

The
Dover
Society

Newsletter

No. 51

December 2004



Lille, City of Culture

The Opera House with Bamboo Sculpture in foreground



THE DOVER SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1988

Registered with the Civic Trust, Affiliated to the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies
Registered Charity No. 299954

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Contents

2	EDITORIAL	
3	MEMBERSHIP NEWS	Sheila Cope
4	KFAS Autumn Conference	Jack Woolford
5	PLANNING	Jack Woolford
6	COWGATE CEMETERY	Lesley Gordon
7	THE OCTOBER MEETING	Merril Lilley
11	WESTERN HEIGHTS PRESERVATION SOCIETY	Chris Taft
	SOCIETY OUTINGS	
12	Bank of England & Tate Modern	Adeline Reidy
15	Visit to Lille	John Husband
	GLIMPSES OF THE PAST	
16	Extracts from Memoirs of Budge Adams	
17	Richard Tilden Smith	Derek Leach
20	President Wilson at Dover	Martin Webster
24	Dover's Prisoner's Friend	Terry Sutton
25	LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	
26	INAUGURAL CONCERT	Jack Woolford
27	THE DOVER MUSIC SOCIETY	
28	WEBSITE	Mike McFarnell
36	APPLICATION FORM	

The Objectives of the Dover Society

founded in 1988.

- to promote high standards of planning and architecture
- to interest and inform the public in the geography, history, archæology, natural history and architecture of the area
- to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest
- and commitment to the belief that a good environment is a good investment.

The area we cover comprises the parishes or wards of Barton, Buckland, Castle, Lydden, Temple Ewell, Maxton, Pineham, Priory, River, St. Radigund's, Town & Pier and Tower Hamlets.

All members receive three Newsletters a year and in each year the Committee organises about ten interesting events - talks, tours, visits, Members' Meetings and usually a Christmas Feast.

The Society gives Awards for improvements to the area, monitors planning proposals and supports, joins in or initiates civic projects and arts events.

Editorial



Christmas Greetings to all our readers

We hope to see many of you at the Christmas Feast at Dover College Refectory on December 18th. An application form is included with this Newsletter. Please book your place if you have not already done so.

Application forms for the Wine and Wisdom on February 14th are also enclosed. The details of all other meetings are to be found on the back page as usual.

The two last outings of the summer are reported here, the London trip to the Bank of England and Tate Modern, by Adeline Reidy, and the visit to Lille, by John Husband.

The first indoor meeting of the autumn was held on October 25th at Biggin Hall with two speakers, Mike Dawson on Planning for Dover and Jon Iveson on the Western Heights, past and present. The discussion of the St. James' development, which provoked the most response to Mike Dawson's talk, was continued at the November meeting and will be reported in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Chris Taft contributes his usual WHPS report and is to be congratulated on his Society's work in opening up the Western Heights this summer. The Drop Redoubt and Grand Shaft were open to the public several times and attracted large numbers of visitors.

Jack Woolford, as well as his usual reports on planning and KFAS, has written a review of the last music concert. These concerts have been so successful that it is proposed to start a Dover Music Society. Details of this are to be found on page 27.

One of our usual features, 'Glimpses of the Past', did not appear in the last issue, so, as promised, it is included in this one, with four very different contributions.

The committee are delighted to announce the publication of our long-awaited tribute to Budge Adams which was launched at the meeting on November 15th. This is a selection of slides, taken from Budge's collection and chosen

and presented by Derek Leach and Bob Hollingsbee. As a memorial to Budge all members will receive a free copy of the book, one per household. Members who did not collect a copy at the November meeting will have one delivered with the

Newsletter.

With many thanks, as usual, to all who have contributed to this 51st issue of the Newsletter, to advertisers, distributors and, most of all, writers.

Editor

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DEADLINE for contributions

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 52 will be Monday 14th February 2005. The Editor welcomes contributions and interesting drawings or photographs. 'Paper copy' should be typed at double spacing. Handwritten copy should be clear with wide line spacing. Accurate fully proof-read copy on computer discs is acceptable; please ring 01304 205254 to discuss details.

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

AUTUMN 2004

This time of year is always the lowest point for membership. The final tally of non renewals, for whatever reason, is calculated and the usual increase in applications resulting from the indoor meetings has not yet occurred. Although the total at 442 is less than we had hoped, it is still higher than in any previous Autumn. Very welcome new members are Mr W P Parry, Mr A and Mrs A Jones, Mrs M Morris, Mrs H Tappe-Pearce, Mr T Croft.

We send our congratulations and best wishes to two of our members, Chris Taft and Tamsyn Edwards, who were married this summer.

PLEASE MAINTAIN RAFFLE PRIZES AND CONTINUE TO BUY TICKETS

Sheila Cope

KFAS AUTUMN CONFERENCE 2004

reported by Jack Woolford

THE AUTUMN CONFERENCE of the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies was hosted by the Bexley Civic Society on Saturday September 18 at Danson House, Danson Road, Welling, an 18th century Palladian Mansion recently restored from ruin to magnificence. Set in a fine park, offering superb views from its top storey (its fine stone stables now a splendid pub), it is architecturally fascinating because the interior behind the Palladian facade is octagonal from cellar and kitchen through spiralling staircase to dome. Original frescoes, paintings, library, salons and chamber organ have been meticulously restored.

The Conference was organised and chaired by John Mercer and it emerged from the address by Chris Donovan, of Bexley Environment Services (speaking on the 'Thames Gateway') that it was John Mercer and the Bexley Society who had saved the building from neglect and

demolition and, with the Borough Council, had persuaded English Heritage to restore it. What an achievement (amongst many others) for an Amenity Society!

Martin Wilson, also of the Society, entranced us for an hour with meticulous description and illustration of the fantastic refurbishment of 'The Crossness Engines' which, for more than a century, pumped London's sewage from the Thames to its tidal estuary (now the 'Thames Gateway') after 'The Great Stink' following the cholera epidemic of 1854 which forced even the House of Commons to run away holding its nose. The great engine house was a masterpiece of Victorian Gothic architecture as well as of Victorian civil engineering. Like Danson House it is in working order and open to visitors.

Bernard Gambrill, formerly of Union Rail which built the railway through the Channel Tunnel and sponsored KFAS Conferences, is now Head of Public Affairs at Crossrail which proposes to build a new underground from Paddington via Tottenham Court Road and Liverpool Street northwards to Stratford and southwards to Abbey Wood to connect with a new Thames Tunnel and Ebbsfleet in Kent. Mr Gambrill (still sponsoring KFAS) argued convincingly as always that the billions it would cost would relieve congestion and overcrowding, and facilitate essential



The Red House

financial and business growth and international links.

After a delicious buffet lunch we were skillfully guided not only through Danson House but also through the Victorian Gothic Red House, based on a 14th century monastery, built for the artist,

poet and craftsman (wallpaper a speciality) William Morris by architect Philip Webb in 1859. It was a shrine for the Pre-Raphaelites and consequently positively reeking in atmosphere. It gave me the pip but was well worth the visit. What a day!

* * * * *

The work of the

PLANNING

Sub-Committee

Reported by JACK WOOLFORD, Chairman

Dover has many hanging fires. The response to our appeal to Biggin Street traders to contribute to the £2000 needed for the planting of Town Centre Trees to complement the Town Council's 'Dover in Bloom' was very disappointing: only Simmonds jewellers were forthcoming with £250. We are now applying to the Tree Council for a substantial rekindling grant and, if successful, will try appealing again. Furthermore, if Calais can be induced similarly to plant town centre trees, European funding may also become available.

We hope that the conversion of the 'Prince of Wales' building into housing, which we heartily support, will not be long delayed by reconsideration of the number of 'affordable' flats. We hope that conservation of the United Reformed Church by conversion into a restaurant with housing, will progress and that the construction of the Sea Sports Centre, unlike its predecessor, actually be funded.

We congratulate Dover Town Council for improving and safeguarding the 'Xmas Lights' but trust that the endless fiery bickering with Town Centre Management on the 'Switch-On' will ultimately subside.

