



# Newsletter

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July 2019



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# THE DOVER SOCIETY

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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 take this opportunity to remind members to read the programme inside of the back cover. Included are details of the 4 night September outing to York as well as the Christmas meal.

The booking form for the Christmas meal is printed on the centre page of this newsletter so that anyone wishing to book early may do so.

If anyone requires a copy of the Chairman's or the Treasurer's report from the AGM then please contact the Editor, details inside the front cover.

Our next indoor meeting is not until 21st October. A small number of our members meet up for a meal before each of the winter meetings, with that evening's speakers normally being present. If you would like to be included in this get-together then please contact the editor for further details. You will be most welcome.

The Dover Society is again this year helping in the organisation of the local Heritage Open Days. These will take place on two consecutive weekends, the 14/15 and 21/22 September. Entry is FREE to visit some of Dover's iconic and historic buildings. Full details are contained in the Heritage Open Days article within this newsletter.

Lastly, but most importantly: Do you have a small number of hours to spare each month as the Society is still in need of willing helpers? Needed are volunteers to take a more active involvement in any of our sub-committees, projects, events, meetings and submitting articles and reports for the newsletter.

*Alan Lee, Editor*

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## DEADLINE for contributions

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 96 will be Wednesday 2nd October 2019. 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 to be submitted in JPEG and not imbedded in the text of the article and must be in as high resolution as possible. 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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\* \* \* \* \*

## DOVER GREETERS

Dover Greeters are volunteers greeting visitors to Dover. We love doing it and invite you to come and try it once!

**Tel: 01304 206458**

# MARCH MEETING

— First Speaker —

## The Knights Templar

A talk by Simon Le Fevre

Reported by Terry Sutton

An artist's impression of the possible design of the Knights Templar farm that once prospered on the hills above Temple Ewell was screened at our packed public meeting at St Mary's parish centre in March.

Guest speaker, Simon Le Fevre, told how the hilltop centre, the Templar's preceptory, included a farm which grew grain and produced wool from sheep that were sold to help build up the organisation's fortunes, which eventually led to its suppression and demise.

Simon gave a run down on the history of the creation of the Knights Templar by nine knights, whose vow was to protect Christians visiting the Holy Land. In 1128 the Templars were recognised by the Pope as a military and monastic order of chivalry.

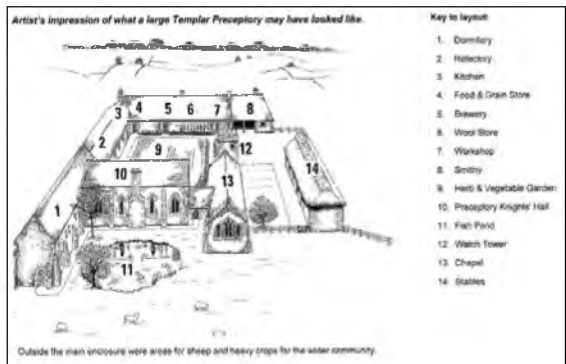
The Templars first came to the British Isles in 1128 and over two centuries their preceptories and farms were woven into medieval life. The Templars and their followers not only prayed: they farmed. And their income revenue helped finance their military colleagues safeguarding Christians in the Holy Land.

Mr Le Fevre told his audience that the centre above Temple Ewell was not the only Dover base for the Templars. They also had a

little round chapel on the Western Heights (the remains of which are still there) which, suggested Mr Le Fevre, could also have acted as a lookout post in association with the Templars' fleet of ships.

Over the years the fortunes of the Knights Templar prospered so much that they were able to open banks and issue what would now be described as cheques, which could be cashed in the Holy Land and elsewhere. They also provided loans to European monarchs, but early in the 14th century they declined to provide a loan to King Philip of France, who was running short of money!

Philip was so offended that in 1307 he ordered the arrest of a number of the leaders of the Templars and in 1312, with the agreement of the Pope, ordered the suppression of the Order. The following year some of the leaders were burnt at the stake in Paris for alleged heresy offences.



Mr Le Fevre detailed the modern day legacy of the medieval order, including the formation in 1982 of the Templar Pilgrimage Trust launched by the Order of the Temple of Jerusalem, and the Templar Heritage Trust, tasked with increasing the history and understanding of the Knights Templar.

*The Knights Templar or the medieval Order of "The Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon" (Pauperes commilitones Christi templique Salomonici) was founded in 1119 by nine Frankish Crusaders led by Hugues de Payens, whose aim was to protect pilgrims visiting Christian shrines in*

*Jerusalem. This holy brotherhood lived under austere vows of poverty and chastity, according to the rule of St Bernard of Clairvaux. They can be well described as a band of fighting monks. The order comprised four ranks: servants, chaplains, sergeants, and knights, the latter wearing white surcoats with the red cross of St. George. In 1147 Pope Eugenius III ordered them to bear the familiar eight pointed cross, which is said to be older in history than the St George's cross. By the 13th century there were as many as 20,000 knights. King Baldwin II of Jerusalem gave the Order its headquarters on Temple Mount, hence the popular name, "Knights Templar".*

*Editor*

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS **Sheila Cope**

It is pleasing to know that these reports are read by someone. In my last report I mentioned that we have no system of cross-referencing old Newsletters and, more in hope than expectation, asked whether any member would be willing to take on such a mammoth task. To my great surprise and pleasure, Paul Skelton came forward and offered to do the job. Having completed it in two or three weeks, he said:

"After joining the society a couple of years ago, I was most pleased to learn that the Society still had a complete set of old newsletters going back to the very first. Even better when Sheila Cope offered to pass them on to an interested party for the possible creation of a reference or master index of contents. What an opportunity for me to see what I have missed, I thought, and so offered my services to take on this no mean task. However, not wanting to do this with pen and paper, I took to computerisation to do the task for me, and have just converted them all into

searchable digital files that fit onto one DVD."

So there it is! The Committee is most grateful to Paul and has yet to decide how to make the best use of this valuable resource but it will undoubtedly contribute towards our marketing strategy and advertise what The Dover Society and the town itself has to offer.

Thanks, as always, to all those members who have paid their subscriptions on time. I am currently sending out reminders to the rest and hope that once our membership list has been transferred to a database then that particular task will take hours rather than days.

There are 473 of us at present including 15 welcome new members:- Toby Oakes, Barry O'Brien, Nicholas Lockhart, Graham & Vanessa Fitcher, David & Judith Smith, Jeff Howe, Melvyn Durrant, Graham Leadbeater, Brian & Christine Walton, Joanna Walton and Gary & Anita Jordan

# MARCH MEETING

———— Second Speakers ————

## Dover Big Local - Achievements and Plans

A talk by **Linda Aldred and Marina White**

Reported by **Alan Lee**

**L**inda began with a brief history of the Dover Big Local (DBL) and by outlining how it is set up and the way it operates.

After a series of local meetings in 2014 a committee was formed to work on creating a 'vision' for the area. The 'vision' was concentrated into five main areas:

- Business and Tourism
- Environment and Green Spaces
- Arts and Culture
- Health and Wellbeing
- Communications

Following a series of focus group meetings a basic idea of what the local people's views

and ambitions were about the future of the town, emerged.

By the following year the committee had reached the stage where they felt that they were ready to move forward. These views and ambitions along, with the way DBL was to be managed and run, were then written into a formal document as required by the National Lottery to allow access to Dover's £1 million funding and they were then submitted to the Local Trust for approval.

Dover's plan for the DBL area and the town was approved. By 2016 the committee had decided on some quick start projects and



*Co-Innovation Thursday Market*



drew down the first amount of money from the £1m. At long last, after nearly 2 years of planning, the 'vision' could start to be realised.

Many projects in the arts, green spaces and environment, sports and leisure, economy and tourism and communication are all making a difference in Dover with more exciting ideas for all these areas being developed all the time. What would you like to see happen? The staff and committee are always willing to assist with the planning stage and the grant application form.

Martina then continued by giving details of the largest project undertaken so far. Dover District Council (DDC) offered use of the old CO-OP building on a short term lease to DBL. Working closely with DDC, and after many months of planning, DBL has converted the building into an area to encourage people to start up their own businesses. Charging very low fees for a space to open a shop, the aim is to allow people to start and grow a business while cutting down the risks. It is hoped that these will then be able to move onto the high street.

Now renamed as 'Co-Innovation' the building has just about reached capacity for office start-ups and small shop units, open 6 days a week - Monday to Saturday. There is also a children's area, a café and the 'Escape' rooms. A market consisting of over 30 stalls is run on every Thursday and Saturday.

