

clean-up assisted by cadets concentrated on litter in the South Kent College area.



The Society reached a new milestone by August 1993 when membership topped 400.

Members Budge Adams and David Atwood initiated a campaign to move the Charles Rolls statue away from the seafront toilets to a more dignified location in The Gateway gardens close to its pre-war site. It was eventually moved and rededicated in June 1995.

1994

The topic for the January 1994 meeting was the future of local government with the options of the status quo or replacement of KCC by district councils combining into larger unitary authorities. After presentations by KCC, DDC, University of Kent at Canterbury, Kent Association of Local Councils and the MP, the opinions of the five discussion groups informed the Society's submission to the Local Government Commissioner. This was in favour of the status quo albeit with some improvements. The eventual outcome was not welcomed - retention of KCC but with the Medway Towns becoming a separate unitary authority.

At the 1994 AGM Terry Sutton, already a Vice President and having been co-opted onto the Executive during the year, was

formally elected and became Press Secretary. Jeremy Cope became a co-Vice Chairman with John Gerrard.

Members were asked via a questionnaire in the Newsletter about their vision for the future of Dover. The conclusions made interesting reading at the time and perhaps even more so now in the light of what has happened since! Whilst the Impact improvements, White Cliffs Business Park and Western Dock development were welcomed, a town master plan was said to be needed, rather than ad hoc planning approvals site by site - in other words a proactive approach by DDC. The Russell Street area in particular needed to be redeveloped as a whole, including the removal of the bus garage. Public car parks should be used to attract customers rather than raise revenue (in order to compete with free out of town parking), lorries banned from the town centre unless delivering, a new use for the redundant telephone exchange, the buildings demolished in front of the St. Martin le Grand ruins to create a park and a plea for the demolition of Burlington House! Also on the wish list were better shopping facilities, more people living in the town centre, streets to be cleaner and more attractive, new attractions such as a bowling alley, skating rink, a decent theatre, a facelift for Connaught Park as well as a maritime museum and cruise liner terminal. Finally, Dover with its many heritage assets should be promoted as a tourist town and not only as a port. Urged also was a review of the town centre one way system designed originally to help accommodate the freight vehicles to and from the docks (overtaken later by the A2/Jubilee Way bypass and the A20/Townwall Street). The Society included the need for a Russell Street masterplan in its submission regarding the new Local Plan.

At the same time editor Merrill Lilley presented her vision of Dover in 2020. Langdon Cliffs Visitor Centre would be busy with tourists; most of the 2,000 passengers from a gigantic cruise liner in the harbour would be in the town on guided tours after taking the monorail into the town centre, viewing the Bronze Age Boat in the Museum, appreciating Dover's history in the Heritage Centre, visiting the Old Town Gaol, enjoying the attractive small shops as well as the vast shopping centre at the Western Docks; others would be resting in the open air cafés. Hotels were fully booked, including the new 5 star hotel on the castle cliff and the smaller hotel above the Grand Shaft. The Drop Redoubt with its new entrance was open to the public after extensive renovation. The attractive promenade and the clean beach were crowded whilst sailing and windsurfing were on offer at the water sports centre. At the Whitfield activity centre tenpin bowling, ice skating, indoor tennis and squash could be enjoyed whilst the commemorative Millennium Monument in the Western Docks towered over the town. Time is running out for Merrill's vision to become a reality!

A Town Trail Quiz devised by Philomena Kennedy was amongst the wide range of events during Festival of Dover week in 1994, whilst the Project Group helped Crabble Corn Mill with its annual tidy.

The reopening of the White Cliffs Hotel as a luxury hotel, renamed The Churchill, was warmly welcomed, but there were concerns about the Harbour Board's plan for a 60 bed hotel in the Camden Crescent car park. It did not happen. Considerable interest was shown in the future of Old Park Barracks, which was surplus to Ministry of Defence requirements.

Society and National Trust representatives met to discuss the proposed visitor centre

for Langdon Cliffs. The Society's view was that any scheme should not adversely affect the unique atmosphere of the cliff top and, therefore, felt unable to support the scheme which was, however, approved. Planning Committee Chairman, Lawrence Gage, assisted the judging of the architectural competition. The winning design was mainly of wood with a turf covered roof, making it hardly visible from the sea.



Thinking ahead to the Millennium celebrations, the Society organised an open meeting at the Town Hall to gauge the interest in applying for money from the national Millennium Fund of £66 million to finance a local project and, if so, what? There was no shortage of suggestions, including the radical idea of a modern pharos on the Western Height's possibly incorporating a revolving restaurant, conference centre and concert hall. As a result a working party was formed to prepare a bid. A Millennium Fund grant application was submitted in 1995. The major components were a national maritime museum, an institute for maritime development, a Millennium Pharos and a cruise liner terminal, welcome to Britain tourist centre, sea training activity centre, transport links to the attractions and a big event to welcome the new millennium. It was unsuccessful, but undaunted, it was suggested that other

lottery grants should be sought to achieve the Millennium objectives as separate projects. The Society would apply to regenerate the Western Heights as a managed nature reserve with a Millennium Pharos beaming light across the Channel. Unfortunately, the proposal received no support from DDC despite support from English Heritage and English Nature and so the scheme was dropped.

Travelling by hovercraft, 45 members spent an enjoyable hour on the Goodwin Sands watching Morris dancers, looking round the souvenir stalls, drinking canned beer or participating in elaborate picnics complete with tables and chairs! This successful event was repeated the following year.

The fifth annual Society clean-up was in the shopping precinct where 38 cadets removed stickers from street furniture and then touched up the paintwork. This was followed during Environment Week by the Society organising a clean up of Shakespeare Beach assisted enthusiastically by 60 pupils from Aycliffe School who received the Society's grateful thanks in the form of a framed certificate.

A Society member, Mrs Gillian Janaway, was congratulated on winning the *Dover Express* competition to name the Shakespeare Cliff platform created from the chalk spoil of the Channel Tunnel - Samphire Hoe.

The October 1994 meeting considered Dover's economic past and future. Budge Adams reminded the audience of a busy, prosperous town with a garrison, industries, many shops, liners calling, etc. Attracting tourists and industry was the hope for the future.

Various planning matters kept the Society

on its toes: the planning brief for Old Park (the Society suggested a regional sports centre) and the water sports centre study, a DDC workshop on a sport and recreation strategy, the new Snargate Street clubhouse for the Sea Angling Association (Bluebirds), DHB's plans for its Cruise Liner Terminal and opposing DDC's wish to demolish the Kearsney Abbey tea room, a listed building (the billiards room of the demolished mansion). White Cliffs Business Park Phase 2 was welcomed provided it was for business and not for more retail outlets. Good news was planning permission for a transport/travellers' centre at Whitfield catering for freight, coach crews and passengers which would create 200 jobs (part of phase 1 of White Cliffs Business Park) - but it never happened. The Society pressed successfully for the repair of the historic gutter in Laureston Place on the former turnpike road to Deal. A proposal to convert Burlington House into flats was strongly opposed - demolition should be its future! Use of Archcliffe Fort by the Emmaus organisation for the homeless was supported. At long last a route for the dualling of the A2 from Lydden Hill to the Eastern Docks was announced, but the Society had to oppose the proposed route. It never happened anyway!

The enthusiastic Project Group spent a day helping the East Kent Railway volunteers clear brushwood and erecting new fencing.

1995

Another year and another clean up - Along the river from Cherry Tree to Stembrook. The winning cadet team received a dartboard! During Environment Week the Project Group with cadets cleaned up the welcoming signs to Dover on the key approaches to town.