The other two hanging fires are 'Dover Pride' and the St James Town Centre

Redevelopment. We have, of course, heard most, if not all of it, before from consultant after consultant and are entitled to ask why this time it should be different. We cannot but applaud expansion of the port, the attraction of new business activities, more and better housing, shops, restaurants and hotels and the improvement of tourism, but know that competition from the Channel Tunnel, cheap airlines, other cruise terminals and seaside resorts, fruit importers (like Sheerness) and other maritime teaching and research specialists (like Southampton) will not go away.

'Dover Pride' is indeed right to 'upgrade and improve transport links'. A2 dualling from Lydden, restoration of the rail link to the docks and extension of the High Speed Rail link to Dover are the indispensable keys to any rehabilitation of Dover. All of this we have all, Councils, Boards and Societies, been saying for a decade, some of it for more than a quarter of a century. There is only one exception to what is now technologically feasible: A2 can be upgraded and the Shakespeare Tunnel improved or replaced (at a cost). Alas, however, Townwall Street, cutting off Dover from its seafront, is irremediable. It can neither be lowered nor lifted. Pedestrian bridges are inconceivable. The proposed new superstore will compound congestion and the promised 'pedestrian super-crossings', across two lanes of HGVs, coaches, and cars (etc), beggar the imagination. Will the developers (and the government) fire it all up? We cross our fingers.

Cowgate Cemetery

Report by Lesley Gordon

In 2001, at the behest of the White Cliffs Countryside Project, the Society took on what seemed a daunting project to clear two plots of graves in the derelict and overgrown Cowgate Cemetery at the foot of the Western Heights. It also resolved to make a record of the location and inscriptions of surviving headstones. Emboldened by early compliments, the volunteers in the two clearance parties gradually extended their remit and the inscribers followed them, until all eight plots plus the line of vaults along the rear wall were included in the project.

Three years later it is with some relief that the recording team can report a successful conclusion to the exercise, and a large tome is ready to be lodged with Dover Museum. This contains maps of the eight plots and line of vaults showing the location and grave number of each recorded gravestone, followed by a section of inscriptions and a final index of names, each with its own burial reference number. Another book, comprising just maps, has been prepared for Dover District Council who hold all the burial records for the cemetery, but who for many years have had no map, or easy way of locating individual graves within the plots. The Society's enterprise built on and consolidated the work of Elizabeth de Bourbel who, in the 1980s recorded over 400 tombstones. The Society has itself recorded only slightly less, yet many more inscriptions must have been lost to the elements as each of the eight plots contained over 200 graves, although not all would have had inscribed stones. Over 7250 people were buried in the cemetery between 1837 and the 1950s

Although the Museum and the Council will eventually hold the original record, it

is hoped that the local Family History Society will put the whole work on microfiche so that the Society and Dover Library can hold copies for their records. The Family History Society also intends to make copies of the microfiche available to purchase for a small fee. In this way, the public will have ready access to data captured for posterity, as well as easier access to the cemetery itself.

Cowgate is one of many cemeteries in Dover, and those researching family histories may not be sure where a relative is buried. In these cases, the District Council, who have the records for Cowgate, St. Andrews at Buckland, Charlton, St James's and St. Mary's cemeteries (but not the churchyard burials) are happy to do some delving. Call Madeleine Whitcombe, Environmental Support Officer on (01304) 872287 for details or e-mail her on burials@dover.gov.uk. If possible, have the full name of the person you are researching and date of death (or approximate date of death) ready as a charge may be made if a lot of detective work, or more than one name, is involved. If the burial was at Cowgate and you are given the grave number, the society's records in the museum or library should enable you to at least locate the grave with reasonable accuracy even where a headstone is missing. The more fortunate will find full details of the tombstone's inscription in the records. So, grateful thanks are due to Ian Murton and Hugh Gordon for their tireless labours in collecting and recording this piece of Dover's history. Unlike the teams of clearance volunteers, who will labour on for the foreseeable future, their work is done.

The OCTOBER MEETING

reported by Merril Lilley

The first meeting of the autumn was held on 25th October at Biggin Hall, the change of venue due to the fact that St. Mary's Parish Centre was not available on that day. The meeting was very well attended and the hall crowded to capacity. However, the meeting was, nevertheless, successful and the two talks, by Mike Dawson and Jon Iveson, generated a great deal of interest among the packed audience, with a lively discussion time after each address. The interval refreshments and raffle proceeded as usual despite the restricted space and thanks are due to the members who organised these.

PLANNING FOR DOVER

A talk by Mike Dawson, Chief Planning Officer, Dover District Council

Mr. Dawson, taking up a remark from the Chairman's introduction, said that his talk could have been entitled 'Dover, Past, Present and Future', for that is what it was about. He had worked in Planning for 30 years, coming to Dover in 1980.

He reminded his audience of what Dover was like in 1980 and went on to list the changes he had seen since then, with particular mention of the opening of the M20/A20, the work of IMPACT, the improvements to the sea front and the opening of the A256 to Sandwich. He spoke of job losses, the increase in freight traffic and decrease in tourist trade, changing traffic patterns, the impact of the Channel Tunnel and the development of Pfizers. He told, also, how changes and new legislation made the job of the planners more difficult. The planning system was expected to be faster, while the planning department was coping with a shortage of staff. The fact that there was a planning inspectorate, related to the Government but separate from it, increased the time it took to get a decision on any planning application.

Our speaker then went on to matters of concern to all of us - the future of Dover. He talked of new developments, some already taking place (Deal Barracks, Pfizers, the coal field sites) and some in the future (plans for new housing e.g. 800/1000 homes at Aylesham, with

associated facilities like shops, sports hall and workshops. In East Kent altogether 50,000 dwellings are planned).

On the subject of Phase Two of the White Cliffs Business Park, he said that access via the A2/A256 roundabout would take place. B&Q may be moving to Whitfield to a much larger site than they currently occupy and it was hoped to encourage more small businesses to relocate to the area.

In the town the major discussion point was the St. James' development, with plans recently on show at Dover Discovery Centre, designed to provide for a super store (Asda), small shops, housing and car parking.

He ended by saying that Dover District Council thought that the public should be involved in the planning process for Dover. We should ask ourselves - What next? What sort of future do we want for this town? What facilities? What population figures? Should Western Docks be developed

When he stopped to invite questions, Mr. Dawson was bombarded with a flood of queries from the floor especially on the St. James' development. Why do we need a superstore? What about increased pollution on Townwall Street? What provision will there be for young people?

Mr Dawson replied that ASDA was prepared to come and invest in the project

in the town centre which would bring increased revenue to the town. He answered queries about traffic volume, the dualling of the A2, the closing of Russell Street, car parking and the relocation of the bus garage.

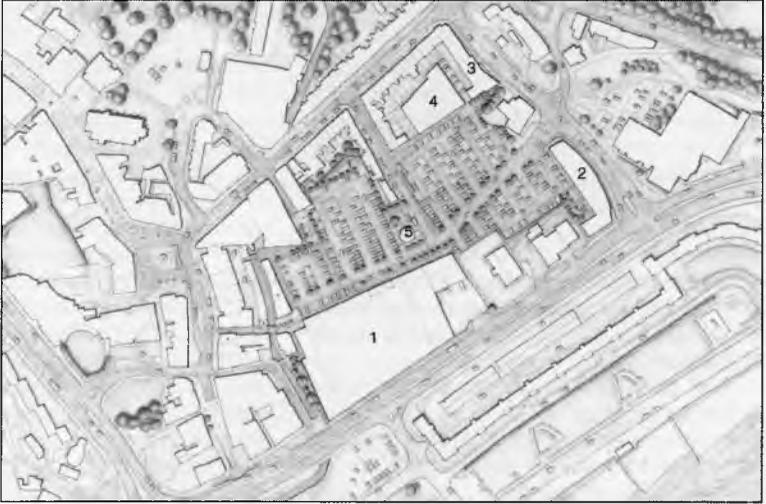
The session left us with plenty to think about and, as all these issues will have been discussed by members at the November meeting brainstorming session, we hope to add to this report in the April Newsletter.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT : MIX OF USES

The proposed scheme provides a mixed use redevelopment of the site, in line with the Planning Brief and Public Consultation.

