

Brigadier Maurice Alan Atherton CBE, JP, DL, DCL

Terry Sutton

Members of The Dover Society, headed by Chairman Derek Leach, attended the packed memorial service at Canterbury Cathedral giving thanks to the life of our former president, Brigadier Maurice Alan Atherton.

Maurice Atherton, a former Deputy Constable of Dover Castle and commander of Dover Shorncliffe Garrison, died at his Barham home on Monday, July 15. He was 92.

During the Cathedral service Dean, Dr Robert Willis, told of Maurice's long service to the nation and to the County of Kent which was very well represented.

He commanded the East Yorkshire Regiment in 1946, serving in Egypt, Sudan, Malaysia, Germany and Hong Kong until being appointed chief instructor at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst from 1964-67.

There was laughter during the service when it was mentioned that this mild man, Maurice, was once known as 'The Gripper'. This was when he was the senior instructor at the Royal Military Academy and was ready to tell trembling officer cadets to "Get a grip of yourself, man".

From 1967 to 1969 Maurice commanded the 1st battalion of The Green Howards and they were represented by a number of men who served with him. At one stage he

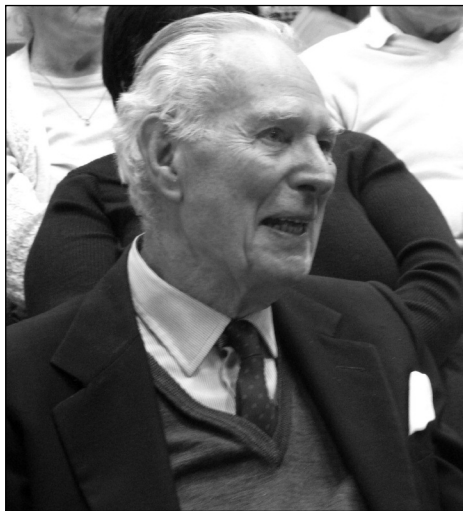


*Brigadier Maurice Atherton
an Officer and a Gentleman*

was county president of the Royal British Legion and his service to the Legion was demonstrated by a parade of standards in the cathedral.

In 1976 he was appointed Deputy Constable of Dover Castle and Commander of the Shorncliffe garrison, serving until 1981 when he retired from the army. He awarded the CBE in 1981.

As Deputy Constable of Dover Castle, he and his family lived in the castle's centuries-old Constable's Tower. Maurice and Wendi played a pivotal role in entertaining the late Queen Mother when she was Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports.



Brigadier Maurice Atherton

Among the many organisations represented at the service were the Confederation of the Cinque Ports and the Rotary Club of Dover, of which he was a member for a number of years.

As the notes of the Last Post and Reveille rang through the Cathedral, there were the words of Pope John XXIII: "Death is the future for everyone. It is the Last Post of this life and the Reveille of the next."

Maurice was a Deputy Lieutenant of Kent, a Dover magistrate, county president of the Royal British Legion, a keen member of the Men of the Trees and a former

president of The Dover Society.

A former chairman of the governors of the University of Kent, in 1996 he received an Honorary Doctorate in Civil Law.

Maurice and his wife Wendi regularly attended the annual meetings of our society and would speak highly of the work of the society. He was also very generous in his support of our Town Hall fund.

For years Maurice and Wendi continued to play an active role in the local community often entertaining at their home at Barham.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS **Sheila Cope**

With great regret I have to record the death in July of our former President, Brigadier Maurice Atherton who, together with Wendi, was genuinely interested in our Society and attended our functions regularly, including being present at the pre-meeting meals for our speakers and getting to know committee members personally. We shall be pleased to welcome Wendi when she feels able to attend again.

Another sad loss is that of Jeremy Fox, an inveterate cyclist who had delivered Newsletters in the Temple Ewell area since the foundation of the Society. He was a regular member of the Cowgate team and is one of the Jeremys (Jeremy no. 2 as he referred to himself) pictured on the front cover of the 25th Anniversary Newsletter.

We have 454 members at present and hope that we shall recruit more during the "indoor season" when we hope to attract new recruits with a variety of interesting speakers. The challenge is to find different ways of advertising ourselves and then to

have sufficient person-power to undertake tasks such as updating our website monthly and to man a publicity stall at community events. At the same time we appreciate the support of all our existing members who regularly pay their subscriptions and attend our functions when they can.

On the Society's very successful September trip to York, two of our members were able to meet their brothers, one at Beamish and the other in York itself. Both men are Dovorians who have moved north but who keep in touch with their home town through their continuing membership of the Society.

We welcome: Chantal Vouillemin, Louise Miles, Mrs J Thompson, Philip Knight, John & Pamela Male, Sarah & Mark Mannall, Sheila Watts, Mr A Hogg, David & Gillian Roberts, Mr J Lewandowski, Alan Lewer, Mr Philip Allcock and Lucy Blincow.