

The  
Dover  
Society

# Newsletter

No. 62

August 2008



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# THE DOVER SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1988

Registered with the Civic Trust, Affiliated to the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies  
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## *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

I would like to remind members that the last of our summer outings is the trip to Lille and should be an interesting day. There will be plenty of time for sightseeing, a meal and of course shopping. Thanks to Pat our social secretary for organising four very interesting and diverse trips this year.

To mark the 125th anniversary of Connaught Park the society has paid to have a holm oak planted, not far from the pond with its new fountain. Thanks to Graham Wanstall for instigating and following through this project. He was also instrumental in having the new flagpole installed near to the main entrance of the park.

Congratulations also to another of our members, Lorraine Sencicle, for her dogged determination in the long battle to obtain a new hospital in Dover. She has succeeded in obtaining promises that we will have a hospital in the town.

The report from the AGM is reproduced in full, although some events mentioned may have already taken place. Our chairman Derek Leach laid a wreath on behalf of the society at the Zeebrugge memorial service on St. George's Day. It is pleasing to see the increase in the number of people attending this service to pay their respects.

The committee has been trying to get some action on tidying up Moates (Moats) Bulwark and the surrounding area and maybe in the future have it open to the public. English Heritage is

preparing a discussion document although funding may be a problem.

The committee has also authorised the release of funds to refurbish the plaque on a house in Saxon Street. One major event next year will be the centenary of the first cross channel flight by Louis Bleriot.

The next indoor meeting is on 20th October and will feature talks by Ruth Parkinson and Jon Iveson. The Christmas Feast will be held this year in the refectory in the grounds of Dover College. The entertainment will be Quodlibet. Please book your place as soon as possible as this is always a popular event and the number of tickets is strictly limited.

The Dover Festival events are continuing at various venues around the town, so keep an eye out for them. Any reports on these as well as the Heritage Open Days, supported by the society, will be carried in the next issue.

It is sad to see Mike McFarnell standing down from organising the Dover Pageant. Well done, Mike, for all of your efforts and the enjoyment you have provided over the years.

Last but not least, congratulations to Pat Sherratt and Patricia Hooper, our social secretary, on their wedding. We wish them health, wealth and happiness.

*Editor*

## **DEADLINE for contributions**

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 63 will be Wednesday 8th October 2008. 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 213668 to discuss details.

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## **EDITORIAL AND PRODUCTION TEAM**

<b>Editor:</b>	Mr Alan Lee
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# MARCH MEETING

## *The Dour and the Environment Agency*

A talk by Ian Humphreys reported by Terry Sutton

Guest speaker at our March meeting was marine biologist Ian Humphreys from the Environment Agency who told us how lucky we are to have such a delightful chalk stream, the river Dour, flowing through our town. The Dour, he explained, was one of only two pure chalk streams in Kent.

Ian, who has been working with the Dour's environment since 1989, detailed progress on the rolling programme to improve the river by removing various obstructions to the passage of fish.

He claimed there were "loads" of brown trout in the river, and told how they spawned in gravel beds, and said there were sea trout in the dock into which the river flows (the Wellington Dock) just waiting to swim up-stream but for the obstructions that stood in the way (presumably under the New Bridge area).



*The River Dour*

Ian explained how the chalk hills above the Dover valley, through which rain water percolates, were formed millions of years ago and why chalk streams are so friendly to wildlife. These reasons included the stability of temperature (no more than a 4 °C annual change), high calcium content, low levels of silt, and regularity of flow.

With the use of a PowerPoint screening he detailed the range of "beasties" to be found in the Dour but noted that crayfish, said to have been located in the river a few years back, were now missing. However efforts might be made to re-introduce them to the river where fresh water shrimps were already to be found.

Aquatic plants growing in the Dour, or on the river bank, included water sedge, water forget-me-nots, mint, water parsnip, wild iris and an abundance of watercress. In addition to the brown trout there were a few eels and sticklebacks, he added.

Ian told how agreement was being reached with water companies not to extract water from the upper limits of the river Dour but to make any required extractions down-stream, thus improving the river flow through the town. This was a slow process involving extraction licences.

"You are so lucky to have such a lovely river flowing through your town," was Ian's parting shot.

## Dover Transport Museum

A talk by Nathan de Thaubrew reported by Alan Lee

The second speaker of the March meeting was also one of the youngest. Nathan started by revealing details of what his motivation was and how he had become involved with the Transport museum. At present, he is part of the curatorial team (collections).

Continuing, he explained how the museum came into being in 1980 and that until 1995 their base was at Cambridge Terrace. Then, for various reasons, they had to vacate these premises and moved to a site at Old Park Barracks. In 2004 they had to move once again and this time it was to their present location at Willingdon Road, Whitfield. Grants obtained from the National Lottery and Dover District Council, along with some excellent local sponsorship, were a great help in allowing the clearing and setting up the site.

Over the last few years the volunteer workforce has transformed this sadly neglected area with some very imaginative displays. Inside the main body of the museum they have built authentic looking old buildings; these include a bicycle

shop and a garage. As well as the static displays, the museum is home to a great many old vehicles. These include a 1924 Aveling and Porter 10 ton road roller, made at Rochester, an Austin 7 made in the 1930's and a Humber Super Snipe from 1936. A marvellous 1929 Dennis Charabanc is a must to see along with a NSU (Neckar and Sulm) motorcycle and a 1914 Pierce-Arrow truck manufactured in



1924 Aveling and Porter 10 ton road roller



Your local garage

America and shipped over to Europe to help aid the war effort during World War One. To widen the range of interesting items a SRN4 (Saunders Roe Nautical 4) hovercraft propeller from Hoverspeed is on display. A blue steam 0-6-0 locomotive made in 1927 by the Avonside Company of Bristol should also be of great interest to visitors. This was for many years in use at Snowdon Colliery.



*Steam 0-6-0 locomotive, 1927*

There is a Maritime room and the museum is home to the East Kent Bus Company Memorial to employees killed during the war years.

Many thanks go to Nathan for giving us an insight into the workings of the Dover Transport Museum. With the many varied and fascinating items from bygone days, this museum is well worth a visit.

**The opening times are:**

**Easter to End September**  
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday  
1.30 pm – 5 pm

**Sundays and Public Holidays**  
10.30 am to 5 pm

**October to Easter**  
Sundays only - 10.30 am to 5 pm

\* \* \* \* \*

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

**Summer 2008**

Thanks once again to the majority who pay their subscriptions on time and thereby contribute to the financial stability of the Society. No credit crunch for us, we trust! Please note that for economic and timesaving reasons subscriptions, including those paid in cash, are only acknowledged on receipt of an s.a.e.

Our numbers hover around 460 and we are grateful to those who have recruited our thirteen new members who are lucky for us. They are :- Mrs T Roche, Mr C & Mrs S Smith, Mrs G Rapley, Mrs C Morecroft, Mrs S Jones, Mr M Fuller, Mr D & Mrs L Wyborn, Mr J & Mrs P Widgery, Mrs V Philpott and Mr A McKendrick.

Unfortunately Mr Jack Griggs was omitted from the list of obituaries in the last Newsletter.

*Sheila R Cope*

# Magic in Deal

It is not only the Dover Society which sponsors and enthusiastically reports musical events, so does our neighbours the Deal Civic Society. We are both affiliates of the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies. They are organising this recital as a prelude to 'Transport Infrastructure in East Kent' their conference in November.



## Sophia Lisovskaya Piano Recital Deal Town Hall Saturday 4th October at 7.30 pm

Born in Moscow and at the age of six gave her first public performance. She studied at the Tchaikovsky Junior Conservatoire of Music in Moscow and at London's Royal Academy of Music. Sophia has a broad repertoire although her childhood love of Russian composers has never left her. She chose Scriabin for her debut CD. Her debut in the legendary "Great Hall" of the Moscow Conservatoire, performing the premiere of Bruch's Double Piano Concerto with the Moscow State Chamber Orchestra in their Winter Proms season, was a huge success and she has made a number of live broadcasts many national radio stations.

### Order of recital:

Ludvig Van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Frederic Chopin (1810-1849)

Frederic Chopin

Frederic Chopin

Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915)

Alexander Scriabin

Alexander Scriabin

Sonata No.8 Op.13 Pathétique

Four Nocturnes:

Op.27 No.2 Op.48 No.2 Op.55 No.1 Op. (Posthumous)

### Interval (with wine)

Two Etudes: Op.10 No.6 E Flat and Op.25 No.10 in B

Fantaisie Impromptu Op. No.4 in C-Sharp Minor

Preludes Op.11 No.1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9.