The mix of uses include:

- ANCHOR SUPERSTORE
- RESTAURANT
- HOTEL
- RETAIL
- RESIDENTIAL
- VISITOR CENTRE
- PUBLIC CAR PARK



1. Anchor Superstore 2. Hotel/Restaurant 3. Residential 4. Retail 5. Visitor Centre



View along Townwall Street towards Dover Castle



View of Visitor Centre in central public space

ANCHOR SUPERSTORE

The large foodstore will be situated on Townwall Street, acting as an anchor to the entire scheme and increasing the number of visitors to the town centre. The store will incorporate a fashion department and a café restaurant. It will have self-contained discrete servicing from Townwall Street.

PUBLIC CAR PARK

The development will provide a new surface car park for 460 vehicles, including special needs parking. It will be operated as a shopper's car park serving the town centre and local retail/leisure amenities, as well as the new development.

VISITOR CENTRE

Located in the centre of the development, the Visitor Centre will be part of a new public space creating a key focus to the centre of the site, with transport node links including buses and cycles.

THE WESTERN HEIGHTS

A talk by Jon Iveson, Curator of Dover Museum

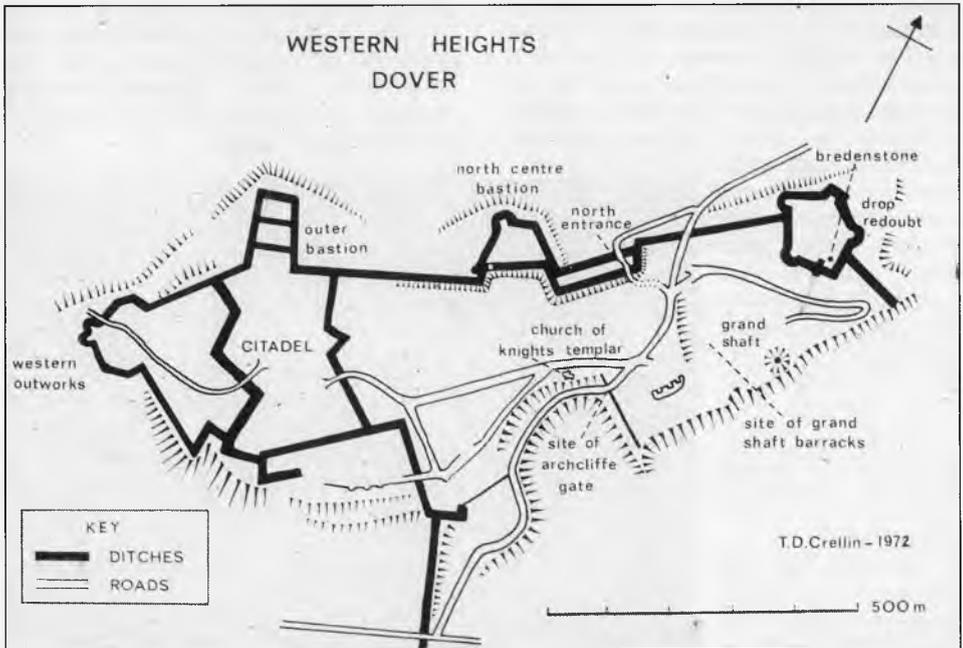
Illustrating his talk with slides, Jon Iveson gave us a brief history of the fortifications on the Western Heights from the late eighteenth century to the present day

Referring to Crellin's map he pointed out the two main areas of the fortifications, the Citadel and the Drop Redoubt, linked by a series of dry ditches. There were two main points of access, the north entrance and the gates at the foot of the cliff leading to the Grand Shaft, which is the triple staircase down to Snargate Street. The main thing to remember is that the defences pointed landward. During the Napoleonic wars it was thought that the enemy would land further along the coast, somewhere like Romney Marsh, and then attack the Western Heights from the rear. He traced the history of the barracks and

the fortifications through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to the present day.

The second part of his talk concerned the future of the Western Heights. He explained that this was complicated by the fact that different areas of the Heights had different owners, including English Heritage, the Home Office, Dover District Council, Dover Town Council and private owners. All schemes for the Heights were influenced by many factors, such as finance, planning and access.

Our speaker went on to say that the fortifications on the Heights were very important and historically interesting because it was a multi-period site. In addition the site is a nature reserve with an amazing variety of wild life, rarely found elsewhere.



Crellin's Map of the Fortifications



Old view of Roman Dubris

Until recently there was a lack of any scholarly approach to the development of the Heights and its importance. This has now been provided by RCHME (Royal Commission for Historic Monuments in England) which is now part of English Heritage, and there is now a ten-volume description of the Western Heights. Every possible reference has been followed up and looked at and this work forms a justification for further work. The next step is to produce a conservation statement which will act as a lever for future development. There was hope that, in the future, money would be available from a European inter-regional programme

He spoke of the valuable work being done by the Western Heights Preservation Society, which was

formed in 2000. The volunteers had done a great deal in clearing areas of the site and in arranging openings of the Drop Redoubt to visitors. Even more open days are planned for 2005, but, in the long run, to cope with more visitors, the site needs electricity, water, car parking and toilets.

Question time threw up a query about the Citadel,

currently used as a detention centre for failed asylum seekers. The Home Office looks after the site but its future might present a worrying problem if this present use was discontinued.

Our Chairman thanked both the speakers for providing us with an interesting and thought-provoking evening on two very different aspects of Dover's past and future.



View of a Caponier across the moat

The Western Heights Preservation Society

report from Chris Taft

The Western Heights Preservation Society (WHPS) is once again pleased to be able to offer a brief update on its activities.

OPEN DAYS

The summer months, as has now become traditional, provided the opportunity for open days organised by, or involving, the WHPS. This year saw an even more packed timetable than previously. In April the Drop Redoubt was opened for an entire weekend, as reported in August's Newsletter, but it was again opened for the annual Western Heights Open Day on the 27th June. This event improved on the previous one and was extremely popular, attracting excellent numbers and furthering the profile of the WHPS. The 2005 Open Day is already being planned and is likely to take place on Sunday 5th June 2005 although this is to be confirmed so do please contact the WHPS or visit the website at the address below to keep up to date.

On Sunday 12th September, as part of the nation wide Heritage Open Days, the Grand Shaft was opened and entrance was combined with tours of the Western Heights Fortifications. The day proved extremely popular and was attended by many visitors new to the Western Heights and who went away extremely enthusiastic about what they had seen.

PUBLICITY AND PROMOTIONS

The work on publicising the Western Heights and WHPS continues and further developments have been made to the Society website, which is an excellent place to keep up to date with the group's work and see a calendar of forthcoming events. All project days and open days are always advertised on the site.

The planned Society leaflet is now nearing completion and is awaiting approval by the committee before being finalised.

PROJECT DAYS

Project days have continued and are now beginning to settle on regular sites. The focus more recently has returned to the North Lines and clearing the overgrowth that has built up over the years. The beginning of next year will see additional work go into preparations for the 2005 open days. The exact timetable for this is yet to be decided but once again information can be obtained from the WHPS or from the website.

YOUR COMMENTS

The WHPS is always keen to hear from people and learn from their opinions. If you have any comments on this update or the Society generally we would be delighted to hear from you at the address below or by e-mail to publicity@western-heights.org.

We also welcome questions from any one wishing to know more about the Heights or the WHPS and we will always do our best to provide an answer.

MEMBERSHIP

The Western Heights Preservation Society is not all about getting your hands dirty clearing trees, it is also about supporting and moving the Society forwards in promoting the Western Heights and help is needed at all levels. For more information or to join please contact the Hon. Secretary at 66 Union Road, Deal Kent CT 14 6AR or visit the website, www.dover-western-heights.org. Please remember to say where you read about the WHPS.

Chris Taft
Publicity Secretary
publicity@doverwesternheights.org

Society Outings

☉ BANK OF ENGLAND AND TATE MODERN ☉

Thursday 12th August 2004

— reported by Adeline Reidy —



We arrived in London with plenty of time before our timed visit of 11am. We were able to have a quick preview of the museum before being called into a very modern comfortable room for the presentation about the Bank of England. A cheery lady welcomed us to her first presentation with slides of many rooms that the general public do not see. There was a short question time.

