

# Jeremy Cope, Honorary Freeman of Dover

Derek Leach

On 19 May at the annual Mayor Making ceremony Jeremy Cope was appointed an Honorary Freeman of Dover for his very long, dedicated and active service to The Dover Society and other local organisations, which has benefitted the town and people of Dover.

The Dover Society - Jeremy was elected to the Executive Committee of the Dover Society at its inaugural meeting in 1988 and was serving as the Society Secretary when he retired from the Executive at the AGM in April 2022. Society members present unanimously appointed him a life Society Vice President for his outstanding contribution to the Society.

In 1994 Jeremy became Vice Chairman of the Society and in 1996 became Chairman of the Planning Committee and in 1998 was elected Society Chairman. He represented the Society on the Town Centre Management Board until it folded in 2008 and represented the Society on the River Dour Steering Group, first as its secretary, then Chairman and currently minute-taker, taking an active part in river litter clearing.

Jeremy retired as Dover Society Chairman in 2004 but became Vice Chairman when Derek Leach was elected Chairman. In 2009 he became Chairman of the newly formed Refurbishment Committee (to identify and lobby for a range of modest improvements to make the town more attractive to residents and visitors and to promote some civic pride in our surroundings). In 2018 he retired as Vice Chairman of the Society but became Society Secretary.

Jeremy has always been involved in the Society's physically active projects, including the replanting of Lousyberry Wood (top of Whitfield Hill) following its destruction by the 1987 hurricane and clearing the gutters and soakways of St. Edmund's Chapel. From 2000 to 2021 Jeremy also coordinated twice-monthly Society work parties to maintain Cowgate Cemetery as a nature reserve and closed churchyard. Previously neglected, it is now a joy to visit.

From 2000 Jeremy organised the manufacture and erection of initially 10 Society blue plaques to celebrate the



*Jeremy Cope DTC Meeting May 2022*



*DTC Meeting May 2022*

Millennium with the first two installed in 2002. This has since become a permanent project with one new plaque a year with Jeremy still leading until this year.

Behind the scenes, since 2001 Jeremy, together with wife Sheila, has organised the distribution of Society newsletters three times a year to nearly 500 members.

Other organisations - Jeremy's community activities were not confined to the Society: 1998-2003 local treasurer of Dover Red

Cross, 2000-2007 Treasurer, then Chairman, of Dover Citizens' Advice Bureau, then Vice-Chair of Dover/Deal combined, 2013-2016 Secretary of Dover Big Local and 2011-2020 Treasurer, Rotary Club of Dover.

I am sure you will agree that Jeremy, born and bred in Dover, is well worthy of this privilege and honour. He will join Society members Adeline Reidy, Terry Sutton, Mike McFarlane and Patrick Sherratt who are Honorary Freemen.

## John Lockyer

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### Terry Sutton

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When the Romans arrived in Dover they used rocks and other masonry to protect a base on the Western Heights. When they departed and Dover was in need of protection from sea-borne raiders, the masonry remaining on the Heights was rolled down the hill into the Dour valley to build coastal defences.

When Dover expanded the former coastal defences were pulled down and the ancient masonry was re-used, and still is, imbedded in the structure of some of Dover's remaining historic buildings.



John Lockyer

This was the controversial belief of author John Lockyer, a member of *The Dover Society*, who died in February 2022 in Hove, aged 93. He had been wheelchair bound for many years.

John had a great love for Dover where, when young, he lived in Snargate Street where his parents ran a restaurant next to the Royal Hippodrome. His first published book, *Beyond the Foreshore*, details the exciting life he enjoyed in Dover and its environs in the 1930's, focusing very much on the Western Heights that towered over his Snargate Street bedroom. He also recalled how he and his pals would misbehave on the quayside stacks of timber which was imported through Dover in those days.

In the months before his death John was completing another book, *Her Fortress*, which his family are hoping to publish.

John, educated at the now-demolished St Mary's School in Queen Street, always had high hopes for the future of Dover. One of his dreams was for it to achieve city status.