A major success was the opening of the DBL Hub in the Charlton Centre. Run by Linda and 3 part-time staff, this has been so successful and busy that a second unit has had to be opened. A whole range of activities and advice is available including housing, health, benefits, welfare, job-seeking, fitness and mental health. Also

included are coffee mornings/social groups - such as DBL Stitching/Knitting Group, free advice sessions, advice clinics, cookery sessions and fitness sessions. A wide variety of formal Training Courses are run. There is the chance to volunteer or run your own projects. Pop into the Hub to find out more and to connect.

A Repair Café in partnership with Future Foundry and Transition Dover has been launched. This provides the opportunity for people to get a large variety of household items repaired and to share and learn new skills. This takes place each month in the early evening at the Biggin Hall.

DBL is involved with Destination Dover, a 5 year project to attract more tourists and for them to stay in the town for at least two days. They have links with the River Dour Group, Hill at the Heart Project (Old Park Hill Nature Reserve), the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership, Kent Wildlife Trust, Dover smART and many more organisations. The Big Draw, the Multicultural Festival, the Urban Fete and the Dover Music Festival, 'Unlimited' and Pop-Up Business Schools have all been projects assisted by Dover Big Local.

At present DBL has about half of the money remaining. If any reader has a project or an idea they think that may be of benefit then do please contact Linda or any of the committee. DBL is always open to fresh suggestions that will improve the town.

Although DBL started with £1m this has so far attracted much more money from other sources, all of which has, and will, benefit the people of Dover.

2024 will see the 10 years of DBL come to an end and it is hoped that a beneficial long lasting legacy of improvement to the town will have been achieved and continue.

# APRIL MEETING

## The Dover Castle Keep 1625 - 1930

A Talk by Paul Pattison

Reported by Alan Lee

The talk covered the period after the Great Tower ceased to be a place of occasional royal residence.

The Duke of Buckingham had refurbished the royal apartments for the use of Henrietta Maria of France on her way to marry Charles I. They were married by proxy on May 11th, 1625 and married in person on June 13th, 1626 at St. Augustine's Church in Canterbury. Henrietta was raised and educated as a Roman Catholic and as the coronation service was an Anglican one Henrietta could not be crowned as queen.

The Board of Trade then took over the Great Tower for use as a fortification. Under the leadership of the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports they supplied a small permanent staff of gunners, artillery and ammunition.

By 1697 much of Dover Castle lay in decay and ruins. The Great Tower was in serious decline with only 3 or 4 of the Governor's rooms being habitable.

During the Nine Years War, 1688-97, Lord Shrewsbury, Secretary of State for the Southern Department arranged for Dover Castle to hold prisoners until they could be exchanged.

In June 1702 during the War of Spanish Succession, 1701-14, Mr Morris, Marshal of Dover Castle was instructed to take as many prisoners as possible. Owing to lack



*East and West Profile Square Tower Dover Castle*

of room at the castle the Major of Dover was also instructed to house prisoners in the town goal. The number held at Dover fluctuated between 160 and 604. As Dover Castle was a naval prison the majority of prisoners were naval or merchant seaman. Graffiti that they left can still be seen carved into the soft Caen stone of the Great Tower.

In 1717 William Osbourne, master carpenter, supervised repair work to the Great Tower. In 1726 timber removed from the tower was re-used in work at Constables Gate.

Again by 1736 most of the castle was in ruins. Only the Great Tower, a gunpowder magazine on the north side of the bailey and a stable against the outer east bailey wall were usable.

Paul then showed the audience a number

of slides of what the Great Tower looked like in the C18th.

The War of Austrian Succession, 1740-48, saw extensive renovation as Dover became a military garrison. The inner bailey and Palace Green were adapted to serve as barrack accommodation. A new great stairway was completed in 1751, the majority of renovations had been completed by 1755. By early November 1756 the castle could accommodate 14 companies, about 1050 men. The remainder of the 2 battalions were quartered in Dover town or in the new barracks at Archcliffe Fort.

Between 1797 and 1815, owing to the conflict with France, the garrison increased dramatically as did the number of guns on the Great Tower. Separate magazines held 8740 barrels of gunpowder, each weighing 100lbs. The main magazine on the side of the tower survived until 1930, the inner doorway is still in use today. At the end of the war came another 25 years of neglect.

In 1853 and for the next 17 years Palace and King's gates were developed, both with counter-balanced drop bridges over deep pits. Towers and a musketry parapet were constructed around the inner bailey wall.

By 1892 the 10 guns on the roof of the tower had been removed. Fort Burgoyne had taken over. The remains of 2 gun arcs are still visible on the roof.

Up until 1930 the Great Tower continued as an Ordnance store that now included chemical explosives, small arms, ammunition, equipment and clothing. In the 1920's the 1st and 2nd floors held racks containing some 20,000 rifles.

In 1888/89 the eastern end of the main

room on the second floor had become a 'Banqueting Hall' for officers.

Through WWI the ground floor of the tower was used as a general store for the Army Ordnance Department. A searchlight was installed on one of the turrets, operated by the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve AA Corps. It served the Royal Garrison Artillery anti-aircraft guns sited near St Mary-in-Castro.

Owing to the increased fire risk the War Office had removed all of the military stores by July 1930. By September of that year they had ceded the building to the Office of Works. Restoration work commenced immediately so that the Great Tower could be opened to members of the public. In 1931/32 25,000 people had visited the tower.

By 1935 most of the evidence of the 250 year military tenure had gone. Much of the present appearance of the Great Tower stems from this period of work.



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# SOCIETY OUTING

## *The Bluebell Railway*

25th April 2019

### Rodney Stone

Our friend, Leo's Pride driver Iain, recommended a trip on the Bluebell Line with ploughman's lunch. Thirty-four of us set forth with his intrepid fellow driver Janet.



*Bluebell Railway  
Coat of Arms*

British Rail (remember them?) closed the Lewes to East Grinstead line as part of their purge of apparently unprofitable services in the 1950s. A local worthy pointed out that the line was safeguarded by an ancient Act of Parliament, and BR had briefly to re-install it, acquiring the name 'the sulky service'. They persuaded Parliament to annul the Act and departed by 1959. A preservation society rose up promptly, and the Bluebell Line has grown ever since, one of the largest of such societies. The route is Sheffield Park to East Grinstead, and they plan to connect to the main line at Haywards Heath, running to Lewes again being now impracticable.

Sheffield Park Station has all the memorable features, brick structure, booking hall, smartly uniformed staff (all volunteers, of course) and wooden destination boards. The Museum is full of history and of artefacts lovingly made as they were in those days; and the joy is to get up close to preserved engines in the engine shed, beautifully presented and fully deserving to be called 'she' rather than 'it' (whatever they now call ships elsewhere). From there,

is a view of staff maintaining engines, perhaps more a pleasure than a job. Plus there is, of course, a pub for the thirsty, of whom we had some.

There is something special about a meal on a train, in company and in well-preserved rolling stock, most pre-1939, and with the steady chug of the engine up front. The views, passing slowly, were of green and leafy (arboreal and economic) countryside and, when we were there, rich abundance of bluebells. Spring had arrived.

Thanks go to those attending who put up with the crush for elevenses at the tea room when we arrived with another coach party who were due before us, and to unfazed Janet, who had to circumvent a motorway crash on the way back, in contrast to her smooth outward journey.



*BR Class Standard Four No80151 Horsted Keynes*

# Memories 1939

**Terry Sutton**

**E**ighty years ago, in 1939, was a dramatic and worrying time in Dover and throughout the nation. Throughout the early months of the year Dover was preparing for a threatened war which eventually came in September. For those still alive today who can forget those frightening words in September from prime minister Neville Chamberlain: "consequently this country is at war with Germany."

Memories of 1939 were revived for me when two journalists from Finland visited Dover in a hunt for anyone who could remember those days. They were especially interested because, in 1939, Finland and Russia were at war. I was able to tell them of my memory that early in 1939 there was mysterious talk in Dover about a 'death ray' being beamed from wooden masts erected at Swingate. We were told it was top secret, not for discussion, but car drivers claimed their vehicles had suddenly been brought to a standstill on the Deal-Dover road near the masts. We now know, of course, these wooden masts (later replaced by steel masts) were involved with radio location, now known as radar.

