

The
Dover
Society

Newsletter

No. 82

March 2015



Cullinan IV (Cushion Shape) and Cullinan III (Pear Shaped)



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

The Annual General Meeting this year will take place on Monday 20th April. This is also the last of the winter meetings until October. All members are urged to attend.

All nominations for elected posts within the committee and any resolutions must be received by the secretary no later than 14 days before the date of the AGM.

With our treasurer Mike Weston's excellent running of our financial affairs the committee has been able, once again, to hold the membership subscriptions at the same level. The last increase was way back in 1996.

Our membership has slowly been increasing towards the elusive 500 figure. With such excellent value for money now is the time to encourage your friends and acquaintances to become members. If you know of anyone who would like to join please contact the membership secretary or the editor for an application form. Forms will also be available at all of our meetings.

I would also like to remind all members that the annual service to commemorate the Zeebrugge Day Raid will take place on St George's Day, 23rd April at St James' Cemetery (assemble at 10.30 am for 11am start). Then at 12 noon the Zeebrugge Bell will be rung at the Maison Dieu. This is the first major commemoration of the year when the townspeople can express their gratitude for the sacrifice that others made so that we can enjoy the freedom we have today.

Alan Lee



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DEADLINE for contributions

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 83 will be Wednesday 20th May 2015. 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. Copy on computer disc or by e-mail is acceptable. Pictures via e-mail must be as high a resolution as possible in JPEG. Please ring 01304 213668 to discuss details.

Publication in the Newsletter does not imply the Society's agreement with any views expressed, nor does the Society accept responsibility for any statements made.

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OCTOBER MEETING

First Speaker

A Day in the Life of ...

A Talk by Trevor Willmott, Bishop of Dover

Reported by Terry Sutton

The Right Reverend Trevor Willmott, Bishop of Dover at Canterbury, was a guest speaker at our public meeting on October 20th when he told us what he did each day and admitted his ambition was to remain in his present job. He told us the Bishop's see of Dover was created in 1534, because of the importance of the town and port.



Bishop Trevor Willmott

Trevor, a bishop for 12 years, has been in his present post for five years. He is married to Margaret, an accountant, and they have a daughter who is a hydrologist.

Trevor, responsible for 321 Church of England parishes in the diocese, admitted to being passionate about rugby, cricket and working in the garden at his home in the cathedral precincts.

He revealed he gets up each day at 5.30 am and spends the first hour of the day in silence, listening to God. Normally he then attends a service at Canterbury Cathedral. When he gets the opportunity he tries to speak to young people, helping them to make sense of their lives.

Trevor told how he had visited all the prisons in the UK, except one, and had come to the conclusion that "prison does prisoners no good whatsoever." He said in his view the criminal justice system in the

UK was "shameful." Questioned on this opinion he admitted that he thought some evil people needed to be removed from society (he told of playing cards in prison with the Kray twins) but there were many others in prison who, not having had a chance in life, should not be there.

He was asked for his views on asylum seekers. He accepted that the UK could not absorb everyone but he really believed they should welcome some of those who were desperate. "There must be a better way than closing our borders. We should not demonise them," he added. Dover, he said, could be proud of always being a welcoming community to strangers.

"I really enjoy my work, spending much of my time just hanging about trying to improve society," he told his appreciative audience.

Bishop of Dover

The title, 'Bishop of Dover', was created under King Henry VIII by an act of 1534. His main function is to assist the Archbishop of Canterbury in the business of the diocese.

In more recent years, due to the increased worldwide responsibilities of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Dover is the pro-Diocesan Bishop. This is signified by the deed of delegation received from the Archbishop at the investiture of the Bishop of Dover.

————— Second Speaker —————

Port and Community Working Together for Dover

Tim Waggott, CEO Dover Harbour Board

Reported by Alan Lee

Tim opened his talk with details of his background. He was the first member of his family to go to university and he had been in Dover for seven years.

He then said that the revival of the Western Docks was unashamedly a commercial decision but plus points would be the creation of sustainable new jobs. It would maintain and improve the port and create a new marina. In his mind we have the best castle and the best port in the world.

We must encourage more people to stay in the area, even if it is only for a short time, instead of just passing through. We must unlock opportunities and create "Destination Dover". One aim is to link all tourist, heritage attractions and real activities together throughout the town.

Giving more details Tim said that at present the port supports 104 jobs with George Hammond. The new development will increase the number of people employed by the company.

After the Strait of Malacca (the main shipping route between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean), the Strait of Dover is the second busiest shipping lane in the world with 1.2 million vessels in and 1.2 million vessels out.

It is envisaged that there will be 600 new jobs created during the building work with 140 permanent jobs in the new facility.



*Tim Waggott, CEO
Dover Harbour Board*

Dover is the busiest port in the UK with a shipping movement every 10 minutes. It is also the fourth largest facility for the number of passengers after Gatwick, Heathrow and Manchester airports.

At present the Eastern Docks cargo terminal covers 6 acres. By moving this operation to the Western Docks the terminal

can double in size.

£10 million is being spent on the upgrade and refurbishment of existing buildings. It will celebrate our heritage with improvements to the Clock Tower (at present used for art exhibitions) and Lord Warden House, both Grade II listed buildings. Dover Marine Station is being given a facelift and therefore is undergoing restoration work. A further £25,000 has been spent this year on refurbishing the historic Victorian Fairbairn Swan-Neck Tubular Crane. Built in 1868 and sited on Esplanade Quay (formally Ordnance Quay) it stands on the seaward side of Dover Marina at the Wellington Dock.

Tim stated that wherever possible the quality views of Dover Castle and the Western Heights would be maintained. The members of the Harbour Board have pledged to continue their consultations with local people and organisations. The overriding aim being to work together and create increased and wider opportunities within the area.

The Board is also halfway through the £85

million improvement to the Eastern Docks.

The final point that Tim had to make was that initially the Community Fund would receive £250,000, then annually 1% of the profits. (It is thought that it will be £100,000).

The talk finished with a wide ranging and probing question and answer session.



Artists Impression of New Western Docks

Press release from 13th October 2014.

Port celebrates new powers to deliver for Dover

Celebrating a landmark achievement in the rich and varied history of the Port of Dover, the Dover Harbour Board is delighted to confirm the Marine Management Organisation has approved the Board's application (through a Harbour Revision Order) for additional powers.

Tim Waggott, Chief Executive Port of Dover, said: "This empowering decision arrives just four months after the initial application was made. Such a swift approval, in record time, comes only days after we announced the biggest ever single investment in Dover, the £120 million Phase 1 of Dover Western Docks Revival. This means we now have the necessary powers to develop the project, delivering over 600 new jobs for Dover and transforming the waterfront to be the catalyst for Dover's wider regeneration.

We look set to deliver a record traffic

performance in 2014. Moving forward with major investments in the Eastern Docks Ferry Terminal whilst providing excellent customer service. It demonstrates how the Port of Dover and its ferry operator partners are maximising our contribution to the local community, East Kent and the nation.

I would like to pay tribute to my team for their hard work and also to thank all at the Department for Transport and our local MP, Charlie Elphicke, for their help, support and encouragement. I also salute our customers and community who have supported us greatly in our quest. This is an exciting time to be associated with Dover and its port.

These are new and uncharted waters for us all, but I believe we are entering a period that will go down in the history books as the start of a golden age if we all continue to support each other and work together to deliver for Dover"

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NOVEMBER MEETING

— First Speaker —

Roman Villa - Copt Point

A Talk by Keith Parfitt

Reported by Terry Sutton

The history, ancient and modern, of the Roman villa site above Copt Point at Folkestone was the subject of a most interesting illustrated talk at our meeting in St Mary's parish centre on November 17th.

Archaeologist Keith Parfitt screened images of work that had been carried out at the site, a part of which is in danger from coastal erosion. He reported that it was expected that archaeological work would start again on the site in 2015.

Mr Parfitt, of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust, reported how Folkestone borough council financed the excavation work in 1920 with the aim of making the site a tourist attraction, but the work ended with the outbreak of war in 1939, when the site was used for defence purposes and became overgrown. In 1957 the local authority covered in the site but fresh investigations began in 1989 and continued in 2010 when finance became available.