Op.16 No.1 in B Major (Andante)

Two Etudes Op.65 No.2 and 3

Vers La Flamme Op.72

### Tickets £12.00

Contact (by mail, tel. or e-mail):

Jack Woolford, 1066 Green Lane, Temple Ewell, Dover CT16 3AR

Tel: 01304 330381 E-mail: [a.woolford2@ntlworld.com](mailto:a.woolford2@ntlworld.com)

**Cheques made out to Kent Federation of Amenity Societies, please!**

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**Deal Branch also open Sunday 10 - 12**

# A Different Kind of Magic

## Thomas Tallis Returns To Dover

by Jack Woolford

As regular readers are aware, I habitually use the word "magic" in describing the Connaught Hall concerts organized by the Dover Music Society, especially when Oliver Poole is performing. The same word is (at least) as appropriate for the packed Tallis Concert in the Refectory of Dover College on the beautiful evening of Saturday 10th May.

Presented by the Dover Society as a contribution to the 2008 Festival of Dover, it was superbly performed by no less than the Canterbury Cathedral Choir with soloists from Glyndebourne (!). By my count there were forty choristers, boys and girls, men and women, all suitably clad in modest black, but all continuously and smilingly delighted to sing and to form and re-form into different groups for different items under the benign but authoritative and athletic or even balletic choirmaster...

It was a truly unique occasion. The remarkably surviving Refectory of Dover Priory, now Dover College, in which the Tallis Concert was performed, dates from 1132 (its gigantic Romanesque bareness gives it an echo more worthy of a cathedral than a dining room). Four hundred years



later (1532) Thomas Tallis, born in Kent some 500 years ago (c.1505), served there as organist and composer in the Chapel (also surviving) for six years and ate in that same Refectory.

Then he proceeded via Waltham Abbey and Canterbury Cathedral to the Chapel Royal where, in remarkable succession, he served Kings Henry VIII and Edward VI, and Queens Mary and Elizabeth, all through the spiritual and temporal turmoil of the Protestant Reformation. His music, however, both sacred and profane, was uniformly superb, brilliantly furthering the development from plainchant to polyphony: the motet *Spem in alium* (with which the choir skillfully ended both the first and second parts of the Concert) is in no less than forty parts: eight groups of five, as we could see, as well as hear. Unique?

Part I was, properly, Tallis alone. Part II demonstrated his influence, first on his younger friend and pupil, William Byrd, and then, not only on 18th century Gabrieli, but also on living composers Tavener and Ridout - not to mention Vaughan-Williams' *Fantasia*. Unique indeed!



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## The Chairman's Report

# Annual General Meeting

## of the Dover Society, 2008

◆ ◆ ◆ by Derek Leach ◆ ◆ ◆

*The Chairman's report has been reproduced in its entirety so therefore some items or events will already have taken place - editor.*

**Your Executive tries to keep members up to date on most issues via the Newsletter and our website, but perhaps it is only through this annual report that members can really appreciate something of the range and extent of the Society's activities for the past year.**

### Membership

I am pleased to report that not only has our membership remained steady, but has increased since this time last year from around 450 to 464 despite the loss of some members through natural causes and lapsed membership. This is due to recruiting efforts by some members and the hard work of our membership secretary, Sheila Cope. Thank you, Sheila.

I now ask you to stand as we remember those who have died.

### Planning matters

Needless to say our Planning Committee under its tireless chairman, Jack Woolford, has kept busy monitoring, and commenting upon where necessary, all planning applications and related issues with several important matters referred to the Executive. Whilst we would have preferred the Connaught Barracks site used for higher education or something similar, we have welcomed plans for 500 eco-friendly homes, although we are keeping a careful eye on the future of Fort Burgoyne.

The controversial future of Dover's health

services has been prominent throughout the year and member, Lorraine Sencicle, has been in the forefront, trying to ensure that as part of Dover's regeneration we have adequate local health facilities.

An essential part of any such regeneration are Dover Harbour Board's outline proposals for major expansion at Western Docks to meet future traffic demands with associated commercial development; having welcomed them in principle with some reservations, we await more details about the development and the essential infrastructure.

We also await, but with some trepidation, the long delayed redevelopment of the St. James' area and the impact of ASDA upon both local traffic and local shops, but are eagerly awaiting the demolition of Burlington House. I may feel just a touch of personal sadness - perhaps The Dover Society would fund a plaque for the site stating, '*Derek Leach once worked here!*'

Yet another key element in Dover's regeneration is the resolution of the Townwall Street problem - both traffic congestion and air pollution. Unfortunately,

there still seems virtually no prospect of the obvious solution - that is for Eastern Docks traffic to use a dualled A2 and for Western Docks traffic to use the A20. The recently announced proposal by Kent County Council for a 3000 vehicle lorry park off the M20 may offer an alternative to Operation Stack and even, perhaps, some alleviation to Dover's problems at other times.

We are pleased to see the refurbishment of Dover Priory station and its environs and to see the Sea Sports Centre take shape, but wonder when development of the Buckland Mill site will begin. We have supported Langdon Action Group's opposition to the proposed wind farm, and welcome Dover District Council's promise to replace the vandalized town centre trees.

The conversion of many existing buildings into flats continues apace, but a major concern is the growing number of retrospective planning applications and their subsequent approval, coupled with somewhat limited or tardy enforcement action by DDC.

Thank you Jack and your committee.

### **Social/educational programme**

Pat Hooper has experienced a very demanding first year as social secretary. Pat spent considerable time arranging the successful visit by the Association des Amis du Chateau de Condette last June, which included lunch at the Maison Dieu and a hurried trip to Canterbury, as well as planning our return visit to Boulogne, which had to be cancelled for lack of interest. Undaunted, Pat organised a successful summer programme of outings, the traditional Christmas Feast at Dover Priory and the February Wine and Wisdom evening. We are also grateful to her and her assistants who provide refreshments for our public meetings, to the raffle organisers and donors of prizes and to Jack Woolford who,

once again, arranged our array of interesting speakers.

It would help Pat so much if people interested in summer outings booked early rather than late. If you have not booked yet for this summer, please do it tonight if possible.

### **Newsletter**

Our newsletter goes from strength to strength and our thanks are due to Alan Lee, our editor, to our proofreaders and contributors, to Jean Marsh our successful advertising manager and to those behind the scenes who stuff the envelopes and deliver the newsletters to our door.

### **Website**

Mike McFarnell, despite his involvement in promoting the archery event last August, his Film Festival in February, the Festival of Dover and organising the Dover Pageant this summer, still finds time to keep our website up to date and interesting.

### **Projects, initiatives and concerns**

Jeremy and his team are still to be found every fortnight at Cowgate Cemetery - not pushing up the daisies but keeping the cemetery attractive for you and me and for its wildlife.

Jeremy, as our representative on the River Dour Steering Group and its secretary has successfully re-engineered the group, following the much greater involvement of the Environment Agency. We are pleased to see the progress of various projects to increase water flow, plant and wildlife and to soften the banks in addition to the work of the White Cliffs Countryside Project litter clearing volunteers. A welcome development is the recent adoption by Dover Town Council of the Charlton Green riverside area.

We should also note the recent demise of Town Centre Management. Jeremy Cope was

our representative on its board and was heavily engaged in its winding-up. We have urged both Town and District Councils to fill the gap left by Town Centre Management.

Once again the Society acted as local coordinator for Heritage Open Days last September with six properties open to the public. This year we plan more and better publicity. Regarding the centenary in 2009 of Bleriot's historic cross channel flight which we wish to see commemorated by permanent improvements to the memorial site and some sort of celebration linked to flight, we met again with DDC recently to hear, in confidence, their plans. You must wait, however, for the public launch of these plans, but it should be a great weekend.

### **New initiatives and concerns**

The 125th anniversary of the opening in 1883 of Connaught Park will be celebrated this year. Graham Wanstall has taken on, very enthusiastically, a watching brief not only for the festivities but also for the day-to-day maintenance of the somewhat neglected park. The Society has agreed to mark the event by planting a Holm oak tree with a suitable commemorative plaque. Expensive protective fencing is kindly being donated by Jackson Fencing of Ashford.

We are supporting the 2008 Festival of Dover by underwriting up to £1000 of the cost of the Tallis Concert by Canterbury Cathedral Choir at Dover College on 10 May. Tickets cost £10 and are available from Mike McFarnell tonight if you have not purchased yours yet.

We were pleased to see the Maison Dieu clock repaired, but would also like to see it illuminated at night once again if possible. We doubt whether DDC will provide any funding since it would cost £6000 apparently - mainly for scaffolding. A talk by John Clayton during the Film Festival has also resulted in the Society approaching DDC to see whether a case can be made for a major

lottery grant to enable a much-needed major refurbishment of the Maison Dieu.

