS

	2011	2010
	23	23
	49	66
	250	25
	661	661
	<u>28,235</u>	<u>27,701</u>
	29,218	28,476
	<u>(2,044)</u>	<u>(1,654)</u>
	27,174	26,822
	<u>£27,174</u>	<u>£26,822</u>
	<b>£27,174</b>	<b>£26,822</b>

The Society's Funds are represented by:

The General Fund	20,556
Rolls Memorial Fund	50
Projects Fund	496
Publication Fund	4,835
Town Hall Fund	1,237
	<b>£27,174</b>

## Statement of Financial Activities for the year Ended 31st March 2011

### INCOME

Subscriptions  
 Donations  
 Social Events  
 Gift Aid attracted by Subs etc to General Fund  
 Bank Account Interest  
 TOTAL INCOME

### EXPENDITURE

Members and Meeting expenses  
 Administrative Expenses  
 Newsletter Expenses  
 Other Items [including donations]  
 TOTAL EXPENDITURE  
 NET (OUTGOING)/INCOMING RESOURCES  
 Total Funds Brought Forward  
 TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD

	General Fund 2011	General Fund 2010
	2,388	2,428
	157	46
	328	621
	564	595
	53	62
	<u>3,490</u>	<u>3,752</u>
	5	33
	1,027	1,206
	1,729	1,485
	120	280
	<u>2,881</u>	<u>3,004</u>
	609	749
	<u>19,947</u>	<u>19,199</u>
	<b>£20,556</b>	<b>£19,948</b>

Capt. M.H.Weston

## APRIL MEETING

### The Minister of Parliament for Dover & Deal

A talk by Charlie Elphicke MP reported by Terry Sutton

Following tradition The Dover Society invited the Member of Parliament to speak at our annual general meeting about life during his first year in the House of Commons.

Charlie Elphicke, MP for Dover and Deal and a member of the society, was our speaker on Monday,

April 18th when he told us he has discovered working in the House of Commons was much harder and exhausting than he had expected. He had expected it to be a lot easier than his previous job but found much of the work, often from 8.30 in the morning until 11 at night, sometimes emotionally very draining.

Mr Elphicke, in a witty and chatty talk, spoke of his elation at being elected the MP for Dover, a town known throughout the world.

He added that he was working hard to get a new hospital for Dover, to prevent the port being sold off and to obtain more jobs for the district and



*Charlie Elphicke*

more money injected into the environment.

He believed progress was being made on the hospital front and his aim was to have a new hospital for Dover in three years time. Another aim was to attract more tourists to the district and to get them to spend more time and money in Dover. "Everyone has

heard of Dover," he added.

Revealing an aspect of his earlier life Mr Elphicke said he came from a family where his parents split up with the result he hardly ever saw his father. "I think I had a right to know my father more than I did," said the MP who has brought in a 10 Minute Bill designed to help children from broken homes to keep in touch with both parents.

Answering a series of questions, he put forward the view that the coalition government would not allow a referendum on the EU, although personally he thought there should be one.

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# THE DOVER SOCIETY PRESS RELEASE

## HERITAGE OPEN DAYS IN DOVER

**PROPERTIES OPEN FREE AGAIN THIS YEAR**  
**Saturday 10th & Sunday 11th September 2011**

• • • *by Derek Leach* • • •

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 and not free. This year eight buildings will be open to the public free of charge. Feedback from last year was that there was too much to see in the time available and so this year more buildings are open on Sunday as well.

### **1 Dover Town Hall formerly the Maison Dieu**

Founded by Hubert de Burgh, then Constable of Dover Castle, in 1203, the primary purpose of the Maison Dieu was to provide free board and lodging for pilgrims on their way to the shrine of Thomas a Becket at Canterbury and later

to care for the elderly poor and sick of Dover. A chapel was added by Henry III, which was adapted in the 19th century as a court. More buildings were added over the centuries. In 1536 the religious house was suppressed by Henry VIII, becoming the King's property. The buildings became a victualling depot for the navy until 1830 when it was taken over by the Board of Ordnance. Put up for auction in 1834 it was bought by the Dover Corporation. Restoration and adaptation of the Stone Hall and chapel took place between 1852 and 1862. The 19th century stained glass windows in the Stone Hall depict episodes in the history of the town and there are a number of portraits of famous people connected with the town. The Council Chamber was added in 1868 and the adjoining Connaught Hall was opened in 1883.

### **2 Roman Painted House**

This famous house joins Dover Heritage Open Days this year. Constructed in about 200AD in the civilian area adjacent to the great Roman naval fortress at the foot of the Western Heights, this high quality mansio or hotel of possibly 90

rooms was largely demolished when the Roman army built a shore fort in about 270AD as a defence against the Saxon invaders. The remnant was buried under rubble. Discovered in the 1970s, parts of five rooms are now on view complete with underfloor heating and 400 square feet of finely painted wall plaster. It is situated in New Street between Biggin Street and York Street.

### **3 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.

### **4 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.

### **5 Dover College**

On the site are the remains of St. Martin's Priory: built in the 12th century, and 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 in Effingham Crescent.

### **6 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.

### **6a 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.

## 7 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.

## 8 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.

## 9 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 guest house survive.

### Opening times will be:

- 1 Town Hall - Guided tours on Saturday only from 10am to 1pm
- 2 Roman Painted House - Guided tours at 11am and 3pm on Saturday
- 3 Maison Dieu House - Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm
- 4 St Edmund's Chapel - Saturday 10am to 4pm
- 5 Dover College - Guided tours only at 11am and 2pm on Saturday and Sunday
- 6 St Mary the Virgin Church - Saturday 10am to 4pm
- 6a Bell Tower of St Mary the Virgin - Saturday 1.30pm to 4pm and Sunday 2pm to 4pm
- 7 Unitarian Church - Saturday and Sunday 11am to 4pm
- 8 Grand Shaft Staircase - Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm
- 9 St Radigund's Abbey - Guided tours on Saturday 10.30 to noon and 2.30pm to 4pm

### Publicity leaflets

Publicity leaflets 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](http://www.heritageopendays.org)

Local contact for more information: Derek Leach on 01304 823926 or email [derekriverdale@btinternet.com](mailto:derekriverdale@btinternet.com)

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## *New Freeman of Dover...*



# Terry Sutton MBE




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by Alan Lee

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On Thursday 19th May 2011 in the Dover Town Hall Terry Sutton was honoured by the Dover Town Council when he was invested as the latest Freeman of Dover. This was in recognition of his commitment and his many years of work for the community.



Terry Sutton

© Mike McFarnell

Terry and his wife Danielle live in Whitfield. They have been happily married since their wedding on 24th September 1971 and have a daughter Joséphine who is married to Simon.