These were the days of fears of possible German spies in and around the Town, Port and Garrison of Dover. As ten-year-old I was always on the look-out for them!

In April 1939 there was a serious clash of views about evacuation. The government decided that the Dover area would be just the place to receive evacuees from the Medway towns. Dover Borough councillors, some with memories of the 1914-18 war,

told Whitehall this was a daft idea because Dover was sure to be the target of air raids. Eventually Whitehall agreed and made Dover a neutral area: neither receiving evacuees nor making the town an evacuation zone. By 1940, with the enemy on the cliffs at Calais, there was a rapid change of mind as Dover became an evacuation area.

In 1938 and in 1939 we queued up at the fire station where volunteers fitted up with gas masks - horrible smelling things. If war came, gas attacks were expected.

In February, Dover's air raid sirens were sounded for the first time, later also to be used for shelling raids. Bags of sand were prepared to dampen any fire bombs that might be dropped on the town.

The Dover authorities decided to move the stained glass windows from the Town Hall, the windows we still enjoy today. In 1939 they were taken down and stored for safety



*Trocadero Bars*

in tunnels under Dover Castle.

Work, started in 1938, continued in 1939 on the extension of tunnels that had earlier been excavated in the cliffs and in quarries. There was controversy between the Dover authorities and Whitehall over who should pay for this work. In the months ahead these tunnels were to become the home for many.

Dover's menfolk returned to gardens where, in the crisis of 1938, they had worked together to dig communal shelters in case there were air raids. Some of these men had served in the trenches in World War One and they remembered the danger of flying splinters. The design of the shelters was intended to give protection against splinters and shrapnel falling from anti-aircraft guns.

As the months of 1939 drifted towards the declaration of war in September, shops were busy selling material that could be, and was, used as black-out curtains to ensure no house lighting helped guide enemy pilots. Later many Dover windows were criss-crossed with strips of sticky paper to prevent glass splintering if bombs fell.

How well I remember that Sunday morning of September 3rd in 1939 when, minutes after the declaration of war, Dover's sirens wailed out. I was scared. Any moment, I feared, enemy aircraft would be zooming over the hills to bomb Dover. My teacher, 'Barney' Taylor at Barton Road School, had told us one bomb would completely wipe out Dover. And in 1939 we believed what teachers taught us!

## COWGATE CEMETERY

Jeremy Cope

Summer has arrived, although looking out of the window at the rain reminds me of the variable nature of our weather. However, rain will get the grass growing with ever more vigour!

With the closure of the Night Shelter in March, the tents have returned and although most occupants are tidy, it only needs one careless person to make the work of our litter-clearers, led by Deborah, somewhat onerous. A comment on the times we live in! Apart from this we continue to manage the "bullies" – Angelica and likeminded plants that tend to crowd out so many smaller ones. Over the years we have seen a large increase in primroses and similar plants and of course grasses, which says something for our efforts! John and Jean continue with the never ending job of trying to control the ivy, particularly that covering tomb stones. This helps if

visitors are looking for evidence in their genealogical researches.

We have had further feedback from Melanie at WCCP on the maintenance of the site in such a way as to encourage its use by wildlife. I will update as we develop the ideas she has provided.

A big 'thankyou' to Dover Town Council for providing us means to store our equipment. It is very much appreciated with a special thankyou to Jim Peacock for his input and help.

If you would like to join our happy band then please contact me on 01304 211348 or email [jeremycopes@willersley.plus.com](mailto:jeremycopes@willersley.plus.com). We usually work the first Thursday morning and the second Saturday morning in the month but this varies according to the weather and holidays.

## *Dover's Volunteers Keep The Town Tidy*

*Peter Sherred*

Despite being surrounded by a plethora of historical and scenic assets, arguably the most important asset possessed by our town of Dover is quite simply the people who make up this great town of ours. This came to me forcibly once again this year in the nature of the town's response to the Keep Britain Tidy Spring Clean Campaign which ran formally between March and April nationwide. The response of Dover was truly remarkable with many Dover Society members being involved. In short, the KBT Campaign galvanised an incredible volunteer response from the people of Dover which I was privileged to observe, or form a part of, in my role as a Keep Britain Tidy Litter Heroes Ambassador.

Along with several other individuals I have been a litter picking activist for years both within and outside of the town and I was pleased to be appointed by Keep Britain Tidy to my new role during 2018.



*John Morgan, Peter Sherred and Ken Read promote the campaign*

Just ahead of the official start of the 2019 campaign members of the town's two Rotary clubs, the Rotary Club of Dover and the Rotary Club of South Foreland, undertook a substantial clean-up project in the Buckland Estate targeting Green Lane from its top entrance, almost opposite Christ Church Academy, down into the Estate and over the railway bridge then down as far as Brookfield Avenue. This entire route had been thoroughly cleared by Rotarians just two years previously so it was somewhat disappointing to find that at the end of the exercise a whopping total of over 70 full refuse bags had been collected along with a large number of individual items such as a widescreen television, a push chair, large children's toys, a chair, vases and other artefacts. The bulk of the bag rubbish contents included tin cans, plastic and glass bottles and other items associated with fast food or take away outlets but also included several domestic rubbish bags that had been filled and simply thrown away into the verges of the route. The Rotary effort was a good kickstart to the following Campaign.

Prior to the commencement date of the Campaign itself I delivered to every Primary and Secondary School in the town a personal letter addressed to the Headteacher highlighting the Campaign and encouraging participation in it in some form. Hopefully, the perils of the litter epidemic focussed in the environmental studies of these institutions but as only one school responded it is hard to know. A large A3 sized poster promoting the Campaign was delivered at the same time to each school.



In addition, I emailed the clerks of as many local parish councils as I could to encourage community participation in the Campaign and promotion of it. There were a few responses one of which was particularly heart-warming coming from Temple Ewell where I was advised a local organisation for people under a disability would be participating with their charges.

When the Campaign began officially volunteers in groups or associations and individuals rose to the occasion magnificently. Members of the London Road Community Form, under the leadership of its charismatic leader Deacon Michelle Legumi of the Beacon Church, were immediately active picking up litter in the top end of the town and painting out graffiti which had been placed on the walls of a local business. It was amazing to see the quantity of drink containers (cans and bottles) that had been dumped in the front area of the old former Methodist Church in London Road. Full marks to our town mayor, The Right Worshipful the Town Mayor of Dover, Mrs Sue Jones, who participated in the exercise. Over in St Margaret's Bay the local Women's Institute members, with local leader Brenda Paul and WI County Chairman Gill Crone, held the first of a series of litter picks conducted over the whole period of the Campaign.

As the days passed people, both young and not so young, gathered together to clear Barton Path alongside the River Dour while the Tower Hamlets Forum members undertook a significant litter pick over a wide area within Tower Hamlets and in that activity were two other Town Councillors - Ann Jenner and Pam Brivio - as well as Paul Pearson who is well known for his regular litter picking activities in the town area adjoining Bridge Street. Paths and roads were not the only subjects of clean ups by volunteers for Dover Society

members, led by Jeremy Cope, descended upon Cowgate Cemetery (which is regularly cleared by Society members) and then more volunteers, including Society member John Morgan, took to the waters of the River Dour, under the leadership and direction of Iona Dubieniec of the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership, to clear our lovely chalk river of rubbish thrown in to it or on its banks by thoughtless or uncaring people. The Land Trust tidied up the Fort Burgoyne boundary near Burgoyne Heights while unsightly redundant banners were removed from street side railings at the top of Connaught Hill and Castle Hill. Why do organisations who erect these banners not take them down again once an event has passed?

Volunteers undertook beach cleaning as well as Promenade clearing, while other volunteers undertook work at Shakespeare Beach. Rubbish collected from Castle Hill Road, from its junction with Dover Road, Guston down to Laureston Place, filled seven big bags with cans and bottles as well as yielding up some half a dozen car wheel hub caps! How sad such a principal route for tourists to our main tourist attraction in the form of the Castle should be so heavily



*Castle Hill Road Clearance 15 April*

despoiled by rubbish with no-one bothering to pick it up!

The volunteers of Dover responded to the challenge of the Campaign magnificently and, of course, many individuals and others continue these civic activities throughout the year. It is to be hoped that many others will consider undertaking more frequent clean ups rather than just making an annual appearance because those who drop all this rubbish do not rest on their laurels as it were continuing with their anti-social behaviour all year round.

