

Some months later the CAT team had a second opportunity to dig and this time the crypt was discovered on the south side of the tower. Still visible were the steps to the street, light wells, and the beginnings of arch strings, as well as a small cupboard set in one wall. All these features could be seen in an 1836 sketch of the crypt.

Initial indications seem to show that the crypt was nothing more than the cellar or vault of a Norman merchant's house, similar to the Shakespeare Crypt opposite. It has no connection to the Tower next door which in all probability was a merchant's fortified house. Bench Street was, after all, the commercial centre of Mediæval Dover.

It will be interesting to see CAT's final report. Tentative dating puts the Tower in the early 14th century. As it is only yards from the Town Wall, begun in 1307, it would seem logical to say it pre-dates the wall – it seems excessive to build a fortified house inside the fortified town. It is perhaps also logical to assume that the tower, like the walls, was built as a result of the devastating French raid of 1295. If this is so then the Tower, despite standing for half a millennium, only had a practical life of 12 years or less.

Membership News

Individual Membership: £4.00 p.a. (1st April – 31st March)

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Current Membership: 370

All the news is good concerning subscriptions for the next financial year.

Firstly, there will be no increase and as payment is due on 1st April the A.G.M., on 26th April this will be an excellent opportunity to pay.

Secondly, two people living at the same address and sharing a Newsletter may pay a joint subscription of only £6.00. (Nevertheless we will be very grateful to those who feel able to continue paying separate individual subscriptions).

Thirdly, the Society has set up a scheme for payment by Standing Order and a form to use is included with this copy of our journal. Please return the form to me if you decide to use this method and, after I have recorded your intentions in my records, I will forward the instructions to your bank. By using a standing order you are able to alter the amount to be paid to the Society whenever it is necessary.

This scheme has been requested by members but, of course, if you prefer to pay by cheque or cash either method will be equally welcome.

I look forward to hearing from you all.

SHEILA COPE, *Membership Secretary*