

NOVEMBER MEETING

— Second Speaker —

ChalkUp21 Trail

A talk by Charles Holland

Reported by Terry Sutton

Deal-based architect Charles Holland took our members and our visitors on a virtual stroll along the top of the cliffs from Capel to Deal when he was our guest speaker at St Mary's parish centre in November.

He screened images of the modern architectural gems to be seen and enjoyed, from the imaginative Battle of Britain memorial at Capel, to Dover sea front, up on the cliffs at Langdon and finally to the structure on Deal Pier. His talk, entitled ChalkUp21, included descriptions of other interesting architectural designs in structures in the UK and abroad with which he and his practices had been involved.

Then he detailed the designs of the nine buildings and structures that are highlighted on the cliff top trail which was initiated by Dover Arts Development (DAD) to celebrate contemporary architectural development. After leaving the Battle of Britain memorial he took his walkers to the visitors' centre on Samphire Hoe, where excavated chalk for the Channel Tunnel has provided a waterfront platform. Then on to Dover sea front with its Seaspots Centre and the Three Waves lighting and white paved beach walks on shingle, mimicking the surf, before climbing the cliff path from Athol Terrace to the White Cliffs visitors' centre at Langdon Cliffs. From there on to St Margaret's Bay to study the Calyx centre at



Above: Cliff Path Marker Birds
Nigel Green

Left: Athol Terrace Trail Marker
Nigel Green



The Pines Calyx. Nigel Green

Pines Gardens, constructed by packed chalk from the material excavated for the building. And finally a further walk along the cliffs to Deal pier to enjoy the inspirational construction of the pier-end cafe.

Derek Leach, chairman of the meeting, suggested that in time there might be an interesting building constructed at Dover's Western Docks to add to the list of the architectural gems to be discovered on the trail.

Mr Holland's contribution to the project has included the design of plaques that mark each of the structures described. He explained the plaques serve a number of roles including information provision and detailing wider themes.

One side of each circular plaque reflects the coastline between Capel and Deal as well as marking the geographical position of each of the nine buildings and structures highlighted along the trail. In the centre of each bronze plaque, like medallions, is a description of that particular building or artwork. The plaques start out polished, he says, but will eventually patinate to a greeny-blue.

Wander the Dry Chalk Cliffs...

Wander the dry chalk cliffs
Formed in the folded past,
When the earth was new.

Gaze at the restless sea,
Ever changing and plumbing
Unfathomable fears.

Stand in the castle keep,
Where grey walls whisper secrets
Eight hundred years old.

Consider the Pharos,
Its stones laid by Romans
Two thousand years ago.

In the museum slumbers
A boat from the Bronze Age
Cocooned in preserved silence.

The chalk cliffs are much older,
Haunt of the blue butterfly
Sanctuary for sea birds;

Older than the town,
Rare cowslips and wild orchids
Have always thrived here.

Wander the dry chalk cliffs,
Made of a myriad creatures
In another age.

*Merril Lilley
8 June 2014*