Two notable negatives in this Campaign were lack of participation by Network Rail and the Highways Agency with Dover District Council the latter in respect of the A2. Having contacted Network Rail and shown officials around black spots at Priory Hill, Tower Hamlets and Green Lane, it was disappointing to learn no steps would be taken to clear the piles of rubbish shown to the officials because of the nature of the sites concerned. In fairness the condition of these sites was not caused by Network Rail but by local people. However I intend

to keep pressing for action. This is also the case for the A2 which must look like a third world country condition to visitors or tourists to this Country. The practical problem seems to be the division of responsibility between DDC (the litter collection authority) and HE (as the strategic route operator) as well as cost. Despite promises from HE of clearance as at the time of writing nothing has materialised but why should the condition of verges and the central reservation of this principal route be allowed to fall into such a parlous state in the first place? Continuing monitoring and clearance are needed or, perhaps, HE should lose its responsibility for the major routes in the first instance?

But these negatives should not be allowed to distract from the wonderful response of the volunteers who participated in the Campaign and made such a significant contribution to the improvement of the amenities and the environment of the town. Well done Dover's Champion Volunteers for where would we or the town be without them?



*Dover Society members at Cowgate Cemetery*

# Memorial for B-17 Bomber Crash

St Margaret's-at-Cliffe --- Denise Lee

At 2pm on Saturday 18th May 2019 members of the St Margaret's Historical Society and relatives unveiled a plaque to mark the spot of a WWII B-17 [Flying Fortress] plane crash. Organised by Mr Brian Cole the plaque is fixed to a 1 metre high memorial near to the junction of Station Road and Nelson Park Road.



487 Bomb Group

In the early hours of 8th January 1945 the American B-17 bomber, part of the 837 Bombardment Squadron, 487 Bombardment Group, took off from Lavenham, Suffolk for a raid over Germany. The bomber suffered damage over Frankfurt but managed to reach England. As it crossed the coast the engines failed and just before 2pm the pilot Lt Frank Casey brought it in for a crash landing on farmland. In all he flew 54 missions without any of his crew being

injured.

Mr Cole's father, an Air Raid Protection [ARP] warden after hearing the crash was first on the scene. He was very surprised to see all eight crew walk away from the crash uninjured. He then invited them in for tea while a neighbour contacted the authorities for the crew to be

picked up.

Frank Casey was born in Cave Springs, Floyd County, Georgia USA on 16th December 1919. In 2011, then a resident of Cedartown, Polk County, Georgia he received a shard of metal from the plane after it had been dug up in the field at the crash site. He died 3rd November 2013 at Cedartown and is buried at the local cemetery at Cave Springs.



## Casey Crew - 837th Squadron

Back Row L to R:

T/Sgt Robert W. Keene (radio operator), S/Sgt Roy E. Emery (nose-turret gunner), S/Sgt Bruce R. MacFarland (ball turret gunner), T/Sgt George M. Ogle (flight engineer)

Front Row L to R:

2nd Lt Charles P. Mundorf (navigator), S/Sgt Albert C. Harmon (tail gunner), 2nd Lt Edward J. Wilkowski (co-pilot), 2nd Lt Frank L. Casey (pilot)

# Crypt Plaque Unveil

Wednesday 27th March 2019

Terry Sutton

The night of March 27th 1977: I remember it well. As a result of an early tip-off, I was the only reporter on the scene as fire ripped through the well-known Crypt Restaurant. I watched as bodies were removed from the charred, smouldering debris.

On March 27th 2019, the 42nd anniversary of the disaster, nearly 200 Dover people and firefighters returned to the ugly remains of The Crypt in Bench Street for a ceremony to remember the seven, including a fireman, who died as a result of the blaze that terrible night.

Highlight of the ceremony was the unveiling of a plaque carrying the names of those died including Leading Fireman John Sharp who gave his life trying to save the others. The plaque, on the wall of the A20 underpass, was unveiled by the fireman's widow, Mrs Glenda Sharp.

The ceremony, attended by more than thirty Kent Fire and Rescue firefighters, serving and retired, was the initiative of town councillor Graham Wanstall, whose efforts resulted in the formation of a support group



*Crypt Fire Plaque Unveil*

including retired firemen.

He recalled the names of those who died that terrible night in March 1977: Leading Fireman John Sharp (31), Marion Clay (32), Shane Clay (6), 18 month old Charlotte Clay, Anita Lee (19), Janusia Ashton (7) and 43-year-old Phyllis Conlon, her grandmother.

Fire service officer Sean Bone-Knell, on behalf of the Kent fire and rescue service, spoke of Mr Sharp's bravery, while retired fireman James Wraight recited the Fireman's Prayer. Dover's mayor Sue Jones was among those in the large congregation, which included relatives of those who died in the fire.

Father Jeff Cridland of St Paul's RC church led prayers for those who died that night. It was said six of the seven were Roman Catholics.

The scene of the commemorative ceremony once more reminded everyone of the terrible state of the site where The Crypt once stood. Forty-two years after the disaster vegetation and litter still covers charred wooden frames, while scaffolding covers a neighbouring wall; all this in Dover's main street.

Mr Wanstall and his plaque organising committee would be delighted to see the site turned into a commemorative garden.

The Dover Society pays tribute to the initiative of Mr Wanstall in organising this event. A proud Dovorian, he has campaigned for a number of issues, not always with success. When others doubt him in the future he can always point to the success of organising this event.

# Refurbishment Committee

Jenny Olpin

Since Christmas the Refurbishment Committee has continued to lobby for 'Cliff Path' and 'Dover Castle' direction signs at each end of the ER32 Right of Way. In partnership with Walkers are Welcome and English Heritage, we are pleased to report that funding for the signs was agreed by Neil McCollum of English Heritage and has included a finger plate safely directing walkers off Langdon Cliff and down the Cliff Path, thus avoiding the dangerous bends of Upper Road. However, Refurbishment has agreed to further lobby Kent Highways, Dover District Council (DDC) and other agencies to urgently consider the safety of the increasing number of visitors daily using Upper Road to access the Cliff and, vice versa, Dover Castle. We will keep you updated of any progress.

Deborah Gasking, Refurbishment member and very active with the Dour, has been reporting on the renovation of the Victorian railings on Barton Path, off Beaconsfield Road. This is work in progress, whilst the Bridge Street railings have been removed, renovated and returned, looking very smart.

Keeping our focus on litter issues is an endless task and we regularly contact DDC via their web site to report concerns. We urge you to use their site if you have any litter concerns. Currently Refurbishment are developing a focus on recycling and we are looking forward to welcoming Liz Hayes of 'Plastic Free Dover' to meet with us. Mike McFarnell keeps us

regularly updated on the Town Team activities, the Co-Innovation project and other Town Centre initiatives and ideas.

Having a remit to review, monitor, support and lobby for any issues regarding tourism we have been pleased to recruit to Refurbishment Denise Smith of the Dover Greeters. In our engagement with Kent Police, Denise has volunteered to join the PCSO's in their 'surgeries' in and around the Market Square. We look forward hearing of her experiences.

In March we were pleased to be invited to be part of the inaugural meeting of the Dover Community Network hosted by Dover Technical College. This initiative is aimed at bringing together a range of groups to work in partnership for our community.

Finally, Refurbishment has taken up the challenge of lobbying regarding the appalling sparsity of Public Conveniences in Dover. Watch this space, responses to date have been encouraging, so fingers crossed!



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You can change your preferences or withdraw consent at any time by contacting us at: [secretary@thedoversociety.co.uk](mailto:secretary@thedoversociety.co.uk).

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(\*Please tick box)

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Signed: ..... Date: .....

## Practical Help

I/We could sometimes give practical help with the following (please tick relevant sections)

Social events  Writing for newsletter  Projects e.g. clearance, surveys

Photography  Any other interests or expertise .....



## THE DOVER SOCIETY CHRISTMAS LUNCH

### Sunday 2 December, 2018

Our Christmas Lunch will be held in the Stone Hall in **Maison Dieu**, our magnificent historical Town Hall.

There will be a three course meal with coffee and mints. A welcome drink of mulled wine or tropical fruit punch is included in the price of **£25.00 per person**. Other drinks may be purchased at the Bar. After lunch we welcome Quadlibet who will be providing entertainment for us.

Welcome drinks will be available from **12.30pm** and lunch will begin promptly at 1.00pm.