The Bank of England, in the heart of the City of London, was established

in 1694 to provide William III with finance to fight the French. The Museum tells the story of the Bank of England from its foundation as a chartered joint-stock company to its role today as the United Kingdom's central bank.

Having been in existence for more than 300 years the Bank of England has, unsurprisingly, accumulated a considerable number of items associated with its history. These items are grouped into 'Collections'. Some of them, such as



bank notes and furniture, represent the survival of tools used in the everyday working of the Bank while others, such as the cartoons, have been acquired over the years either by purchase or presentation. Items from the Bank's collections are displayed in its Museum where they are used to illustrate the history of the institution and its role today at the centre of the UK economy.

Over the years the bank grew to become Britain's central bank, with the authority to print and issue currency notes. The Bank of England also has the responsibility for storing the country's gold reserves, managing the National Debt and safeguarding the value of British currency.

When the Bank moved here 1734 it acquired the nickname, 'The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street'. Sir John Soane designed the building in 1788; the original plans can still be seen in the Sir John Soane Museum, Lincoln's Inn Fields. However, only the exterior of Soane's building has survived; the rest of the building was replaced between 1925 and 1939 when the Bank was enlarged. The museum centres on the reconstruction of Soane's Bank Stock Office of 1793, complete with waxwork figures in period costume. The Bank Stock Office is considered to be the finest neo-classical interior in Europe. The museum illustrates the work of the Bank of England and the story of England's financial system using interactive videos and displays, including a modern dealing desk. Other exhibits include silver plated decoration,

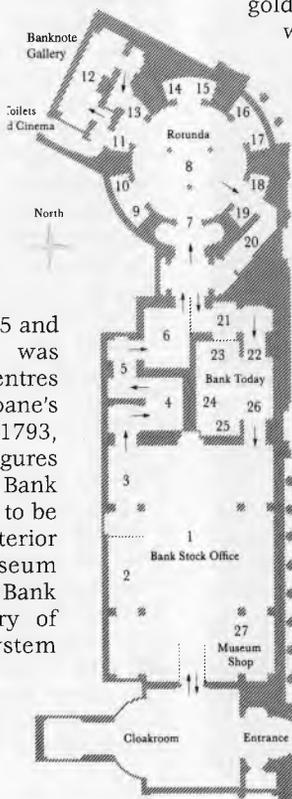
coins and the banknote gallery, displaying a complete collection of Bank of England notes. There are also pieces of Roman pottery and a Roman mosaic floor discovered during the rebuilding.

The Museum is housed within the Bank of England itself, right at the heart of the City. Sir Herbert Baker's Rotunda contains a display of Roman gold bars as well as a modern 281b, 13kg, gold bullion bar

which you can actually try and pick up. There are gold bars from

ancient times, to the modern market coins and a unique collection of bank notes, as well as many other items you might not expect to find - such as the pikes and muskets once used to defend the Bank and the Roman pottery and mosaics uncovered when it was rebuilt in the 1930s. On display are documents relating to famous customers such as the Duchess of Marlborough, George Washington and Horatio Nelson.

The Bank Stock Office, a late 18th century banking hall by the great English architect Sir John Soane, has been reconstructed and new DVD



systems allow visitors to look behind the doors of the nation's central bank and inter-activities allow them to examine the intricacies of bank note design and production. Live information on gilt-edged stocks and securities and the foreign currency and money markets is given at the Dealing Desk, similar to those in everyday use at the Bank. You can even try your hand at dealing on the US Dollar/Sterling Exchange by pitting your wits against a computerised simulation. Our time was soon spent and by 12.30pm we were on our way to the next treasure.

After a leisurely lunch along the Thames walkway, we arrived at the gigantic awesome Tate Modern, which stands in the heart of London, linked to St Paul's Cathedral by the new millennium footbridge. The building is a remarkable combination of the old and the new. The original Bankside Power Station was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott who was also the architect of Battersea Power Station, the Liverpool Anglican cathedral and the famous British red telephone box. Located along the banks of the River Thames, Tate Modern opened to great acclaim in 2000 and has since welcomed over 6 million visitors through its imposing doors. Housed in the former Bankside Power Station, the gallery pays homage to modern and contemporary art from 1900 to the present day. The collection includes works from Matisse to Moore, Dali to Picasso and Rothko. The incredible turbine hall creates a stunning entrance and a vast space in which to display temporary installations.

The building consists of a brick-clad steel structure, constructed from more than 4.2 million bricks. The height of the central chimney was limited to 325 feet (99 metres) in order to be lower than the dome of St Paul's Cathedral. The building has been converted by the leading Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron, whose plans have highlighted the building's new function while respecting the integrity of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott's original design.



The Tate Modern

The most noticeable change to the exterior of the building is a new two-storey glass structure or light beam spanning the length of the roof, which not only provides natural light in the galleries on the top floors, but also houses a stunning cafe offering outstanding views across London.

My views on the visit.

1. Modern Art isn't as silly as some people think. But some exhibitions are easier to understand than others. On actually seeing and experiencing modern art firsthand there is something that is not obvious, which is that it is VERY IMPRESSIVE. Works of art are very big, or shocking, or of strong impact on the mind. It's like a funfair of the MIND
2. Even if you don't like Modern Art you should visit Tate Modern (in fact it is especially worth visiting if you DON'T like it)
3. Preconceptions about an art gallery being by necessity an ancient classic building with fine but unexciting paintings on the walls can be DISPELLED on visiting the Tate Modern
4. For ME the experience opened my mind to alternative art, design and colour.

With the clock ticking away it was soon time to saunter along the riverbank and take in the views of this wonderful city and to hear her call for us to return soon. With our thanks to Joan for another successful day, we were back in Dover by 7.45pm.

DOVER SOCIETY VISIT TO LILLE 2004

— reported by John Husband —

WE WERE RECOMMENDED to visit Lille at this time - because Lille is European capital of culture this year and Dover within easy travelling distance. The year begins in October so there is still plenty of time to visit. We managed to fill a full-size coach and it took us a few hours to get there. During the journey it was cloudy and grey but there was plenty of evidence of order and industry on the way. As we entered Lille, modernity gave way to the old world and the streets became narrower. The fascination of the city cannot be conveyed fully here, but the air of activity was so French. We saw textile and fashion shops and media and enterprise was everywhere. Although traffic was busy, thanks to the skill of our driver we arrived quickly at the town centre with its ornate buildings and wide avenues and squares. The crowds were out in force and soon the sun came out. Bamboo sculpture from Australia was being constructed to symbolise the occasion and after a short orienting walk and a delicious meal we went on a coach tour in a little bus fully equipped with a multimedia guide. The coach tour showed us how large the town is, which is twinned with Ashford. There where monuments and open spaces everywhere with motorway junctions and bridges over the river.

When we got back to the centre we went our separate ways to visit places which we had noticed on our tour, in our case an inn called Les Trois Brasseurs which offered an extraordinary selection of beers. All too soon it was over and we had to leave. There is obviously plenty of scope for more extended visits for anybody. A repeat visit could never be boring!

Thanks are due to Joan Liggett for organising and accompanying us on this memorable trip.

John Husband - a notorious Europhile.