He showed on the screen how, over the years, one habitation had been built on a previous one, from Roman times through four stages to the Iron Age with indications of a 50 BC settlement.

The number of broken grinding stones found on the site gave credence to the belief that at one stage Folkestone, using local material, might have been the centre

of that industry for a wide area.

The discovery of remains of Roman pottery, located at a lower level than Roman habitation, encouraged the belief that tribes in East Kent were importing wares from the Continent well before the Roman invasion.

Some began forsaking the drinking of a type of beer for more sophisticated Mediterranean-grown wine transported across Europe and the Channel to Folkestone for onward cartage.

Mr Parfitt suggested that Folkestone, at one early stage, was probably the main port of trade for these islands until the Romans "eclipsed" it by switching trade through the port at Dover. This belief that Folkestone was a main trading port was reinforced by the discovery of an ancient road leading down to the foreshore which he dated at around 100 BC.



Working on the NE Wing, 2010

————— Second Speaker —————

Crowns, Regalia and Royal Jewellery

A Talk by Nicholas Humphrey-Smith

Reported by Alan Lee

Nicholas is the head of 'Ancestors of Dover' who successfully manufacture, market and supply historic merchandise. They currently supply approximately 95% of the castles, museums and zoos in the UK. Over recent years they have increased sales in Europe, America and even to the State Museum in Moscow. A large number of films have made use of their full size replica crowns and regalia including *The Madness of King George*, *The Hustle*, *Johnny English* – with Rowan Atkinson and *Young Victoria* starring Emily Brunt. In the theatre world one of the most notable productions was Shakespeare's *Henry V* by the National Theatre Company.

On 9th September 2015 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II will become our longest serving monarch. Eleven years ago, sitting for an official portrait she wore a replica crown which was a lot lighter than the real one.

Ancestors of Dover holds the only licence to reproduce full size copies of the crown jewels. Part of the agreement included a clause that no one was allowed to wear the exact replica of the Imperial State Crown or the Edward Crown.

During his talk Nicholas passed many replicas round the audience to let them touch and inspect them at close quarters. All are made to an exactingly high standard. The only difference is that the

replicas are plated and coloured crystals used - not solid precious metal and precious gems like diamonds.



Imperial State Crown

The Crown Jewels are owned by the state and not the monarch and for over 900 years have been housed in the Tower of London. The one exception was during WWII when they were removed to a secret location for safe keeping.

The regalia refers to objects that are used in a coronation ceremony. The use of regalia

can be traced back to Edward the Confessor who became king in 1042 and was crowned in 1043. His great seal shows him seated on a throne wearing a crown, in one hand holding a sceptre surmounted with a cross and in the other an orb. On the reverse in one hand he is holding a sceptre surmounted with a dove and in the other a sword. It is believed that he also wore a ring. With only slight alterations these are still used to this day. The spurs used in the ceremony are thought to have been introduced in the 12th century. From about 1250 there appears to have been two sets, St. Edward's regalia, only used at coronation ceremonies and the royal regalia, part used in coronations and also on other state occasions.

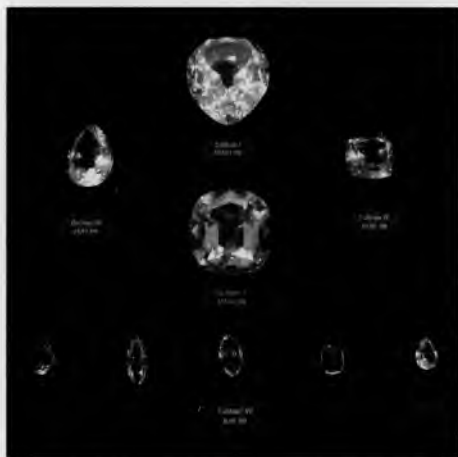
In 1216 King John is said to have lost the crown in quicksand and Edward III pawned the regalia to pay his troops the money he owed them. In 1649 after the end of the Civil War Oliver Cromwell

ordered the regalia to be "totally broken", the precious stones to be sold and the gold and silver sent to the "Mint" to be melted down and turned into coins. The clergy at Westminster managed to save the ampulla (a golden eagle some 8 inches high that holds the holy oil), the anointing spoon, the Elizabethan salt cellar and some of the historic gems from the crowns.

At the cost of £12,185 replacement regalia was made for the coronation of Charles II in 1661. Since then there have been numerous additions to it.

Up to the early part of the 20th century it was usual to set the regalia and crowns with gems that were hired for the occasion. After the ceremony the crowns were dismantled and the gems returned leaving just the frames.

Whilst seated in King Edward's chair, made in 1300, the sovereign receives the orb and sceptre then has the crown placed on his/her head by the Archbishop of Canterbury. After the ceremony the crowns are usually dismantled leaving just the frames.



Cullinan Diamonds I to IX

One of the most important items of the regalia is the magnificent jewelled Sword of State or Offering, made for the coronation of King George IV. The gold scabbard is covered in leather set with precious stones. These include 1,200 diamonds in the form of national plants from England, Ireland and Scotland. Wales is not represented as it is a principality and not a kingdom.

In 1910 the Sovereign's Sceptre was altered to allow the addition of the 530 carat Cullinan diamond - the largest top quality cut diamond in the world. Uncut it weighed about 1.5 pounds. It produced 9 major gems (Cullinan 1 to 9), 6 stones, 96 smaller brilliants and 10 carats of unpolished pieces.

The only time the Crown Jewels left the Tower of London was during the Second World War when they were moved to a secret location for safe keeping.

This well presented and interesting talk was enhanced by the large number of replicas that Nick passed round the audience. Many thanks to Nick and his company Ancestors of Dover for supplying these items.



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Christmas Lunch 2014

Saturday 13th December 2014 - Denise Lee

Following last year's successful event the Dover Society annual meal was once again held in the Stone Hall at the Town Hall with 104 meals booked. From 12 noon members and their guests were welcomed with either a glass of tropical fruit punch or mulled wine prior to their meal at 12.30 pm.

With two members of the music trio being ill on the day it was left to Alex Pratley to supply the vocals and play the keyboard. The guests joined in the entertainment by singing the carols O Come All Ye Faithful and The First Noel.

Thanks must go to all who helped with the raffle and the organisation of the event with special thanks to Beverley-Anne Hall.

I was especially pleased that the raffle raised a remarkable £251.50p. This was due in no small way to the generosity of our members who donated prizes and purchased tickets.

Fears that the hall would not be warm enough were unfounded and all present seemed to have a thoroughly good time enjoying the good company, entertainment and food.



JANUARY MEETING

— First Speaker —

Fan Bay Project

A Talk by John Barker – National Trust

Reported by Terry Sutton

Seventy volunteers are being sought by the National Trust to go on a rota to act as guides in a network of wartime underground tunnels about to be opened to visitors at Fan Bay, east of Dover harbour.

This was reported by Jon Barker, National Trust's visitor experience manager for the area, when he and volunteer Gordon Wise spoke at our public meeting at St Mary's parish centre on Monday, January 19th. Jon, a caver, and Gordon told of the discoveries made at Fan Bay since the National Trust provided a budget of £117,000 to excavate the tunnel network and two historic sound tunnels that were buried in the cliffs. They told it was hoped to open the tunnels to visitors in May when the admission charge would be £10 for an hour's tour.

Jon explained that much of the 18 month clearance work had been carried out by a team of volunteers, including NT members.

The Fan Bay tunnel system, excavated in one hundred days in 1940, was provided for the three six-inch gun battery that guarded the Strait and the approach to Dover harbour. The men of the battery claimed to have sunk four enemy ships before it

was decommissioned.

The battery and tunnels, with its 125 steps, provided accommodation for four officers and around 184 other ranks. Their graffiti on the chalk walls, averaging 70 feet underground, made interesting reading, said Jon. There was also a small hospital and power plant chamber.

Part of the clearance work involved uncovering two sound mirrors, one provided around 1914 and the other some ten years later. They were constructed to listen to the approach of enemy aircraft, which they did successfully in the First World War, only to be superseded by radar. The 1914 mirror, found to be in excellent condition, offered a range of up to 15 miles (usually five to ten miles) and in October 1917 clearly picked up German aircraft bombing Boulogne. A year later the mirror gave early 5-10 minute warnings' of the approach of enemy aircraft, early enough to be intercepted by British fighters.