#### Menu

##### Starter:

- [A] Quenelles of mushroom pate served with red onion chutney, rocket, tomatoes and granary bread
- [B] Plump prawn and crayfish cocktail served on a bed of seasonal leaves with malted granary bread
- [C] A traditional brie & asparagus cheesecake served warm on a bed of baby leaf spinach

##### Main:

- [D] Roast turkey breast with port, cranberry and orange stuffing, chipolata sausage, roast potatoes and vegetables
- [E] Roast beef with Yorkshire pudding and a rich horseradish gravy, roast potatoes and

vegetables

- [F] Butternut squash filled with roasted Mediterranean vegetables, roast potatoes
- [G] Paupiette of plaice with asparagus and a light hollandaise sauce, roast potatoes and vegetables

##### Dessert:

- [H] Traditional Christmas pudding with brandy cream
- [I] Selection of cheeses, celery and dried fruits
- [J] Mango and Passionfruit Bavaois served with pouring cream

Welcome Drink:

- [K] Mulled wine
- [L] Tropical fruit punch

To book your place(s), please complete the form below and return it together with your cheque made payable to **THE DOVER SOCIETY** to: Beverley Hall, 61 Castle Avenue, Dover CT16 1EZ Tel: 01304 202646. If a receipt is required please enclose a S.A.E.




---

#### Christmas Lunch – Sunday 1 December, 2019 – £25.00 per person

Name: .....

Address: .....

Telephone: ..... No. of places @ £25.00 each .....

Please select for each person, your choice of menu and welcome drink (mulled wine or fruit punch).

Name(s)	Starter	Main	Dessert	Drink
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
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# Memories - A Boy's War in Hell Fire Corner

Barry Fincham

I was born in Buckland in the early 1930's and attended Barton Road School.

1936: early memories of the trams standing bumper to bumper in River (now Lewisham Road) awaiting disposal. My parent's concern listening to Chamberlain's speech and his declaration of war against Germany on 3rd September 1939. Earning rebukes from my father as he struggled to erect the Anderson shelter in our back garden. The first air raid warning, which was a false alarm, but the sound of the sirens frightened all of us and we took shelter in the next door neighbour's wooden garden shed! Fun trying on our gas masks; my younger sister had one with a Mickey Mouse design and the baby of the family was placed in a sealed canopy which he didn't like one bit. Moving into a bigger house in Shrubbery Cottages and watching soldiers drilling in the road outside. With my sister watching soldiers camouflaging themselves in hedgerows all around our locality, tank traps constructed alongside the railway lines and with concrete obstacles at the bottom of Crabble Hill (now the Daihatsu Garage).

The schools closing, talk of invasion and many of our friends being evacuated. My mother told us we should all stay together when the Germans came and not to be afraid. Being taken to Waldershare hospital for a tonsil extraction. Wounded soldiers seemed to be everywhere. Being sent home straight away after the operation as every bed was needed - everyone talking about the retreat from Dunkirk - when would the dreaded Germans come?

The Battle of Britain - watching from our shelter, the skies full of aeroplanes. Gunfire

- and being told to stay in the shelter because of falling shrapnel.

With no school there was plenty of time to watch barrage balloons and searchlights being installed and the one in Cherry Tree Avenue (now Kwikfit garage) was one of my favourite places when getting the groceries from the Co-operative Store. Ration books and no more sweets, bananas or oranges! Dark bread.

The night of the 12th June 1941: the dropping of an aerial landmine on Dover. An air raid warning had been sounded but no enemy planes heard, so after an hour or so we went back to bed. A huge explosion occurred some hours later and the sky was seen to be glowing over the Union Road area, but only a distant hum of a plane was heard. Trying to see the next morning what had happened, but not able to get very far up Union Road (now Coombe Valley Road) as the road and pavements were ankle deep in debris. Randolph Road was obliterated and I could see many rescue workers searching the rubble and feeling sick with fear as my Grandparent's house once stood there.

Very little was found of my Grandfather and my Grandmother died a few weeks later from her injuries. 15 people perished that night.

The coffins were draped with Union flags as they were taken for burial in Buckland cemetery. Feeling deep sadness and shock at the loss of my Grandparents but also a sense of pride that the two older sons, both in uniform, stood to attention and saluted their parent's coffins as they passed by. Acquired two new members to our family:

my Grandparent's two surviving teenage sons (from the Randolph Road disaster), so a move to a bigger house in London Road was necessary.

Part time schooling commenced in 1942 at Buckland School. Boys in the morning, girls in the afternoon. Now a member of Buckland Church Choir and graduated from the Cubs into the Scouts 15th, Saint Andrew's. Every morning I did a paper round serving Kearsney and River districts from Eddy Mills Paper Shop (now Crabble Post Office). Early morning start and at the end, a cup of hot weak tea, no sugar, from Oliver's Tea Barrow (2d per cup), parked in the ARP yard next to the tram sheds (now Hollis Motors).

Scout camps in Kent countryside, always under canvas and fun fruit picking and finding our way around with all road signs etc., removed as a war security measure.

More and more evacuated children returning to Dover from their billets in Wales (except County school pupils). Conversely, more Dover residents leaving the town as the shelling increased. The Dover population almost halved and I knew practically everyone in our locality.



*Robin Hood Townwall Street*



*Randolph Road 1941*

Surprisingly, very little theft reported from vacated property – a combination of heavy policing (the enthusiastic Specials) plus people were too pre-occupied with looking after their own safety to be bothered with thieving.

Buckland School recommenced full time education in January 1943. Miss Radford as head teacher. I was transferred back to Barton Road School later in the year.

Frequent air raids and shelling from the German guns in the Pas de Calais now a regular occurrence - most nights disturbed and spent in the shelters. One frightful aspect of shelling was that a shell had to fall before the air raid siren could be sounded and people could take shelter. In Buckland, a fore-warning of an imminent shelling attack was to hear the hooters of the army diesel trains used to haul the shells etc., for the long range guns hidden in the Guston railway tunnel. We knew that when our guns fired the Germans would retaliate.

1944: a shell fell at the back of our house and badly damaged the rear half. Our family had taken refuge under the stairs, being too frightened to run to the Buckland School shelter. Despite debris, my mother lit the gas stove to make us tea and the rescue workers went berserk as there was gas leaking everywhere but we had the tea never-the-less! Moved to a new home on



*St James Street*

Crabble Hill with only a few bits and pieces salvaged from our shell damaged home – the utility furniture purchased was of poor quality and there was no Social Security or counselling in those days. Air raids and shelling now more intense. Old Park Barracks became full of American GI's and French Canadians as well many British Regiments. The GI's were extremely generous and a great favourite with the children - always ready to give us sweets or gum and the black Americans were especially nice and would always be interested to talk and listen to your news.

The Royal Engineer's Regiment occupying Buckland Mill House began to move out in May 1944 and it was common knowledge that an invasion of Europe was imminent. Crabble Hill was jam packed with tanks and heavy equipment. As a paper delivery boy I was always up to date with the latest war news and keenly followed the progress maps in the papers, of the Allies advance into France following the invasion of Europe on June 6th 1944 - and we were longing for the long range guns in the Pas de Calais to be captured and silenced: earning extra money by selling newspapers to the transit troops as they moved from Old Park Barracks and always given some extra rations from the cookhouse! Completing my paper round toward the end of that

month I was terrified to watch a low flying German plane roar overhead with flames shooting out from its tail end. The noise was tremendous and I didn't realise that I was witnessing the sight of the first doodle bugs (V1's) en route for London.

The shelling in the town during August and September was intense and in one day in September over 50 shells fell on the town. We stayed and slept in the deep air raid shelter in Buckland Mill grounds. In October the Canadians finally captured the German cross channel guns and for us it felt like peace at last. Along with 100 other Dover children we were given a fortnights' holiday in Brighton, courtesy of the New Zealand Regiment stationed in that town – it was marvellous.

German POW's started working in the town, digging a large trench up London Road and Old Park Road to install a new drainage system. They were unguarded and seemed a sullen, down-trodden lot - many housewives gave them tea and showed them sympathy although they were still our sworn enemies: I learnt my first German word – 'Jause' (southern German for break time).

V1's and now V2's raining down on London



*Stembrook 1947*

with no defence at all against the V2 rockets - fortunately Dover only experienced 3 V1's and they landed on the outskirts.

May 8th 1945: victory at last with Germany having to accept unconditional surrender. Jubilation all over town. A huge bonfire on the beach with plenty of wood from war damaged property to keep it going. Singing in Buckland Church choir at a massed church service in Charlton Parish Church to celebrate Victory in Europe.