The Town Hall



The Church



The Railway Station

GLIMPSES OF THE PAST

Some snippets of Dover History

Another extract from the writings of Budge Adams

The last episode in Newsletter 48 took Budge's story up to 1917. Now it continues with more extracts from Budge's memoirs up to 1919 (Part of this piece has already appeared in the first section of 'Memories of a Century' published in 2000)

In 1917 America entered the war we had been fighting since 1914 and it was interesting to us children to see these men from the New World, especially as they wore Boy Scout hats and riding breeches and Fox's puttees., cut on the bias and incredibly easy to put on, unlike the 'horse bandages' which were issued to British troops. (I know, I've had to wear both kinds.) Their uniforms were not quite the same shade of khaki and the material was closer woven and better than that provided for the British soldier. But they were often ill-fitting, just as were those of our own men. Where they mostly differed from our soldiers was in the amount of money they had at their disposal and in the quantity of food they were provided with. They were, at least to we children living in the area at the foot of Castle Hill, very generous. Their ration wagons, long low carts drawn by four mules moved up through Castle Street to Victoria Park where some of the troops were quartered and then on to tented camps at Broadlees and on the cliffs. The ration wagons were usually piled high with cases, tins, jars and every sort of container, and mountains of sacks of potatoes. These things appeared to have been loaded in any old fashion and the stacking was precarious, to say the least. Surmounting all these packages, and even more precariously perched, would be four or five 'Doughboys', as I remember they

were called. As the wagons moved along the street various items would providentially fall off, always, it seemed, just where a little knot of children were standing watching. The frequency with which seven-pound tins of corned beef fell off kept us busy running off home with our 'findings'. Though I remember the corned beef more vividly than anything else, many other very desirable items 'fell off as well.

The American soldiers quartered in Victoria Park were often 'confined to barracks' and would sit on the top of the long wall running up Castle Hill Road and would throw dimes and cents down to us, who scrambled for them. At the time the Americans were here Castle Street was a water-bound macadam road with a high element of chalk in its surface mix. In wet weather it was a squelchy mass of stones and mud and outside each house there was a foot-scraper (always called that, though in fact a 'boot-scraper' - why 'foot-scraper' when it was boots that were scraped?) which had to be used before one entered. The road camber was high and the tilt it caused must have contributed to the ease with which items "fell off" the American ration wagons.

As a result of Dr. Kent's efforts my father recovered and enjoyed another ten years of comparatively happy semi-retirement. He would, whenever he could,

work during the mornings even though all he did had to be accomplished sitting on a stool or 'squat' (a compositor's support). By 1919 a wicker bath chair stood at the bottom of the stairs at 37 Castle Street and most afternoons my father would be helped into it and I would push him over to the Sea front where, with an old pair of binoculars I still possess, he would intently inspect all that was going on around him. We had to be back in Castle Street by half past five so that I might have assistance from Charlie Southey, who had by then returned from the war, in getting my father indoors and stowing away the bath-chair. Working hours were from 7.30 until 6 o'clock so my return soon after five gave ample time.

I became accepted as the natural successor to my father and he devoted a good deal of time and care to very subtly teaching me what I would need to know of business and money matters. As far as these two things are concerned both my

father and I were, and I still am, quite unsophisticated. My father's main tenet was 'keep the books accurately and don't 'fiddle' the tax returns'. He held that a man's word was his bond and that the timely settlement of debts incurred in the usual way of business had the highest priority. 'Good name was more important than a full belly', was what I was brought up to believe.

I have some photographs of my parents, taken in the garden of No. 37 when my father was just able to get about again and the pitiful clothes my mother is wearing make a stark commentary on the sore straits in which the war and my father's illness had placed us. Both my parents were strong on principles but they were very kind and my sister and I in no way felt deprived: quite the contrary, in fact. Weekly we looked forward to reading '*The Children's Newspaper*' the demise of which was, I feel, the biggest loss the children of this country ever sustained.

The Dream of Richard Tilden Smith or Tilmanstone - what might have been

By Derek Leach

There is nothing left of Tilmanstone Colliery today, but during its short working life it produced 20 million tons of coal. There were three pit shafts: number 1 was 1590 feet deep, number 2 was 3168 and number 3 was 3139 feet. All were sealed during 1987. Things were different in 1925 when Richard Tilden Smith envisaged a pyramid of businesses based upon Tilmanstone Colliery, making S E Kent one of the richest industrial areas in the country.

Richard Tilden Smith was born in New South Wales in 1865. His father had emigrated, but had died when Richard was 16. The family owned a pub, but had discovered gold which Richard used to

good effect. He soon owned 5 million acres with 75,000 cattle and at 21 he was responsible for developing Australia's first coal field. A bank crisis in 1893 made him poor and he came to England, but he still owned property in a gold field which restored his fortune. In England he started restoring failing businesses and refused a baronetcy for his efforts! By 1908 he was a director of Burma Mines and had a controlling interest in Chinese lead, silver, zinc and copper mines. In 1914 he acquired the Swansea Vale Works and built a large modern zinc smelting plant at Avonmouth. Ironically, this plant produced mustard gas for war purposes and Richard's only son, Jack, died from



Tilmanstone Colliery in the 1980s

German mustard gas. In the City he built the impressive office block of Adelaide House, which still stands on the riverside at the end of London Bridge, and lived in its penthouse. He introduced the diesel engine to Britain and had various interests all over the world.

Richard had plans for the Kent Coalfield as early as 1907 and made his first bid for Tilmanstone in 1915, just two years after it produced its first coal, but was thwarted by the then owner, Arthur Burr who, despite dubious methods, did so much to develop the coalfield. In 1925, six years after Burr's death, 1200 men were about to lose their jobs at Tilmanstone. Richard was appointed manager by the receiver and then became the colliery owner. It was in a poor state, bedevilled with water problems, inadequate pumping systems, dangerous shafts and miners notorious for their militancy. Using all his vast experience of finance, business and mining, he set about not only transforming Tilmanstone Colliery, but building a complex of industries around Dover using the energy produced by the pit. From the outset he knew that the colliery could only survive if ancillary

local businesses were created.

First, he tackled the water problem. For every ton of coal mined, 17 tons of water had to be pumped to the surface. He installed the largest pump in the country, called Lady Gray, which is still buried in the pit. New coal washing equipment was installed and a coal briquette plant built to produce poor quality coal - dirty, but easy to burn and cheap at 1s 6d a cwt.

The high cost of transporting coal by rail even to Dover docks was a big drawback. To solve this problem Richard planned an overhead transport system comprising a continuous wire supported by 177 pylons stretching seven and a half miles across country from Tilmanstone to the Eastern Arm in Dover Harbour. Coal would be carried in a succession of buckets attached to this aerial ropeway. On arrival at the Eastern Arm, having passed through a tunnel a quarter of a mile long in the White Cliffs, buckets would empty their coal into a 5,000 ton bunker to await loading on to ships. This would cost only 1s 9d per ton compared with 5s 9d by rail. Despite stiff opposition from the railway companies, parliamentary approval was obtained and the ropeway opened in 1930. It was not used during the Second World War and then fell into disrepair and was dismantled in the 1950s.

By 1929 Richard had acquired controlling interests in various Kent gas companies and he planned a gas plant at Tilmanstone, producing 1,000 million cubic feet of gas a year with coke as a by-product transported to Dover by aerial ropeway. Other by-products would have been pitch, benzol,



Aerial ropeway emerges through the cliffs on the Eastern Arm

dyes, creosote and artificial manure! There was more! The existence of rich deposits of iron ore in East Kent was well known, such as the 115 million tons 600 feet below the Shakespeare Colliery - now Samphire Hoe. Richard planned a steel works, once again using his aerial ropeway to Dover docks. Even a brick works featured in his master plan to use the waste from the mining activities. Perhaps the most exciting project was a local power station, using Tilmanstone coal, not only to supply the local area but also to attract other businesses to the area. This was before any national grid. He offered to supply London and other towns as well at one farthing a unit. His death intervened and Battersea Power Station was built to supply London.

The manufacture of cement locally was a top priority. It made sense to Richard with plenty of local coal, chalk and clay combined with the proximity of Dover docks for both home and export trade.

Twenty-four acres of land at Langdon Hole close to the harbour were leased for the proposed site. He envisaged the largest plant in the world producing one million tons a year, but had not foreseen the extent of local opposition, apathy and red tape. These had not been overcome when he died in 1929. His dream died with him, depriving Dover of many jobs.

