

PROJECTS : Update

JOHN OWEN, Chairman, Projects Sub-Committee



THE TREE COUNCIL

NATIONAL TREE WEEK

In 1998 the week ran from 25 November to 6 December with the theme 'Favourite Trees'. We visited our 'Favourite Trees' on Sunday 6 December to view our beech, field maple and wild cherry plantings of 1990.

The two hundred trees are thriving and are already re-creating a predominately beech wood presence in the sky-lined gap, caused by the hurricane of 1987.

1998 being the Society's tenth anniversary year, our Chairman Jeremy Cope, planted a three year old oak sapling to mark the occasion. The weeping willow planted by former Chairman Jack Woolford at Lydden Pond in 1991 is now quite a mature tree and is an impressive feature close to the Dover Society bench, presented to Lydden Parish Council in 1993. This was the 24th National Tree Week organised by The Tree Council and the fourth sponsored by Esso, during which thousands of tree plantings and management events took place across the country.

*(New) Chairman Jeremy Cope planting
(a 3 yr old) Sapling Oak during Society's 10th
anniversary year*



Ken Wright - Jeremy Cope - Leo Wright
National Tree Week

ST EDMUND CHAPEL PRIORY ROAD DOVER

The property is owned by the St Edmund of Abingdon Trust and was consecrated

as a chapel by St Richard of Chichester on 30 March 1253. It is the first and only chapel ever dedicated by an English saint and the first building dedicated to St Edmund of Abingdon Archbishop of Canterbury 1234 - 1240. On 30 March 1253 St Richard preached his last sermon and said his last mass in the



St. Edmunds Chapel
(Abingdon Trust) Priory Road, Dover

chapel. He died in the Maison Dieu Dover on 3 April 1253.

The chapel was in the charge of the Maison Dieu which ministered to pilgrims and was under the control of the Master appointed by St Martin's priory then the most important institution in medieval Dover after the castle. Probably it served as a chapel of rest for the 'cemetery of the poor' outside the priory. After the Reformation in 1534 the priory, Maison Dieu and St Edmund chapel were forced to close. Over the years new buildings concealed the old chapel and its sacred status was forgotten. It had many uses including, in late Victorian times, use as a blacksmith's forge. In 1943 German shells demolished two nearby shops revealing the chapel buildings for the first time in four

16 hundred years. In 1965 Father Tanner arranged a private purchase of the chapel and its restoration using medieval materials. At least 75% of the building however is original. The chapel was re-consecrated in 1968 and is now owned by the charitable trust which maintains it solely from gifts placed in the wall boxes. Mass is celebrated on Saturdays at 10.00 and the chapel is available for use by all denominations.

SOCIETY RESPONDS TO A REQUEST FOR HELP.

The Abingdon Memorial Trust's cry for help saw a small group of members assembled on the morning of Saturday 29 September at St Edmund chapel; a Dover ancient monument in Priory Road. We were dressed in working clothes and carrying an assortment of necessary tools. The morning was dull and grey with rain threatening.

We started on the stroke of ten which coincided with the start of the regular Saturday morning service at the chapel but were able to find quiet tasks to do until completion of the service at 10.30.

The north facing guttering was completely clogged with years of vegetative growth of one sort or another. This Jeremy Cope quickly removed at the same time performing hair-raising gymnastics between ladders and over and under obstructions in the three flanking properties. Leo Wright took on the soak-aways which likewise were long overdue for attention. Paul Sheldrake along with Terry Sutton wire-brushed the gutters and downpipes in readiness for painting.

Serious rain returned at this point which curtailed operations for the day.



We planned to to deal with the painting phase of the project on 17 October but very severe weather meant we had to cancel. As anyone out and about on that day will testify, a particularly bad morning seemed to herald the onset of winter and it was decided to postpone completion of the project until the spring.

We had, however, achieved the main objective before the winter. A routine inspection of the chapel by the Trust's surveyor had revealed the problem and the need for early action to avoid dampness setting in.