Following the dropping of the atomic bombs, Japan surrendered on 15th August. Feeling immense relief that the Americans had developed these horrendous weapons before the Nazis.

Food rationing still in force and the winter of 45-46 was particularly severe and fuel was hard to come by. The council decided to rip out all the hardwood blocks between the old tram lines in London Road and Crabble Hill and these provided a much needed heating source for many households - but also caused many chimney fires! Singing in the choir in St. Mary's in Castro at the Castle for the inauguration of Winston Churchill as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. I was thrilled to be sitting only a few feet away from this great man who had inspired us all during the long terrible years of war.

Now working for my living assisting a blacksmith/plumber at the Western Heights Citadel and working alongside German POW's who were imprisoned up there. Despite everything I felt a certain pity for some of the younger POW's and helped them by selling their cleverly made wooden toys in exchange for cigarettes for friends and family. Walking along the former Liverpool Street to the Drill hall for the Sea Cadets' parades and band practice (now the former leisure centre). No street lights and

the utter desolation and shattered silhouettes of the once proud Burlington hotel and Granville Gardens (now Gateway flats and part of Townwall Street).

Apprenticeship at the Dover Packet yard and restarting my education again in earnest at the Dover Technical College (now being converted into luxury apartments). Attending evening classes four times a week and sitting alongside the returning County School boys, realising that I had a mountain to climb if I was to achieve anything in my life.

The joy of being able to swim in the sea once more and the beached stern half of HMS Codrington made a first class diving platform. Being a member of PC Punter's Penguin Swimming Club and using the Duke of York's swimming pool.

Reflections: war in any form is terrible and for civilians caught up in it is especially terrifying and shelling from an unseen enemy is horrific. During those war years 2,226 shells fell on Dover and everyone in the town heard each terrifying explosion and thanked God they were not on the receiving end. Even after 60 years I still feel my stomach turn over when a low flying aircraft goes overhead and sudden loud explosions cause my heart to miss a beat.

Anyone who thinks or says they had a good war is either lying or simply stupid - for those who suffered it leaves permanent scars and glorifying war is totally incomprehensible to my mind and has no place in a modern society. The Second World War cost the lives of 55 million people and I will always be grateful to all those young men and women from all over the Free World who gave their lives to defeat Nazism. We could not have made it alone.

Dover had the heart ripped out of it and it

has never really recovered. There was never any money available from the Government or private investment to restructure the town back into its pre-war elegance and character. Old, much loved, damaged properties were demolished and cheap, colourless buildings, lacking any sort of character, were substituted. The one exception is the Gateway flats which, over the years, have slowly merged into the seafront landscape and now appear quite

acceptable.

The one jewel in Dover's crown - remains the seafront and promenade - and thankfully, every effort to turn it into another Southend has been resisted. When I walk along the seafront and gaze up at the magnificent Dover Castle, (where, in 1907 in army married quarters, my father was born). I feel a sense of pride in the town which is still very dear to my heart.

## **Death of Denys Le Fevre**

### **Peter Sherrad**

**D**enys Le Fevre, who was well known in Dover and across the County as an artist famed for his pen and ink drawings enhanced by his use of water colours, died on April 9th in a Wiltshire hospital at the age of 89.

Living previously in Ramsgate he moved for reasons of health and age with his wife Barbara a couple of years ago to be near his son and daughter in law in Wiltshire. He and Barbara were married for over 60 years celebrating their diamond wedding anniversary in 2015 in Sandwich.

Denys was a frequent visitor to Dover and had a close association with the late John

Turnpenny with whom he often commuted daily to Calais on the occasions of the Calais Foire in the 1980s and 1990s and in association with the Dover Chamber of Commerce.

During his life he received many prestigious commissions and held exhibitions at the Barbican Arts Centre in London and in various places in France. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and his pictures grace private and public collections across the world. Among his many creations were aspects of Dover both Town and Port and he provided work for the Confederation of the Cinque Ports over the years. So popular were his works that in his retirement exhibition in 2014 over 50% of his pictures were snapped up by the time of closure of the exhibition.

Denys leaves a wife Barbara and two sons, Simon and Graham. A long serving member of the Knights Templar Denys served as Grand Prior of England for eleven years before becoming Grand Prior Emeritus. A fuller appreciation of his life and work appeared in Dover Society's newsletter number 81 in November 2014.



*Denys Le Fevre*

# Heritage Open Days in Dover 2019

## FREE!

Derek Leach

This year around the country Heritage Open Days will be spread over two consecutive weekends on 14/15 and 21/22 September. Once again The Dover Society is coordinating arrangements in Dover. 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. In Dover this year 10 buildings will be open to the public free of charge.

**Western Heights North Entrance Road Tunnel Guided Tours:** Access to the North Entrance Road Tunnel on the Western Heights Dover will be opened specially again this year. Built in the 1860s, it provided vehicular and pedestrian access to the military defences from the town of Dover. It was closed around 1967 when a new road was cut through the ramparts and public access stopped a few years later.

Pre-booking is essential as places are strictly limited on these guided tours. Due to the terrain the tours are unsuitable for prams and wheelchairs and for young children. The tour route covers uneven ground with low levels of lighting so sturdy footwear should be worn. Limited parking will be available on nearby Drop Redoubt Road. Booking details will be available from 1st September and publicised via the Western Heights Preservation Society website: <http://www.doverwesternheights.org> and Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/WesternHeights>.

**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.

**Dover Town Hall formerly the Maison Dieu:** Founded in 1203 by Hubert de Burgh, then Constable of Dover Castle, the primary purpose of the Maison Dieu was to provide free board and lodging for pilgrims on their way to the shrine of Thomas Becket at Canterbury and, later, to care for the elderly poor and sick of Dover. A chapel was added in 1227, which was adapted in the 19th



Maison Dieu © Alan Lee



century as a court. More buildings were added over the centuries. In 1536, the religious house was suppressed by King 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 impressive 13th century Stone Hall 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.

**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 King 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 Dover 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.

**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.

**Dover College:** Incorporating the remains of St. Martin's Priory: built in the 12th century, but suppressed in 1535 as part of King Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries. The site was then leased for farming and most of the buildings fell into disrepair. Fortunately, the grand Norman refectory was used as a barn and survives today. Dover College opened on the site in 1871 when the refectory and gatehouse were restored and the king's hall became the college chapel. Part of the cloister also survives. The entrance is from Effingham Crescent.



*St Edmund's Chapel*

**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, then rebuilt by the Normans. At the

Dissolution it was saved from demolition when King 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.

**Bell Tower of St. Mary the Virgin:** In the gallery of this Norman tower visitors will see how the bellringers operate and in the clock chamber they will see the clock workings and various artefacts.

**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 and 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 and dolls' house show, as well as refreshments.

**St. Radegund'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:**

**Weekend 14/15 September** St. Edmund's Chapel – Saturday only, 10am to 4pm

St. Mary's Church – Saturday only, 10am to 4pm

Bell Tower of St. Mary the Virgin – Saturday only, 1pm to 4pm

St. Radegund's Abbey – Guided tours on Sunday only, 10.30 to noon and 2.30pm to 4pm

Unitarian Church – Saturday and Sunday, 10am to 4pm

Town Hall/Maison Dieu – Guided tours Saturday only, 10am to 4pm

**Weekend 21/22 September** Western Heights North Entrance tunnel – Saturday and Sunday, pre-booked tours only 10am to 3pm.

Grand Shaft Staircase – Saturday and Sunday, 10am to 4pm

Dover College/Dover Priory ruins – Guided tours only at 11am and 2pm on Saturday and Sunday. Maison Dieu House – Saturday only, 10am to 4pm

**Publicity leaflets** are available from the Visitor Information Centre (now located in Dover Museum), Dover Town Council Offices (Maison Dieu House), Dover Town Hall and Dover Library.

To find out about other buildings open in the region 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)

## BOOK REVIEW

# Secret Dover

### Jeff Howe

Reviewed by Terry Sutton

Dover Society member Jeff Howe is to be congratulated on his detailed research which reveals a range of little known facts about our town. Jeff, a garage manager and an active member of the Western Heights Preservation Society, is the author of the most readable book *Secret Dover* (Amberley: 2019 £14.99).

He delves into the background of Dover's long-demolished Promenade Pier, leading citizens who invested in it, why it failed financially and highlights the artistes who entertained townsfolk and visitors there.