What sort of man was this business tycoon? He took over Tilmanstone during a period of major strikes, including the General Strike of 1926, but was concerned for the welfare of strikers' families and, through a third party, paid out £ 100 a week to families of men on strike at his own pit! He gave his men the option of co-operating with management to keep the pit open or he would close it. They co-operated. Wages at Tilmanstone were amongst the highest in the country and were never cut despite continuing losses of up to £1,000 a week. The revolutionary practice of making workers part of management was introduced and a joint management committee was formed, but he rejected a profit sharing scheme because the men would also have to bear the losses! Reports of better conditions in Communist Russia were countered by sending a deputation of miners to Russia, with all expenses paid by Tilden Smith, to see whether these 'better conditions' could be introduced to the pit. He even offered



Eastern Arm with its aerial ropeway and coal staithe

free passage to Russia for miners and their families, but there were no takers! One of the deputation commented, 'If men at Tilmanstone had to work under such conditions, there would be hell to pay!' Concern for his men extended to building 100 new homes at Elvington available at low rent which they would own after several years. Pithead baths were installed.

Richard owned Elvington Court. Its large barn was converted into a miners' leisure centre that could seat 750 people which was used for dances, staging shows, plays and boxing tournaments. As Tilmanstone expanded, miners came from all over the country. Elvington Court was turned into a hostel for single miners at 25 shillings a week for full board including packed lunches for work. He had a pig farm behind Elvington Court, supplying the local butcher but also providing cheap pork to his miners.

By late 1929 the men of Tilmanstone had something to be proud of. They were treated with respect by management, who received respect in return. A future of security and prosperity seemed assured.

On 18 December 1929 Richard Tilden Smith was lunching in the House of Commons, lobbying the government to amalgamate compulsorily all collieries under a single Coal Board. He was

laughing when he suddenly collapsed and died. His premature death at 64 robbed East Kent of an industrial future as well as a great businessman and humanitarian. All his ambitious plans were made. Many projects had started, but nobody was prepared to continue with such complex and expensive ventures. Squabbles and mistrust returned to Tilmanstone and the family estate eventually sold its interest in the colliery in 1937.

What of Richard, the family man? He married and had four daughters and one son, but met a lovely White Russian immigrant after the Russian Revolution. He banished his wife to a luxury apartment and installed his mistress in his Mayfair home. Whilst he entertained lavishly and was generous to others, he was always being careful with his own personal spending - always buying second-hand cars! The Salvation Army and Barnardos benefited from his generosity and, of course, his fortune helped to support the Tilmanstone losses.

In 1929 there were still reckoned to be possibly 1,000 million tons of coal at Tilmanstone and Snowdon - enough to last 300 years at 10,000 tons per day. I wonder whether another Richard Tilden Smith will be brave enough to try to exploit it one day?

Reception of President Wilson at Dover

by Martyn Webster

The first State Visit to the United Kingdom by a President of the United States of America took place in 2004 in the person of the 43rd Incumbent of that office George W. Bush. This of course was by no means the first actual visit of an American President. The very first presidential visit took place in 1918 in the aftermath of the First World War at the time of the Peace Conference in Paris. As on so many occasions before, it was the town and port of Dover who received this

important visitor the 28th President, and on whose soil his foot was first set.

The "Dover Express" of the day reported the detail of this great occasion and the following is an edited extract: On Boxing Day Thursday December 26th, 1918, the President of the United States of America, Mr. Woodrow Wilson, accompanied by Mrs. Wilson and a large staff, landed at Dover. It was the first time that a ruler of the United States had ever landed in Great Britain and to make the

occasion more historic President Wilson came to England to confer on the question of the coming peace conference and the possibility of establishing a League of Nations that would keep the world in comparative peace for all time. The President was received at Dover on behalf of the King, by HRH the Duke of Connaught and was presented by the Mayor and Corporation of Dover with an address of welcome.



Woodrow Wilson, 28th President



Edith Bolling Galt Wilson

Although, owing to the enclosed nature of the Marine Station, it was not possible for the general public to get a view of the reception, there was a large and representative gathering at the station and the railway at the pier, where a good view can be obtained of those passing through Dover, was lined by great crowds.

The crossing from Calais was made by President Wilson on the s.s. Brighton, the President having come direct from the Front after spending Christmas Day with the American troops. It was a lovely calm, day with a bright sun and frost and the crossing, as the President stated, was made under the best of conditions. The 'Brighton' flew the flag of Vice Admiral Sir Roger Keyes, who accompanied the President, at the fore and the President's blue, with the American eagle, at the main. The vessel was escorted by the destroyer leader "Termagant" and six destroyers, the 'Meteor', 'Milne', 'Saracen', 'Afridi', 'Melpomene' and 'Mynges' which half way across the Channel had relieved the French destroyers, whilst a very imposing aerial escort accompanied it across the Channel, consisting of a dozen fast scouts, four seaplanes and a couple of Hadley Page bombers.

The 'Brighton' showed up out of the haze at a quarter to twelve and entered the harbour through the eastern entrance. The warships were all manned and decorated with flags, the Stars and Stripes being flown at the masthead of every vessel. As the vessel came between the entrance piers the saluting battery at Dover Castle fired its first salute since the war commenced. On the landing places at the Marine Station there were assembled HRH the Duke of Connaught; Lord Reading, the Lord Chief Justice of England, whose missions to America during the War had been of such importance to this country; Lord Henschell, Lord in Waiting attached to the President; the American Ambassador and very many British and American officials. The camouflaged 'Brighton', in addition to the President and Mrs Wilson, carried a very large number of those attached to the President during his European visit including pressmen and a large number of cinematograph operators all dressed in American Army uniforms, and as the boat came alongside the whirr of the cinema cameras on the boat and ashore almost drowned the buzz of the aerial escort,

which flew low over the pier, one after the other.

As soon as the gangway was made fast the President came ashore and was welcomed by the Duke of Connaught. On either side of the landing place were drawn up guards of honour of the Royal Navy and the 3rd Battalion of the Buffs with their King's Colour. To the strains of the American National anthem, the guards presented arms and the President, accompanied by the Duke of Connaught, walked up and down the lines inspecting the fine body of men on parade.

After inspecting the guards of honour the President, accompanied by the Duke of Connaught and followed by Mrs Wilson, entered the station, where the Mayor and Corporation were in waiting on the red baize carpeted platform to present their address on behalf of Dover. A large number of seats had been placed around the space where this was to take place and here were assembled a large number of Dover and East Kent people.

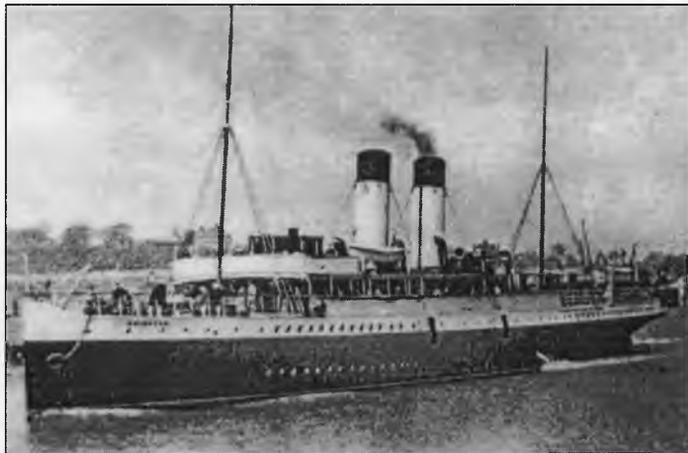
As Mrs Wilson walked along the carpeted way to meet the Corporation her pathway was strewn with roses thrown by the following little girls:- Freda Pudney, Freda Denne, Joan Wood, Alice Farley, Phyllis Earley, Phyllis Hookway, Jessie Igglesden, Winifred Pudney, Marjorie Turnpenny, Gladys Highley, Alma Vasse, Peggy Houlden and Winkie Heath.

The Mayor and Corporation, who wore their robes of office, included the Mayor Councillor E. Farley and the Deputy Mayor Councillor C. E. Beaufoy. Also present were the Recorder Sir A. H. Bodkin, the Chaplain W. G. Elnor, Aldermen and Corporation officials.