His investiture when he received his MBE from H.M. Queen Elizabeth II took place on Tuesday 26th March 1991 at Buckingham Palace. I am not sure if it was just a coincidence or by grand design but that was also his 62nd birthday.

One of our longest serving members Terry has been a Vice President of the Society since 1989. Over many years he has helped to raise the profile of the Society and has worked hard to further our aims. In 1994 he became our Media and Press Secretary, a post he still holds today. Between April 1999 and April 2001 he was Vice Chairman, then until April 2004 the Chairman.

Terry has led a full life and has always had a strong interest in the town. It would be impossible to mention all he has achieved or done, so I will attempt only to highlight a part of it.

He was born in Dover on the 26th March 1929 in Buckland Avenue. He attended Barton Road School then the Dover County School - now Dover Grammar School for Boys.

During WWII, between 1940 and 1944, along with many others he was evacuated and after a couple of moves ended up in Ebbw Vale. First he was billeted with the very strict schoolmaster and his wife - not a happy time. Life improved a great deal when he moved in with the deputy town clerk and his wife - hardly any rules there. He then moved in with an accountant and his wife. It was during his stay here that he found out that his brother Roy had been killed when his aircraft crashed. This was the lowest point of the war for Terry. By Christmas 1944 he had returned to Dover and was very glad to be back at the family home.

Called up for National Service on 15th

June 1947, he first served in Misurata, North Africa then later in the Canal Zone in Egypt. He reached the dizzy heights of Lance Corporal but he was happy to be demobbed on 22nd January 1949.

That same year, against his father's advice, he started as a cub reporter on the Dover Express and East Kent News. He officially retired in 1994 as an associate editor. However, after 62 years with the paper he is still sending in copy as a freelance reporter.

He played as hooker for Dover Rugby club and was also a freelance reporter for Fleet Street.

At various times he has had some interesting jobs and belonged to many varied organisations. Some are listed here:-

Editor of the Saga and the P&O magazines. Executive committee member of the Channel Swimming Association. Helps with the Dover Film Festival, writing and narrating scripts for the films. Founder Director of Dover Town Centre Management Ltd. Founder member and Chairman of the Dover Round Table. Founder member of the League of Friends of Dover Hospitals. Founder member of Dover History Society. Helped to set up the Dover branch of Guide Dogs for the Blind. A member of the New Dover Group. Founder trustee of St Martin's Emmaus when it moved into Archcliffe Fort. Chairman of the White Cliffs Country Tourism Association. A member of the Rotary Club of Dover. Patron of the Roman Painted House.

Trustee of the Dover Patrol Memorial at Leathercote Point. A representative for St. Mary's Church on the Church of England's deanery synod and on Christians Together in Dover and on the parochial church council. Co-editor of the Dover Grammar School old boys' newsletter.

Last but not least Terry has had three books published:

In 2003 *Our Town Dover 1945-2000* with Derek Leach.

In 2008 his autobiography *Mr Dover Reporting*.

In 2010 *Dover in the Second World War* with Derek Leach.

Terry said, "This is, as you can imagine, one of the proudest days of my life. To become an honorary freeman of the town of which I'm so proud is a great honour."

It is fitting that Terry has been rewarded for his many years of devotion to the town.

### ***Congratulations Terry, Freeman of Dover.***



*Terry and Danielle*

# Marine Station

## DOVER HARBOUR BOARD HERITAGE PROJECT

BY TERRY SUTTON

Work set to last three to four years has been approved by Dover Harbour Board to protect the massive former Marine Station, now the port's Cruise Terminal Number One. The Marine Station, first used in the First World War for the landing of wounded from Flanders, is a grade two listed building.

Now that the harbour's three lighthouses have been repaired and protected, DHB's £10 million task turns to protecting the former station and the covered walkways on the Admiralty Pier.

A port spokesman said preliminary design stage for the work is underway and it is hoped detailed design will begin in the autumn this year.

"The total removal and replacement of the steel and glass cathedral-style roof will be a major undertaking. The roof has deteriorated along with the roof access walkways and protective barriers. A new permanent roof system will be designed to allow

safe access for future maintenance and will also be sympathetic to the existing modifications and listed building requirements," said the spokesman.

The new roof, formed of laminated glazing, will need to withstand impact damage from wave-hurled shingle from the neighbouring Shakespeare Beach, as well as constant wave spray. On occasions even waves crash down on the roof of the building.

Mike Kraysenbrink, director of port development, said: "Our heritage project will protect these iconic Dover structures for another century. The work will return a grand building back to its former glory."



Marine Station

# Summer Outing

## *Palace of Westminster*

20th June 2011

by PATRICK SHERRATT

As I write this report I turn back to 2007 when we visited the Palace of Westminster and opened the article with, "After days of rain the sun shone on the righteous". Well despite our long periods without rain the weather pattern had altered with rain on most days, but again the sun shone on the righteous with a bright and sunny day.

After our swift travel to London we arrived at the entrance to the Houses of Parliament some 50 minutes before our scheduled tour. Having been advised that we should be at the entrance at least 30 minutes before the tour time we soon experienced how thorough security is. We just about made the allotted tour time, having queued to go through airline type checks as well as being photographed and issued with individual identity passes to be visibly

displayed. Certainly the security, for obvious reasons, has tightened since our last visit.

After the great fire in 1834 when all was destroyed except Westminster Hall and the Jewel Tower, a design competition was held and the architect Charles Barry was successful. At the time a relatively unknown Augustus Pugin was to help Barry and what we see today is the fantastic influence of Pugin and his renowned Gothic revival style.

So with two groups we departed from Westminster Hall to start our tour based on the "Royal Processional Route". Starting at the top of the Royal Staircase we passed into the Queen's Robing Room. Without doubt this elaborately decorated room contains the magnificent frescos based on the story of King Arthur. The artist William Dyce

took 16 years producing these, as painting was only done in the summer when the paint would dry on the wet plaster. In this room are magnificent carved bas-reliefs set into the panelling. The Chair of State is also in this room and it is here that the sovereign puts on the Imperial State Crown and



*Houses of Parliament*

parliamentary robes. After the destruction of the Commons Chamber in 1941 the Queen's Robing Room was used by the House of Lords (until 1951) whilst the Commons sat in the House of Lords' chamber.

We then moved to the Royal Gallery. This is a vast room some 100ft (30m) long, lined with two historical scenes: the death of Nelson at Trafalgar and the meeting of Wellington and Blücher at Waterloo... quite a problem as parliamentary ceremonies including receptions of visiting statesmen from abroad are held in the gallery. Indeed Charles de Gaulle refused a reception in this room and Mitterrand insisted on covering up the depicted scenes although I am informed that it was not so with Sarkozy who said it shows we have our fights but can make up and get on in this modern world. In this gallery a temporary exhibition is always a feature and on our visit its theme was the execution of Charles I, including a copy of the death warrant.