Fan Bay Deep Shelter



Fan Bay Sound Mirror



Surface Works

———— Second Speaker ————

Dover Big Local Update

A Talk by Ross Miller Chairman Dover Big Local Reported by Terry Sutton

Called upon at short notice to give a talk, Ross Miller was the second speaker at our well-attended January meeting at St Mary's parish centre.

London Road resident Ross, a freelance financial services project manager, is chairman of Dover Big Local, the volunteer group charged with distributing over ten years £1,000,000 of National Lottery money designed to make the heart of the town a better place in which to live, work and play. He explained how and why Dover had been allotted the money, leading to the setting up of Dover Big Local which needed the support of the whole Dover community to ensure expenditure went to the right places.

Ross detailed how, in the first two years of the ten year time frame, Big Local was aiming to see £650,000 spent on a range of projects of which about fifty per cent would be provided by Big Local, the rest coming from match funding.

Projects under discussion including the purchase of Buckland Mill Lake, fed by the river Dour that is partly bordered by upper London Road and the former mill. (Other sources have been told the asking price is around £30,000). One idea, he said, was to set up an aquaponic project in the lake involving fish and edible vegetation. Another important aim was to boost tourism in order to attract to the area many more of the millions of passengers who each year pass through the port. Match funding from Porchlight, he said, had been



Dover Big Local Area

agreed to increase awareness in sport while Big Local last year provided £25,000 to help fund the successful Dover Music Festival. Not all was used so the remainder was available to help in this year's venture.

Another project under discussion was to set up a Kent Savers credit union branch so that Dovorian in need of help would not have to resort to doorstep lenders.

Yet another project, involving talks with Dover Harbour Board, was with a small grants scheme to encourage young entrepreneurs set up businesses, ranging (he suggested) from jam making to artistic painting. One possibility was the use of one of the cruise liner terminals at the western docks. Financial help was also being proposed for art and culture in the town.

Mr Miller concluded his interesting wide-ranging talk by saying "We must all work together" to make a success of this ten-year project.

**Mr Miller took the place of head of Dover police Chief Inspector Stephen Barlow who had to postpone his advertised talk on "Policing Dover."*

Unveiling of the Dove of Peace

Report by Derek Leach

With over 250 others I accepted the invitation of Dover Harbour Board to attend the unveiling of the Dove of Peace at Cruise Terminal 1 (or Dover Marine Station as most of us still call it) on 22 December. It was also an opportunity to see the recently completed roof restoration, which cost ten million pounds.

We gathered in the cruise passenger departure lounge keen to see the Dove of Peace sculpture, but it was hidden in darkness beyond the glass partition and so we enjoyed traditional Christmas refreshments of mince pies and mulled wine as we were welcomed by Tim Waggott, Chief Executive of the Port of Dover. He reminded us of the vital role that the Marine Station played (even before it was completed) throughout the First World War with millions of troops passing through en route for the Western Front, returning on leave or injured.

We were then treated to a reading of "The Night Before Christmas 2014" written by Richard Davis and read by Richard Christian interspersed with carols in both English and German performed by the Pharos Chamber Choir. The story of the 1914 incredible, impromptu Christmas truce continued with a reading by Karen Steel and Emlyn Bailey of an actual letter, giving an eye witness account, sent by a soldier from the trenches.

Anthony Heywood, the sculptor of the Dove of Peace, then told us how the sculpture had been made using the famous Conqueror brand paper manufactured at Buckland Paper

Mill (which sadly closed in 2000). The Chairman of Dover Harbour Board, George Jenkins, told us how the Dove of Peace came to Dover and would stay until 2018 before he introduced the Lord de l'Isle, Lord Lieutenant of Kent. After a one minute silence he 'unveiled' the sculpture. This was no traditional unveiling, since the sculpture weighed one ton and was suspended from the roof. Instead, from the far end of the former station 'searchlights' began to play to and fro until they focused on the sculpture – a full size replica of a Second World War Spitfire fighter plane. It was an incredible and moving sight!

What, many of us asked, was the connection between a Spitfire and a dove of peace? I leave you to work that out, but George Jenkins suggested that during Dover's dark days as Hellfire Corner during the Second World War, Spitfires, circling overhead engaging the multitude of German bombers, gave the people of Dover hope of an eventual peace.



The Dover Dove of Peace

The Night Before Christmas 2014

By Richard Davis

T'was the night before Christmas and across every trench, Not a soldier felt festive, neither British nor French.

Whilst some of them whispered their solitary prayer, Others just hoped for an end to despair. Back home their young children were tucked up in bed, Praying that Pa was alive and not dead.

With little for warmth just their coat and their cap, The troops settled down for a cold restless nap.

The moon cast its glow over fields of mud, With hundreds of corpses, the letting of blood. Destruction and death of an unthinkable scale, Never again, peaceful air they'd inhale. When across No Man's Land there arose a disturbance, The British looked over to make cautious observance.

On the German trench tops appeared several small trees, With candles that flickered upon the cold breeze.

The Fritz started singing with much festive cheer, On the Eve of the most Christian day of the year.

O Tannenbaum and Silent Night, No longer black, the war was white.

So Tommy sang back, a bloody great din, Heard across Ypres, and very nearly Berlin!

From the officer's bunker to the barbed wire wall, Now sing away! Sing away! Sing away all! With the night nearly over and spirits quite high, They bid warm farewell to their adversaries nearby.

For the first time in ages no bullets or bombs, Just the sadness of knowing, it wouldn't last long. The morning it came just like all others, Except for a sign, scribed by soon to be brothers.

"Happy Christmas" it read, quickly followed by gifts, Thrown by the Germans to reconcile rifts. White flag aloft, a German officer appeared, With offerings of chocolate, tobacco and beer.

His counterpart met him in No Man's Land, And greeted him with a shake of the hand.

The Germans suggested a truce for one day, The Englishmen agreed, there was little delay.

The ranks from the trenches then joined them there too, Respite from the fighting was long overdue.

It was agreed it was chance to bury their dead, Foes dug graves together, bible verses were read.

It was a moment in time like never before, And highlighted the utter futility of war.

Men from both sides smoked and talked like old friends, In a way hardly possible, to now comprehend.

They passed around photos of children and wives, To see them again, gave the will to survive.

Then from out of nowhere football turned up, A hundred men playing, a united Europe.

3-2 to the Germans, it was not Tommy's day, The result mattered not, it was a thrill just to play.

All the men wanted the truce not to end, So agreed not to fire at their newly found friends.

Guns angled upwards, now aimed at the sky, So innocent men wouldn't needlessly die.

With the day finally over, they returned to their lines, Their lives changed forever, humanity shines.

Writing home to loved ones, they told what they'd seen, Of that day on the front line, Christmas Nineteen Fourteen.

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River Tram Plaque 29th January 2015

Derek Leach

The following is the speech given by our Chairman Derek Leach on the unveiling of the latest Dover Society plaque.

Good morning and welcome everybody, especially the Chairman of River Parish Council, Clive Taylor, some fellow parish councillors, residents of Crabble Mill and Mill Race, Malcolm Mitchell of Smith Woolley Perry, who manage the site on behalf of Crabble Mill Developments and John Hill who kindly erects our plaques free of charge.



Women had taken on many male jobs during the war, including Lottie Scrase, aged 27, the conductress of the tram. Unfortunately, for her she had volunteered to take another woman's shift and died as a result. She was engaged to be married so her wedding ring was buried with her.

To mark the Millennium in 2000 The Dover Society erected 10 plaques in Dover to commemorate certain events and people. Since then we have added several more, but this is our first plaque outside the town.

Dover Corporation owned the town's tram system, which was only the second in the country when the mayor drove the first tram in 1897. In 1905 the system was extended to River, along what is now Lewisham Road to its terminus. In those days and until the end of 1936, when buses replaced the trams, the people of Dover packed the trams to get to work, to go shopping and to ride into the River countryside.

But in 1917 tragedy struck when, on 19 August 1917, a heavily loaded tram on its way to the River terminus careered down the hill into River, crashing into the wall of the Crabble Rag Mill and overturning. Eleven people were killed and 61 injured, one of whom later died. Our new plaque marks that tragic spot commemorating the worst tram accident in Britain.