Jeff, who gave a talk to our society about the location of the Archcliffe round towers that once defended Dover's western harbour, provides more details about these historic forts depicted in the well-known painting of Henry VIII setting sail from Dover for the Field of Cloth of Gold.

He unearths more facts about the Western Heights and recalls the military hospital that once stood on the lower slopes of the Western Heights and some of the staff who worked there. This hospital was demolished not all that long ago. I was given injections there in the late 1940s before embarking for North Africa military service.

I was very interested in his research about Hellfire Corner Dover at the time of the Dunkirk Evacuation, when the town played host to British,

Allied and American journalists just waiting for the German invasion. He recalls the raid that virtually destroyed The Grand Hotel in Wellesley Road and the rescue of journalists from the debris. His map of the British anti-invasion defence zones is among the wide range of excellent illustrations in the book.

In my opinion many of Jeff's "secrets" have been culled from the pages of the *Dover Express* (and possibly other newspapers) but where the author shines is his detailed follow-up research which makes *Secret Dover* such a good read.



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# Planning Committee

## Patrick Sherratt

More and more applications are being made for Change of Use (COU) to Town Centre properties. We continue to make comments that, in general, support a COU rather than see a building become a derelict eyesore, however, we strive to seek quality conversions. Sadly many are for sub-standard flats and Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO's) that we strongly oppose. I cover this subject elsewhere in my report.

### **Dover Western Docks Revival (DWDR)**

A date to remember 3rd May 2019 at 4pm. This is when the new Marina Pier opened to the public. Early community comments are positive regarding the structure but of concern is Dover Harbour Board has not restricted cycling or skateboarding and this is causing problems for those taking a walk. It is hoped that some seating will also be provided at a future date.

The marina cut is almost completed, and the design will enhance the safety from tidal flooding. The bascule bridge is also complete.

Part of the facilities within the cargo area is a berth that will accommodate "Port of Call" cruise ships, this berth classified as "Berth C". This will enable up to three large cruise ships to be handled at any one time at the "Western Docks".

It will be interesting to see if this berth is first used on the 9th July as Hapag Lloyds MV Europa is scheduled to use berth "C". Three ships were originally to use the port on this date but now only two are shown as calling at Dover on this date.

After this date the next occasion when three ships are scheduled is the 30th July with the Aidaaura on "C" berth and Viking Jupiter on CT1 with Pacific Princess on CT2. We wish this new facility all good wishes for the future in order to attract more cruise ships to Dover.

### **DTIZ (St James Development)**

Now over one year since opening. Still eight units available (4 retail and 4 catering) although still one retail and one catering "under offer" for the last six months. During the planning process we emphasized the need for good quality landscaping, as landscaping had been considerably reduced possibly to reduce the overall cost of the project. The very limited landscaping is far from satisfactory as maintenance is neglected, we hope this will improve in the future.

### **Castle Street/Biggin Street**

Planning applications continue for properties from "commercial" to "residential". One application (re 13 Castle Street) made application for COU last year for two residential units and has now re-submitted for FIVE rooms (possibly 10+ occupants) as a HMO. Experience has shown many badly managed HMO's create anti-social behaviour and with only one small kitchen for all residents a higher level of rubbish due to relying on take-aways.

It is recognized Castle Street has a very high visitor footfall and photos are taken from the Market Square towards the Castle. As such we consider this application with HMO facilities is not desirable. It should be noted in close proximity there are already

15 HMO properties capable of housing up to 227 occupants. We have strongly objected and since we have made the local community aware 15 members of the public have also objected.

### **Conservation Areas**

Comments to DDC by both Planning and Refurbishment Committees continue in the attempt to visually improve these important areas.

### **Section 215 of Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Enforcement**

Thank you for the positive comments to me following the article on this subject in the March newsletter.

### **Farthingloe and Western Heights**

Current plans show very little variation to those previously submitted. We recognize the heritage benefits to the Western Heights but are concerned as to the volume of housing in Farthingloe despite some improved landscaping. As such we remain unable to totally support this application.

### **Connaught Barracks Developments**

A "Hybrid" application that in effect is outline planning for up to 300 dwellings. Phasing of development, and details of a new road junction from the development (and Guston) onto the A258. It would appear some blocks of flats could be up to five storeys in height and not suitable in close proximity to the castle. The opportunity for high quality "market housing" seems to have been missed on this panoramic site with views of the castle and English Channel.

### **Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO's)**

I have alluded to some of the problems these create if not well managed. Those with "bonafide" organisations such as Porchlight, that have 24/7 supervision, in

general have few problems. It is those that are managed by Agents that are not on the property that are the most problematic.

Latest statistics by DDC confirm that now ALL wards in Dover are within the top 20% of deprived wards in England. The lack of planning control has to be a major contributor and sadly reflects the failure of DDC to deliver its statement contained in the 2010 Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework "Have no areas falling within the 20% of those most deprived in England".

Within the District there are 47 licensed HMO premises of which 41 (87%) are in Dover. The total permitted HMO occupants in the District being 510 with 91% (465) in Dover.

It has long been reported in respect of HMO problems in Thanet. Thanet District Council for several years has restricted the granting of HMO's. We have sought similar restrictions in Dover as "absent" landlords now see Dover as a soft touch to exploit private sector housing.

The Socio-economic profile of Dover has considerably declined and is restrictive to quality inward development within the town.

Of interest is the comments made by one member of the public in respect to the 13 Castle Street HMO application. "Margate with a population of 58,000 and 20 HMOs compared to Dover 41 HMO's and a population 30,000"

Let us all hope Dover District Council start to take control of this problem and deliver the Local Development Framework statement to have no areas within the 20% of those most deprived in England.

# River Dour Partnership

Deborah Gasking

White Cliffs Countryside Partnership's (WCCP) greengang has put on more river labs with Affinity Water than you can shake a trout at. Together with Affinity, Barton and White Cliffs schools, the Dour is being put into the curriculum these two terms with the hope this will become a self-spawned permanent topic for following years. WCCP have 32 active volunteer river wardens who are reporting issues, counting wildlife and attending courses so that they may gain vital knowledge.

It is not long now until the River Centre, at Buckland Bridge, will be opening. With some bespoke instalments needed, a sign and some basic equipment it could well be open in time for the summer holidays.

The litter clear-ups have been under way for a couple of months now - any volunteers amongst you? Tea, coffee, cakes and bananas plus good company always on offer - email me for info: deb4tune8@yahoo.co.uk

The Barton Path railings will very soon be fully restored back to their Victorian beauty. All this sounds great, but... being a keen Dourite, I have to sadly say that I have not seen one trout this year. I've reported this to the South East Rivers Trust. Could those of you who walk the river - any part of it - please let me know if you see ANY trout, could you then email me at deb4tune8@yahoo.co.uk and let me know where you saw the fish, plus time of day



*Volunteers in the Dour!*

# Dover Society Newsletters

Paul Skelton

Being a bona fide 'Dover Shark' (one who was born and bred in Dover) a couple of years ago I decided that it was about time I joined the Dover Society and did so in 2017. I was very glad to receive my first edition of the newsletter, which I believe was number 90, November 2017. "What a wonderful read," I thought, and wished I had joined earlier and wondered just what I had missed in previous issues.

Two years later, at the start of 2019, I was contemplating asking the committee whether they had any back issues that I could 'borrow' in order to catch up on missed articles. Then saw in the latest newsletter that our Membership Secretary, Sheila Cope, had a surplus of old editions that she wanted to reduce and she said she would offer them around at subsequent meetings. What an opportunity for me to gain these wonderful archives. What was also made clear, though, was that if someone was looking for a particular article, at present it was impossible to find it as there was no full index, and she asked whether there were any volunteers who would like to take on the task of creating one?

I envisaged someone sitting down in front of a desk, wading through these newsletters page by page, and making notes regarding the contents on a rolodex or some sort of database on a computer, and then trying to put them into an order that could be searched.

That sounded like time consuming work to me and most certainly a labour of love, especially to get it right. But in a mad

moment I decided offer my services, much to the dismay of my family and friends, who told me that I didn't have the time, that it was too much work and that I'd never get it finished, along with all the other activities I was currently doing.

To give a few statistics of the size of this project there are 94 editions of the newsletter to date, most containing over 50 pages and, a quick calculation tells me, over two and a quarter million words in total.