Onward to the Prince's Chamber, with its Tudor decoration. The room also contains a large neo and classical statue of Queen Victoria, two fine octagonal tables and a set of lion-headed chairs designed by Pugin in the grandest manner.

From the Prince's Chamber there is entry to the House of Lords. Oh, what a disappointment, as the chamber was closed for television or something. Anyway, we were able to peer through the doors to see the grandeur and magnificence of this chamber.



*Big Ben*

Passing through the Central Lobby with its fine mosaic ceiling and corridors we reached the Commons Chamber, spartan and lacking the opulence of the Lords. In the corridor are various interesting pictures, including Charles II landing at Dover. However, the flag is not quite correct. There is also a very important painting of Speaker William Lenthall on the 4th January 1642 when Charles I entered the House, to arrest five members for treason. He was met with those famous words from Lenthall, "May it please Your Majesty, I have neither eyes to see, nor tongue to speak in this place, but as the House is pleased to direct me"... What a brave man and the true cornerstone of our parliament today as this was the last time a reigning monarch entered the House.



Before entering the chamber we walked through a lobby with many busts and statues of former Prime Ministers. Pippa our guide drew attention to that of Lady Thatcher, who on the unveiling stated that instead of bronze it should be iron.

On to the Division Lobby and the interesting information from our guide that when the division bell rings there are eight minutes before the division doors are closed. I can recall in my younger days when I was working in London that in a certain pub there was a bell that summoned members back to the Division Lobby. Our guide confirmed that the pub I referred to still has a division bell to this day and I reckon at a brisk pace it is two minutes (subject to



*Dover Society members meet Charlie Elphicke at the Houses of Parliament*

traffic at crossings) to the Palace. So are some of our MPs enjoying a quick dram before a division?

Our tour then took us back to our starting point where Charlie Elphicke met us and took questions. It was good that our Member of Parliament took time out between his hectic life at Westminster, and I am sure that all our members were most appreciative. Also to Katy for making sure Charlie was where he should be at the correct time and as we were also thus ensuring our visit went smoothly.

We then had free time for visiting local attractions and I know some went to Westminster Abbey, others to the War Museum, the Jewel Tower and the National Portrait Gallery. Patricia and I took time to visit the National Gallery and particularly admired the Monet paintings, having a few weeks earlier visited Monet's garden at Giverny. Whatever their choice the members voted the day a great success.



*Statue of Oliver Cromwell*

# The White Hart / Castle Inn

by Joan Liggett

The *White Hart Inn*, a Grade II listed building, was opened in 1790 with *Maurice Baker* as the Licensee. It is situated in Dolphin Lane one of Dover's oldest thoroughfares but with the opening of Russell Street in 1838, the Inn is usually described as being on the corner of Dolphin Lane and Russell Street. The *White Hart* (an archaic name for a mature stag) was the personal emblem of Richard II and is the fifth most popular name for a pub.

The 1861 census records the Licensee to be a Mr George Tyler who lived there with his wife, three sons, two House Servants - sisters aged 13 and 16 and two boarders. The inn traded under this name until August 1891 when the interior was destroyed by fire (the Licensee's mother having accidentally overturned an oil lamp) that caused the closure of the building. According to an account in *The Dover Express*, a Mr. E. Spain was passing at the time the fire started and he not only rescued the woman but also called the police. Luckily the exterior of the building escaped serious damage and after restoration it was reopened in 1898 as the *Castle Inn* with *Oliver Gibbons* as Licensee.

At that time the inn must have had a steady influx of customers as there were many more labour intensive jobs about then, such as engineering,

shipping and agriculture. The 1901 census records no boarders and only one servant - the Licensee being Henry John Benchley. One major local employer was the Phoenix Brewery in Dolphin Lane off Castle Street, which spread over about five acres. Of course Dover was also a Garrison Town and home to many hundreds of soldiers who no doubt would have been looking for a pint or two!

The 1911 census records the Licensee as A. J. Parker who shared the premises with his wife, two children, his sister (who acted as housekeeper), his niece and a Belgian visitor. Dover continued to be home to many industrial ventures between the wars; the Phoenix Brewery itself did not cease brewing until 1927 and bottling of beer continued until 1950 at the Phoenix site. That the *Castle Inn* was a viable business is reflected by the inn being in constant use with no break in licensees until WW2 when it was closed by enemy action in 1942. It reopened in 1950 and remained a popular 'local' helped no doubt by patrons from the old Southern Television studios opposite and those regulars from the old *Salutation* who switched to the *Castle Inn* when their pub was demolished in 1963.

Local Dovorians remembered Ron Lobeck holding weekly quiz nights

there, several young ladies remembered 'Hen nights' and the popular karaoke evenings at the *Castle*. I was also told that Cliff Richard and The Shadows used to frequent the Inn whilst playing at the Grenada and there is certainly evidence to show that Cliff Richard was top of the bill at the first stage show on April 25, 1960 after the Grenada was renamed the ABC. In recent years the Inn has fallen on hard times with the closure of the ABC Cinema, Southern Television Studios and the demolishing of much of the local area



*The Castle Inn*

©Alan Lee

prior to its regeneration. It closed in February 2008 but recently reopened in November 2010 with Paul McMullan as the Licensee.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

**Summer 2011**

We number 447, thanks to all those who have paid their subscriptions and to those who have introduced new members. The Society's work in connection with the Port of Dover privatisation has also advertised our existence to a wider number of people.

Finn Christian Stumoen, a much-respected friend of the late Budge Adams died in February. He was the last member of the 52nd (Norwegian) Minelaying Flotilla which operated out of the port from 1942-5. To commemorate their service and their lost comrades he gave the conifer in the memorial garden at the end of Pencester where the Union flag and the Norwegian National flag are flown side by side. He also donated annually the Christmas tree in the Market Square.

We have regrettably lost two founder-members Ken and Delysia Berry who contributed much to our Society in its early days. Ken took over from Norman Willis as Treasurer and his gentle sense of humour was an antidote to any excess of earnestness at committee meetings. Del contributed her musical gifts to events such as the Christmas Feasts.

Apologies are due to the families of Mr Ronald Robertson and Mr Graham Beer whose names were omitted from the March list of obituaries.

The good news is that we have a record number of new members who are all most welcome:- Mrs J Bishop, Mr & Mrs P Beresford, Mr C Taylor & Ms S Taylor-Whale, Mr K Langsford, Mrs J Cox, Mr J Lambert, Mr J & Mrs D Wiggell, Mr T Porter, Mr P Cairns, Mrs S Hillen, Mrs P & Mr D Brivio, Mr P Eyden, The Hon. R Hamilton, Mr W & Mrs S Browning.