The address, which was read by the Recorder merits reproduction in full:

To Mr Woodrow Wilson, the President of the United States of America We the Aldermen and Burgesses of the Cinque Ports and the Borough of Dover desire to offer you our respectful and most cordial greetings on your arrival in our ancient and historic town and port. We welcome

you, Sir, at this season when thoughts of peace and goodwill are uppermost in our minds and as the President of a Republic which, though far away from Europe, determined to associate herself with our Allies, including the great Republic of France, whose shores you have just left and ourselves, in the battle for freedom and humanity, and thus to adopt and act in furthering the high ideals which you have placed before the world. The valour of the Armies of the United States, so rapidly organised, has won the admiration of all the Allied Nations and contributed in no small degree in hastening, by their co-operation, in the rapid succession of victories on the Western Front the Armistice of November 11th. But Dover the Keeper of the Gate of England and the Guardian of the Narrow Seas, has also watched and admired the closely associated measures for the safety of the seas taken by the navies of the United States and Great Britain. Our country has in gratitude noticed that towards all that can alleviate the suffering and distress of war your country since 1914 has most generously and enthusiastically contributed. This is a most memorable occasion and unique in our history for it is the first time we have had the honour of welcoming the President of the United States, a country knit to us by race and tongue and now by loss and grief suffered to a common end, - that the principles of Liberty, Righteousness, Justice and Peace may alone henceforward guide the destinies of all nations. You are passing from our Town to London as the guest of His Majesty the King and afterwards to other parts of the country. We are only tendering to you the first instalment of those feelings of respect and cordiality which you will everywhere experience. Given under our Corporate Seal in our Council Chamber at Dover this 26th day of December 1918, E. W. T. Farley, Mayor, R. E. Knocker, Town Clerk. The President at once made his reply and although in the noise of the Station he could not



SS Brighton IV, 1903-30

always be heard the general tenor of his remarks could be caught by those standing around. He said:

You have certainly extended to me, and to those who accompanied me, a very cordial and gracious welcome. Even the sea was kind to us this morning and gave us a very pleasant passage so that it tallied perfectly with our expectation of the pleasure we should have on landing in England. We have gone through many serious times together, and therefore we can regard each other in a new light as comrades and associates because nothing brings men together like a common understanding and a common purpose, I think that in spite of all the terrible sufferings and sacrifices of this war we shall some day, in looking back upon them, realise they were worthwhile not only because of the security they gave the world against unjust aggression but also because of the understanding they established between great nations which ought to act with each other in the permanent maintenance of justice and right. It is therefore with emotions of particular gratification that I find myself here. It affords the opportunity to match my mind with the minds of those who with a like intention, are purposing to do the best that can be

done in the great settlements of the struggle. I thank you for the warmth you have shown in your welcome and extend to you in the name of my countrymen a most cordial greeting.

The President was loudly cheered at the conclusion of his address. He then asked the Mayor to introduce him to the members of the Council and shook hands with each of

them. There was quite a time before the train left and after spending some time in conversation with Admiral Keyes and shaking hands with him most heartily the President entered the special train in waiting. At 12.40 p.m. it left for London, the guards of honour which had now been drawn up on the platform, saluting and the band played the American National Anthem. As the train went past the crowds standing in the streets and on the bridges at the pier hearty cheers were raised. An escort of some twenty aeroplanes accompanied the special train to London flying round and round it in circles as it travelled at considerably less than half their speed. A meeting of the Corporation was held at the Council Chamber at 11 a.m. on Thursday to order the sealing of the above address of welcome to President Wilson which would be illuminated and subsequently forwarded to him in that form. The President, after his momentous visit to these shores, returned to France from Dover the following Tuesday morning, New Year's Eve, 1918, Dover once again having played out its role in national and international history.

Perhaps some of the girls who strewed roses in the First Lady's path are still alive to tell their tale.

Dover Prisoners' Friend

by Terry Sutton

It must be a horrible situation to get into debt, but it was far worse 200 years ago. Just imagine the plight of those committed to the Cinque Ports' debtors' prison in the cold outer walls of Dover Castle. Not only did the poor debtor have to pay exorbitant prison fees, but when released, after payment of the debt, he had to pay £1 to get out.

Conditions in the castle's debtors' prison were deplorable. Their tower was dark, small and damp. The prisoners were provided with neither fire nor food and there was 'no privy accommodation!' They had to rely on friends to bring them food or on charity from passers by. From their prison, overlooking the steps leading to Canons Gate, they were allowed to lower a basket from a small grill where those passing by could donate a crust or two. A bell was attached to the lowering wire to attract attention. And that is how James Neild, a rags-to-riches London jeweller, found the situation when he visited Dover Castle and its debtors' prison in 1770. He also toured similar prisons in Calais and Paris before deciding something must be done to help the poor wretches. He set up the Neild's Charity in 1810 under a trust deed which provided the three per cent dividend on consols to be used for the purchase of bread for the prisoners and, if any cash was left over, it went towards buying their discharge.

James Neild became treasurer of the Society for the Relief of Prisoners, formed in 1773, and as such appealed to the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports to improve conditions for those in the prison. At first nothing was done until the Earl of Guilford (of Waldershare Park) was appointed Lord Warden. He ordered some improvements as was necessary for 'cleanliness and decency.' Lord Guilford also reduced the prisoners' fees but even then those sentenced had to

pay 13/8d to the gaoler on commitment and half a crown (2/6d) a week for lodgings! In the year 1810 Mr. Neild, angry at lack of improvements in the prison, transferred to the mayor and jurats of Dover the £800 deed of trust, with the instruction that Dover Corporation's Chamberlain take steps to supply each day 2 lbs weight of bread to each prisoner. In addition he wanted a record kept in a book to show how his money was being spent. Eventually, after the debtors' prison was closed in October 1855, the £800 capital was devoted to the Dover Almshouse Charity.

Just who was this benefactor of prisoners? James Neild was born at Knutsford in 1744. His father was a linen draper who died young leaving a widow and five children. James went to live with an uncle who was a farmer. But James disliked that work and after two years obtained an appointment as a jeweller's apprentice. When his uncle died, James inherited a little money and set himself up as a jeweller in St. James' Street, London. The venture prospered so when he retired in 1792 he had a considerable fortune.

He had two sons but, apparently, neither got on well with their father. William, the elder, went into law and emigrated to the East Indies as a barrister, returning home broken in health, and died, aged 31, in October, 1810.

The other son John inherited his father's property valued at £250,000, lived in a large house at Cheyne Walk, Chelsea and existed as a miser. When he died, aged 72, he was worth £500,000 most of which he left to Queen Victoria. Such was the end of the family and fortune of James Neild, benefactor of the Dover Castle prisoners. No monument was ever provided for him and his good work. Today he is largely forgotten.

(Sources: Dover Express and English Heritage booklet 'Dover Castle').

Letters to the Editor

From: Joe Harman

Your picture on the front cover of Newsletter 50 shows the clock tower on the old Harbour Station. I am not sure if it ever had a clock. The story goes that someone missed his train and it was removed. Certainly it was not there when I started on the trains in 1929. When the roof was removed it was to put a light on top which was used by the captains of the train ferries when they entered the dock.

(Editor's Note. Apologies to Anthony Lane for this mistake. The caption on the cover should have been placed with the picture on page 15.)

From: Sherifa Rashidally

As a child I lived at 'Chaldercot', 1 Leyburne Road, Dover, and this home has always been dear to me, remembering the happy hours there with my late mother. I do have a few aerial photos of 'Chaldercot' but I have no close-up photos which show the house clearly in detail.

I am wondering if you know anyone who may be able to help me obtain such a photo. It would be much appreciated and, of course, I would cover the cost and p&p.

Miss Sherifa Rashidally, Flat 8, 8-14 Park Avenue, Mansfield, Notts. NG18 2AU

From: Jeane Dutton-Hill

Return to Cowgate

On Sunday 8th August I took my fiancé Jeremy to visit Cowgate cemetery as he hadn't been there before, he just had to put up with me telling him how nice it was! He wanted to see where Arthur Beresford Pite was buried. My article about Pite in Issue 50 of the newsletter generated much interest in him, I received queries from as far afield as West Yorkshire. I now have a website about his life, work and where he is buried in Dover, which can be found at www.members.lycos.co.uk/askjeane

It was a gloriously warm and sunny day and we spent a very pleasant morning having a look around. Pite is interred in the Mowll family vault. The volunteers are doing an amazing job in their never-ending task of keeping the place tidy. Hopefully I can encourage more people to visit not only to see the interesting memorials but to enjoy the wonderful wild flowers, birds, butterflies and tranquillity.

