

in the newly opened Museum in Ladywell were exhibited the Town Plate and the old Burghmote Horn, now, alas, vanished.

Although at the time the Eastern Docks seemed busy, there were but two ferry berths, land reclamation was just beginning, and the Hovercraft was as yet in the experimental stage.

Maybe it is wrong to look back over 30 years. I no longer wonder what on earth is a flead cake, and perhaps have almost ceased to regret the disappearance of the Salutation Inn and the lovely catalpa tree by the Library, although it would be nice to have a Cricket Week again. But I, and thousands of true Dovorians, care desperately about the future of the Town, and would dearly like to see it regain its old enchantment.

Marion Horsfield

I came from the Midlands to live in Dover on January 1st 1946. It was not the bomb and shell damage which I remember most clearly, for I had experienced both having spent the war years in Coventry, but the incredible kindness of the Dovorian people, not least that of the shopkeepers. Rationing was still the order of the day. I have not forgotten dear Mr and Mrs Morris, Family Grocers, and 'Daddy' Morris's superb ham sandwiches, Albert Decourt, Butcher of 'The Hole in the Wall', Bench Street, with his advice in plenty on 'best buys', pleasant Mrs Emmons in the Orange Shop and Charlton Creamery, Frith Road, run by Mr and Mrs Savage.

Living by the sea was a totally new experience. A Sea Front shared with a railway, and long, pleasant walks on cliffs littered with barbed wire entanglements, to St Margaret's Bay and Kingsdown, offering splendid views of the magnificent harbour and across the Channel. More than 40 years on, I have no wish to leave. Dover is still very much home for me.

Freda Brook

I hope that these two articles will be the first of a series. Contributions of First Impressions of any time between 1888 and 1988 invited. Editor.

DOVER - The View from a Wheelchair

I have lived all my life in Dover. I was born here, I grew up here and it was here that I was struck down by Multiple Sclerosis, so gradually that for a while it was barely noticeable. But now, twenty-three years later, I have it rather badly. This makes me very aware of facilities for disabled people, especially those in wheel chairs.

Like other disabled people I have a great deal of time on my hands and I would love to take a course. Unfortunately Further Education is not possible in Dover because there are so many steps at both Westmount and the College of Technology. The staff are most willing but there are limits to what they can do and disabled people are often very independent and don't like making a fuss. At Westmount the toilets, so vital to people like me who don't get much warning, are in the basement.

Dover is not well supplied with toilets for the disabled and even those that exist are not adequately sign-posted. Some of them need a special key which I feel should be more widely advertised or, better still, should be given out with the Orange Badge for disabled drivers.

Another thing that really bothers me, not only in Dover, is that when I go out for refreshments the cup is invariably filled to the brim and I just cannot manage a full cup.

One of the most difficult things to do in a wheelchair is to open a door, especially outwards. It would be greatly appreciated if this problem could be considered when buildings are designed.

This leads me to a personal bug-bear - the Health Centre. On one occasion I was asked to attend a doctor's surgery but, as the doorway was not wide enough for a standard-issue wheelchair, I had to be physically assisted into the room.

If only more were done to encourage the disabled to take part in ordinary life! If you would like to know more about how to do it why don't you come and ask us?

April Nye

Arthritis Care is an organisation with branches all over the country. In the South-East a list of places to visit has been compiled. It does not include Dover as only the seafront is suitable, being flat and having toilets for the disabled.

Dover Town Hall is the place for the Operatic and Choral Societies' performances, for exhibitions and dinners as well as other activities. It is barred to the disabled unless they are prepared to be carried up the steps in their wheelchairs.

The Library, the Citizens' Advice Bureau, the Police Station, the Bus Station Office, the Gas Showroom and other places are impossible or difficult to enter.

At Charlton Centre there is a lift to the upper floor but then a few steps. The ramp is outside and the parking space for the disabled is also not under cover.

Any improvements made for the disabled in wheelchairs would also benefit those with prams, pushchairs and in battery cars.

Ellen Fraser. Secretary of Arthritis Care - Dover Branch



THE DOVER SOCIETY in the 18th CENTURY

No, our Society is not a revival. On 28 January 1756 John Wesley made his first recorded visit to the town and established the Dover Society. He wrote in his journal:

'I preached at noon at Dover to a serious, but small, congregation. We afterwards walked to the Castle, on the top of a mountain. It is an amazingly fine situation. From here we had a clear view of that vast piece of the cliff which a few days ago divided from the rest and fell down upon the beach'.

On 3 December 1760 when he was again in Dover for his annual visit he wrote:

'I rode to Dover [from Canterbury]. Who would have expected to find here some of the best singers in England? I found, likewise, what was better still, a serious, earnest people. There was a remarkable blessing among them, both in the evening and the morning, so that I did not regret having been wet to the skin on my way to them'.

In 1765, on 3 December, he had occasion to rebuke members of his congregation who were engaged in the popular local trade of smuggling.

'While several of them continued to rob the king, we seemed to be ploughing upon the sand...'

On 23 November 1767 he wrote 'I have not found so much life here for years'.