*The work of the*

# PLANNING

*Sub-Committee*

Report by

PATRICK SHERRATT

The Planning Committee continues to be active with regard to planning applications. Since March we have made comments in respect of six planning applications and the Council have taken into account our comments. In general we are seeking that over-intensification (often back garden development) is controlled as well as the design, in particular where either listed buildings or conservation areas are concerned. Often this may be in respect of materials that are considered suitable within such areas of sensitivity. There is greater understanding of the value of trees and we are challenging applications that require the felling of trees which quite surprisingly often are in respect of trees that have Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) served. They have therefore been considered of importance in saving.

I mention trees above and as urban areas have lost much vegetation with front gardens being surfaced for car parking there is a need to ensure as much greenery as possible is retained. At a recent meeting involving KCC/DDC it was mentioned the planning laws since the end of 2008 have introduced the need to seek planning permission for any paving over of gardens. This is mainly due to flood risk and applications are restricted in regard to the area of land permitted and also that pervious materials are used. Certainly this could assist with a more sympathetic visual appearance as well as removing the pressure of surface

flooding. Let's hope that our council exercise suitable enforcement.

With respect to enforcement, sadly our council is not using Section 215 enforcement which would force owners to "tidy up" buildings that are currently in disrepair. There may be major regeneration plans but very often facelifts at relatively low cost can give a community an immediate improvement.

It is important to have an open dialogue with the planning authority (Dover District Council) and I am pleased that we have this year had two meetings with the Director of Community and Development which we see as important particularly as the much awaited regeneration projects come to fruition and are placed as planning applications. In this respect, as quoted in the local media, we await with interest the new plans for the DTIZ scheme which it is understood will enhance the quality that Dover Town deserves.

The Society has been active in making comments to future land use (Site Allocations Document-Interim), which is a process where land may be "offered up" or "considered" for future use. As this consultation process continues The Dover Society is seen by the local authority as always giving a balanced view.

In addition to the above "routine" activity we have recently assisted two members on matters involving planning/environmental issues. I hasten to add this

is not a replacement for any legal/professional activity but very often we are able to give an unbiased view and point the individual in the right direction where a matter may then be resolved.

Those members who access the DDC website in respect of current applications and decisions will be aware of a new on-line system introduced in March. Like all systems it has its teething problems and we have, at our aforementioned meetings with the Director of Community and

Development, highlighted certain areas. I am pleased that as "the dentist" he has taken on board our comments and I hope some of these small problems will be resolved.

We are still watching the Whitfield Urban Expansion scheme with particular reference to the comments that The Dover Society has made to the Planning Authority which were previously summarised in the Planning Report in the March edition of our newsletter.

## Regeneration ... Jeremy Cope

Many matters have been put on hold by the recent elections. The message has been wait until the results are in and then start lobbying again. However one thing is now becoming even clearer, the cuts are here and there is very little in the way of resources to enforce standards and improve what is run down and neglected. Lobbying for improvements was always difficult but now it will require much more determination and an ability not to be put off by disappointments.

Matters we are pursuing: the ARP post meeting was positive with the KCC suggesting that we adopt the post. Bodies such as the Society can attract funds in a way not open to local authorities. Subsequently the proposal was that the Society lease the property but this is more complex with problems of insurance and control. Town Centre planters show some improvement but a long way to go - the vandals, no surprise, show no sign of improvement. A letter has gone off to KCC Rights of Way Unit on our ideas for improving the walk from Bleriot Memorial to Langdon Cliffs. No reply has arrived yet and I suspect a hastener will follow shortly. At a recent meeting with DDC the message on neglected properties, particularly listed buildings and conservation areas, is that there are very limited resources within the Council. It seems that the only way things will get done is by lobbying over each neglected property of and just keep on badgering them.

### **New Ideas**

Can we /should we adopt Connaught Park Pond? It is need of repair and DDC does not have the money. Can we attract the funds required including matched funding? The amount required is anything between £20,000 and £75,000 depending on what is done. The Lindemann Plaque on the sea front (all those shells sent across to Dover from the gun emplacements at Calais) needs maintenance. Again money is needed.

And those toilets - once this article is finished its time to pick up my pen again.



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# The London Road Community Forum and the 'Big Society'

Andy Cooper, Secretary, London Road Community Forum

The London Road Community Forum - LRCF, as we are called by just about everyone, has been chipping away at undoing the blight that affects most urban areas, for several years now. We are a small but committed group from all areas of society and across the political spectrum. We have adopted a pragmatic attitude towards the things about urban decay that get us all angry - empty shops, fly-tipped rubbish, shabby neighbourhoods, and so on.

That pragmatism is basically saying "If no-one else cares about the environment they live in, we do: if the Council can't afford to spend money on it, we will." It's the final straw that will break the camel's back not actually being put on that wretched animal's strained spine, it's about drawing a line in the sand that is saying no more will blight be ignored, and it's about the community taking on board a lost sense of pride. A century or more ago, wealthy Victorian philanthropists invested their fortunes in building impressive town and city halls in the name of civic pride; today, with rather less money around to afford the grandiose ideology of our forebears, our

politicians have resurrected the concept of civic pride and rebranded it the 'Big Society'.

It is easy, with the benefit of hindsight, to smugly look back a few years and say 'Been there, done that, got the t-shirt' when it comes to the concept of the Big Society, but London Road resident (and former LRCF Chairman) Terry Nunn can do exactly that. The apolitical stance to improving central Dover's collective lot stems from Terry's ideas of a decade ago and has continued under the careful wing of current Chairman Jeanette Harper, landlady of Dover's iconic White Horse public house at the foot of Castle Hill. Cynical eyes will look at the shabby state of the London Road area and assume, wrongly, that nothing is being done about it. The truth is very distant. How often will you hear a local politician trotting out the usual bumf about lack of funding preventing ambitious plans from being realised, or that the public doesn't appreciate all the planning that goes on unseen behind closed doors? Both statements are usually true, of course, but another cliché also rings true - if you do nothing, nothing gets done.

Under Jeanette's diligent stewardship, LRCF has made great progress over the last two years. It is now looking at the impending deluge of expensive council-supplied services that the Localism Bill (currently in the Committee Stage of consultation prior to becoming law) will force downward through District and Parish Council levels to become the responsibility of those community groups that can take on running themselves. It is an uncomfortable truth that many services society currently takes for granted will no longer be affordable, and the equally unpalatable effect of that will be that areas that do not have a strong community group will simply lose those services. LRCF is determined that the area it represents will not become just another forgotten backwater of abandoned council services; it comes back to that phrase in a previous paragraph of drawing a line in the sand beyond which a downward spiral cannot be allowed to continue.

