

January Meeting

The Geology of the White Cliffs

Les Richmond

Dover Street and Prayer Pastors

Noel Beamish

Reported by Terry Sutton

Society members and their guests Sheard about two very different subjects at our meeting at St Mary's parish centre on January 20th.

Leslie Richmond, a former ferry officer, told us how the white cliffs of Dover were formed millions of years ago while Noel Beamish, vice chairman of Christians Together in Dover, detailed the progress of the Street Pastor volunteers who help others in the town centre on Saturday nights.

Mr Richmond was invalided out of the Dover ferry industry following serious

injuries sustained in a fall. With time on his hands he studied geology with the Open University to be awarded with a B.Sc. (Hons) in Natural Sciences with Earth Science.

Using a PowerPoint presentation he described the various stages in the creation of the earth over many millions of years. At one stage the temperature rose to 17 degrees warmer than now, melting the ice at the poles, creating more water in the seas that eventually overflowed to form the English Channel. Until then these isles were linked to France.

The cliffs of Dover, made up of soft white chalk, consist mainly of coccoliths, plates of calcium carbonate formed by



The White Cliffs showing erosion



Gephyrocapsa Oceanica showing the Coccoliths

planktonic algae whose skeleton remains sank to the bottom of the sea to form sediment. Amazingly, each "little beastie" was so small that five of them were smaller than a hair breadth. Yet there were so many they created cliffs, at one stage, 500 feet high. The line of flints to be observed in the cliffs indicated the rise and fall of the seas over millions of years.

Second speaker Noel Beamish, chairman of Dover Street and Prayer Pastors, told how the initiative began nationally, with an Apostolic background, in 2003. There are now 250 groups with 9,000 volunteers nationally. Kent police suggested a similar group be formed in Dover and in September 2011 the Dover Street Pastors were commissioned.

They now have, in Dover, 13 Street Pastors and nine Prayer Pastors who, in

turn, are on duty on Saturday nights from 10 pm to 3 am.

They help those who have drunk too much, check on rough sleepers, collect up any glass bottles that might cause danger, provide first aid when necessary and hand-out "goodies" such as sweets, drinks of water, and flip-flops for girls tottering on high heels.

Mr Beamish said that when they began in Dover they received generous donations but now, as they were about to start recruiting again, the funds were drying up.

Questioned about costs he said that the annual costs were about £7,000 which also funded a co-ordinator or £2,000 without one. He also explained to a questioner why every volunteer had to be a Christian and an attendee at a church.

COWGATE CEMETERY

Barry Late

Although the weather and number of volunteers will always be a factor, the overall appearance and condition of the cemetery continues to show many obvious signs of improvement year on year, much thanks, in no small part to the effort and skill of 'The Noble Company of The Carers of Cowgate Cemetery'.

The latest addition to our merry band is Michele Cooper who has settled in and taken to strimming grass with consummate ease. We appear to be on target to complete all our winter tasks quite soon, with the opportunity to then possibly consider new tasks locally elsewhere?

Do you have a little spare time you could offer - new team members are always very welcome. For more information please contact either:

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Working party sessions are from 9 am to noon with dates for 2014 as follows:-

Thursdays:	06 Mar	03 Apr	01 May	12 Jun	03 Jul
Saturdays	15 Mar	12 Apr	10 May	21 Jun	12 Jul