

# HISTORIC PLAQUES

## SOCIETY'S MILLENNIUM PROJECT

*By Terry Sutton*

In February last year I suggested to the committee of The Dover Society that we should mark the Millennium with a number of plaques on properties in the town that have played their part in history. I was delighted when the suggestion was adopted.

Little did we realise what an insurance minefield we were about to enter!

Those property owners we have approached have been most cooperative but, so far, have declined to take on the insurance risk of the plaques falling down on passers by.

So we got on to our insurance advisers at the Civic Trust. No, said our insurers, such insurance risks are normally carried by the owner of the property on which the plaques are placed.

And, at the time of writing, the talks go on.

My thanks to Chairman Jeremy and his wife Sheila (who chairs our "plaques" sub-committee) for trying to find a way out of this legal minefield.

Your executive committee has decided, when the insurance problem is sorted out, to erect plaques in the Market Square area as a first step. We have permission, in principle, from the TSB in Castle Street to put up a plaque where the last enemy shell to land in England crashed down in September 1944,

and from Barclays Bank for a plaque indicating where the town's instruments of punishment once stood.

The next stage is to mark the sites where the Bronze Age Boat was excavated (in the Townwall Street underpass) and, partly at the request of Budge Adams, to recall that those killed in the Zeebrugge Raid on St. George's Day 1918 were rested, before burial, in what is now the museum.

Other suggestions I have put forward include: The spot where the first aerial bomb ever dropped on the UK (1914-Taswell Street area); where Charles Dickens wrote part of *Bleak House* in 1852 (Camden Crescent), where the exiled Napoleon III was re-united with his wife Eugenie in 1871 (Southern House-Lord Warden), the home of William Elgar, father of the composer (Charlton Centre area), birthplace of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke who instituted the calling of Banns of Marriage (Snargate Street), and where Dover's gallows stood, the last hanging in 1823 (bottom of Tower Hamlets-High Street).

Your committee is anxious that members, with knowledge of other interesting links with local history, should put forward ideas where other plaques could be erected in the years ahead, possibly after the Millennium.



### **Society Badges**

The wearing of a Society Badge reminds the general public (who really do have eyes to see) that the Society is a viable and energetic non-political voice for Dover. The beautiful little enamelled Lapel or Brooch Badges are to Philomena Kennedy's original design, in black on a white ground, surrounded by a gold line defining the shape of the badge and are available from the Treasurer, in either type, for £2 post free.

Just contact the Treasurer, Jennifer Gerrard, at 77 Castle Avenue, or phone her on 206579 (with a cheque or P.O. if possible) and she will very quickly ensure that a badge is in your hands.