From the sublime to the ridiculous - our concerns about the amount of litter in various parts of the town resulted in the DDC officer responsible discussing the issue with our Executive.

Participation in a short, sharp campaign to save an Air Raid Precautions post by Dover Priory station - one of the few surviving - from demolition resulted in protective listing. It will be a constant reminder to those who lived through the days of Hellfire Corner and those born since that terrible time.

### **Chairman**

So, what have I been up to as your Chairman? In addition to keeping order at Executive meetings, which is sometimes difficult given the passion of committee members, and 'MCing' our public meetings, I have represented the Society at a number of functions during the year. Two in particular stand out: at the Zeebrugge ceremonies on St. George's Day and the remembrance service at the imposing war memorial at the Cruise Liner Terminal. This year for the first time I also laid a wreath at our plaque to the Unknown Warrior whose body arrived at Dover in 1920 on its way to London. Terry Sutton laid our wreath at the town's Remembrance Day service.

### **Conclusion**

No chairman's report would be complete without thanking your Executive and others in the Society for all their efforts over the past year. Mention must be made of Mike Weston's meticulous book keeping as treasurer, not forgetting his role as purchaser of fine wines for Society events. I should also like to thank especially Adeline Reidy who is not seeking re-election to the Executive, but who assures me that she will continue to work for the Society on the 'back benches'.

*The work of the*

# PLANNING

*Sub-Committee*

Report by

**JACK WOOLFORD, Chairman**

Kent County Council has thanked us for drawing to their attention unauthorized spoil dumping on Roman Road, which they have stopped. We are also pleased that Dover Harbour Board has accepted our argument that there should be a connection from the proposed new marina to the Wellington Dock via a lock and swing-bridge.

As always, other messages are mixed. The A20 upgrade proceeds with less than the gloomily predicted chaos despite predicted weather and French strikes. Thanks to all concerned and notably the A20 Action Group. The endless delay to the redevelopment of Buckland Mill is apparently not because Christie Homes has pulled out, but because it is undergoing some redesign to meet changing circumstances. The Eastern Dock relief road is at last under construction and it seems that after even longer Dover will get either a community or a general hospital, in either Whitfield, Coombe Valley, Connaught Barracks or the Health Centre, etc. The Society supports both options.

The new bus depot at Whitfield shows that the DTIZ St James Development is still alive but B&Q, which paid for the Phase II Business Park's infrastructure, has put its new superstore on the market and will (presumably) remain at Charlton Green, so that the rumoured Morrisons takeover of the site (presumably) evaporates.

The Society has accepted Dover District Council's Local Development Framework Option 4 for 10,000 new houses but points out that jobs must and should come before houses, and draws critical attention to cumulative former major planning errors.

We also applaud the massive plans for the futures of Connaught Barracks and Fort Burgoyne, although the current national and international economic climate, which may force Dover Harbour Board towards privatization, is, putting it mildly, unpromising.

Meanwhile we remind DDC of its undertaking to replace our missing town centre trees.



# THE DOVER SOCIETY FINANCIAL REPORT

## An extract from the Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2008

The following extract from our accounts represents the statement of financial activities and the balance sheet. The supporting notes to the accounts are not reproduced due to lack of space. However, the complete accounts are available for inspection upon request to our Treasurer, Capt. Mike Weston (telephone 01304 202059) or Email (mike@weston71.freemove.co.uk).

CURRENT ASSETS	2008	2007	INCOME	General Fund 2008	General Fund 2007
Society Badges	27	27	Subscriptions	2,529	2,534
Newsletter Binders	66	88	Donations	73	46
Debtors and Prepayments	30	0	Social Events	655	463
Cash at bank and in Hand	<u>25,547</u>	<u>23,072</u>	Gift Aid attracted by Subs etc to General Fund	588	547
	25,670	23,187	Bank Account Interest	1,184	930
CREDITORS:			Christmas Cards	0	224
Amounts falling due within one year	<u>(3,291)</u>	<u>(990)</u>	TOTAL INCOME	<u>5,029</u>	<u>4,744</u>
Net Current Assets	<u>22,379</u>	<u>22,197</u>	EXPENDITURE		
Net Assets	<u>22,379</u>	<u>22,197</u>	Members and Meeting expenses	-44	-123
Funds	<u>22,379</u>	<u>22,197</u>	Administrative Expenses	947	1,099
			Purchase of lapel microphone	0	0
			Newsletter Expenses	1,164	950
			Other Items (including donations)	1,130	115
			TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>3,197</u>	<u>2,041</u>
			Net (Outgoing)/Incoming Resources	1,832	2,703
			Total Funds Brought Forward	<u>15,209</u>	<u>12,506</u>
			TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>17,041</u>	<u>15,209</u>

The Society's Funds are represented by:

The General Fund	17,041
Rolls Memorial Fund	50
Projects Fund	464
Publication Fund	4,824
	<u>£22,379</u>

Capt. M.H. Weston

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# APRIL MEETING

## *The Lords Warden & Lady Hester Lucy Stanhope*

A talk by Terry Sutton reported by Alan Lee

Starting with a brief overview of the Appointment of Lords Warden, Terry likened them to a kind of ancient liaison officer between the monarch and the Portsmen of the Cinque Ports. Many Royals have held the post, and many have come to a sticky end. He then described some of the characters who have occupied the dual post of Lord Warden, Constable of Dover Castle and in earlier times the Admiral of the Cinque Ports fleet.

During the time of Edward the Confessor the highest appointment in this area was Constable of Dover Castle, which as sea power increased, would eventually encompass the role of Lord Warden. During this time, the Portsmen provided the ships to defend this coast against invaders, mostly French out on a day's rape and pillage.

It is unclear who the first Lord Warden was, but early Constables of Dover Castle included Godwyn, Earl of Kent, and his son Harold (of the Battle of Hastings 1066). While Harold was away fighting, Bertram Ashburton acted as Constable. He held out against the troops of William of Normandy, which so upset William that when he eventually captured the castle he had Ashburton and his deputy beheaded.

William de Peverell held the post briefly until William's half-brother Bishop Odo replaced him. A thoroughly odious man Odo made his own laws and punished those who offended, his aim being to amass a fortune and then buy himself the job of Pope. William, worried about Odo's growing power and greediness, banished him from England.

The Constable in 1190, Matthew de Clera, was deprived of his office for breaking into Dover Priory Church to arrest the new Archbishop of York, the illegitimate son of Henry II. One of the great Constables, Hubert de Burgh, held the post irregularly between 1202 and 1232. He also built Dover's Maison Dieu Hall. In 1226 William de Averanch, Lord of Folkestone, was recognised as being the first Constable of Dover Castle to hold the post of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports also. Sir Stephen de Pencestre held the appointments from 1265 to 1298 and had Pencester Gardens in Dover named after him.

Not all Lords Warden were well behaved. Sir Bartholomew Badlesmere, 1st Baron de Badlesmere was notorious. He would select some poor virgin from the local community, and regardless of her wishes, have his wicked way with her. He obviously believed in the tradition of *Droit de Seigneur*, *The right of a lord to have sexual intercourse with a vassal's bride on her wedding night.* (French, literally translated means: *the right of the lord*). Bartholomew joined the enemies of King Edward II and in October 1321 when his wife refused Queen Isabella entry to Leeds Castle the king captured the castle and imprisoned Lady Badlesmere in the Tower of London. At the Battle of Boroughbridge, the Earl of Lancaster was defeated and Badlesmere captured. He was hanged and beheaded at Blean on 14th April 1322 and his head displayed on the Burgh Gate at Canterbury. The next two met the same fate for alleged traitorous activities. After three beheadings, there was no great rush for the role of Lord Warden.

By 1381 Sir Robert Asheton, or Asheton, Ashton, Ashtone, buried in the church of St Mary-in-Castro, was in charge at Dover Castle and was kept busy suppressing Wat Tyler's Peasant's Revolt about the poll tax. Then there was Sir Simon Burley, accused of trying to sell Dover Castle to the French. He was imprisoned in the castle, then taken to London in 1388 and executed for treason.

Henry V of Agincourt fame, when still the Prince of Wales was Lord Warden, as was his brother Humphrey Duke of Gloucester in 1415. The king being jealous threw Humphrey into prison where he died, possibly murdered. Being Lord Warden was clearly a dangerous occupation with, in 1447, Lord Saye beheaded at Cheapside in London and the next two killed in the Wars of the Roses.

From 1493 to 1509 Prince Henry, later Henry VIII, held the post. One of three in 1534 was George Boleyn Lord Rochford, brother of Anne. By 1535 he had lost his job. By 1536 he had lost his head. George Villiers the Duke of Buckingham was assassinated

during a visit to Portsmouth by John Felton, an insane army officer. Sir Algernon Sydney, 1648 to 1651, resigned and was later executed for his involvement in the Whig Rye House plot to assassinate Charles II.