They say there's a small line between insanity and genius. They told me I was barmy in taking on this task, being in full time work as well. Surely it's something for someone who is retired? Then again you have only got to see me in the street to know that I am a little bit unorthodox and find it difficult to hide in a crowd. Eccentric, some call it, not quite the norm others. I think I know which side of the line I stand.

The task that I believe they requested, wasn't quite what I had in mind for an end result. I wanted better. I wanted to reference not just every article, but every word, 2.5 million of them. What the devil am I taking on here? Madness has finally caught me, surely. I always seem to take on huge and seemingly impossible tasks.

As soon as I picked the editions up, I knew this would be a bit of a challenge, but it was Easter, and I had two weeks off work as the schools were closed, so I knew I had a bit of free time. I had another thing in my favour as well. A computer, scanner,



and programs that would help me with this task and, better still, I had done similar work before.

But just how much work had I actually taken on? I'll let you decide with the following account of what was necessary. I will keep this as technically simple as I can, by the way.

My first task was literally to scan every page to capture a digital image. The last few copies, I was glad to find, were already available as PDF files (Printable Document Format), so they were ready for computer manipulation. The paper newsletters already being bound, I scanned two pages at a time, side by side. That totalled no less than 2,279 scans. However, I really wanted every page to be able to be viewed separately and in the correct order, not two at a time. I could have scanned each page separately, but that would have doubled the scanning time. I needed every page on its own, and started to do this with an image manipulation program Paint Shop Pro (very similar to Photoshop). However, the next program I used would do this automatically for me I discovered, thus saving more time in splitting over 2,000 images I am glad to say.

This next program was an OCR (Optical Character Recognition) program, which literally identifies the scans I had produced and distinguishes between pictures and text. This is very important and makes the contents of the files it produces searchable. The images were now not just bitmaps, (a picture made up like a huge sheet of graph paper with every square coloured in a different colour - you only have to enlarge one to see what I mean by this), but the part of the scan that looks like a letter is now actually recognised as a letter of the alphabet and

not a series of dots. This program not only does this, but also splits the images where there are two pages on a scanned image, giving separate pages, and also allows me to change the order if required and rotate them too. Of course, I had to move the scan of the front and back cover into the correct order. There was also one edition that, for some unknown reason, had its pages printed in the wrong order. That has now been corrected. The program referred to, but the way is ABBYY Fine Reader, but there are others on the market.

Having now processed all 94 newsletters, put them in the correct order, page by page, and converted them into a computer readable format, I saved each complete newsletter as an individual PDF file, each individually searchable on the computer using the "Find command (Ctrl F)" from within the program that will open the file.

However, this still wasn't the end result I wanted and I still didn't have the facilities to search all newsletters 94 at once for a required article or, indeed, author or word.

I also wanted this to be user friendly, otherwise who would know what to do with a disk containing nothing more than files with titles such as 001.pdf, 002.pdf and so on.

Next was to create an index page that would allow you to open each file on any web viewer such as Internet Explorer or Google Chrome, (or Safari etc. for those who prefer an Apple machine), and to do this I needed to go into web design mode and write some HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) files. This actually isn't as difficult as it sounds, I use a program called Microsoft Frontpage, although if you know your coding you could do this in a program as basic as Notepad.

I then had another file burnt onto the disk that contains a menu system viewable just like a website, but which will run from the disk, so is transportable to any computer.

Now, I have already said that each file is individually searchable using the "Find" command, and we all know that you can also search for things on the web using a program like Google, but Google doesn't know this disk exists, and I wanted all files to be searched at once, directly from the disk and for any word, just like Google.

I have another program called Zoom Search Engine Indexer, which will look at all the PDF and web files on the disk, and create its own Search Engine from the data now contained within those files. Those files are also saved to the disk and will run it just like the Google search engine so I wrote a little more HTML into the menu to point to that search file.

Here I need to explain in more detail what this search engine allows you to do. Should you, for instance, wish to find a specific word or words, this search engine will tell you every newsletter in which they exist and allow you to open that newsletter. Although quick, that's not as good as I really want, as you would then have to do a secondary search using the "Find" command to find where in that file your chosen word occurs. But, again I have the solution. And another mad moment, probably, as surely I have completed the original task. Yes, but not to the standard I had planned.

The next stage may seem to some like as if I was going backwards, but this was necessary, unfortunately, to enable me to make the search results user friendly. I used a program to split each newsletter into individual pages again and save them as individual files, this time not scanned

JPG picture files but as searchable PDF files.

Then came the manual work I was trying to avoid at the beginning, I had to identify each article but, luckily for me, each edition of the newsletter has its own "contents" page. My original menu identified only each edition by date and opened that newsletter with a click of the mouse, I changed those links to open a sub-menu containing the contents list of all the articles that appeared in each edition.

From my now split files just saved, I collected only those pages for each article, Again, is written on and kind of stitch them back together again and save that as another file. Thus producing an individual file for each article. AMMY does this very well. This secondary menu points to each



*Paul Skelton*

article, allowing you to access just that and not the whole newsletter. Of course, the search engine will now find not only the edition in which the chosen article was written, as I still have a file containing the complete newsletter as printed, but also individual files containing only that article. This method also allows me to remove all the advertisements, if they split an article in half.

Some may think that work is now complete, but I can guarantee that although it has been done with utmost care, there will always be a few errors, so the next step is to test that all the links work. I am glad to say that, although this could be done manually, with the aid of a program called Xenu Link Sleuth I am able to check automatically that every link points at least to an article. What can't be checked, though, is that they all point to and open the correct file. Although the

menu from the search engine is accurate, links from my web based file menu will have to be checked manually, but I'll leave that to people using the disks and ask them to report back to me any anomalies found.

So, that's all it takes really. Oh, and, if I have created the disk correctly, adding one last file, it should open automatically when you put the disk into your computer, presenting you with the main menu in your chosen internet browser.

My moment of madness is now complete I reckon. It's now over to the committee to decide whether they want the entire disk's contents uploaded to their web site to be available to the world, or whether they wish to produce disks to be used without internet access for anyone who wishes to acquire a copy. This should work either way.

## Dover Society Badges



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Contact the editor at:

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# PROGRAMME 2019

*Non-members are welcome at all meetings except that only members may vote at the Annual General Meeting. You may join on the night and vote at the meeting.*

Monday 9  
to Friday 13  
September  
£395 pp

**A 4-night stay in York:** The price includes; Coach travel from Dover Half board at the Parsonage Hotel and Spa  
You will have a full day to explore the ancient City of York at your leisure.  
A day excursion to Harrogate: This offers the opportunity to visit the Royal Horticultural Society Garden at Harlow Carr (there will be an entrance fee for non-RHS members). A day out with admission to the famous Beamish Museum Open Air Museum, telling life in the North East in the 1820's, 1900's and the 1940's. An outing to Barnsdale Gardens: This consists of 38 separate gardens created by the late Geoff Hamilton of Gardeners' World fame. The services of a Tour Manager is included. This short break is a shared tour with the Silver Phoenix Travel Club.

**A £100 supplement single occupancy of a twin/double room applies**

To book or for further details contact: Rodney Stone Tel: 01304 852838

21 October  
Monday 7.30

**Speakers:**

**Jeff Howe** "The Sun Fire Insurance and Archcliffe"

**Chris Townend (DDC Tourism Strategy Manager)**

"The District Tourism Strategy"

18 November  
Monday 7.30

**Speakers:**

**Doug Bannister (CEO DHB)** "Port of Dover Update"

**Lynda Pearce (Assistant Curator Dover Museum)** "Local Memories of WW2"

2 December  
Sunday 12.30  
for 1pm  
£25.00

**Dover Society Christmas Lunch**

Our Christmas Luncheon will take place in the Stone Hall of the Maison Dieu, the historical Town Hall.

The price includes a three course meal, coffee, mints and a welcome drink of mulled wine or fruit punch. Other drinks may be purchased at the bar. Quadlibet will be providing the musical entertainment of course there will be our end of year raffle.

A booking form is available on the centre page of this newsletter. More details and a further booking form will be available in the next newsletter or you can contact Beverley. Please make sure you complete the booking form with your choice of menu and welcome drink.

**To book: Complete the enclosed form and return with your payment, cheques made payable to "The Dover Society", to: Beverley Hall, 61 Castle Avenue Dover CT16 1EZ Tel: 01304 202646**

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

*Non-members are welcome on all society outings.*

*For all outings and events please book as early as possible.*

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