LRCF has taken on the mantle of guardian in keeping what the area already has and building on it. That stems from the increasingly politically correct concept of 'Buy Local, Shop Local' that is championed daily by those who would have you vote for them or buy from them, to actively working to improve property and land where private landlords and landowners cannot afford to. Much has been made in the local Dover newspapers this year of the work carried out by LRCF volunteers in the



*Cherry Tree scrapyard before....*

*....and after the clear-up*



triangle of land between the River Dour and Barton Path (entrance in Cherry Tree Avenue). In case you are unaware of what has been achieved the 2.8 acre site that was formerly Coppin's car scrapyard has been cleared. 20 years' worth of overgrown brambles, fly-tipped rubbish and the usual bottles and tin cans thrown there by people walking along Barton Path, all done without a penny of tax payers' money being spent on it, and to universal acclaim. The site has been opened up to take away an eyesore and give residents something to take a pride in. At the time of writing a third planning application for redevelopment of the land is



imminent and the LRCF committee are awaiting the outcome of the decision regarding that planning application to see if the land can be acquired for a more permanent solution to a problem that has blighted the area for two decades.

Our flagship '*Empty Shop*' project has seen a number of shops transformed into presentable and tidier frontages that remove the sense of despair that boarded up properties - especially in the quantities that have sprung up along London Road - bring with them. One property that was inspected in 2010 had been turned into a haven for drug users and the team that inspected it believed that it would never be opened again as a commercially viable property, but at the eleventh hour it was let and is now fully refitted and trading again. Some readers will be familiar with the scenes of Old Dover recreated in vinyl in the huge plate glass windows of the former Sainsbury's building in the High Street. This LRCF project completed at the back end of last summer was a

pragmatic solution to finding some use for a building that needs more than £1 million in order to make it suitable for trading again. In most cases, LRCF has to deal with private landlords in order to give the properties a decent facelift. Councils spend public money and public money cannot be spent on private property. Unless the bull is seized by the horns, nothing will ever come, in many cases, of empty shop properties, as landlords cannot afford to spend money on buildings that will never give a return on investment under current economic conditions. The LRCF recognises the impasse that this causes. It offers a pragmatic solution to keeping empty shop properties tidy enough to encourage potential traders and residents to recognise that this particular neighbourhood wants them to come and set up shop or home there.

LRCF runs fund raising schemes throughout the year; in the summer months this tends to be through our used book stall that we set up at most of the outdoor events in the district,



such as Dover Regatta. We are constantly looking for further volunteers to help with the bookstall as well as the rubbish clearances that we do from time to time, so why not join in. LRCF can be contacted through the 'Contact Us' tab on our website **www.londonroad.info** or just by walking into The White Horse in St James's Street where, over a pint, the landlady will wax lyrical about a community group that really is trying

to make a difference in Dover. We all know the difficulties the global economy has left us facing, but at local level we simply cannot afford to sit back and bemoan our lot whilst doing nothing about it. With your help, LRCF will continue to make a difference for years to come. We enjoy support from Councillors, Dover District Council Officers, the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership and even Kent Police. Can we add you to our list of supporters?

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*One of a series of articles  
covering the lives of Dovorians of international renown.*

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## **Harriet Quimby** *- the first woman to fly the Channel*

**by Lorraine Sencicle B.A. (econ) hon**

A few days before Louis Blériot entered the history books as the first person to cross the English Channel in a heavier-than-air flying machine, Hubert Latham (1883-1914) had taken off from France. He flew 8

miles before his engine failed. On the morning of Blériot's epic flight, 25 July 1909, as it was windy, Latham's advisors let him sleep. Nonetheless, there is a statue to Latham near Cap Blanc Nez, outside Calais.



Harriet Quimby

© Giacinta Bradley Koontz

Less than a year later, on 2 June 1910, Charles Rolls (1877-1910) made a return flight across the Channel. Leaving Dover at 6.30pm he was over Sangatte, France, at 7.15pm and was back in Dover at 8.00pm. Over 3,000 people witnessed the event, after which he was carried through Dover, shoulder high. A month later Charles Rolls lost his life in a flying accident at Bournemouth. A bust of him can be seen on the Seafront.

In 1912 the first woman, Harriet Quimby, (1875-1912), flew across the Channel. Many, including myself, feel that there should be a monument, a road name or even a plaque in Dover/Whitfield, to celebrate her achievement.

It was on Tuesday 16 April that Harriet took off from Whitfield aerodrome, in a Blériot monoplane with a 50hp Gnome engine, to make the epic flight. The feat took 59 minutes and she landed at Hardelot-Plage, about 25 miles (40 km) from Calais. Her account was published in Fly Magazine of 12 July 1912.

Harriet, a journalist, gained her pilot's licence in August 1911, the first woman to do so in the US. By Christmas, she had decided to be the first woman to fly across the Channel and through contacts managed to get a letter of introduction to Louis Blériot in Paris. On 1 March 1912, Harriet set sail for London on the Hamburg-American liner *Amerika*, where she put her plan to the editor of the Daily Mirror.

Her next stop was Paris, where she placed an order with Blériot for a seventy-horse-power machine. At the same time, she persuaded Blériot to loan her a fifty-horse-power monoplane for the Channel crossing. Blériot agreed and suggested that the aeroplane should be first tried out from his airfield at Hardelot-Plage.



Harriet Quimby in the Blériot plane

© Giacinta Bradley Koontz

On arrival at Hardelot, Harriet was keen to undertake trials but the weather decided otherwise. The wind increased throughout the first day and on the second, it blew a gale. The wind showed no sign of abating but as the Daily Mirror had given her a deadline to meet, she ordered the monoplane should be shipped to Dover.

As she was concerned about keeping the whole venture a secret, the monoplane was to be delivered to the aerodrome, which she described as having, *"a fine, smooth ground from which to make a good start. The famous Dover Castle stands on the cliffs, overlooking the Channel. It points the way clearly to Calais."*

In Dover, Harriet stayed at the Lord Warden Hotel, where she met reporters from the Mirror. The following day, Sunday, was perfect for flying, *"there was no wind. The sun was bright and warm. The air was so clear that by straining our eyes a little we could see the French coast dimly*

*outlined across the channel.*" However, Harriet's mother had asked her never to fly on Sundays.

Instead, she and aviator Gustav Hamel went to Whitfield to inspect the Blériot monoplane and for Gustav to show her how to use a compass. On arrival, a crowd of reporters and spectators greeted them, as rumour had spread that a woman was going to attempt to fly a solo Channel flight!

The following morning, Monday, Harriet, Hamel and the Mirror reporters all geared themselves up for the flight, but strong winds made it impossible. However, by 3.30am on the Tuesday, the wind had eased. Dressed in a flying suit of her trademark purple wool-back satin, she wore two pairs of silk combinations underneath. Over this apparel, she wore a long woollen coat, an 'American raincoat' all topped with a sealskin stole.