Lionel Sackville, the 7th Duke of Dorset, appointed in 1708, was first Lord Warden to live at Walmer Castle. During his tenure, he gave a piece of land at East Cliff to Captain John Smith who built his strange folly house there. Sackville resigned in 1713 but as the 1st Earl of Dorset was reappointed in 1727. Frederick North, 2nd Earl of Guilford and Lord Warden from 1778 to 1782, whose estate was at Waldershare Park, planted the slopes of the castle facing Dover with the trees that we enjoy today.

Many important leaders have spent time as Lord Warden in the official residence at Walmer Castle. These have included William Pitt the Younger and Arthur Wellesley, the 1st Duke of Wellington. George Nathaniel Curzen, Baron Curzon of Kedleston, the Viceroy of India, resigned, claiming the smell from the drains there was killing his



*Walmer Castle*

wife. King Edward VII travelled secretly to Walmer to sniff out the drains himself. Presumably, he found little wrong as he then appointed his son, the Prince of Wales who had to follow tradition and spend some time there, or perhaps it was punishment for some minor misbehaviour.

Since the Second World War we have had as Lords Warden Sir Winston Churchill, Sir Robert Menzies the Prime Minister of Australia, H.M. Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother in 1978 and now Admiral Michael Cecil Boyce, Baron Boyce of Pimlico, installed in April 2005.

Terry then devoted the remainder of his talk to one of the most interesting people who lived at Walmer Castle Lady Hester Lucy Stanhope although she was not a Lord Warden. Born in 1776 she was a haughty and sometimes cruel, aristocrat, later known as the Queen of the East. The niece of the Prime Minister Pitt the Younger Hester accepted his invitation to be his hostess for his many official receptions. An attractive woman, she became one of London's leading socialites. When appointed Lord Warden Pitt moved into Walmer Castle. Hester moved in with him and used her influence to upgrade the castle gardens, still admired by guests today.

Dover was full of troops who expected an invasion by Napoleon any day. Portsmen all along the coast enlisted with the Volunteers, the 19th century Home Guard, ready to defend England. Hester, dressed as, a Colonel in the Volunteers, rode most days along the cliffs to Dover to inspect the troops. She loved it and this aristocrat in a tight-fitting uniform gave the old boys a boost. Once she marched the troops to Waldershare Park, near Dover, and with the Lord of Guilford's permission, uprooted some small trees and replanted them at Walmer Castle where they still grow today.

*Lady Hester Lucy Stanhope*



Her brother, stationed at Dover Castle, and Hester received an invitation to Shorncliffe Barracks where she met, and fell in love with, General Sir John Moore. Soon he and Hester's step brother, who was on his staff, sailed for Spain to fight Emperor Napoleon's troops. With both killed in the 1808 Retreat from Corunna Hester went into prolonged mourning.

With Pitt also dead (in 1806) and plagued by scandal from an unhappy love affair her influence waned and so, in 1810, she set off to tour Europe and never returned. Hester had sailed from Portsmouth but been shipwrecked on Rhodes. She had lost all of her clothes and refused to wear a veil so dressed as a Turkish male in robe, turban and slippers. On arrival at Cairo she bought a more elaborate version with a purple velvet robe, embroidered trousers, waistcoat and jacket as well as a saddle and sabre. From there she went overland to Jerusalem and Damascus.

In Europe, free from wagging tongues, Hester enjoyed several short love affairs. She met Lord Byron who, when he was fleeing England immersed in sexual scandal, stayed the night in one of our dockside inns. Some of the leading ladies of Dover dressed up as servant girls in order to get into the inn just to have a look at our hero.

Warned that Europeans were not welcome in the fabled city of Palmyra this fearless woman, dressed in male Bedouin attire, rode her horse into the city and became the first European woman to enter the Forbidden City. Locals, impressed with her courage, crowned her in a celebration and she became known as *Queen Hester*.

Her fame soon spread throughout the Middle East and she was often called upon to settle disputes among the local tribes. She was able to join the local women in their harems but was not impressed with the way the women entertained themselves with dances of a sexual nature. Despite her love of dressing up as a man she abhorred the inherent lesbianism of the harems. She wrote home about it and said, *Sexual arousal between two women is an aberration and passion should only be excited by that which God created for the purpose - a man.*

She enjoyed her status among the Arabs and set up home in the hills of Lebanon where she began taking in Arab and Christian refugees. She lived first at *Mar Elias*, a disused monastery at Abra, then at the monastery of *Deir Mashmoush* southwest of the Casa of Jezzine. She became a political force in the Lebanon, defying the despotic war lords. Later she and her remaining servants moved into a former convent at Joun (also known as Joon or Djoun) a village on seven hills above the Mediterranean. Her residence, *Dahr El Sitt*, on top of one of the hills, shaped like *half an orange*, became a fortress with its high walls and a focus of both gossip and awe.

She mounted an expedition in search of treasure at the city of Ascalon which was unsuccessful so she asked the British Government to pay, but they refused. Now deep in debt in Syria Vicomte Palmerston, then Foreign Secretary, ordered that her creditors were to be paid from her pension of £1,200 per year, which she had been awarded from 1810.

Hester had love affairs with at least two of her visitors - one the young son of a captain who had served in Napoleon's Imperial Guard. The second with a much younger Englishman, wealthy Granville Leveson Gower whom she had hoped to marry. He left her when his father threatened to disinherit him and the French guardsman died. No luck there Hester! Incidentally, Gower was another interesting character who had affairs all over Europe. One arrangement was with the wife of Napoleon's general Nye, later executed by Louis XVIII's government. Once Gower organised the escape of a French aristocrat and for this he was imprisoned by the French, accused of being a traitor.

Miss Williams, Hester's cherished companion, had died in 1828 and Dr Charles Meryon finally left her in 1838. Alone, with only thirty servants for company, in her walled up derelict property she died a year later. Thus the life of this remarkable woman ended. Once the talk of London her influence had reached from Downing Street to an isolated village in Lebanon. All we now have to remind us of this unusual woman are the trees she had planted at Walmer Castle.

Lady Hester Lucy Stanhope was born on 12th March 1776 to relative riches, the eldest child of Charles Stanhope, 3rd Earl of Stanhope and Lady Hester Pitt. This strange, brave woman died aged 63 on 23rd June 1839, in rage - unloved and unwanted.

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# Summer Outings

## *Eltham Palace and Rochester*

20th MAY 2008

by SHEILA & JEREMY COPE

From the 14th to the 16th century Eltham Palace was an important royal palace, a favoured residence where successive monarchs spent Christmas and hunted in the surrounding parks. However, Eltham Palace was eclipsed by Greenwich Palace and for 200 years after the Civil War it was a farm. By the 1930's the site was almost surrounded by houses and the proposed scheme of Stephen and Virginia (Ginie) Courtauld to erect a large home in the grounds attached to the Great Hall was very controversial. Nevertheless permission was given conditional on the restoration of the Great Hall and the preservation of three 15th century timber gables. Architects Seely and Paget designed a house with an exterior of brick and Clipsham stone inspired by Wren's Hampton Court Palace. Layout has two V shaped wings with the Great Hall attached to one end and a triangular entrance area at the point of the V. The Courtaulds moved into their new house in 1936.

Stephen Courtauld was the youngest son of the family whose fortune was derived from the manufacture of rayon (or "art" silk). He was much affected by service in the First World War and used his considerable fortune to pursue a wide variety of cultural and philanthropic interests. Many

of the rooms at Eltham were designed with specific features to display Stephen's collections and enthusiasms. He was retiring by nature while Ginie, Italian, was vivacious. They looked after Ginie's two nephews and in photographs are often accompanied by dogs plus their ring-tailed lemur Mah-Jongg, or Jongy, who had his own centrally heated cage.

Our party approached the Palace along a shrub-bordered path which led us across the North Stone Bridge, the restoration of which had been a condition for permission to build the house. The main entrance doors were closed to us, but after collecting our hand held guide machines we soon entered the hall. This is so memorable because of its shape which is actually triangular (at the apex of the V) but feels



*North Stone Bridge*

circular because of the light flooding through the concrete glass domed roof, 7 metres in diameter. The walls are lined with Australian blackbean veneer incorporating marquetry panels featuring the massive figures of a Roman soldier and a Viking on either side of the entrance doors. Both figures are flanked by representatives of world famous buildings combined together into imaginative scenes.