Several servicemen were amongst the dead and injured. Albert Hallam, a teenage soldier stationed in Dover, was a passenger. He was thrown from the top deck and landed on a sailor who was killed, but who cushioned Albert's fall and saved his life, although he was injured.

A hero that day was Trooper Gunner. As the tram gathered speed he dashed forward and jammed both feet on one of the sets of brakes. It did not stop the tram and both feet had to be amputated. He spent the rest of his life in a wheelchair, no army pension was paid as he was not on duty, but he received the Albert Medal for bravery and a modest pension from a hero's fund.

My dear friend Lillian Kay was another passenger that day. She, aged 3, and her mother and father were travelling to see her grandfather, the Riverdale House gardener, as they did every week. However, when it reached Buckland Bridge, Mother insisted on getting off and walking the rest of the way. Apparently the previous Saturday it had been top heavy and wobbling as it went down the hill into River. She did not want to risk it again.

Walking along Crabble Avenue they heard the crash. Father and a policeman were first on the scene. Mother knocked on a door in Crabble Road, handed over Lillian to whoever opened the door and ran to help. What a lucky escape for Lillian who lived until she was almost 99!

Much of the blame fell on the tram driver, Albert Bissenden, who tried but failed to stop the tram and jumped clear before it crashed. He had been discharged from the wartime army because he had suffered a nervous breakdown and had only passed his tram driving test 19 days previously. At the inquest, many possible causes were explored, for instance, that the tram capacity was 48 but there were over 70 people on board - not uncommon apparently - but the decision of the coroner was 'death by misadventure' due to the inexperience and lack of judgement of the driver.

£13000 was paid out by the Corporation in compensation and the council rates had to be increased by 1/6 in the £ (7.5p) to pay for it.

So the brief wording of this plaque conceals what was a tragedy for many individuals and their families. Let us spend a moment in silence to remember this incident and its consequences.

Crabble Tram Accident - 19th August 1917

A detailed and complete article on the tram accident can be read on The Dover Historian. Privately owned and run by Lorraine Sencicle with her husband Alan this web site contains a large collection of historical articles from the town of Dover, England. All are well researched, well written and interesting articles. There are also articles on the many Dovers throughout the world. I highly recommend a visit to The Dover Historian, to do so go to <http://doverhistorian.com>

Editor

Please help... Magna Carta!

As part of the 2015 celebrations of the signing of Magna Carta 800 years ago an exhibition including Magna Carta is touring the country. It is hoped to bring the exhibition to Dover for the month of September, probably in the Town Hall. Dover Museum would be responsible for the arrangements, but we shall need quite a few volunteers over the month to 'mind' the exhibition. Could you please give a few hours in September?

If so, please contact Derek Leach on 823926 or email derekriverdale@btinternet.com and he will put you on the list and give you more information during the year.

Friends of Dover Museum

The Friends have now changed both the time and venue of their meetings which should prove more attractive to both existing and potential members.

Meetings are now taking place at The Silver Screen Cinema, Market Square, Dover CT16 1PH, on the second Wednesday of the month at 2.30 pm. There is usually a talk with slides or film about a local historical subject.

There are various categories of membership - for example, senior joint membership is £20 - and visitors are always welcome, admission £3.

For further information please contact
Tel. 01304 825732

AGM

A reminder to all members

The Annual General Meeting this year will take place on Monday 20th April. This is also the last of the winter meetings until October. All members are urged to attend.

All nominations for elected posts within the committee and any resolutions must be received by the secretary no later than 14 days before the date of the AGM.

Patricia Hooper-Sherratt, Castle Lea, Taswell Street, Dover. CT16 1SG
Tel: 01304 228129 E-Mail: castlelea@tiscali.co.uk

MEMBERSHIP NEWS - SPRING 2015

Sheila R. Cope Membership Secretary

Subscriptions Are Now Due

Our Chairman would dearly have loved our membership numbers to have reached 500 during our 25th Anniversary year but it was not to be. However, the numbers are gradually creeping up and we have now reached 487. So if you, or someone you know, has been meaning to join but has never quite got round to it, now is the time to act. Just tear out the membership application form at the end of this Newsletter and "follow the links". Your name will be added to the list of new members in the next Newsletter, although it can be omitted if you prefer.

So our most recent and welcome recruits are, in order of joining:- Miss E Pott, Mr R Little, Ms K Jones, Mr P and Mrs K Coe, Ms B Cummins, Mr B Flood, Mrs A Friend, Rev. K Child, Mr M Jeffrey, Mr A and Mrs A Wright, Mr D and Mrs E Soppitt, Mrs S Green. Miss B Little and Mrs F Christine.

At our AGM we shall be standing to honour those members who died during

the year. They are:- our late Vice President Mr Peter Marsh, Mr Bruce Lilley, Mr Brian Powell, Mrs Jean Baldwin, Mr David Pennington, Mr Harry Hutchison, Mr Martin Fuller, Mr Jeffrey Steed and Mrs Daphne Davis. We send our condolences to their families and friends.

In mid-January one of our founder-members, Sybil Standing, died. Sybil served on the Executive Committee for many years, her role as archivist being appropriate to her career in the Public Library. As a representative of the Society she also attended and reported back on the meetings of the Town Council planning committee. Sybil was very direct, with a sharp lateral-thinking intelligence and her sense of humour was both zany and disarming.

In Newsletter no. 54 (December 2005) Jim Francis wrote "Captain Osmond File" which is a very full and interesting account of the life of Sybil's father.

Remembrance at the Marine Station



Remembrance at the War Memorial



When The Great Plague Stalked Dover

Terry Sutton

There's an area on the lower slopes of the Western Heights which, for generations, Dover people avoided. It was known as The Graves and here many are buried of those who died when The Great Plague hit Dover.

The spot, once a covered over large pit, is not far from P&O Ferries' headquarters at Channel House. Also not far away is the place where the now demolished military hospital once stood. It is believed this site for The Graves was selected because it was attached to the Chapel of Our Lady of Pity which stood at Archcliffe Point.

In the 17th century there were still folklore memories of the time when the Black Death arrived in the British Isles, around 1348. It killed 30-45 per cent of the population.

Experts still do not agree on the cause of the Black Death but the most accepted opinion is that it came from the fleas that lived on the back of rats. Historians say the dreaded disease swept England, Scotland and Wales in three waves. It arrived at Weymouth in June 1348 and lasted two years, the second outbreak came 1361-1365 with the third 1368-1369.

It was back again in the mid-seventeenth century when bodies were buried at The Graves.

No city, town or hamlet escaped the bubonic plague and Dover, being one of the principal ports in the country, was no exception. The plague raged on the Continent and it was from there that many of the passengers arrived by ship at Dover. The same disease hit other Kent ports including Deal, Sandwich and Chatham, all of which had links with the Continent.

First reports of the Great Plague reaching London was in April 1665. By the end of May enough people had been infected to cause alarm. It became so serious the king and his court left London for Salisbury. Many of the clergy and the rich went too. But the poor, believed by the rich and powerful, to be the carriers of the plague, were stopped at the boundaries of towns and ordered to go home.

There had been two outbreaks of the plague in Dover in the 1630s but by far the worst broke out in 1665 and is said to have raged for the next two years. Locals blamed the outbreaks on those who fled from London, where the disease was rampant, including those off to seek refuge on the Continent (where the disease was just as bad if not worse). Many towns refused entry to those fleeing from the cities but Dover, being such an important port, could not (or did not) do so. There were those leading citizens of the town who demanded a certificate to show that those arriving in Dover were free from the disease.

As in the rest of the country it was a time of great anxiety in Dover. For weeks the once busy streets remained empty as Dover folk were scared to leave the apparent safety of their homes. Business came to a standstill.

Despite the precautions the plague arrived in Dover. One unfair theory was that it was introduced to the town by a young serving girl working in London and who had returned home to the escape the disease that had broken out in the house where she was employed.

Throughout the country, and in Dover, the homes of those families infected were bolted with doors and windows sealed. A large red

cross was painted on the front door as a warning. Guards were set up outside the houses bearing the cross to prevent anyone escaping while, in some parts of the country, nurses were hired to take food to the infected and their families. Those who were infected usually died in agony two or three days later. The town council ordered the burning of bonfires in parts of the town in the hope that the smoke would wipe out the infection. Dogs and cats were rounded up and killed.

