

Deal Library Gallery

Exhibition of work by

PHILOMENA KENNEDY

19 September – 7 October 1994

—MERRIL LILLEY

DEAL Library Gallery is an ideal choice of venue for a small one-artist exhibition. It combines the feeling of intimacy in an enclosed area devoted to art with the immediacy of access straight from the bustling Middle Street car park. The space was totally filled with the range of Philomena's art; originals, prints, maps, plans, calligraphy, boxes and cards, encompassing a wide variety of media, materials and techniques.

The substantial collection, imaginatively arranged, included many of our favourite views of St. Margaret's Bay and Dover and its environs, with some of the larger canvasses together facing seaward on a central display board. On the day I visited, during the first week of the exhibition, there was a steady stream of viewers, many of them especially interested in the works focusing on Deal; Deal doorways 1 and 2 (nos. 39 and 42), prints from original ink and watercolour, must be a pair much coveted by Deal residents; as also Street Names of Deal 1 and 2 (nos. 31 and 35), masterpieces of calligraphy, showing the fascinating narrow streets off Beach Street and Middle Street with a gem of information about each in the spaces between them; Ad Delam, a print from original in acrylic inks and gouache (no. 11), is a selection of quotations about Deal written over a street map of part of the town; A Sea-Faring Town, print from original in acrylic inks and gouache, uses a quotation from Hasted, with repetition and overlapping building up an abstract pattern to make an intriguing picture. All these had unframed mounted prints available and must have been in great demand.

Several of Philomena's pictures of Dover scenes are also available as unframed prints (e.g. The Pharos, Dover Castle ink and watercolour, and Dover Castle: The Key and Bar of England, print in black, hand coloured by the artist). What a good idea for Christmas presents, I was reminded, when I came to the display cases of boxes, coasters, paperweights and greeting cards (some of these already familiar to us as they have been available at Castle Book Shop for some time).

The attendance at the exhibition and the interest shown in it is a reflection of Philomena's growing fame and popularity as a local artist. ◇