Before going to Whitfield, she stopped at the Blériot Monument on Northfall Meadow. Besides providing Harriet with the machine, Blériot had secured a long pontoon beneath the fuselage to enable it to float until someone rescued her, if she went down in the Channel. At the aerodrome, Hamel undertook a trial run. Satisfied with the monoplane, Harriet climbed aboard and took off at 5.30am. Within thirty seconds, Harriet had climbed fifteen hundred feet and flew over the Castle. There, Mirror reporters were waiting to take pictures of her.

As the early morning mist cleared,

she could see France on the horizon. However, part way across the Channel Harriet ran into a bank of cloud so was obliged to use her compass in earnest. When she thought she was nearing Hardelot, Harriet dropped down below the cloud. Unfortunately, she did not recognise where she was so landed on a beach.

Soon a crowd of fisher folk gathered, congratulating her. Then, according to Harriet, one of the women *"insisted upon serving me with a very welcome cup of hot tea, accompanied by bread and cheese. The tea was served in a cup fully six times as large as an ordinary teacup and was so old and quaint that I could not conceal my admiration of it."* The fisherwoman let Harriet keep the cup. Then the media arrived and Harriet was assured of her entry into the history books as the first woman to fly the Channel. Sadly, Harriet was not given the recognition she deserved for on 14 April the *Titanic* had tragically hit an iceberg off the coast of Newfoundland.

Less than six months later, near Boston, Massachusetts, while at the controls of her new 70hp Blériot, Harriet and her passenger fell to their deaths. Harriet was 37 years old.

Thanks to Giacinta Bradley Koontz (Aviation Historian/Author) and Martin Young (Aviation Historian) for their help and loan of the picture and photograph.

For more information on Harriet Quimby: [www.harrietquimby.org](http://www.harrietquimby.org)

# SOCIETY PROJECTS

Report by Jeremy Cope

## RIVER DOUR

The River Dour Steering Group held its latest meeting in April when we received reports of the work of groups concerned with the river.

The Environment Agency continues to play a very positive role and if anyone would like proof I suggest they take a walk up Barton Path. The river's course over this stretch has been slightly modified by dredging a narrow but deeper channel which together with planting has made for a very attractive and natural scene. The birds and fish are there in greater numbers. However, this is just one element of the Agency's work along the length of the river.

On the subject of Barton Path the London Road Community Forum have cleared the old scrap yard, much improving the area - a very creditable effort. White Cliffs Countryside Project, despite the problems of funding, will continue their very necessary work of organising the volunteer groups who clear litter along the length of the river from Buckland Bridge down to the sea.

**Anyone interested in helping -  
Phone 01304 241806**

The parish councils also take a close interest in the river. Dover Town Council have turned the riverside

area next to Morrisons into a pleasant grassy spot. They are organising interpretation boards for the river which should help residents and visitors understand it better.

One concern is the poaching of fish. Anyone over 12 must hold a licence and members of the public should report any illegal fishing to the Environment Agency on 0800 807060. The better the quality of the river the more fish and the greater attraction to poachers.



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

## *Front Line Harbour*

*A History of the Port of Dover*

By Anthony Lane

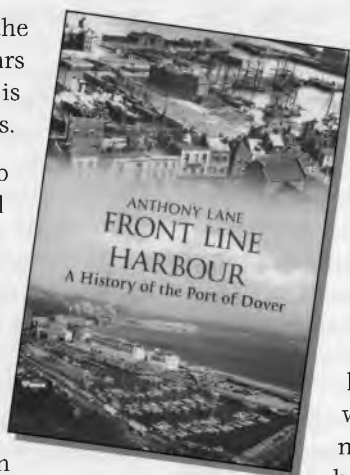
Reviewed by Alan Lee

Anthony grew up near the sea and for the last 14 years has lived near Dover. He is married with two daughters.

The author has managed to capture, with this well researched book, the history of one of Britain's oldest ports. He covers the early years but concentrates in the main on the last 500 years of the harbour. The era when the port was a haven for smugglers brings to light some amusing and interesting stories.

Although not as widespread locally or as colourful as in the 1700's, the modern smuggler flourishes and concentrates more on drugs and people. One thing that has not changed over the years is the bringing in of illicit booze. The port has evolved over the decades in answer to the type or style of trade and commercial use demanded from it. The pilot system has improved and been refined to become the efficient system that we see today.

There have been many connections with the Navy. The battleship *The*



*Prince of Wales* moored alongside the pier of that name for the ceremony when The Prince of Wales officially opened the harbour on 15th October 1909. This led to warships arriving in increasing numbers. The evolution of shipping that has used the port and the work of the lifeboats has not been forgotten, nor have the collisions and sinkings that have occurred around the port. Commercial and leisure fishing, yachting and important personalities all have separate chapters. Anthony completes the book with descriptions of some of Dover's many maritime buildings, from piers and hotels long gone and ancient buildings still standing to modern architecture.

This excellent and interesting book contains over 300 illustrations. It is obtainable on line from [www.amberleybooks.com](http://www.amberleybooks.com), from local bookshops or by post from Amberley Publishing, Cirencester Road, Chalford, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 8PE.

## 'WEE WILLIE'

### *The Figure of Youth, Dover Town War Memorial*

by Marilyn Stephenson-Knight

Founder of the Dover War Memorial Project

Our War Memorial was created by Richard Reginald Goulden, a Dovorian. The granite blocks are surmounted by a bronze figure of Youth. He disregards the thorns coiled painfully about his feet as he looks up at the flaming cross he bears.

It's a beautiful memorial, and was designed, so the War Memorial Committee tell us in the programme for the unveiling in 1924, to educate young people and future generations as yet unborn. Thus, the figure is deliberately simple and symbolic, shunning show, discouraging jubilation in victory, and evading emulation of war dress and weaponry. Its message instead is of spirituality, of the difficulties in the path of life overcome, and of duty and self-sacrifice. Suffering may destroy the body, but cannot harm the spirit, and our reward should be not what we receive, but the knowledge that we give freely, even of ourselves unto death.

Perhaps, though, it wasn't always so. Richard Reginald Goulden's design for our War Memorial rendered the entire space one large memorial, a still spot of calm in the busy thoroughfare, the grass and the granite kerbs an integral part. It was created in keeping with and to complement, not obscure or

overwhelm, the 17th century Maison Dieu House behind. The bronze figure of Youth, however, has a longer history.

Richard Goulden, in the first years of the 20th century, was the Art Adviser for the Carnegie Trust, in Dunfermline. There he produced a number of works, including a statue of Andrew Carnegie himself. In 1908 he was commissioned to produce the centrepiece of a fountain, to stand at Pittencrieff House, Dunfermline, the estate having been bought by Mr Carnegie in 1902 and given the following year to the town.