Most of the house furnishings shown have been faithfully reproduced using illustrations from contemporary editions of *Country Life* and from details in the inventory taken in 1939 when many of the items were dispersed elsewhere. Thus in the hall we saw a replica of the 5.8 metre diameter circular rug with its fawn and brown colours chosen to complement the wall marquetry. On the rug stand Swedish club chairs - cream coloured with contrasting piping.

The dining room leads off the hall and these two rooms provide a fascinating example of the style now called "Art Deco" coined as a result of the 1925 Paris Exposition des Arts Decoratifs. At the time the style was "Moderne" and tended to favour geometric shapes rather than the organic forms of earlier "Art Nouveau". It relies on contrasting tones and textures for effect. The huge black doors feature animals and birds applied as ivory coloured raised decoration alternating with panels in a Greek key pattern. An echo of this pattern outlines the

fireplace which consists of polished ribbed aluminium panels surrounding an electric imitation log fire. The real heating came from coils embedded in the ceiling which has a recessed central aluminium-covered portion with built-in lighting designed to make the metal shimmer at night. The dining table and chairs (upholstered in pink leather to set off the ladies' dresses to best advantage) are basic in shape but with cream and brown wood contrast.

Two other ground floor rooms - the Library (Stephen's office) and the boudoir (Ginie's sitting room) both contain ingeniously designed built-in furniture featuring geometric designs and wood panelling. In each case, however, the severity is mitigated by curved ceilings and traditional Persian style carpets.

The Drawing Room is a total contrast yet eclectic. It was designed to display the Courtauld collection of Italian walnut furniture and pictures (now replaced by reproductions). Over the fireplace is Christ in Limbo by Andrea Mantegna and there are other paintings of the Venetian School. Walls are plain cream but there are richly decorated ceiling beams, a marble fireplace and opulent soft furnishings. In contrast, plaster panels designed in 1935 edge the windows and are based on the premise that all civilisations will eventually decline through decadence. This in a house that features internal telephones, a centralised cleaning system, music piped



*Door to dining room*

throughout the ground floor and the facility to run 10 hot baths simultaneously.

Two matching sets of stairs, one to the west wing, the other to the east, each lit mainly by a circular window, curve up from the entrance hall to the bedrooms on the first floor. All the bedrooms are en-suite, often with sunken baths. The bathrooms have under floor heating, heated towel rails and are mainly lined with large plain tiles of Vitrolite made from rolled glass. Furniture in the guest bedrooms is built in, using laminated wood with curved ends and horizontal lines reminiscent of cabins in an ocean liner.

Stephen Courtauld's bedroom is aspen lined with block printed wallpaper depicting Kew Gardens on the sidewalls. The shades of blue tone with the blue-green mosaic tiled bathroom. The Venetian Suite, named after its panelling, is splendid, but pride of place must go to Ginie's bedroom situated across the corridor from the preserved medieval timber gables and above the drawing room with its windows on two sides. With its circular ceiling, classical references in the marquetry of the maple lined walls, it appears like a temple, yet has the convenience of concealed walk-in wardrobes. The bathroom has a vaulted ceiling and walls lined with onyx and embellished with black slate disks on to which are set glass spheres. The bath with its gold plated taps and lions mask spout sits within a gold mosaic niche containing a statue of the goddess Psyche. This room is memorable because it has surely been the inspiration for many aspirational yet mass-produced bathrooms ever since.

The house is thoughtfully designed for the maximum comfort of its owners and guests and also for the ten resident servants



*The Great Hall*

housed in a service wing. It is interesting to reflect that this modern home, rich but not ostentatious, was built and enjoyed during the time of the Great Depression. From 1945 the property was given over to the Army Educational Corps and in 1995 English Heritage took responsibility for the entire site.

The Great Hall, which is the only part of great medieval palace still standing, was built by Edward IV in the 1470s as a dining hall for the court and at Christmas 1482 a feast was given for 2000 people. It is entered on the ground floor from the west wing of the house and the minstrels' gallery (an inventive construction of the Courtaulds) leads from the bedroom corridor. The Hall's most magnificent feature is its "false" (i.e. the posts are morticed into the hammer beams rather than resting upon them) oak hammer beam roof repaired in the 1930s when other antiquarian revival additions were made. These include a raised dais at the far end where royalty would have sat and which

receives extra lighting on each side from the original two double height bay windows. Behind the dais is a carved timber screen commemorating the various monarchs associated with the Hall together with the initials of those responsible for its restoration. Stained glass roundels in the windows, wall hangings and antique furniture and lighting sconces were all supplied by the Courtaulds and they intended the Hall to be used as a music room.

Because the Palace is on a raised area and surrounded by a moat some of our party found sheltered spots for a picnic. However the day was breezy and others ate in the tearoom, formerly the kitchen. Part of the moat is flooded and forms a pond in which massive carp could be seen. It is possible to walk right round the Palace at this lower level, passing through a succession of gardens in a variety of styles and at the same time noticing some of the walls and buttresses of the original palace. One example is the diamond-patterned brickwork above the sunken rose garden which formed part of Elizabeth I's new royal lodgings built in the 1580s. Apparently the Courtaulds were knowledgeable about plants and would have made a real contribution toward the layout and content of their new garden. We were too soon for the roses but admired a long herbaceous border of irises interspersed with alliums and near to the house the wisteria pergola built with Ionic stone columns. There is a second bridge across the moat, made from oak but supported on medieval brick and stone foundations which once formed part of another entrance to the palace. The garden is studded with mature and uncommon trees such as tulip and Indian bean trees and before the war was maintained by 15 gardeners. In the late '30s the gardens were

from time to time opened to the public and used for garden parties in aid of good causes.

An acknowledgement is due to the excellent English Heritage guidebook.

Our party left Eltham at 1.30pm and soon arrived at Rochester where we spent about an hour. For most of us there was a choice between looking at the shops in the High Street and a cup of tea or a visit to the Cathedral. The High Street is mainly pedestrianised and the buildings have been restored and repaired to create a very attractive functioning tourist area. It is noticeable that there are no chain stores. Presumably Boots and M&S lurk elsewhere.

Having spent our hour in the High Street it left a hurried ten minutes for the Cathedral, time only for the nave. The Cathedral is opposite Rochester Castle, a shell and a reminder of the impressive nature of our own castle keep. Inside the Cathedral, at Pat's prompting, we came upon illustrations of these two castles carved upon the tomb of John Henniker who represented Dover in the 18th century. From our limited observation the Cathedral is well worth visiting with its impressive Norman arches in the nave and what appeared to be the remains of medieval wall paintings in the south transept. On the next visit it will be an hour for the Cathedral and ten minutes for the High Street.

Our thanks to Pat for a day which included two most interesting subjects. The day was particularly successful in that we started out just before 8 am and arrived home at 4.30 pm leaving us a full evening. The travelling times avoided the rush hours adding to the efficiency of the arrangements. Well done our Social Secretary!!

# Bletchley Park & the Enigma Machine

## 20th JUNE 2008

by MAUREEN MORRIS

Last year we had an interesting talk by Audrey Wind about her work on the Enigma machine during World War II, so we were looking forward to this visit to Bletchley Park to learn some more of its secrets. Our trip, twenty four hours before the longest day, seemed appropriate as the Normandy Landings took place at that time in 1944 and much of their success was due to the brilliant code cracking abilities of the people working at Bletchley.



*The Enigma Machine*

After an early start from Dover we were badly delayed in traffic congestion on the M1. But we were pleasantly greeted when we arrived and given an introductory talk about Bletchley and how the operations had evolved there.

The attractive Victorian mansion was the first major building on the Bletchley site although the manor had been recorded in the Doomsday Book. Since then it had belonged to several noble families including the de Greys who held it for nearly 400 years. In 1883 it became the home of Sir Herbert Leon, Liberal MP and financier. He was responsible for most of the building seen today and some of the rooms are splendidly decorated with fine moulded plaster ceilings and wooden

panelling. In 1937 when his widow died the property was sold, but hardly used until 1939 when it was purchased by the government as new premises for the Code and Cipher School. With war looming Bletchley seemed a safer place than London, with good rail and road connections as well as being half way between Oxford and Cambridge, where the finest mathematical brains were. It became the most important communications centre for modern warfare.

