

## — The Iron & Crundall Families of Dover —

A talk by David Iron - Reported by Alan Lee

DAVID IRON STARTED with an apology stating that he was not qualified to talk about the Harbour, but about people so he would concentrate on the very personal story of the Iron and Crundall families.

After a brief personal introduction he proceeded with a very well researched family history. This placed both families at the centre of the story a century ago when Dover was at the height of its relative economic wealth.

There were a number of John Irons starting with the first back in 1744. The second was born in 1775; he joined the Royal Navy, fought at the Battle of Trafalgar



*John Irons and family, 1911*



*Four of the Irons family, Dover Esplanade, 1900*

and became a Channel Pilot. Eventually he became the Harbour Master at Dover and during this time he saw an improved harbour entrance, inner harbour, Wellington Dock and the initial Admiralty Pier. Upon his death in 1867 he was buried in Cowgate cemetery.

On John's retirement in 1860 his son Richard took over as Harbour Master, a position he held for the next 22 years overseeing the work on the Granville Dock.

In 1898 another John Iron took over as the Harbour Master and he retired after 40 years in control. In his time he saw many developments; the completion of the Prince of Wales Pier, the Eastern Arm and the Breakwater which was built for the Royal Navy. The Marine Station, the widening of the Admiralty Pier and the Train Ferry Dock were all finished. He was a friend of the Kaiser and in WWI was the Admiralty Salvage Officer. On his death he had a Buckland Church burial.

Douglas Iron 1893 - 1983 was present when Bleriot landed and joined the Royal Flying Corp becoming one of the first pilots trained in WWI. During WWII he carried out pilot training, was awarded the CBE, became an Air Commodore and on retirement moved to Herefordshire. Clive Iron 1896 - 1985 also saw Bleriot and joined the Royal Navy Flying Corps. Later he worked with the Bank of England then ran a coffee plantation in India. He moved to London when he retired.

One of the interesting ladies in the family was Agnes Irons 1897 - 1981 she lived at 3 Maison Dieu Road for all of her life and was a practising Buddhist.

David then moved on to the Crundall side of the family who were also a well known and prominent local family. Henry 1856 - 1941 was a timber merchant and a cousin of Sir William Albert Crundall, a banker in South Africa.

The most well known member of the family Sir William Crundall 1846 - 1934 was a Member of Parliament, the Chairman of Dover Harbour Board and 13 times Mayor of Dover. He owned a large timber and coal merchants and played a large part in the redevelopment of Dover - see previous edition of the newsletter for a more in-depth story. There is also a display about him in the Town Museum.

These two families were linked more closely when (Frederick) John Iron 1895 - 1975 married his first cousin Dorothy Crundall 1893 - 1972.



*Henry Crundell and family*

The talk was very well illustrated with over fifty slides showing various local scenes and family members. Many thanks go to David for his fascinating insight into his family history.

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## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

**Summer 2006**

Our present membership is 457 and by the time you read this report virtually all subscriptions should have been gathered in. We have a record number of new members this time. Thanks are due to our editor who has enrolled several work colleagues. They are particularly welcome as our average age profile is thereby reduced which bodes well for the future of the Society.

Our former editor, Merril Lilley, who also recruited many members when in post, has now moved house. We wish Merril and Bruce contentment in their new home.

We welcome:-

Mr E Bates, Ms G Burgess, Mr D Tanner, Mr B & Mrs E Fincham, Mr P Fargher, Mr C Harpham, Mrs B & Mr R Boyer, Mr D & Mrs J Circuit, Mrs B Roberts, Mrs C Huntley, Mr C Friend, Mrs P Fuller, Mr P Cunningham, Mrs G Burrows.

*Sheila Cope, Membership Secretary*