

AWARDS EVENING 16 October

St Mary's Parish Centre was full for the presentation of the Society's awards by the Mayoress of Dover followed by speeches from the Mayor - Councillor Bill Newman and Dover's MP David Shaw.

Cleaning of the River Dour

This project had been undertaken by a sub-committee of the Society following a suggestion from Mrs Deborah Turner. Sponsorship was obtained from brewers Shepherd Neame and Whitbread. Nine pubs along the river- Cricketers, Fox, Dublin Man o' War, Old Endeavour, Red Lion, Louis Armstrong, Falstaff, Royal Oak, Lord Nelson - and three others - Archer, Alma and Bull's Head - had organised teams of at least 6 volunteers to clean sections of the river. The landlords were congratulated and presented with framed certificates to mark the Society's appreciation of their efforts.

Shop Front Award 1989

On behalf of the judges Peter Marsh of Dudley Marsh, Son & Partners reported on the nominations received. They had been disappointed by the slow response and low number of nominations submitted. The winner, Brodys of Worthington Street, was praised for the retention of original features including side-panels and fascia, and the relationship of the front to the interior of the shop. The Society's ceramic plaque was presented to Mrs Brenda Filtness of Brodys.

In other nominations the judges had looked for features leading to future overall improvement and they particularly commended Bonnies Antiques in Beaconsfield Road as a building treated with care and interest, especially its window boxes.

Dover Society Quiz

Philomena Kennedy thanked the Editor and Deputy Editor of the Dover Express for their help and support. She had been very impressed by the amount of local knowledge displayed by entrants of all ages from 7 upwards. The prize-winners were Mr D E Gavin - £50, Mr A Belsey - £10, and under sixteen, John Whitehead and Anneliese Sencicle.

The Future of Dover by the Mayor

As a native Dovorian Councillor Newman spoke with enthusiasm of the beauty of the town's natural surroundings, its magnificent man-made harbour, castle and fortified heights. In this setting the River Dour should be a jewel. Sadly, in the past, no thought had been given to proper planning of buildings or transport so that random and piecemeal development of land had occurred. For the future we needed to look beyond short-term market gains and to remember our history, ceremony and amenities as well as quality of life. Our environment should be kept and cared for. Attempting to subjugate it could destroy it.

The quality of life could be improved through the social dimension. People needed to be encouraged to join in activities like sports, music, libraries, cinema, cafes, pubs, restaurants, churches, voluntary and charitable work. These needed to function in the town centre to give it life, but also in outer parts such as Buckland or St Radigunds which were totally devoid of social facilities.

A concert hall and theatre were needed, and the present intermittent arts events could perhaps be brought together in a 'Dover Week' which might later grow into a larger Dover Festival.

Dover in a Changing Britain by David Shaw MP

The recent formation of the Dover Society had delighted Mr Shaw as so much was changing in the economy and environment of the town. He briefly reviewed the town's history over 2000 years with its fundamental dependence on the sea. In spite of the Channel Tunnel trade in both passenger and freight traffic should continue successfully with the expansion of trade with other EC countries as well as to Eastern Europe.

For the future there would be both expansions and reductions in employment opportunities. The country's population was ageing, with a 30% growth in the 65 plus age group. Dover had 20% more retired people than the national average and this proportion would increase. Most of these would be the active retired, socially involved, and more prosperous than in the past because of second pensions. Thus demand for hotels, restaurants and shops, and leisure developments like theatre and the arts should increase, providing jobs and perhaps new buildings more attractive than the poor quality post-war structures. Mr Shaw's preference was for Georgian style, but good modern design was acceptable for work buildings. He also stressed the need for the town to remain open and accessible to the sea.

Phyllis Dobbins Committee Member



FIRST MEMBERS' MEETING

On Monday November 20th our first meeting for members to raise and discuss matters of current concern was well attended by some 60 of us in our habitual venue, St Mary's Parish Centre.

The Chairman presented a brief sequence of slides to illustrate potential housing sites, successful initiatives like the river clean-up and Wiggins Teape's landscaped new entrance, and controversial developments like B & Q and the threatened trees on the Halford site opposite the Red Lion.

The Western Heights was obviously included and Vice-President Peter Johnson then outlined the options for the future of the area and explained the Society's decision not to oppose the limited high class development by Dover District Council. Mr Johnson said that the first option was to do nothing and leave the area in its current overgrown, unsightly and hazardous state, with continued tipping and vandalism. The second was to clean it up and restore the Napoleonic fortifications, moats and other features and open it as a tourist attraction; but the cost, including maintenance, would be millions of pounds. The third was the option of partial development (10% out of 200 acres) for high quality, low density housing, with public access both safeguarded and protected for the Drop Redoubt, St Martin's Battery and the Grand Shaft. There would be no skyline development, views and open spaces would be retained and car parking screened with trees. Appropriate building materials would be specified and there would be an archaeological survey. The Society accepted, and would defend, the