With the aid of audio *wands* we were able to take ourselves off to explore the buildings and the grounds. The tour started in the mansion itself where the first decoding staff worked, and then moved on to the outside buildings, including the former staff cottages and temporary huts, with the commentary detailing their uses. We passed the back gate where despatch riders brought in the intercepted German messages received from the surrounding RAF stations while other messages from around the country arrived by telephone. Aerials in the trees enabled contact with the British embassies in Europe but by 1940 these were removed for security reasons. Above the stables was the loft for the pigeons which carried vitally important messages from the Resistance in France. In

the former tack room Alan Turing, the brilliant mathematician, having gathered information from colleagues who had met the Polish cryptanalysts in Warsaw, was able to make the first break through into cracking the Enigma code. He, along with Gordon Welchman and Tommy Flowers, went on to develop their ideas into computer research. The Germans changed the Enigma keys daily so the team developed their own *Bombe* machine, named after the ice cream, an electro-mechanical machine of clattering code wheels which broke the cipher. After this the *Colossus*, a valve operated semi-programmable computer, was developed to break the even more highly sophisticated cipher machines being used later by Hitler. In Block H we saw the recently built version which had been painstakingly reconstructed from pieces of information gathered from many sources. It is one of several machines brought to life again by dedicated enthusiasts at Bletchley. After the war every piece of equipment and information there was destroyed for



security reasons. It was only with the knowledge and help of people who had worked there, including American forces personnel, that it has been possible to build up these displays of equipment and systems.

During the war, as Audrey Wind described in her previous talk, the many buildings housed hundreds of operators all working independently, not telling anyone what they were doing, keeping Bletchley's secrets totally secure. At its busiest 8,000 staff worked there and 18,000 messages were deciphered daily. The *Colossus* machine was ready and running for the D-Day landings and played a major part in their successful outcome, shortening the war by two years, some said.

Some of the huts now show examples of how people lived during the second world war. One room has displays of Winston Churchill memorabilia while in another there is a splendid sculpture, in layered slate, of Alan Turing seated at his keyboard. A man of tremendous abilities his personal life was unfortunately troubled and he died of cyanide poisoning in his early forties.

The work of Codes and Ciphers now continues in the Government Communications HQ at Cheltenham where it works closely with HM Customs, the National Criminal Intelligence Service and the Immigration and Nationality Directorate.

As we boarded the coach to come home someone remarked that they hadn't understood much of it, but it was so interesting they would like to see it all again. If only a code breaker could sort out traffic congestion on our roads we reached Dover at 9.15 pm, five and a half hours after leaving Bletchley!

*Alan Turing slate sculpture*

# Blood pressure tests will not Kill!

## A STROKE MAY!

Fr Peter Sherred (Ambulance Chaplain Dover)

Dover is fortunate to be home to one of the South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Trust (SECamb) stations, based off Winchelsea Road, with staff who are on call 365 days of the year.

SECamb, created in July 2006, covers an area of 3600 square miles of Kent, Sussex and Surrey and serves about 4.6 million people. Just over every minute an emergency 999 call is received in one of three emergency dispatch centres and ambulance crews respond to Category A, B or C patients. Category A is for patients who are or may be life-threatened and need timely clinical intervention, B is for those who need urgent face-to-face attention and C is for those who may not require an immediate or urgent response. The Government sets differing target times to reach the appropriate category of patient.

Since its creation the Trust has targeted three high profile medical conditions (Stroke, Cardiac and Trauma) with its innovative practices having real benefits for patient care. Annually an estimated 150,000 people in the United Kingdom have a stroke. It is the third most common cause of death and a leading cause of adult disability but pre-hospital emergency care can make a significant difference to outcomes for patients. The Trust is pioneering the FASTTracking system. This involves identifying stroke victims, notifying the hospital and transporting the

patient under blue lights and sirens to specialist centres. A potentially clot-busting treatment, known as thrombolysis, alongside new treatments, techniques and technology is then available.

What is a stroke? What signs can warn people of their vulnerability and its consequences? The Stroke Association recently rejoined forces with the Rotary International movement to raise awareness of these questions. In Dover, on Stroke Awareness Day, 26th April, the Rotary Club of Dover were based in St Mary's Parish Centre and the South Foreland Rotary Club along with ambulance staff were in the pedestrian precinct. Offering a free blood pressure test, often a good indicator of a cardiovascular problem, they tested about 600 people in six hours.

Usually a stroke occurs when a blood clot blocks the flow of blood to the brain while others may be caused by bleeding in or around the brain from a burst blood vessel. This can cause often irreparable brain damage, leading to long-term disability and, in approximately 25 per cent of cases, death. Strokes can cause permanent or temporary paralysis to one side of the body leading to impairment in speech, balance and the ability to write or read. Recovery can be a long and slow process.

We measure blood pressure in millimetres of mercury (mmHg) and take readings

when the heart beats - the systolic pressure - and when it relaxes - the diastolic pressure. Normal adult blood pressure should be less than 140/90mmHg, with an ideal reading of 120/80mmHg. Above this is considered as high blood pressure - hypertension.

It is important to be aware of the level of one's blood pressure so that GPs can investigate the causes and take tests to enable advice on how to reduce blood pressure thereby preventing a stroke from becoming a reality.

Of course, 'strokes always happen to other people' but the importance of such a test was demonstrated by the results from the Rotary Club of South Foreland's successful teamwork with Dover's ambulance service on the day. They enabled 283 people, including the Town Mayor of Dover, to have their blood pressure tested.

Rotarians worked in relays through the day to direct the public towards the SECAMB pre-hospital clinicians all of whom worked from 10.00 - 16.00 'clocking', on average, between them 50 people an hour. (The total number of people would undoubtedly have been higher but two of the clinicians were called to an emergency in the Gala Bingo premises opposite taking them away from blood pressure testing for half an hour or so before the on-call emergency ambulance and crew arrived).

123 males and 160 females were tested and of these 58 became GP referrals and 12 were deemed to be urgent. 3 of these 70 including a 14 year old child were immediately referred to the on call doctor. There was a significant referral rate of 25% of those tested. Further statistics show that 67 people were under 35, 72 between 35

and 55 and 144 over 55. The SECAMB team of Jane Brown, John Court, Chris Tully and David Davis were kept busy throughout the day raising public awareness in relation to stroke, blood pressure and cardio vascular disease.

Dick Hubbard, for the Rotary Club of South Foreland, said after the event that we were very grateful for the assistance from SECAMB and were delighted with the number of people who showed such an interest. The statistical results serve to remind everybody of the need for regular blood pressure checks and that like death, stroke does not discriminate - **it can affect anyone at any time.**

The day also served to highlight how valuable the ambulance clinician's role is in prevention, helping to combat stroke and its consequences. They use a simple test to establish if someone is having a stroke and is easy to use by anyone. Called the FAST test it involves checking the movement in the face and arms and ascertaining if speech is slurred. An audit in September 2007 showed 94% of 790 stroke cases were correctly assessed with the FAST test.

David Davis for SECAMB was full of praise for the day's activities and for the work of paramedics and ambulance technicians and stressed that getting patients to hospital quickly is essential. All 11 acute hospitals in the region now offer stroke thrombolysis services. This compares to the national figure of 12%.

The need for regular blood pressure testing is obvious so having read thus far (and if you have not had a test recently) why not be brave and submit to one - it may save your life.

# Birth of Rocket Weaponry

by Terry Sutton

Those living in Dover in 1944 will remember the massive explosions that emanated from across the Channel, which shook the ground and houses. The explosions were from huge bombs dropped on Pas de Calais by the Royal Air Force and the United States Air Force.

The aim was two-fold: to disrupt rail and road communications prior to the June 6 D-Day landings and more importantly to wreck Hitler's "Secret Weapon" sites that military intelligence had heard were under construction there. They were the V-1 and V-2 (Vergeltungswaffe eins - zwei, German for retaliation, reprisal or vengeance weapon) launching sites and the various assembly areas.

*The V-1 officially named the Fieseler Fi 103 was, during the war, commonly known as the Doodlebug or Buzz Bomb. The V-2 rocket was the first ballistic missile and first manmade object to achieve sub-orbital spaceflight.*

Thousands of bombs showered down at Helfaut-Wizernes, five kilometres from St Omer. It was here that Russian prisoners of war were being forced to construct the gigantic La Coupole where rockets, arriving by train from Germany, were assembled and primed to hit London.

The massive underground complex, carved out of a chalk hill, is well worth a visit with visitors issued with a free audio guide.

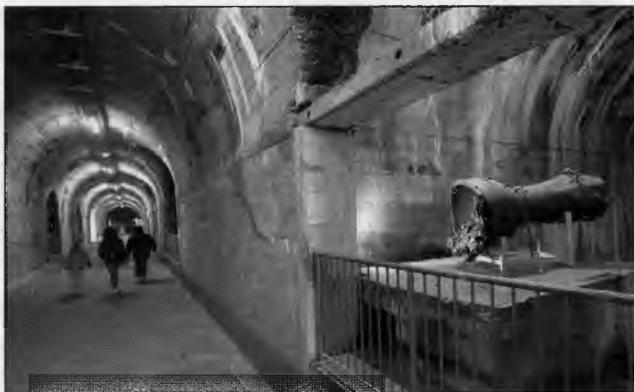
Although it has been open for several years the regional council has recently invested heavily and extended the centre to make it an excellent tourist attraction.

