

Dover Society Memories

Merril Lilley

The Dover Society Newsletter Editor 1991 to 2005

Derek Leach has written a comprehensive and masterly account of the history of the 25 years of the Society. I just want to add some of my memories of the early years of the Newsletter.

I joined the Dover Society in 1988. The inaugural meeting had been held in April of that year and the first newsletter appeared in June. I attended meetings and went on visits in 1989, including those to Buckland Mill, Western Docks and Lousyberry Wood. It was a good way to meet new and interesting people. It was on such outings that I first got to know the Chairman, Jack Woolford, who became a good friend over the following years, and, needless to say, an invaluable contributor to the Newsletter. If I meet him now he always says, 'Merril, I remember when we first met.'

I did not become actively involved in the Society until April 1990 after the Annual General Meeting. Previously Ken Berry had, since May 1989, been holding two committee posts, of Treasurer and Membership Secretary. At the AGM in April 1990 he appealed for help, hoping that a member would volunteer to be the Membership Secretary. I answered his appeal and met to discuss details. After I started we often met with his wife, Del, at their flat in Waterloo Mansions and we became good friends. My name first appears in Newsletter no.7, which was the last issue to appear in the old format, with

A4 copied sheets. Philomena and Budge Adams had been working on the production of the new-look Newsletter No.8 launched in September 1990. This was a great success and it has kept the same format to the present day.

Philomena Kennedy, a talented local artist and enthusiastic member of the Society and local community was also a member of the local U3A, to which she contributed by holding art classes. I soon got to know her and she wanted to persuade me to start a group of my own in the U3A. Little did I know that soon I would be seeing a lot more of Philomena.

In 1991 Philomena had arranged to go to America for an exhibition of her work. She would need help with the next Newsletter. Meanwhile I had started to contribute copy to the Newsletter: articles, Membership News and a crossword puzzle. I discussed things with Philomena, visiting her several times in her bungalow in St. Margaret's. I was asked to take over as Editor in time to produce Newsletter No.11 in September 1990. I was apprehensive (to say the least) at the thought of following Philomena's brilliant work and of working with Budge Adams! However, I need not have worried. Budge and I worked well together and established a good working partnership. Newsletter 11 contained four of my contributions and passed muster, albeit with a few mistakes. Sheila Cope became

Membership Secretary and joined the committee where Jeremy was already a member. Both of them were regular contributors to the Newsletter. Philomena never returned to the position of Editor.

My circle of Dover friends was increasing, Philomena, Budge, Sheila and Jeremy, Ken and Del Berry, and soon Pam Taylor and May Jones, the Newsletter's two painstaking proof readers.

The Dover Society prospered with membership increasing annually. The Newsletter continued to thrive. I was Editor for 14 years, until 2005 when Alan Lee took over the job and I joined Pam and May as proof readers.

When Derek Leach joined the Society, and subsequently became Chairman,

he worked with Budge and myself to launch Triangle Publications, which published five books, starting with 'Dover, Memories of a Century' in the year 2000. We both worked with Ivan Green, well-known local historian, to produce his book 'Dover and the Monarchy' Derek has been Chairman since then and produced many local books, some in collaboration with Terry Sutton, always a welcome and prolific contributor to the Newsletter.

As time went on I met more members and made new friends and, sadly, lost old ones. It would be an impossible task to list the hundreds of people who contributed by sending copy and helping production. I can only thank them all and send best wishes for the future of the Society and the Newsletter to the current Editor, Chairman and committee members.

Ancient Church of St-Mary-in Castro Dover 2012 a Celebratory Year!

John Owen

A plaque celebrating both the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the 150th Anniversary of the restoration of the garrison church of St Mary-in-Castro was unveiled and dedicated during the service of Morning Prayer on St Barbara's Day Sunday 9th December 2012.

The service was conducted by The Reverend Daniel Merceron CF senior padre 2 Brigade assisted by Canon Jonathan Russell OCF.

The plaque was unveiled by the Commander 2 Brigade (SE) and

Deputy Constable of Dover Castle, Brigadier Simon Wolsey OBE.

The regular congregation was joined by the ladies of The Dover & Shorncliffe branch of the Guild of St Helena, members of the Royal Artillery Association and members of the Association of Royal Engineers.

By a happy coincidence the installation of the plaque complements both the existing memorial to the 1862 restoration at the SW corner of the nave and the later fitting of the lofty West window celebrating Queen Victoria's long reign.