

Other members of the Committee

Ken Berry, Phyllis Dobbins (Dover Action Group), Jeremy Cope, Michael Foad (Advisory Member), Adrian Galley, Peter Johnson, Terry Khambatta, Vera Liggett, Mike McFarnall (Advisory Member), Jim Truelove, Leo Wright.

Letters to the Editor

The Other Tunnel ?

April 22, 1988

Dear Madam,

It is a great pity that your society was not formed sooner. As an ex-Dovorian I have watched, via the "Dover Express", the destruction of Dover's heritage. The five water-mills in the town went to the developers. Try to save the working part of Buckland Paper Mill. At the back of Connaught Barracks is a moat that could be a tourist attraction. I used to go blackberrying in it. No one else realised it existed as it was on war Office ground and had notices about trespassers. It was worth the risk for the blackberries. Ferguson used to rent the land for his cattle. There was also a Dummy Fort on the North Foreland Meadow, another of my playgrounds. In the earthworks at Dover Castle there are rooms and tunnels; I went in them before the war.

There is also in existence a tunnel from the Castle to the Market Square built during the Napoleonic Wars by prisoners of war. Very few Dover people know about it but it was uncovered by a bomb in Castle Street and hastily covered up. It's worth investigating. It is brick-built and its exit was in one of the basements of a shop in the Market Square. One of my brothers was an Air Raid Warden. He got buried by bomb debris in Castle St and, he told me, saw the tunnel but was told not to tell anyone. It was obviously secret because it was a direct route into the Castle, the centre of operations for the Western Approaches. But there is no need for it to be secret now and it could hold artefacts put there for safety and forgotten. The Dover Museum has discounted its existence. Hammonds, the coal merchants, is now swallowed up by a supermarket and restaurant, the River Dour almost obscured, Crundall's and Tolputt's timber mills are gone and Chitty's Flour Mill was replaced by Dover Engineering Works. Only Barton Brook remains as it was in my schooldays, but a bit shallower, of course, and used as a rubbish dump. I am 68 years old now but cannot forget Dover as it was, nor do I want to for that matter.

Yours Faithfully,

Ron. F. Warren
London SW1.

Arts Centre

Dear Editor,

I'm sure it hasn't escaped the notice of fellow members of The Dover Society that our town is culturally bereft - no theatre, no cinema, no concert hall and no art gallery.

It's the latter that concerns me most. At the beginning of this year I exhibited a large number of my paintings and drawings in other towns in East Kent. Several people asked why I'd omitted a showing in Dover and finally had to agree that the omission was inevitable once one looked at spaces available.

To be fair, Michael Foad at the Adult Education Centre at Westmount offered to display my work but available space would have severely restricted the quantity.

Surely it's way beyond time for Dover to include in its plans to promote itself a measure of accessibility to the arts, not just for visitors but for its residents as well. I know of so many local artists, writers, musicians and so on who have nowhere to meet, to exhibit, to absorb and to share. Just imagine the joy of being able to see a contemporary play, look at an exhibition of sculpture and generally just stay in touch with what's new without having to travel out of Dover.

I remember tackling Gladys Payne, the then Leader of the Conservative Group on Dover District Council about this very subject nearly 10 years ago. Her idea was to incorporate an impressive Conference Centre and an Arts Centre in one magnificent building which would be sited (yes, you've guessed it!) exactly where the Channel Tunnel works have devastated the land near Shakespeare Cliff! So much for progress and priorities.

Yours faithfully,

Lesley Gasking

PUBLIC SPIRIT

Five pupils of Astor Secondary School and our Membership Secretary, Barry Smith, are making heroic efforts during the summer holiday to tidy and clear various sites in Dover. More about this in the next issue but meanwhile they would be glad to swell the size of the donation they are making to THE NATIONAL CHILDREN'S HOME. Offerings, however small, to Barry please at 51 Glenfield Road, Dover.

SECOND PUBLIC MEETING

The Society's second public meeting on June 27th in the London Road Methodist Church Hall was attended by over 50 members including three of our Vice-Presidents, Budge Adams, Jack Ind and Lillian Kay.

Mike McFarnell, Dover District Council's Project Officer, displayed a number of enlarged prints and a sequence of slides illustrating various aspects of Dover's problems and projected developments and detailed the anti-litter campaign. He fenced quite skilfully in answer to critical comments on details of the District's plans.

After the service of refreshments (during which nine new members were recruited) John Gerrard, the Society's Vice-Chairman, who is the Harbour Board's Director of Engineering, outlined the long history of Dover's harbour. He went on to describe and illustrate various possible