Currently, until the end of September, there is an exhibition about British, American, Free French, and Polish pilots and aircrews. Shot down they were killed, captured, or had escaped with the help of French civilians to return to England to fight again.

There is a horrifying exhibition depicting how the Nazis decided to kill off the Jews, homosexuals, gypsies and many others in the gas chambers of concentration camps.

More than a thousand Jews in the Calais region, including an eight-year-old girl, rounded up by the occupying German force were deported (most of them to Auschwitz) and gassed.

The underground tunnels and galleries, designed by the Germans but dug out by Russians and other Todt Organisation slave



*Underground at La Coupole*

### La Coupole Dome



workers on 12-hour shifts, go on for nearly seven kilometres (over four miles) under a massive thick concrete protective dome.

*In 1938, Fritz Todt a German engineer and senior Nazi figure united government firms, private companies and the Reich Labour Service (Reichsarbeitsdienst) to found Organisation Todt (OT), a Nazi construction and engineering group. During the years of the Third Reich OT enslaved over 1.5 million men and boys from countries occupied by Nazi Germany. They were responsible for construction of the West Wall, later renamed the Siegfried Line, built as a defence for the Reich territory. On 17th March 1940, appointed as Reich Minister for Armaments and Munitions (Reichsminister für Bewaffnung und Munition) he oversaw the work of Organisation Todt in the occupied west. He died in a plane crash on 8th February 1942.*

M. Yves Le Maner, the managing director of La Coupole, told me some of the extensive tunnelling system was blown up and blocked by British Royal Engineers, on the orders of Winston Churchill,

after the war. "I feared the tunnels might be used by another enemy when there was the threat of the Cold War breaking out" he once said.

In September 1944, as the Allies advanced along the coast towards St Omer 500 of the Soviet slave workers were transported by train to Germany where they were massacred.

Ironically, despite all the work at La Coupole it never fired any rockets at England because of the advancing Allies. Those fired at this country came from mobile sites.

However, La Coupole does not dwell just in the past. M. Le Maner, an historian, points out that the rocket technology has resulted in putting men on the moon and the creation of satellites and improved communications allowing for the use of mobile phones and car satellite navigation.

VI flying bomb sites once studded the Nord-Pas de Calais but most have now disappeared. One complex remains, in a forest, not far from La Coupole where the launching platform is lined-up to hit central London. The site, with its many bomb holes, is now a protected historic war monument.



*Doodle Bug at La Coupole*

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*But the port's year did not end there. Dover continued to be Northern Europe's busiest cruise port for turnaround calls handling 120 visits involving more than 150,000 passengers. Its marina enjoyed record numbers of visitors and its cargo terminal saw consolidation in the fresh fruit and vegetable markets.*

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# SOCIETY PROJECTS

Report by Jeremy Cope

## COWGATE CEMETERY

Our working parties continue with two sessions a month, except when the weather dictates otherwise. If any member is interested in our work why not give it a try by phoning me on 01304 211348 and arrange to join us for either a Thursday or Saturday morning. Any commitment is limited to the time you have available.

It is so very pleasing that our work leads to a cemetery that is a pleasure to stroll around and that means more dog walkers. At our request Dover District Council is to install a dog waste bin for which we are grateful.

## RIVER DOUR

I reported on Dover Town Council's plans for improvements to the riverside area around B&Q. Work has now started and the clearance so far shows the potential of the scheme. The work undertaken by Environment Agency is showing its worth with Barton Path the most obvious example. Bit by bit the river's potential is being realised.

However, the value of improvements to the river will be largely negated unless there is effective rubbish clearance. I would remind members of the clearance work undertaken by White Cliffs Countryside Project. There are working parties once a month from April to September so that at the time of going to press there remain Thursday 21st August and Friday 26th September sessions.

## THE DOVER SOCIETY B.O.O.K A.R.C.H.I.V.E

Below is printed the list of books held by the society that members can have access to.

*The Clifford Jarrett Collection:*

**Dover - A Perambulation of the  
Town, Port and Fortress**

**Annals of Dover  
by John Bavington Jones 1907  
Second Edition 1938**

**Dover and the Great War  
by J B Firth 1920**

**Parson's Dover Illustrated 1893-94**

**Picturesque Dover  
published by F J Parsons**

**The New Dover Guide  
by W. Batcheller 1834**

.....  
**Townwall Street Dover,  
Excavations 1996  
by Keith Parfitt, Barry Corke  
and John Cotter 2006**



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# MARIE HART...

## ...a Mayor to Remember

by Fr Peter Sherrad

"You judge a democracy not by the opportunities you give to the majority but by the opportunities you give to minorities." This was a quotation found in a 1978 autograph book belonging to Marie Hart and it helps one to understand her approach to her role in civic affairs and defines her approach to life. Not only was Marie twice Mayor of Dover but she was also Mayoress as well acting in such role for her good friend and colleague Kathleen "Bobbie" Goodfellow when she was mayor. Marie died on 10th January 2008.

Marie Lambert was born on 21st June 1918 the second of three daughters of Margaret (Peggy) and Richard Lambert. Her early life was based in her native Yorkshire centred on Leeds. Her mother died when the three sisters were young (Margaret was 7, Marie 5 and Alice a mere 13 months) and the family faced immediate problems for there was no social service provision or Welfare State at the time and the loss of his wife gave Marie's father a particularly difficult challenge. He had to work and was unable to cope with the care of his young daughters who were to find themselves placed in a one-parent orphanage run by Quakers in Leeds. Their father never remarried and he would bring his daughters home every weekend, for he was a caring man alert to his responsibilities to his children. The girls stayed at the orphanage until they reached the age of 14 although Margaret stayed on as a helper until Marie reached

14 when they both moved back home to live with their father. Alice moved back home upon reaching her 14th birthday and kept house. As was customary at that time the two senior girls went out to work at an early age and became seamstresses/machinists in the Leeds factory of Heaton's. It was here, with her experiences of life, that the later Marie Hart's formative influences were established. One incident demonstrated the young Marie's determination to fight for rights and for minorities. The factory had only one clocking off machine so the last girl to leave would always be about fifteen minutes late leaving work. Marie approached management and suggested a second machine was acquired. The request was refused as one was deemed sufficient. "My grandmother wore a bustle but I do not have to," said Marie when presenting the management with a choice - either a second machine was acquired or the last girl would be entitled to 15 minutes overtime. A second machine was acquired! Marie went on to form what was believed to be the first Union for Women. When the owners of the factory came to visit, Marie was no shrinking violet. "I am Marie Lambert who organises the Union so if you have come to see me (they had) please come and introduce yourselves rather than skulking behind the coat-rails." When war broke out in 1939 Marie, with Margaret, joined Brays munitions factory producing ordnance for the Royal Navy. There she rose to be an inspector. Her reason for leaving this post was redundancy i.e. the war had ended!

This first phase of her life provided her with experiences which were to influence her approach to life and politics in later years. She had lived in the "real world" where she had confronted hardship, inequality, injustice and oppression.

In a second phase of her life she was to become a familiar person in her adopted town of Dover. What she made of this parochial town, tucked away in a valley and inward looking, after all her experiences "up north" is hard to say, but she first came to Dover in the 1930's for family holidays as there were relatives living in the area. An uncle had married a Dover girl and cousins were born in Dover. In 1947, with Margaret and herself as bridesmaids, she attended a dance at the Town Hall where she was to meet a former Royal Naval cook who was working on the Southern Railways ferries running from Dover. His name was Fred Hart who at that time was living in Limekiln Street with his mother and father. Marie and Fred over the years were to become very familiar as a couple in and around Dover. However, it all started slowly and strangely! Fred was quite smitten by the two bridesmaids he met at the dance and one in particular. Therefore, he asked Margaret if he could write to her. When he did this caused some difficulty as Margaret already had a boy friend so Marie asked her sister what she would do with the letters and she took it upon herself to respond as Margaret. Now this all worked perfectly all the time Fred was in Dover and "Margaret" was in Leeds. There came a time when Fred decided he would visit Leeds to see Margaret and the truth came out. It was a defining moment for the two of them for they were to marry - but not until March 1958 as Fred made haste slowly. In 1957 he had invited Marie down to Dover and upon inquiring what she would like for Christmas received the

answer "only you"! Having purchased the ring in Gunn's the jewellers they married in a little Baptist church in Leeds because they could not marry in the Church of England as it was Lent! When they visited the Registrar for a licence and Fred wrote down on a form his occupation as "ship's cook Merchant Navy" the Yorkshire Registrar removed his glasses, looked at Marie and said, "Good God lass! Do you know what you are letting yourself in for?" She did and they were to be married for nearly 50 years until Fred's death in 2006. They first lived in Dover in a flat in Park Street opposite the police station, then moved to 47 Dour Street where they lived together until Fred's death and then Marie alone until her move in October 2007 when, terminally ill, she returned to Leeds. Just before she died she signed a cheque as 'Mrs Marie Hart' saying it took her long enough to achieve the title so she would always use it! This second phase of her life, namely her union with Fred, was to give her a long and happy marriage with stability and security on which she could base the third phase of her life - her interest in politics. Fred gave sterling support to Marie in her public roles and they supported each other in all the challenges they faced. They were quite simply inseparable - with Marie benefiting from Fred's enjoyment of cooking and his role of choosing the hats she acquired for her civic duties.