Historians say that the villages of Lydden and Hougham had their populations decimated.

Carts, sometimes hauled by bullocks, carried the bodies to the graves that, at first, were dug in the town's cemeteries. But as the death toll grew the bodies, covered in sacking, were taken to the mass grave on the Western Heights near where Channel View Road is now.

It is reported that more than five hundred bodies were buried in a succession of pits there in a few weeks. One estimate suggests that nearly one thousand Dover people died from the plague during this terrible time. Not surprisingly the names of those who perished were not recorded as the authorities were overwhelmed.

The plague was in Dover in 1638 when Thomas Day was mayor of Dover. It was he who in 1649 had to tell the town's inhabitants that their king, Charles I, had been executed.

In many parts of the country town councils followed the example of the Privy Council and ordered closure of all inns and lodging houses.

The order to kill cats and dogs made matters worse because the rat population, probably the cause of the problem, grew and so did the number of fleas they carried.

Up On The Downs

We will be running a Get Up On The Downs Festival from 25th July to 9th August. It will include a variety of events from walks to art workshops to nature safaris and much more! To make sure you don't miss out sign up to our newsletter www.uponthedowns.org.uk or contact - Up on the Downs. c/o Dover District Council, Council Offices, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover CT16 3PJ. Tel: 01304 872138 E-mail: uponthedowns@dover.gov.uk

Coming soon to a venue near you!

Are you interested in meeting rockpool rock stars, sending drones into space, night-time walks in search of bats, cycling through rolling hills, or practicing yoga on the Downs? These are just a few of the ways you can get involved this summer during

our Up on the Downs Big Summer festival to enjoy our countryside and heritage!

Green Project Grants

These available for certain projects. Main grants for over £1,000. Small grants for less than £1000. Be sure to read the guidance notes before you apply. An introduction and guidance document has been produced to provide more detailed information about Landscape Heritage Grants. All successful grant applications will help us to achieve the scheme aims and objectives and, where applicable, will contribute to positive actions towards the scheme Landscape Character Areas.

It is recommended that you talk to the Landscape Heritage Grants Officer at Up on the Downs before making an application on 01304 872158.

Christmas Eve 1914 Bombing Remembered

Peter Sherred

An aeroplane Raid at Dover, so ran the headline of an article that appeared in The Times on 26th December 1914. "The threatened German air raid has to some extent become an accomplished fact. On Christmas Eve an aeroplane appeared over Dover and dropped a bomb in the garden of a local resident and then, pursued by British aircraft, was forced to beat a hasty retreat to its base in Belgium. Only a few people actually saw the bomb drop at Dover one of them was a son of Mr Martyn Mowll, the solicitor. He states that he was talking to a friend on Taswell Hill when he heard a whirring sound and looking up saw an object falling in the garden at the rear of St James's Rectory with smoke following in its trail. He did not see the aeroplane which was probably hidden in the clouds. Immediately the bomb hit the ground there was a terrible explosion and the earth shot up to a great height covering him although he was standing 25 yards away. The Rev T. B. Watkins and his family were out but the cook at the rectory was covered with falling glass. Luckily she was not injured. At the house of Mr Bradley JP several windows were broken and the concussion extinguished the gas stoves in the greenhouse. The aeroplane was of the

Taube pattern, all who saw it said that in appearance it was like a big seagull. It successfully evaded observation practically until the time the bomb was thrown. This was due to the fact that it was flying extremely high and there was a fair amount of cloud over the Channel."

The archives of The Spectator for 2 January 1915 under the heading "News of the Week" state *"The first German aeroplanes which have visited us since the beginning of war appeared on Thursday and Friday of last week. On Thursday week, about eleven o'clock in the morning, an aeroplane circled over Dover and dropped a bomb, which fell in a garden and did very little damage. British aircraft started up from the ground in pursuit, but the German aeroplane disappeared in the mist over the sea, after having been visible for only a few seconds."*

In his magisterial book "Catastrophe" describing the events that led up to the outbreak of World War One Sir Max Hastings writing of events in late 1914 included the event in Dover on Christmas Eve. *"By the winter of 1914, all the belligerents save the British had staged at least modest raids on each other's accessible cities... the*



Lt Prondzynski



Friedrichshafen FF29 floatplane

Germans helped their enemies celebrate Christmas Eve by mounting the first air attack on British soil - a biplane dropped a small bomb on Dover. This did no harm but the auguries were plain: a new kind of campaign against civilian populations had become possible and no moral scruples would impede its prosecution as soon as means permitted... little more than a decade after man's first powered flight the blitz era was already at hand.

To commemorate the 1914 event, of national and international importance as well as being of local significance, Dover Town Council led by the Right Worshipful the Town Mayor, Councillor Mrs Pam Brivio, organised a short memorial service on Christmas Eve 2014, the centenary of the event, in Taswell Street adjacent to the blue plaque erected by the Dover Society. Prayers were led by the Mayor's Honorary Chaplain, the Town Mayor read a scripture extract and flowers were laid at the site by both the Town Mayor and Dover Society Chairman Derek Leach OBE. They were joined at the ceremony by Freemen of Dover Graham Tutthill and Dick McCarthy plus members of the public. The event was covered by the press and was recorded by the BBC. The service order's information page described how on Christmas Eve one hundred years earlier the first bomb to fall on British soil from a plane hit the ground in our town at the very spot of the commemoration or close nearby. The Germans had offered a prize for the first German airman to bomb Dover or Britain. On 21st December at about 1pm two bombs were dropped into the sea just off the Admiralty Pier but three days later Lieutenant Alfred von Prondzynski of the German

army and an aeronautical engineer, in a pre-war small float plane Friedrichshafen FF29, unarmed except for a small bomb load, was to claim the prize and make history at the same time.

At about 10.45 - 11am on 24th December 1914 the plane in which Alfred von Prondzynski was flying was seen over the town. Leaning over the side of his plane Lieutenant Prondzynski may have seen below him Dover Castle and Dover's naval harbour. Having held the bomb in place between his knees he lifted it with his hands, held it over the side of his plane and let it fall. At the beginning of the World War One planes had no such things as bombsights, their crews relying on the naked eye to drop their bombs by hand.

The bomb did not hit its probable intended target on the hill but landed in the garden of a Mr T A Terson making a crater some four to five feet deep. The blast from the impact caused damage to the Rectory of New St James's church, (where the current St James's surgery is located), by smashing windows and Mr James Banks, a gardener, was knocked out of a tree he was in the process of pruning and was slightly injured. Mr Banks was reported as saying after the event "I was up a tree cutting branches for



Christmas decoration when I heard the whirr of an aeroplane. Immediately afterwards I saw a blinding light and heard a very loud explosion. The tree was struck by something above me and I was thrown to the ground on to some evergreen beneath. I ran to the house and afterwards went to Mr Terson's garden to the place where the bomb fell". The location was at the end of Leyburne Road where it adjoined Taswell Street.

By his action Lieutenant Prondzynski became the first in the history of warfare to drop a bomb from a plane on Britain. Later in the war he was seriously wounded and died in 1932 of his wounds. In World War 1 aerial warfare was very much a psychological weapon rather than a practical one but the war encouraged the use of the aeroplane in conflict and while not playing a fundamental role in the war it was very much the beginning of a new element in warfare. By the end of the war 184 bombs had fallen on the town from enemy aircraft as well as 23 shells from enemy ships. 113 air-raids, in which 23 people including 3 children were killed and 71 people including 12 children were injured, were recorded within the Borough of Dover.

Prior to the service I had the pleasure of making contact with the grandson of Alfred von Prondzynski, Professor Ferdinand von Prondzynski, who is currently the Principal and Vice-Chancellor of Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen. Due to distance and professional constraints he was unable to attend the ceremony but kindly provided a statement for the commemoration, the text of which follows:

"I never knew my grandfather, as he died in 1932, over 20 years before I was born. But my grandmother occasionally told us about him. He was an ardent royalist and a strong

supporter of the Kaiser, but also an Anglophile - he spent a number of childhood holidays in Brighton. He spoke good English. I do not know how he felt about his military actions, including the bomb dropped on Dover, but by the end of the war he was tired and somewhat disillusioned, and he was seriously wounded on the last day of the War. He died ultimately of those wounds, as the metal alloy used to replace a bone later poisoned his blood.

