

Local heroes

◆ ◆ ◆ By S.S.G.Hale ◆ ◆ ◆

EVERYONE HAS A BOOK IN THEM. But it is hard work getting it out. What is almost as hard is getting it published. Commercial publishers must make a profit to survive, so are reluctant to publish works of limited interest. Fortunately we seem to have an area that generates small publishers. First we had Doug Welby and Crabwell Publications, then Riverdale Publications created by Derek Leach and Triangle Publications by Merril Lilley.

Derek Leach researches, compiles and edits. Riverdale has produced four books, all about local people. The first was the *Life and Times of Lillian Kay* closely followed by *My Dover* by Joe Harman and, this year two new books, *Bombs Gone* by Dickie Parfitt and *Greetings, Dover* from Jack Hewitt.

These books chronicle changes in Dover's history. Joe Harman, Lillian Kay and Jack Hewitt have memories dating back to the first World War. Dickie Parfitt volunteered for bombing crew in WWII. He recounts how he was trained in Canada and joined UK Bomber Command in 1945 when the war was almost over. But bomber command was still taking heavy casualties: and it took just over a month for Dickie Parfitt's crew to move from being the least experienced crew at the bottom of the squadron to being the most experienced surviving crew.

I meet Dutch, Belgians and French who, with gratitude and respect, remember Britain's contribution in the War. We should remember too. This is why books by Joe Harman, Dickie Parfitt and others remind us how seemingly ordinary people contribute to extraordinary events. Future historians will have books like Joe Harman's and Dickie Parfitt's to help them, thanks to editor, publisher and author Derek Leach - heroes all.

A look back at *The Weather in 2001*

REPORT FROM F.G.THOMAS

The year 2001 made an inauspicious entry, halfway, as it were, through the downpours that lasted from October 2000 to March 2001. Twenty three inches of rain fell in the last three months of 2000 and 15.42 inches followed in the first three months of 2001, making a total of 38.42 inches. This was more than the Dover average for 12 months, which is 34 inches. In April the heavy rain started to peter out but the month still recorded 3.30 inches. In May only 1.09 inches fell and our local winterbourne, the Drellingore, finally ceased its 177 day flow.

Summer made a slow start. 20 degrees C was not achieved until June 12th, but 28°C (reverse the figures and it becomes 82°F) ensured that summer had at last arrived. This was confirmed by a violent thunderstorm! The rest of the season was like the parson's egg, good in parts. June and July had 20% more than their average rainfall, but there were several hot spells. In such weather the forecasters threaten us with sleepless nights due to the high humidity. How do they know how we will sleep!

The heat waves culminated on the Saturday of the August Bank Holiday, the 25th, with a