The figure Richard Goulden created used the concept of the water and expanded it into a message for young people who might use the park and play in the paddling pools, which were there for many years. The statue for the fountain was entitled "Let Noble Ambition Be the Thirst of Youth Always", and was of a young lad. He is standing on a plain square base, looking up to a beribboned laurel wreath. The wings on the wreath bear it high above his head so that he can touch it only by fingertip, stretching to full height. With changes in detail, the figure is exactly that of Youth surmounting our War Memorial.



When Richard Goulden was asked to create our War Memorial, time was short. Insufficient finance and the somewhat animated debates on form, situation, and design of a proposed memorial had precluded the commissioning until March 1924, and the public meeting for acceptance of the design wasn't held until 30th June 1924.

Fortunately, already having carried out a number of commissions for War Memorials, as well as other commemorative works, Richard Goulden had ideas in mind. He was said to strive always to persuade War Memorial Committees to "see that a spirit glowed brightly in the hearts of the fallen men, which it should be their endeavour to perpetuate".

Our War Memorial reflects these values, and its material elements can be traced in other memorials of Richard Goulden's creation.

The Fallen of Kingston-upon-Thames were commemorated in 1923 by an adult male figure, holding aloft a cross licked by flames. One foot of the figure stands on a snake, rearing its head, fangs exposed, threateningly towards two children. Square-section (as if a man-made menace) thorny tendrils coil around the sword held protectively before the children. Meanwhile, at Malvern, also unveiled in 1923, the figure is that of a winged youth, bearing high a flaming

torch. Malvern stands on a plain stone plinth, and around his feet are briars, a crown of thorns fallen and trodden.

Reigate and Redhill was another memorial unveiled and dedicated that year, and features an adult male figure bearing a child in his right arm, and holding high instead of a torch, a fiercely burning cross ("the light of life", as one commentator noted) in his left hand. A thicket of thorns rises ominously behind him, like a kraken from the deep; a tendril reaches across the torso of the figure and another climbs to his left shoulder and the flaming cross. The figure, protective and strong, dares denial of the cross and disregards both the wicked barbs and a snake which has seized his left foot in its mouth.

At the base is an explanation of the symbolism, "The bronze represents



*Kingston-upon-Thames Memorial*  
© Simon John Chambers



*Redhill & Reigate Memorial*  
© Simon John Chambers

the triumphant struggle of humankind against the difficulties that beset him in the path of life. Shielding and bearing onward the child the figure holds aloft the symbol of self-sacrifice to light the way. The flaming cross is used to indicate the suffering endured by men in the war - flames consume the flesh, the spirit is unconquerable."

These ideas are taken up by the figure on our War Memorial too, interpreted, just as at Reigate and Redhill, by the programme of unveiling. Instead of the man, the central figure is now that of Youth, and instead of reaching, as in 1908, for the laurels of "Noble Ambition", hovering tantalizingly just out of reach, he takes a spiked step further and firmly grasps the sufferings of the cross, his own flesh mortified, hands and feet, as he does so. The focus is now no longer on the personal; this is diminished and discarded in the burning radiance of the transcendental. The laurel leaves now no longer hover aloft but adorn the plinth below the feet of Youth, simultaneously an accolade for those who grew not old and a message that the mortal life is but the beginning.

Richard Goulden had the ideas for Dover. He had the moulds too. Perhaps this helped the financial

*The gravestone of Richard & Muriel Goulden*  
© Simon John Chambers



situation and the timescale. Practically and conceptually his design met the approval of the War Memorial Committee, and the piece

was commissioned. It was unveiled on 5th November 1924.

Seven years later, the figure of Youth would become a memorial to its creator. On 6th August 1932, the feast of the transfiguration, Richard Goulden, aged 55, died suddenly at Newhaven. Buried on a hill there, the laurels now on his grave too, he is commemorated also by his work of Youth at the entrance to the cemetery, placed there in 1933. The figure, atop a granite plinth, now is called "The Sacrifice of Youth



*Youth at Newhaven Cemetery*  
© Simon John Chambers

to a Higher Cause"; Youth's path is less thorny, but he bears the flaming cross still.

At the dedication, Richard Goulden's widow, Muriel, called the figure one of her husband's best pieces of work. Four years later, the mould would be used again, this time for a memorial to Edward Beckwith. He was the first headmaster of the Imperial Services College (ISC), then at Windsor, at which college the Gouldens' son, Michael, was a student.

There, as perhaps befits an educational institution, and a teacher too, whose work is to inspire his pupils, the bronze figure now bears again the winged and beribboned laurel wreath. The memorial was known as the "Statue of Ambition". It is now believed to be at Haileybury School in Hertfordshire, the school and the ISC having combined in 1942. It is not on public view.

There are other copies of Richard Goulden's 1908 figure. In November 1986 Sotheby's auctioned a work by him, stating in their catalogue that "Ambition" was created for a fountain in Pittencrieff Park. The entry added that until the cast in this lot was placed for sale, the cast in Pittencrieff Park, which was set on a plinth with four drinking troughs above a stone base, was believed to be unique.

In 1994 this figure was again auctioned, this time by Christie's. They described it as a nude boy under its full title as "Let Noble Ambition Be the Thirst of Youth Always". In their

catalogue they noted that Richard Goulden was an "idealistic and painstaking artist", who "often used the figures of children in order to represent a hope in the continuity of life and a faith in the next generation. This is particularly evident in the many memorials which he carried out in the immediate post-World War I years." The figure sold for £8,700.

Meanwhile, in Dunfermline, a replica of the original Pittencrieff figure has been created. It stands in the foyer of the Alhambra theatre, re-opened in 2008 after having served as a bingo hall. The figure there is entitled "Ambition" - the word is inscribed across the plinth on which it stands - and at its feet are the "drinking troughs" - actually fountains in the shapes of shells.

The original 1908 figure stands no longer at Pittencrieff; it was removed after repeated vandalism. However, ninety years after it was created, it was restored, and a year later was presented to Carnegie College, formerly Lauder College, marking their centenary. Youth now stands in the foyer of the Carnegie Conference Centre, Dunfermline, still attempting to capture his laurels.

There may be awaiting discovery yet more casts of Richard Goulden's beautiful bronze figure of Youth and Ambition. If so, there may be as well other names to add to those given in its various appearances. In the meantime, however, there is a little more history, and one more name to bestow.

The bronze figure of Youth was created from a real person, a life model. The lad had been a pupil at St Leonard's school in Dunfermline, built in 1902. Did he too go out to serve in the Great War? Was he even one of the several of that name who fell? His family have yet to confirm.

