

## Bob Goldfield's Address to 2003 AGM

*Jack Woolford*

Bob Goldfield, new Chief Executive to the Port of Dover (former Dover Harbour Board), began with a brief personal history from education and military service to airport management in Inverness, Hong Kong, Teesside and Shannon. Consequently he brought management rigour, high pressured experience and a strong, customer-focused business ethic to Dover, together with regional and national economic, social and environmental awareness.

As he found it, the port was operationally efficient, safe, above average in service and historically sensitive but lacking in strategic vision, operationally rather than commercially centred and oversensitive as to status. Consequently it had been restructured, emphasising commercial and marketing priorities and longer-term master planning to ensure sustainability.

Physical expansion to Samphire Hoe (Westport) was financially and environmentally infeasible. The efficient use of the present harbour was affordable and must be maximised, immediately at the Eastern and subsequently at the Western Docks. Customers' needs must be understood and engagement with the international community be more positive. Improved public relations, local, national and international, were essential. In corporate affairs the influencers themselves must be influenced more strongly than in the past: the needs of the port and of Dover must be heard. Above all, the port must take the community with it, witness the Port Consultative and Port Users Committees. Finally, in 2006 the 400th anniversary of the Charter must be suitably celebrated.

## The March Meeting

*Reported by Merril Lilley*

The meeting on 17th March at St. Mary's Parish Centre was well attended. In the first half members were treated to a talk by Wendi Atherton on Dover Castle garrisons, illustrated with many slides of the castle through the ages. The story of how the research started in 1976 is an interesting one. Wendi has written a book with all her findings and we hope to see it published in the future.

In the second half we had a new departure in the form of a picture quiz devised by Jack Woolford, where he showed pictures taken in Dover and asked the audience to fill in the answers on their question sheets. These mostly asked, 'Where is this? What is this? Where was this picture taken? What famous man lived here?

- and so on. There were 25 questions and the member with the best score was Terry Sutton, who gained 141/2 marks. Not surprising with Terry's knowledge of Dover! The top eight scorers all won prizes. It was good fun but many of us felt we were at a disadvantage as the questions were heavily slanted towards the names of pubs and to the area north of Dover where Jack lives, e.g. Temple Ewell, River and Buckland. Members with the lowest scores could manage only 2 or 3 correct answers.

Thank you, Jack, for a diverting second half of the evening. Perhaps another member might take up the idea next year and produce a similar quiz.