It was in those roles that many Dovorians will remember Marie. She and Fred were staunch members of the Labour Party in Dover and she was a Councillor for Tower Hamlets ward for many years. Theirs was the Labour Party of Ernest Bevin, Aneurin Bevan, Stafford Cripps and Clem Atlee, a party committed to the creation and expansion of a Welfare State and the abolition of injustice whether economic,

social or otherwise. Marie was not a person to sit on the fence, waiting to see which way the proverbial cat would jump and then join a bandwagon, preferring to lead by example and following her principles. Neither she nor Fred had sympathy with the rebranding of names and principles in the pursuit of power and in that they showed how principled they were as a couple. They may not have been fashionable but they were good socialist comrades who fought for social justice, the rights of the underprivileged and the advancement of the Welfare State and Marie was not diffident about expressing her views on the modern direction of the party of which she was a member.

She was deeply involved in the life of the town and was elected to the Dover Borough Council then Dover District Council serving on the latter from its inception in 1973, as a shadow local authority, to 1987. In 1979 she became the fourth woman Mayor of Dover serving with distinction. When she had first visited Dover she was struck by the cleanliness of the town but by the time she was elected Mayor things had clearly changed. At her mayor making she called on all Dovorians to polish up the town especially for the coming installation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. In photographs of the installation, in the marquee in the grounds of Dover College, Marie can be seen in her mayoral outfit sitting immediately behind the Queen Mother. When these two ladies of mature age conversed with each other Her Majesty was amused by Marie informing her that at the previous installation of the Lord Warden she was working as a domestic at Dover College. She had to peer round the corner to witness events while now she, a Yorkshire lass, was Dover's first citizen entertaining royalty and many

distinguished guests in her adopted hometown! So successful was her mayoral year that she was elected Mayor again in 1983-1984. The interesting feature about Marie's years of public service was her ability to keep her feet firmly on the ground. It mattered not to Marie whether the mayoral year coincided with some other high profile role, like Speaker of the Cinque Ports, it was simply an honour and a privilege to be chosen to represent the town as mayor or her constituents as a councillor. Her two mayoral years did not come around on the basis of "Buggin's Turn", as seems often to be the case, but because she had earned the right and privilege to be the town's first citizen.

That right had been earned through her dedication as a conscientious councillor. As a member of Dover District Council she demonstrated remarkable qualities of gentleness and firmness combined with fairness in judgements and consideration for officers of the Council and other councillors. This was particularly noticeable in the years immediately after the re-organisation of local government when the standard of behaviour of many of her elected colleagues took the Council through one of its less satisfactory periods. Marie focussed on what she saw as the important function of an elected servant - the representation of the people who had elected her and nowhere was this more evident than in her interest in housing issues. With her long-term friend and political colleague "Bobbie" Goodfellow she was part of a political 'dynamic duo'. Both were diminutive in stature being less than five feet tall, but they could, in a proverbial sense, punch above their weight (and height!). The experiences of her early life, her union involvement and membership of the Labour party combined to enable her to fight for what she believed was right and

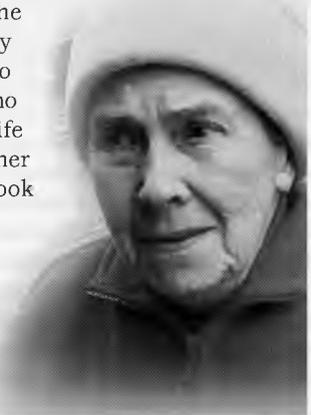
she managed on occasions to ensure people were given decent accommodation where all others had failed. Together with Councillors Kath Goodfellow and Edith Hadden she was part of a very powerful force of socially aware councillors. The weight of their combined efforts forced others to succumb to what was equitable and good. Marie did an immense amount for the people of Dover and never compromised the principles and integrity she learned from the experiences of her early years in Leeds. Even after she stood down from council life it was not unusual for people to look her up and to knock on her door seeking advice on many aspects of life or on their problems and Marie turned no one away.

She was an enthusiastic supporter of many local organisations including Dover Operatic and Dramatic Society and a long-term member of the congregation of St Mary's in Church Cannon Street. Diagnosed with breast cancer before Fred died she confronted this challenge with her true Yorkshire grit. Although terminally ill, after Fred's death she decided to move back to Yorkshire to be near her surviving sister and other members of her family. Her determination to move was carried through and she left Dover for the last time in October 2007. Sadly, by then she was too poorly to move into the little house she had bought in Leeds. She stayed initially with her niece Margaret and her husband at Wombwell near Barnsley until the requirement for full time care necessitated her move to a care home where, though increasingly frail, she participated in the life of the home to the best of her ability. Following her death her body was cremated in Barnsley. She did not remain "up north" however as her ashes were brought back to Barham

crematorium to be scattered where those of her beloved Fred had been scattered some eighteen months previously.

Those Doverians who knew Marie and knew her well would have found their lives made richer by the experience. With her passing there is almost a sense of history passing. After all she lived through 4 reigns, 17 Prime Ministers (22 administrations) and 9 Archbishops of Canterbury! She was at the centre of our town's life for nearly 50 years and set standards in public life to be respected by others.

Marie lived life on the basis of looking forward but understood the value of looking back on her experiences. We can do no worse than look back over the life of this lady, twice first citizen of Dover as well as mayoress, to help us understand that she was, as her good friend and colleague "Bobbie" Goodfellow would have said, "a scarce good person." It was Dover's good fortune that this Yorkshire lass married a lad living in Dover and moved to the town to become an integral part of it. A memorial service for her life and work was held at St Mary the Virgin Dover on April 10th 2008 attended by the local MP, the current Mayor and Mayoress, many friends and former colleagues. She was deservedly a Mayor to remember who lived her life according to her autograph book quotation.



Marie Hart

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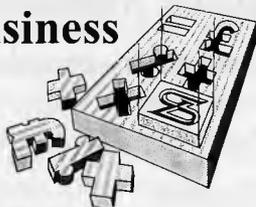
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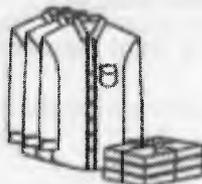
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## WANTED

Volunteers are required to assist in running the raffle, in making and serving the refreshments and with washing up at the Society's winter meetings. We hold five ordinary meetings, plus one wine and wisdom, at St Mary's Parish Centre. Therefore, even if you can only assist at one or two of the meetings it would be of great benefit and help to the Society. If you are interested in helping out, or you know anyone else who may be, then contact the Chairman or any member of the committee,

*(See inside front cover of newsletter for contact details).*



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Signed .....

Date .....

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 2008 - 2009

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

## 2008

SEPTEMBER 20  
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OCTOBER 20  
Monday 7.30

**Speakers:** Ruth Parkinson: "Pavilion & Lord Warden Hotel"  
Jon Iveson: "Fort Burgoyne"

NOVEMBER 17  
Monday 7.30

**Speakers:** Col. Dick Bolton: "Local Stained Glass"  
'Paradise is closer than you think'  
"Guarding Dover's Coast" - speaker to be announced

DECEMBER 13  
Saturday  
6.30 for 7.00  
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### **Christmas Feast**

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## 2009

JANUARY 19  
Monday 7.30

**Speakers:** Derek Leach: "Dover's Workhouse"  
Richard Sturt: "Dover - 40 Years of the Legally Unexpected"

FEBRUARY  
Monday 7.30

### **Wine and Wisdom**

MARCH 16  
Monday 7.30

**Speakers:** Paul Holt: "Sapphire Hoe - from Abbot to Shakespeare Cliffs, 1843-1973"  
Nathan de Thaubrew: "Dour Mills"

APRIL 21  
Monday 7.30

### **Annual General Meeting**

**Speakers:** Town Clerk - to be confirmed

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

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