"My father fought in the German army during World War II, spending much of the war in Russia. Sometime after the war we emigrated to Ireland, where my father became an active participant in events organised by the British Legion and where he made many friends who were British veterans. "War is terrible, but there is always some humanity to be found amongst the combatants, and peace is never unachievable. I pray that all those who have suffered in War, and all those who gave their lives, are remembered and honoured. I pray that we will never have to face war between our nations again."

Contrary to some reports, Ferdinand von Prondzynski tells us that his grandfather was not the pilot of the plane at the time of the bomb drop but was the person who did drop it. Whoever was the pilot or whatever the weather conditions were at the time (as reports vary) the moving ceremony on Christmas Eve 2014 flagged up a significant piece of British history in which Dover played the unwitting role of being the recipient of the first bomb to fall on British soil from an aeroplane - the first of so many that in both World Wars were to fall on the town and the country. The commemoration was yet another of a number successfully organised by Dover Town Council mindful of its civic responsibilities for such important events.

President of the Dover Society

Appeal by Derek Leach, Chairman

Brigadier Maurice Atherton has indicated his intention to retire as Society President at the 2015 AGM in April. Maurice has been President since 1993 when he succeeded the first President, the Countess of Guilford following her death. Maurice and his wife, Wendi, have taken a keen interest in the Society and supported it throughout his Presidency, being particularly supportive of the Executive Committee. It will be difficult to replace him.

As a consequence the Executive would like to invite members to suggest names for a suitable replacement; these should be sent to: Secretary Dover Society Patricia Hooper-Sherratt by 30th April 2015. (Contact details are inside the front cover). The Executive will then decide

who to invite to become President.

To help your thinking, you might like to suggest:

- One of our current Vice Presidents:- Joan Liggett, Jonathan Sloggett, Terry Sutton, Christine Waterman and Jack Woolford;
- A member who has made an outstanding contribution to the work of the Society;
- A non-member who has made an outstanding contribution to the aims of the Society in the Dover area; or
- A person of some standing in the locality e.g. the Lord Warden.

COWGATE CEMETERY

Barry Late

As with all outdoor activities the weather has a part to play and 2014 has been no exception. Nevertheless, the overall appearance of the cemetery continues to create a good impression. The seasons bring with them different visual aspects and the wild life continues to prosper in this little haven. The standard of care and maintenance is in no small part entirely due to the joint efforts and generous commitment of the small but dedicated team of volunteers who give of their time and effort as much and as often as they can.

We are always on the look out for new team members, so if you would like to come and join us or just simply see what we get up to, sessions are from 9 am to 12

noon, on the following future dates:-

If you would like to come and join us or just simply see what we get up to, sessions are from 9am to 12 noon on the following future dates:-

Month	Thursdays	Saturdays
March	05 Mar 15	14 Mar 15
April	09 Apr 15	18 Apr 15
May	07 May 15	16 May 15
June	11 Jun 15	20 Jun 15
July	02 Jul 15	11 Jul 15

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Planning Committee

Patrick Sherratt

Writing in January for this Newsletter I hope you had a good Christmas and all best wishes for 2015.

Did you do some reading over the festive period? If I was looking for a good read appropriate to planning issues in Dover I would choose the following classics: Galsworthy's "Forsyte Saga", Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors", Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing", Dickens "Great Expectations"

The Classical DTIZ must fall within the longest running saga and compete with Galsworthy's epic and whilst I have remained positive the frustration is understandable as the much awaited CPO decision is (at 20th January) still to be announced despite great expectations by DDC that an announcement was likely before Christmas. The delay was partly caused by a comedy of errors as DDC failed to correctly post the legal notice re the CPO hearing.

So what has been happening at DTIZ? Not all negative as the latest planning amendment indicates that a new major store is coming to Dover (rumoured that it is clothing giant Next). The store area (Unit 7A) will now have a mezzanine area increasing the floor space from 802sqm to 1512sqm. The hotel has been let although, at the 21st January, as I write this report the actual hotel group or the retailer of unit 7A has not been announced and no doubt will be in the public domain by the time this newsletter is distributed.

We continue to have a robust dialogue with DDC and as I have mentioned on previous occasions we have been critical of the site hoardings around the DTIZ site. It was



DTIZ Hoarding

therefore pleasing that the residential part of the development on Castle Street has commenced with some excellent new hoardings. Well done DDC.

Car Parking is a contentious issue but we have sought that the developer/DDC gives consideration to a "First 30 minute free" on the DTIZ development when completed. This is being considered within an overall DDC Parking Strategy.

Have you been along Townwall Street recently? Our success with Section 215 continues. The Bench Street area has received much justified criticism as buildings deteriorate; the area is the main link from the seafront to the Town Centre that has a high footfall of visitors who leave Dover unimpressed with this major eye-sore. As previously mentioned we sought Section 215 activity with DDC to concentrate on this eyesore and three legal notices were served last year. We are therefore delighted that the building facing Townwall Street (Castle Amusements Arcade and formerly furnishers Henry Hart) has almost completed its facelift and we look forward to the tromp-l'oeil façade on the former crypt site as well as rendering the exposed end wall of the Funky Monkey. These will greatly enhance the visitor experience as well as

making a more attractive walk for those residents on the seafront side when visiting the town.

The Western heights "Master plan" was unveiled and comment by the society has been made with particular reference to any development having quality build on this important historical site. We support the need for a Trust to oversee the heritage package that must have sustainability. The Citadel is included within the "Master plan" and if the Prison Service no longer had use for it we are concerned as to its method of disposal bearing in mind disposal of former Government assets often fail to come to the open market. We have, therefore, sought to have this important asset of the Western Heights, that is part of the "Master plan", be included on the list of "Assets of the Community value" that would in effect give the Trust first option to purchase or seek a heritage development partner should the asset become available.

On to "transport" issues. The much awaited car park at Dover Priory continues to be delayed. We are given to understand that our MP has taken this forward with the Transport Minister and Network Rail. So do I associate this as much ado about nothing as the opportunity of the HS1 service has not been developed to its maximum potential for Dover.

You may have read my articles in the local press concerning the congestion of traffic going to the port pre-Christmas. We are seeking that greater liaison between the Dover Harbour Board (DHB) and Kent Police as eight mile tail backs and blocked junctions is just not acceptable. DHB have just proudly announced record freight traffic in 2014 with over 2.4 million lorries passing through Dover and representing a 10% growth on 2013. As the UK recovers with economic growth and population increase there would



Old Amusement Arcade

be a further one million lorries passing through Dover in five years' time if volumes continue to increase at 9% per annum.

Therefore, we have asked our MP to seek a strategic review of road and port infrastructure through both the Ports Minister and Transport Minister. On 22nd January East Kent MP's meet the Roads Minister (John Hayes MP) calling for a Government Strategy on Cross Channel Freight Transport Resilience. We welcome this and shall keep pressure on both our MP and Local Authority to ensure that it is not just a "Ministerial Listening" but a "Ministerial Action"

By the time this letter is distributed in early March I do hope that the new Buckland Hospital is completed and operational. The Society, through Lorraine Sencicle and myself, have spent many/many hours canvassing and attending meetings of the various health authority groups as well as DDC and seeking the support of our MP to ensure "intermediate care" is available in Dover as recuperation should be nearer home. As I write this report it has just been announced that a "Five Star Care" promise for a new recovery centre at the Buckland site in Dover. This is the first time that it has been recognised that our aspirations for care beds that allow patients to recuperate in Dover could come to fruition with a 60 bed unit to be built on the land adjacent to the hospital. We fought that any land should not be sold off

by the health authority for re-development but retained for any future expansion of facilities at the Buckland site. We emphasized this in our comments in respect to the recent Land Allocations Consultation. Dover lost a hospital that would have provided A&E and beds, this would have been in the centre of Dover that would have given easy access by

transport across the District but because of political posturing was lost. At least after a long hard fight we seem more likely to secure the beds that Dover deserves and I shall continue to seek A&E facilities at Dover. I would thank Lorraine for her valuable input without which I could not have made such a robust challenge.

