

The Western Heights Preservation Society

report from Chris Taft

In the August issue of the Dover Society Newsletter, I reported on the Western Heights Preservation Society (WHPS) and provided an update on what has been achieved. Since that publication the Society has been working on a lot more projects. A summary of some of the achievements is given below.

WHPS Lecture Evening

In June of this year the Society hosted its first public lecture evening. Dover Museum kindly allowed us the use of their education facilities and Jon Iveson, the Curator of the Museum, gave the lecture. The evening was opened with an address from the WHPS Chairman, Cllr. Mike Eddy. Mr Iveson then delivered his lecture entitled: Drops, Ditches, Secrets & Tunnels in which he provided a fascinating history of Dover's Western Heights. His talk was illustrated with some excellent slides of the Heights as they are today and of the site as it once was. The evening concluded with the opportunity for more informal discussion over a selection of cheese and wine. It provided a wonderful opportunity for members to meet the committee and for local people to ask those questions about the Heights that may have been nagging them for some time. The turnout was fantastic and provided a preamble to the Western Heights Open Day, held the next day.

Western Heights Open Day

This year's Open Day proved to be a wonderful success. Organised by the White Cliffs Countryside Project (WCCP) it was attended by representatives from several organisations, including the WHPS. The weather held out with the rain only moving in about ten minutes after the fast stall was packed up. An estimated 500 people attended, beating all previous

records, and all had an enjoyable day. Regular features included the ever-popular guided tour led by the WHPS, Napoleonic Military Displays from the Cinque Ports Volunteers and a number of displays by local green wood working groups. The open day was staged on the site of the Grand Shaft Barracks and the WHPS looks forward to next year's event, which it is hoped will be held in June or July.

St. Martin's Battery Graffiti Removal

After the success of the Lecture Evening and Open Day, members of the WHPS commenced the first phase of a new project. It is the intention of the WHPS in the coming year to see graffiti removed from St. Martin's Battery and it has now been agreed with English Heritage that a paint layer can be applied to the walls to discourage further graffiti and improve the appearance of the emplacement. As a build-up to this the first gun emplacement of the three has been cleaned of graffiti and tidied of rubbish. It is hoped to continue this work on the remaining two positions as soon as possible before the next phase of the work is started.

Erection of a WHPS Notice Board

Thanks to the generosity of Pfizer UK the WHPS has been able to erect its own notice board at St. Martin's Battery. The board is now in place and at present contains only basic Society information. However, over the coming months we hope to be able to

use it to convey more information about the Western Heights and the WHPS.

Election of a Society President

During August it was the pleasure of the WHPS to welcome its first President, John Peverley, who has been a long term supporter of Dover's Western Heights and who has written on the history of the area. His book: *Dover's Hidden Fortress* remains extremely popular as a reference book and is regularly consulted by members of the WHPS. We look forward to working with John in the years to come.

Once again the last few months have been very busy and there is much more the WHPS hopes to do. We have many plans for major work that can be achieved with the right financial backing. To continue our work the Society needs the support of its members, who we thank for all their help so far. We are also encouraging new members to join and welcome ideas from anyone that can further our work. To find out more or to join please contact the Hon. Secretary at: 66 Union Road, Deal, Kent CT14 6AR or visit the site:

www.dover-western-heights.org

BOOKS

NOW AVAILABLE

THE CENTRAL ESTATE AND THE HARTLEPOOLS

by Jack Woolford

Published by Printability Wolviston at £10.99

For Society members available for £10.00 from Jack Woolford
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(Reviewed in Newsletter 43)

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