

# EDITORIAL

A Happy New Year to all Dover Society members and other readers.

The New Year being a time for reflection, I wonder what changes there will be in 1992 in our rapidly-changing Dover. The last five years have brought substantial changes; the pedestrian precinct, the improvement in Castle Street; the opening of the Heritage Centre, new museum, cinema and Town Gaol; the opening up of the whole area at the end of Dour Street, with Adams Printers, Leo's and B&Q.; the building of Tesco and Texas at Whitfield; the improvement of Pencester Gardens; the re-furbishment of the Town Hall; the coming of the new super-ferries and the Sea-Cat; the building of the new freight berth at Eastern Docks; the addition of extra moorings in the Wellington Dock; and, finally, the start of work on the new A20. All this in five years!

Imagine what might be done in the next five years, and in the five years following that, into the twenty-first century. Meanwhile there is much to be done in the way of planning and preservation; of job creation; of promotion of tourism; of conservation, development and improvement of the town centre. In this future development we hope that the Dover Society, with its increasing influence will have a crucial rôle to play.

Already changes are imminent. Dover is to benefit from a project for environmental assessment and improvement called "Impact", a regeneration scheme already applied to Thanet and Ramsgate and supported by the Kent County Council. Those who attended the Members's Meeting on 25th November heard Adrian Galley, our Planning Committee Chairman, and Councillor Paul Watkins, Chairman of Dover District Council, give an encouraging and positive view of Dover's future, outlining the details of the plans for an economic regeneration for Dover District, supported by the East Kent Business Centre and the Dover Society (for further details see Local Issues Update).

In the words of Councillor Watkins, "it's not all gloom and doom — things are moving forward." After this optimistic news, Dover residents will be observing, with increased interest, each stage of the new developments, especially in Cannon Street.

As Budge Adams reminded us later in the evening, we must not be too concerned or upset at major changes in the town, as it has been said that historically, town centre sexperience major changes approximately every seventy years. It is an inexorable process but it can be influenced by societies such as ours.

Certainly the next two years will be crucial to Dover's future development and, with the completion of the new A20/M20, the appearance of Dover will be substantially altered.

In walking the route of the projected A20, from Aycliffe to the Eastern Docks, it is difficult in places to visualise the finished dual carriage-way. One tends to think only of the noise, dust and inconvenience which must be endured before it is completed, particularly by the people of Aycliffe, Snargate Street and East Cliff. At East Cliff, despite the dust and din, there is a strange fascination in observing the contest between the sea and the contractor. From the top of Aycliffe, however, it is possible to imagine the finished highway. All roads into Dover have splendid views, but surely this will be the most spectacular and panoramic for the motorist, cresting Shakespeare Cliff and sweeping down into the town, via Aycliffe, past the Granville and Wellington Docks; the planned alterations to Wellington Dock enhancing the approach in future years. 3

Since our last issue one of our major concerns has been with the Dover Society Awards, reported in detail in the centre pages of the *Newsletter*. Congratulations to all the Award winners and our thanks to all who helped to make the October Awards ceremony a success. Our three successful September functions are also reported here, all thoroughly enjoyed by the members who attended them.

Our programme for 1992, detailed on the inside back cover, is a varied one. We hope members will be able to attend all the functions which interest them. The first meeting of the year, on 13 January will be held, as in previous years, in the Harbour Board Hall and the subject of the talk, by Melanie Wrigley, will be The White Cliffs Countryside Project, a fascinating undertaking which has recently been granted a three-year extension to its programme. On 24 February an evening of Conundrums and Conviviality will be held in Dover Museum, with the whole of the museum available for our use. Members who took part in last year's Conundrums evening at St. Margaret's Bay Museum will, I am sure, recommend this event as an evening not to be missed.

I hope that all readers will enjoy this number of the *Newsletter*, my second venture into editorship. In conclusion, I put forward a suggestion to any and every member who feels inclined to contribute to future issues, listing three ways in which you could help; firstly, by sending in more memories of old Dover (I estimate there are at least twelve more members who have not sent us memories and could do so!); secondly, by offering to review local exhibitions, concerts or books and, thirdly, by writing letters to the editor on matters of interest and concern to you. Please write. We welcome a wide variety of views, opinions and voices.

MERRIL LILLEY

**COVER ILLUSTRATION:** In 1940 the area around the junction of Wellesley Road and Townwall Street was almost entirely destroyed by a stick of bombs. In the centre of the picture, behind the telephone pole, is Buckland's carpenter's shop (see pages 205/206 of the last issue) The two gable ends left of centre are of the Fox Inn at the corner of St. James Street and Fox Passage. The main building on the right was almost on the line of Wellesley Road which, transformed, still connects Townwall Street with the Sea Front.

We are grateful to Mr Chambers for allowing us to use his picture.