Refurbishment Committee

Jeremy Cope

Upper Road pathway from Bleriot Memorial to Langdon Cliffs. To remind you - we are lobbying KCC pathways to reinstate the original path that should reduce the length of path alongside the most dangerous part of Upper Road. Latest update is that the work is too demanding for White Cliffs volunteers so the job has been added to the KCC "Asset Management" list of works. We await...

Again a reminder with litter and dog fouling. Do contact Dover District Council if you have a problem. It's the only way that standards can be improved. A bad incident of litter in Pencester Road on land not Council's responsibility caused us to write to DDC to pass on thanks to one of their street cleaners. A member spoke to the cleaner who investigated, contacted DDC and the matter was resolved in the hour. Well done all who lobbied Morrisons on the litter of their trollies across the town. The store, realising their error, put back the £1 deposit. Problem solved!

Who can be unaware of the traffic problems caused by the cross channel traffic post-Christmas? This element is being dealt with by Pat Sherratt and our planners but it feeds into the general problem of Dover's traffic problems. You may remember that Di

French has started a campaign on mitigating the effects of traffic on Maison Dieu Road residents and pedestrians. Following debate within our committees we sent off a letter to KCC Highways and widely copied on the need for a rational and wide ranging assessment of the town's traffic needs. The letter was sent off before Christmas and could not have been better timed. Our thanks to Beverley Hall who, with her expertise, wrote the letter.

Along with Derek Leach and Pat Sherratt I attended one of our regular discussions with Nadeem Aziz and Roger Walton. At these meetings we make known our concerns and what resolutions may be available. We hope to have one of the litter enforcement officers come to talk to us to explain their work, its problems and how the public might help improve matters. At Cowgate Cemetery we have problems with syringes and we have raised the matter of whether, with appropriate equipment and training, we should deal with the problem rather than wait for DDC to act. Connaught Park - the pond restoration is fine but would be lovely with lilies and fish. DDC have plans to litter pick the A2/A20 - should really be Highways responsibility but that only applies to motorways.

Dover Society Badges



The wearing of a Society Badge reminds the general public (who really do have eyes to see) that the Society is a viable and energetic non-political voice for Dover. The beautiful little Lapel and Brooch Badges are available from the Editor in either type for £2 post free.

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Contact Sheila Cope 01304 211348

Dover Castle on the road to Runnymede

A Talk by Professor Sir Robert Worcester KBE DL - Reported by Peter Sherred

The political, democratic, social and financial repercussions of Magna Carta, a document that laid the foundations of Britain's common law and which was sealed at Runnymede on 15th June 1215, were addressed by a distinguished visitor to the town, Professor Sir Robert Worcester KBE DL, at the Marina Hotel and Spa in September when he spoke to an audience, including Society members, in a packed room at the hotel using the above title for the talk.

Introduced as a sprightly octogenarian, psephologist and Atlanticist Sir Robert, who hails originally from Kansas City in the United States and is a graduate of Kansas University, told of how the 13th Century English document was revered in the States and of the fact it was used in the justification of the American War of Independence. When Britain wanted to introduce heavy taxes on the largely English colonists the latter argued this was "taxation without representation" and against the liberties guaranteed by Magna Carta. Sir Robert, as Chairman of the Magna Carta 800th Anniversary Committee, advised of a number of commemorative events scheduled for this year (2015) to highlight the anniversary of the sealing of the first version of the document and also indicated how, as he travelled the world, representatives of many countries from Germany to Trinidad and Japan reported how the principles enshrined in this great document of English history shaped and influenced their laws and constitutions. Among other matters Sir Robert reminded his audience that Magna Carta guaranteed freedom of the church, the liberties of the City of London and due process under the law set out in article 39. The first document originated in 1215 because of the disastrous reign of King John, "bad King John", who upset the church, lost most of the

English lands in Europe, levied extortionate taxes on the people and increased "scutage" - money in place of military service - from his nobles. Civil war ensued and the Great Charter was forced on the bankrupt king by barons, bishops and abbots, but within months John repudiated the document and it was annulled by Pope Innocent III. However, rather conveniently it seems, the king died of dysentery within the year and the Regents of the new king, Henry III who was nine years old when he succeeded to the throne, re-issued the Charter again in 1216 and 1217. The importance of the revised editions of the Great Charter became apparent in later centuries and proved an inspiration for the American colonists in the 18th Century. Controversially Sir Robert opined that the referendum on Scottish independence may have breached basic tenets of Magna Carta!

Sir Robert is perhaps best known as the founder of MORI, the organisation that charts public opinion, but he is also a media savvy individual, the author of many books who has held various positions in business and voluntary organisations including being a Freeman of the City of London and the fifth Chancellor of Kent University. He lives in Allington Castle near Maidstone with his wife Margaret. A vote of thanks to Sir Robert was proposed at the end of the meeting and this expressed the appreciation of those present for Sir Robert finding time in his busy schedule to visit Dover and to give an inspiring talk on such an important feature of English History. In particular he was thanked for his lucid explanation of the key events in English History associated with such an important document and for the humour he introduced into his talk - particularly in respect of the misrepresentation that the first document had been signed by the king - when

it hadn't! Sir Robert was presented with a cheque as a donation to the 2015 commemoration. Various commemorative events are being held throughout 2015 for the 800th anniversary of the sealing of this document, important both nationally and internationally, with The Queen attending a major event at Runnymede Meadows on June 15th. Lectures, debates, theatre presentations and exhibitions are just some of the elements of the commemoration this year (details of which can be found on the Magna Carta 800th website). It is also intended that The British

Library will celebrate the 800th birthday of Magna Carta by uniting all four surviving original copies of the original document under one roof for the first time for three days only. Multiple copies of the document were written up originally and sent to the bishops and other officials across England and it is four of those that survive - two of which are in Library's collection while the other two are usually to be found at Lincoln and Salisbury cathedrals respectively - that will feature in this venture by the British Library.

River Dour Partnership Ray Newsam

Things have been progressing slowly but steadily on our plans for improvements to the river. In October we had a visit from the Environment Agency with their fish pass expert in attendance. They were looking at the weirs by Morrisons and Halfords, and other environmental improvements that might take place in that area. This is only the first step in getting plans together, which as well as funding will require consultations with the relevant owners and authorities.

We have also had some discussions with Dover Town Council regarding the potential for opening up the millpond at the Old Flour Mill in Lorne Road. Much work has to be done looking at possibilities and liabilities and hopefully we can report further on this in the next issue. While mentioning Morrisons, we have had some very productive discussions with their new Community Champion who had several suggestions as to how they might support us, the immediate one being giving us three dates during the year when we will be able to have a collection and leaflet hand-out at their entrance. The first date was 28th February, too early for notification through the newsletter. If anyone feels able to help with future collection and leaflet hand-outs then please get in touch via our secretary

Jeremy Cope, (contact details inside the front cover).

One funding success is securing a grant from the DDC and KCC supported You Decide program for a waterproof video camera under a project entitled 'Promoting the Dour'. This came about after a similar camera was used by the BBC on one of their Urban Jungle episodes to record the brown trout in the river by Barton Path, very good publicity which resulted in a significant number of visitors from out of town. As well as producing short films showing various aspects of the underwater ecology for educational use, the equipment can be used for underwater structural and environmental surveys - hopefully there will be something on show at the 2016 Dover Film Festival!

Finally, the usual appeal for volunteers! We have the regular gang who do the river clean-ups organised by the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership that will start again in April, and volunteers are always welcome at these sessions. But we also need volunteers with all sorts of skills and interests - please get in touch if you have anything to contribute to help with planning, fundraising or implementation of our many projects.

The Story of Bruce Lilley 1928 - 2014

Part 2

Bruce and Merrill Lilley

CHAPTER THREE

Galley Boy

In the following two years, 1945-47, I served as a galley boy on several different British ships and many times wished for the favourable conditions I had known on the Dalfonn. Having said that, all ships were not the same and some had much better conditions than others. On the Dalfonn I had been signed on as a cabin boy and was a general dogsbody, doing any jobs assigned to me, including making the coffee and making sure the men on watch always had a cup when they wanted one. There was always an urn ready for them at all times. As a galley boy I was mainly confined to the galley, doing all the jobs associated with it, peeling potatoes, washing up and generally obeying the orders of the cook. Of course, as time went on and depending on the amount of time spent on a ship, I might be allowed to undertake tasks of cooking some of the food for the crew. It depended on the temperament of the cook, the length of the voyage and many other factors.