Contact details: Tel 07831539069. E-mail Jeane.dutton@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk.

Note from May Jones, Proofreader

Did anyone notice the two mistakes which slipped through the net in the August Newsletter?

1. Batemans, Kipling's home, if near Burwash, on the Weald, not Burmarsh on Romney Marsh near Hythe.
2. Reginald Koettlitz, the explorer, must have travelled down the Blue Nile to Khartoum and Cairo. The Nile must flow down to the Mediterrean Sea.



DOVER MUSIC SOCIETY



Inaugural Concert

CONNAUGHT HALL, 9 OCTOBER, 2004

reported by Jack Woolford

DOVER HAS MANY PROBLEMS but public performance of classical music is not one of them. Thanks to Robert and Natalie Poole, the hosts of Yuri Tykonenko and the parents of Oliver Poole, we have had three superb instrumental recitals at Astor College, admission free, thanks to sponsorship from Dover Town Council in collaboration with the Dover Society. Now, with the additional sponsorship of Dover District Council, it was possible to fill the Connaught Hall with an eagerly enthusiastic audience for yet another free concert of world class standard.

Oliver Poole may be only thirteen years old but he has the strength and maturity of a veteran. Technically he is so remarkably brilliant as to be able to concentrate solely on interpretation. He played the Mozart Adagio in B Minor and the Sonata in F as though Beethoven had composed them. The five Chopin Etudes he chose (from a possible 24), playable (as presenter Nicholas Harby said) only by virtuosos, sensitively progressed from two in minor keys through one in the major and back to two more in the minor. No one I have ever heard better expressed the composer's overwhelming powers of joy and pathos. Never, either, have I heard more enthusiastic and prolonged applause.

After the refreshing interval, Nicholas Harby introduced Alexander Sitkovetsky, a Russian violinist of international repute, invited to his School by Yehudi Menuhin himself. He was to have been accompanied by his mother Olga, also of international status and fame, but at two days notice her place was taken by Australian-Japanese Kumito Ito.

Consequently their time for rehearsal must have been drastically limited: but it did not show. Ms Ito's pianistic brilliance - she was sight-reading - matched the mastery of the violinist (playing from memory) and the rapport between them was palpable. They began with Grieg's Sonata in C Minor and so passionately played was the first movement that they were interrupted by spontaneous applause. The sad slow movement and the tempestuous finale equally spontaneously followed.

Before they played Schnittke's (only recently dead) Suite in the Baroque Style, a fantastically convincing pastiche from somewhere between Vivaldi and Handel, mercifully without any fireworks, there was a remarkable addition to the published programme. Oliver Poole accompanied Alexander Sitkovetsky in performing "Granada Walkway", composed by Oliver himself in Granada. Of course it was phenomenally difficult (with glissandi for both of them, the violin in double-stopped harmonics). Of course it was saturated with Spanish rhythms and harmonies ... But it was a masterpiece in its own right: and it brought the house down yet again. I wonder if Oliver the composer will eventually outshine Oliver the pianist.

The concert ended with Sarasate's Gypsy Airs. Sarasate himself was a violin virtuoso. I doubt he could play them with more panache than Alexander and Kumito. The concluding Goblins' Dance lifted the roof.

I shall certainly sign up for the Dover Music Society (at 26, Park Avenue, CT16 1HD) for more concerts, free or not. I hope you will, too!

THE DOVER MUSIC SOCIETY

Promoting Talent

The Dover Music Society has been formed by lovers of music to try and achieve two main objectives. Firstly, to give to young local musicians an opportunity to perform in public and secondly, to attract artists of international standing, to perform in Dover.

It is very important for any young musicians wishing to pursue a performing career to be able to perform in public. This builds confidence, stage presence and can help open doors for their career. For local talent it is important to perform to their own community and develop within it. Dover Music Society will give this opportunity and the first half of all concerts will be dedicated solely to this purpose.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

To attract international performers, we need to have reasonable size audiences. You will agree that it will be difficult to invite performers back, if their experience is of playing to small numbers. In this we would very much appreciate your help. If you can please complete the form below and send it to us, this will help us to gauge future interest. It will also allow us to keep you informed of future concerts.

We also plan to hold master classes. Distinguished professors of international standing will be invited to teach piano/cello/violin etc. for periods of 3-6 days. Active participants will be guided in the study of their chosen music. Non-active participants will watch. If you are interested and would like to receive information, please indicate the instrument of interest.

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The Dover Society Website

www.doversociety.homestead.com

Please visit the site.

Read reports on meetings, check the programme of events.

Your comments and observations would be appreciated.

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**Contact the editor, Mike McFarnell or a member of the committee
if you want more information.**

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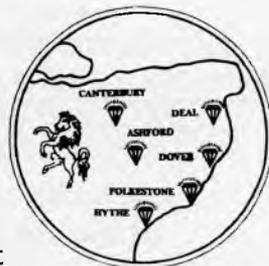
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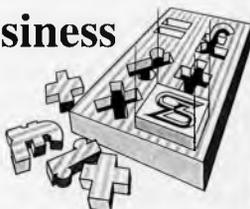


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Please make cheques payable to the Dover Society and forward the cheque or cash to the Membership Secretary, Mrs Sheila Cope, 53 Park Avenue, Dover CT16 1HD

I/We could sometimes give practical help with the following (*please tick boxes*)

Social events       Writing for newsletter

Projects e.g. clearance, surveys, photography

Any other interests or expertise .....

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# PROGRAMME 2004 - 2005

*Guests are welcome at all meetings except the Annual General Meeting which is for members only.*

DECEMBER 18      **The Christmas Feast.** Enjoy a sumptuous feast in splendid  
Saturday            surroundings for only £17.00, to include a sherry reception, wine,  
7.00 for 7.30        soft drinks and entertainment.

## 2005

JANUARY 17        **Speakers:** Derek Leach "An Excise Officer's Tales"  
Monday 7.30        Lea Oakley "Walletts Court"

FEBRUARY 14      **Wine & Wisdom with Clive Taylor.** £4.00 per person to include food,  
Monday              wine, soft drinks, tea and coffee. There will be prizes for 1st and 2nd  
7.15 for 7.30        place.

MARCH 14          **Speakers:** John Walker "Confessions of a Developer"  
Monday 7.30        Councillor David Hannent "My Dover"

APRIL 18            **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
Monday 7.30        **Speaker:** Councillor Paul Watkins "Dover's Pride"

MAY 19              **A Visit to Chartwell,** the home of Winston Churchill with its beautiful  
Thursday            gardens overlooking the Weald of Kent. History comes to life in the  
family and exhibition rooms containing memories of Sir Winston and  
his time. £10.00. Entrance to house £7.00. Free to National Trust  
members.

Pick-ups: 11.00 Railway Bell; 11.10 Frith Road; 11.15 Brook House

JUNE 23             **Walkabout Hythe -** a half day outing. Guided tour around this ancient  
Thursday a.m.      and historic town led by members of the Hythe Society. Lunch in a  
local hostelry. £10.00 excluding lunch.

Pick-ups: 09.00 Railway Bell; 09.10 Frith Road; 09.15 Brook House

JULY 9                **To celebrate SEA BRITAIN 2005 a visit to Chatham Dockyard.**  
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discover the role women played in the work of the Royal Dockyard,  
followed by a paddle steamer cruise whilst enjoying a cream tea.  
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AUGUST              **London.** The Palace of Westminster a.m. Guildhall, Apsley House p.m.  
£14.00.

SEPTEMBER         **France**

OCTOBER 21        **200th Anniversary** of the Battle of Trafalgar and the death of Admiral  
Friday               Lord Nelson. Dinner and Dance. Town Hall. Details later.

OCTOBER 24        **Speaker:** Harry Ward "Captain Hook"  
Monday 7.30

NOVEMBER 14      **Speaker:** Councillor Richard King "The Future of Kent"  
Monday 7.30        **Brainstorming Session**

*All indoor meetings are held at St Mary's Parish Centre*

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