



## BT/CIVIC TRUST ENVIRONMENTAL WEEK

11

# *The Blighted Shop Project*

MEMBERS WILL RECALL that some five years ago the Society dressed the windows of 'Dickens Corner' in the Market Square as its contribution towards the reduction of empty shop 'eyesores' throughout the town: we like to think that the success of that project assisted in the return of the property to active business.



The official opening: JOE HARMAN, JACK WOOLFORD, *Chairman*, JOHN OWEN of the Dover Society with Sea Cadets ANN HERRING and JASON WAKEFIELD

The problem of empty shops is still with us and we all have our pet 'eyesores'. In co-operation with the District Council the Society has tried to address what is a far from simple problem. For success the acquisition of just one property to 'do up' requires a number of factors to come together at one and the same time.

Walters' former shoe shop in King Street (off the Market Square) became available through the excellent co-operation of Dover District Council, Tersons, Walters & Sons of Folkestone and Deal and the Dover Society. Together we were able to make this one happen.

The intention was to do something for the appearance of Dover Town Centre, to give support to the BT/Civic Trust Environment Week, to the DOVER FESTIVAL (27 May-7 June) and to interest our seasonal visitors.

The premises became available in March and rather than wait for the planned start we formed a small group of members and set about cleaning up the shop. Happily we had a modest window display

up and running by Good Friday and the Easter weekend.

At an early stage in our efforts an old lady, arriving breathless at the shop, expressed great disappointment. Following the habit of many a year she had come to buy herself some new shoes.

The 'Spirit of the Sea' features a flag hoist of 'The Dover Festival' backgrounded with the White Cliffs simulation (+ masts!) set in a sea of information pamphlets, Admiralty charts, seaweed, starfish, crabs and shells, nets and floats and ropes and a bollard. Sea orientated posters cover the background walls.