The next ship I served on, out of the Pool, was the Empire Reynolds, a modern tanker. At least I shared a two-berth cabin again. We sailed to the U.S. to pick up a cargo and returned to Antwerp, where the ship was ordered into dry dock to prepare for a trip to the Far East. The war in Europe had finished and I think they did not quite



know what to do with us when we disembarked. We ended up in a kind of transit camp, which might once have been a prison camp, waiting for a passage back to England. Antwerp had the feeling of a military garrison town with soldiers everywhere. You could buy a German Luger there for a carton of 200 American cigarettes. Eventually we were sent back to Tilbury on a landing craft.

I was unlucky with my next posting. It was on the Nianza, an old pre-war tramp ship, owned by McClay and McIntyre of Glasgow. The conditions on board were

diabolical, especially in the galley. There was no refrigerator, only an ice box which did not last long. It was impossible to keep food fresh. We were existing on dried food, mainly peas and beans to go with our dubious portions of meat. We sailed from Plymouth to Montreal where we loaded grain for Bone. While we were in Montreal, anchored out, we celebrated VJ Day. The crew did not go ashore that day but did get shore leave one day later.

When we got to Bone, in French Algeria, it was still occupied by Allied troops. There were many ships sunk in the vicinity of the port and we could see their masts and funnels sticking out eerily above the water. We were there about ten days while we unloaded. Ashore there was a French flavour to the town. I do not have many memories of Bone, but one I was bound to remember, for here I had my first experience of a brothel, which was not at all as I had imagined one to be. Far from a sleazy image it was a classy place, luxuriously furnished and, I remember, with velvet curtains, which can be drawn across further revelations.

From Bone we went light to Takoradi, in West Africa, where we loaded timber for the voyage home. Again I remember little of the stop except that the policemen wore fezzes.

My next ship was an improvement. I was sent to the pool at Leith, which needed galley boys, and I sailed on the Coombe Hill to Buenos Aires. The Coombe Hill was a Doxford motor ship, owned by the Counties Ship Management. When we set off I did not know I would be away for a year. Well, they say you join the navy to see the world! As soon as the crew heard that our destination was Buenos Aires they went mad with delight, shouting "We're going to B.A. We're going to B.A."

Apparently this was one of the most popular runs and every crew member rejoiced when they heard where we were bound. Novices, like myself, wondered what to expect. We soon found out. THE place to go in B.A. was called 'The arches', a glittering arcade with countless bars, shops and restaurants, night clubs and, of course, girls. The food and drink was amazingly cheap and plentiful. From the renowned American cattle ranches they had the most succulent, thick steaks I have ever tasted, before or since. We were reluctant to leave, enjoying our last juicy steaks at the 'First and Last', the pub nearest to the dock gates, calling, for the last time, "Dos beefa de loma. Dos cerverca".

In Buenos Aires we loaded grain for Karachi. When we got there we had to stay outside the port until it was safe for us to be allowed in. Apparently the Indian navy had mutinied and there was a lot of unrest ashore. We were there for three weeks, with guns sounding around us. One of the Indian navy ships was sunk. Although we were used to standing off at a port before being allowed in this seemed a longer wait than usual. The agent could come aboard and we could send ashore to a ship's chandlers for fresh supplies, but we were confined to the ship. When we finally got alongside we did go ashore but we were taken in police vans to the seaman's mission so we did not see much of the town.

Eventually we managed to unload our cargo and left, light, for Lourenco Marques in East Africa, where we picked up a cargo of coal for Hong Kong, which was yet another totally new experience. In Hong Kong the cargo was unloaded by a chain of women each carrying a small basket of coal at a time. As there were 10,000 tons to unload this took at least two weeks during

which I had a great time as I had no work to do. As soon as the ship had tied up on came Mama San with her daughters, asking for a ship's flag and willing to work for the duration of our time in port. They did the cooking, cleaning and washing. The crew members were free to go ashore as they pleased to explore the town, visit the China Fleet Club and be propositioned by a 'Susy Wong' at every street corner. I had never seen such bustling, hustling crowds of humanity. The streets seemed to be busy, busy, busy, crowded at any time of the day or night; the shops, bars and restaurants always open, under a blaze of coloured awnings and banners and incomprehensible Chinese signs. The British navy was in port, with many battleships and the town was full of matelots in uniform. It was a heady introduction to the Far East.

From there we went, once more light, to Canada where we took on a full load of timber from Vancouver, Vancouver Island and several other ports before setting off to make the long haul back to Hull.

I loved Vancouver. The people were very friendly, many of them inviting us to their homes for a meal. Their way of life seemed far superior to anything I had seen in England and I thought it must be a great place to live. I was sorry to leave when the ship was finally loaded to the top with timber, the holds full and the decks piled with planks, tied with wire ropes. As I watched the last of these secured I thought, "I don't want to leave here".

But it was time for the next new experience, passage through the Panama Canal the first time for me. I was subjected

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6			4-53	VERY GOOD	VERY GOOD		

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to the usual joke played on all 'first-timers'. "Save your bread for the donkeys," we were told, "You'll need it when they pull us through the locks". Of course the donkeys were the machines that did the pulling, so the joke was on us!

From Vancouver to Hull we were seven or eight weeks at sea, plodding along at a steady 9 or 10 knots. The Coombe Hill arrived in Hull on the 3rd November 1946. I had been away from home for nearly a year and I had circumnavigated the globe. Looking back on it now it seems strange that in all that time we had handled only three cargoes.

It was on this year-long trip that I became an avid reader. It was the best pastime to combat the boredom of weeks at sea. At every port we had books delivered by the Seaman's Mission, all kinds of fiction and non-fiction and always piles of Reader's Digests. This habit of wide reading, especially non-fiction, has stayed with me through life. In future years Merchant Navy crews benefited from the ship's lending library, which delivered boxes of books which could later be exchanged with other ships.



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

Social events Writing for newsletter

Projects e.g. clearance, surveys, photography

Any other interests or expertise

PROGRAMME 2015

*Guests are welcome at all meetings except the Annual General Meeting which is for members only.
You may pay on the night before the AGM and attend the meeting.*

2015

March 16
Monday 7.30

Speakers: **Derek Leach** "Peculiarities of some Kent churches"
Mike Read "Channel Swimming"

April 20
Monday 7.30

Annual General Meeting
Speaker: **Rowena Willard-Wright**, English Heritage
"Celebrating Wellington and the Battle of Waterloo 1815"

May 16
Saturday
£43.50

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard and the Spinnaker Tower.
2013 was a momentous year for the brand new and internationally renowned Mary Rose Museum which has reunited the hull of the Tudor galleon with the 19,000 perfectly preserved artefacts that were raised with her from the seabed in 1982. You will be able to visit HMS Victory and HMS Warrior 1860.

Included are The National Museum Royal Navy Portsmouth, Action Stations and Harbour Tour. During this time you may like to take a break and visit one of the excellent catering facilities. After visiting the dockyard it is a short walk to the Spinnaker Tower with magnificent views across the Solent to the Isle of Wight. Then back to the coach for our journey home, leaving approximately 16.15 with return to Dover early evening.

Pick-up times: The Railway Bell 06.45; Hollis Motors 06.50;
Frith Road 06.55; Maison Dieu (Brook House) car park 07.00

July 18
Saturday
£14.50

Battle Abbey, Battle Town and Eastbourne
Upon arrival in Battle we will visit the Abbey Battlefields. The Abbey is said to have been "Founded by the Conqueror in expiation for the sin involved in the conquest" in 1066. Admission for English Heritage members Free, Non E.H. members, Concessions price £6.50 (which I will collect on the coach). Audio tour guides are available which enable you to select a short or long tour.

You may wish to get hands-on at the exciting indoor exhibition and feel the weight of 1066 armour and weapons. Discover more about the Saxons and Normans and whether your surname identifies you as a descendant of either.

When you feel you have seen all you wish to see, you can wander into Battle, which surrounds the Abbey. Worth visiting is Yesterday's World (cost of entrance is £3.00 for Senior Citizens). After this we will travel on to Eastbourne.

Pick-up times: The Railway Bell 07.45; Hollis Motors 07.50;
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