

Hooked!

An event also launched at the same time as New Horizons was the World Shore Angling Championships to be held in and around Dover between October 11 and October 19, 1997. Competitors are expected from twenty-two countries from as far away as Brazil and South Africa.

The championships are being hosted by the National Federation of Sea Angling and Dover Sea Angling Association.

At the launch the national federation revealed special steps are to be taken to help conserve stocks in the Channel.

Anglers fishing from the shore will haul in their catches and place them in buckets of sea water until the fish has been measured by judges and then returned to the sea alive.

The championships will bring hundreds of visitors to White Cliffs Country this autumn. Competitors will be accommodated at Kingsdown.

One Member Reports

SHEILA COPE GIVES HER VIEW OF FESTIVAL WEEK

This event now forms such an important part of Dover's year that we avoid arranging a holiday around the end of May. Why go away when so much is happening here? This time a different part of the world was celebrated each day under an overall theme- New Horizons.

Monday 19 May was Italian Renaissance and Dover Youth Theatre gave a Commedia Dell'Arte performance at London Road Methodist Hall. Dating from around 1550, and originating in Italian piazza, this dramatic form involves actors wearing Venetian-type masks stylised so that the character personified is immediately recognisable to the audience. Thus a long nose coloured gold symbolises lechery and avarice of very high status. Likewise each character has a mannered walk which looks stiff and awkward both to watch and to maintain. The play, improvised on a preselected theme of fortune-seeking and intrigue, was excellently performed and amused and fascinated its audience. Congratulations to the players for their courage in tackling an unfamiliar art form so well.

During the second half of the evening the Festival Trio, with pianist John Hurd, gave a concert which ranged from G & S (a nod to Italian theme in the Gondoliers) through opera (Mimi's aria from La Boheme sung in Italian) to Flanders and Swann and West Side Story. I doubt whether this particular concert attracted many outside visitors as most of the audience, including the Mayor and other civic dignitaries, were known to each other. It was an informal local occasion with Peter Booth, June Armond and Marie Kelly-Thomas apparently relaxed and enjoying themselves. The ability of the pianist overcame the shortcomings of the piano and the songs, popular for the best reasons, were performed equally well. A stage was superfluous and so were the microphones, yet one could hear every word. Thank you to all those who gave their skills to create such an enjoyable evening.

From midday to 2pm daily in the Market Square there was an open air concert featuring different parts of the world, together with appropriate food tasting -

14 almost a free lunch. The food was provided by Tesco's. On Wednesday nearly replete with peppered sausage, I listened for a time to the Peelsburgers, members of Kent Police Band who performed traditional German Oompah music, involving large wind instruments and percussion. This would have been a static performance but for the attempts of the leader to persuade those watching to get up and dance. Some children accepted his challenge but the weather was cool and overcast and people were in a workaday mood.

Dance had been promised on Thursday afternoon but in De Bradlei galeria Africa was celebrated by two colourfully-dressed singers accompanying themselves on cone-shaped drums which they beat with their hands. Perhaps these men were just representative of the group Zuriya and such a performance is better suited to outdoors; one would need to be

an expert in this type of music to comment on its quality.

By Friday Tesco's staff had sensibly moved their stall next to the stage facing the fountain and their cheese and wine attracted a steady stream of recipients who provided a captive audience for a French accordionist and a pierrot-style mime artiste. This was not Marcel Marceau nor did she have his advantages but she engaged and amused small groups at a time.

Our well-known street cleaner went away smiling after she pinned a tricolour to his barrow. Warm weather is crucial to such open-air events and they were brave attempts to introduce life and colour to the Market Square.

I hope that neither the organisers nor partakers felt discouraged as they undoubtedly provided entertainment for visitors with children and others who had time to linger.

Organiser's Review

DONNA SOWERBY, ARTS AND EVENTS MANAGER

Every year I approach the opening day of the Festival of Dover with the same trepidation. Even after six years the feelings and questions are no different - Will the programme be well received and will people support it?

1997 brought its own challenges, firstly with the introduction of a new colleague in the team to learn the general running of the annual celebration and, secondly, the everyday problem of tighter budgets and tougher sponsorship! Lisa Webb took over from Sarah Pascoe as the Council's Arts Development Officer in July 1996 and introduced her own new elements into the programme.

The theme, "New Horizons", encompassed world cultures, travel and partnerships across the seas, the programme including artistes representing many corners of the globe, from the opening Caribbean Mardi Gras Day (with appropriate sunny weather) to European countries - an armchair traveller's delight and almost all free!

We reduced the number of days of the event and many people questioned this decision and also asked why the festival was not staged in half term. The main reason was that the festival has always provided a very strong educational pack-