But we do know the lad's name. His own youth now eternal - like so many of our Fallen he commemorates - the lad who modelled for Youth, was named William Galbraith.

Much more about our Town Memorial, and about all Dovorian who fell in or owing to the two world wars and on subsequent service, may be found on Dover's Virtual Memorial at [www.doverwarmemorialproject.org.uk](http://www.doverwarmemorialproject.org.uk)

With grateful thanks to Kris, the sculptor, who, by happy accident, spotted the figure in the Royal Academy catalogue for 1908, and thus began a joyful trail of investigation.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Zeebrugge Day



# GLIMPSES OF THE PAST

## *The Chaldercot Files by Sherifa Rashidally*

As a child, Sherifa Rashidally lived in Chaldercot in Leyburne Road, which was the family home for many years of the Mowll family. By the time Sherifa lived there in the 1950s, the house had been divided into several maisonettes. She went to Castlemount School and studied art at South Kent College before moving with her mother to London where she continued her art studies. Some of her work was exhibited at Dover Museum.

She never forgot her beloved Dover home and in 2002 wrote a series of poems about the house and garden she remembered. Unfortunately, on a visit to Dover in 2000 she found the old house had been replaced by a modern block of flats. Despite all her efforts, she has been unable to find a photograph of the old house that is so dear to her.

Her poem about the tunnels around Chaldercot may be of particular interest:

*Tunnels winding, tunnels steep  
Leading to the Castle Keep.  
Tunnels dark and tunnels old  
Dug in days of knights so bold.*

*Tunnels which were secret roads  
Tunnels which were safe from foes  
Where the guards of Dover's realm  
Were hidden in that rocky helm.*

*And when at night the foes would sleep  
From tunnels deep the guards would creep  
And strike their blows to save this land  
From foes who dealt a wicked hand.*

*Tunnels twisting under soil  
To save this land from any spoil.  
Tunnels deep and tunnels dark.  
Beneath the land of Connaught Perk.*

*Beneath the grounds of Taswell too  
And Godwynehurst and Maison Dieu  
Beneath the grounds of Castlemount  
Where endless tunnels one could count.*

*Where Leyburne stands and Salisbury, too  
Are endless depths with tunnels through  
Dug deep within that ancient rock  
That glorious land of cliffs and dock.*

*Tunnels winding high and low  
Dug so many years ago  
Dug by many a labouring hand  
Dug beneath this fair green land.*

*Beneath this garden plot so green  
Which has seen many a king and queen  
The tunnels deep spread far and wide  
As do the cliffs toward the tide.*

*Of glorious songs I sing to thee  
And go down low on bended knee  
For I was born upon this land  
Of great white cliffs and silvery sand.*

*Of tunnels deep, a castle high  
With England's flag against the sky  
For this is England's gate so proud  
Of glorious deeds to shout aloud.*

*Far and wide your name is known  
For all the glory you have shown.  
And under fields with trees so green  
The tunnels still run through unseen.*

*Tunnels which you may not know  
Tunnels running to and fro.  
Where Ladywell and Godwyne meet  
They run toward the Castle Keep*

*But now I shall not speak a word  
For of the tunnels you've now heard.  
Yes, tunnels deep from history's past  
Of Dover shall forever last!*

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

## *Cruise Ships of Dover*

By John Mavin

Reviewed by Alan Lee

This book is the result of the author's interest in ships that began in 1956 as an 8 year-old. At that time his parent's house had a wonderful view over the North Dockyard at Devonport. Now he has retired he is able to devote much more time to his interest in photography. This is evident in many of the 180 odd illustrations throughout the book. His friend Ken Larwood has supplied a number of the pictures from his large personal collection of slides.

Since 1906 there have been many different sizes and shapes of cruise ships visiting Dover. One of the smallest is the *Hebridean Princess*, although only carrying 49 passengers she is one of the most luxurious cruise ships afloat.

At the other end of the scale many large ships have called into the port. These include the massive *MSC Poesia*, NCL'S *Norwegian Sun* and Princess Cruises' three Grand Princess Class ships.

The *Disney Magic* first visited in June 2010. One unusual thing that caught the eye was the 15 foot tall Goofy hanging over the stern appearing to be touching up the paintwork.

The *Windsurf* looks different from most ships in that she has five masts with computer-controlled sails. The ship announces its arrival and departure by the playing of rousing fanfare music.

The price of the book is £16 and is available from local bookshops, Dover Museum, the Marina Hotel and Spa on the seafront and online from [www.ferrypubs.co.uk](http://www.ferrypubs.co.uk) the publishers' website.





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# PROGRAMME 2011/12

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

## 2011

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Housed in restored 18th century almshouses period rooms, chronologically arranged, show English domestic interiors from 1600 to the present. These include Jacobean, Georgian, Victorian and 20th-century rooms with furnishings and objets d'art from English homes. The museum architecture and gardens attract much attention. The design centre highlights the latest works from contemporary British designers. There is also a cafe/restaurant. Pick up points:

08.00 Frith Road; 08.10 Brook House Car Park; 08.25 The Railway Bell.

**To book contact: Georgette Rapley, 61 The Gateway, Dover CT16 1LQ.**

**Tel: 01304 211026**

OCTOBER 17

Monday 7.30

**Speakers:** Brian Powell and Mike Webb: "Aspects of Freemasonry"  
Samantha Harris: "Behind the Scenes at Dover Museum"

NOVEMBER 21

Monday 7.30

**Speakers:** Derek Leach: "Dover's Caves and Tunnels"  
Maggi Stephenson Knight and Simon Chambers:  
"The Dover War Memorial Project"

DECEMBER 17

Saturday

7.00 for 7.30

£25.00

### **Christmas Feast**

The increased price is due to the rise in food costs and the addition of VAT. I hope that this will not deter you from coming to enjoy the splendid surroundings of the Rectory and sumptuous two course buffet. There will be a complimentary sherry reception and wine on the table. Entertainment is by Elspeth Robertson, 'Marlow Young Musician of the Year 2007'. Elspeth has since played worldwide as a soloist and part of a band including concerts in Sydney, Rome and London. In January she performed at Dover College for the opening of the new Tallis Music School. Elspeth is now studying Baroque Oboe and Recorder at the Royal College of Music.

**To book contact:**

**Mrs Patricia Hooper-Sherratt, Castle Lea, Taswell Street, Dover CT16 1SG.**

**Tel: 01304 228129**

## 2012

JANUARY 16

Monday 7.30

**Speakers:** Gus Jones: "Dr Reginald Koettlitz"  
Richard Moffatt: "TSS Dover"

*All indoor meetings are held at St Mary's Parish Centre  
Non-members are welcome on all Society outings, please book as early as possible.*

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