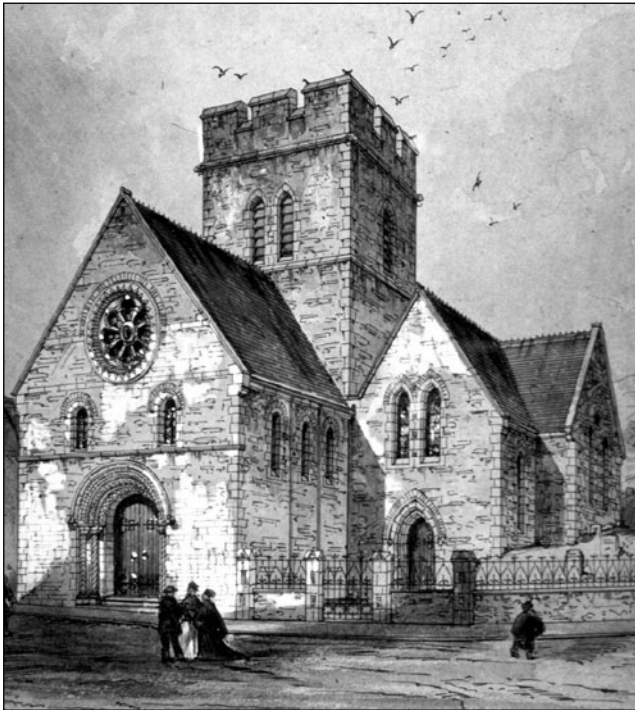


The
Dover
Society

Newsletter

No. 112
March 2025



Old St James' Church 1868

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THE DOVER SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1988

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Registered Charity No. 299954

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THE COMMITTEE	
CHAIRMAN	Jenny Olpin, 19 Redlands Court, London Road, River, Dover, CT17 0TW Tel: 01304 825011 Email: jodoversociety@gmail.com
VICE-CHAIRMAN	Graham Margery, "Greenhead", 1A Byllan Road, River, Dover. CT17 0QI Email: grmdoversociety@gmail.com
HON. SECRETARY	Carol Duffield, 46 Friars Way, Dover CT16 2DW Tel: 07855 045650 Email: cddoversociety@gmail.com
HON. TREASURER	Jane Jones, 58 Charlton Green, Dover. CT16 2PS Tel: 07508 465237 Email: treasurer@thedoversociety.co.uk
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Ann Burke, 20 Victoria Street, Dover, CT17 0EL Tel: 07454 128512 Email: annandjeff02@gmail.com
EDITOR	Alan Lee, 8 Cherry Tree Avenue, Dover CT16 2NL Tel: 01304 213668 Email: alan.lee1947@ntlworld.com
ADVERTISING SECRETARY	Jean Marsh, 31 Millais Road, Dover. CT16 2LW Tel: 01304 206123 Email: jean194663@gmail.com
ENVIRONMENT	<i>Chair</i> Janet Dagsys [ex-officio] Email: jdoversociety@gmail.com <i>Committee</i> James Benjafield, Pam Brivio, Elenor Brooks, Jeremy Cope, Carol Duffield, Ben Elsey, Deborah Gasking, Kelly Green, Mary Margery, Mike McFarnell.
PLANNING & LOCAL GOVERNMENT	<i>Co Chair</i> Ann Burke & Graham Margery <i>Committee</i> Sandra Conlon, Stephen Horne, Christine Pike, Mike Weston
WEBMASTER	Alan Lee
WINTER SOCIAL SECRETARY	Lyn Smith, 2 Redlands Court, London Road, River, Dover, CT17 0TW Tel: 01304 822815 Email: steve.lyn@uwclub.net
ECOLOGICAL PROJECTS	Deborah Gasking, contact through membership secretary
PLAQUES	Martyn Webster Email: martyn.webster1@btopenworld.com
DOVER HERITAGE OPEN DAYS	Paul Wells Email: paulwells75@btinternet.com
COMMITTEE MEMBERS	Lesley Easton Email: lje1@cant.ac.uk Derek Leach Email: derekriverdale@btinternet.com Alan Sencicle Email: alan.sencicle@btinternet.com Pat Sherratt Email: ttt.castle-lea@tiscali.co.uk Mike Weston Email: weston71dover@gmail.com
NON-EXECUTIVE ROLES [ex-officio]	
SUMMER SOCIAL SECRETARY	Pam Male Email: pam.mail@ntlworld.com
RAFFLE	James Benjafield and Ben Elsey
MINUTE SECRETARY	Carol Duffield
WEB SITE	http://thedoversociety.co.uk

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The Objectives of the Dover Society

founded in 1988.

- to promote high standards of planning and architecture
- to interest and inform the public in the geography, history, archaeology, natural history and architecture of the area
- to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest
- and commitment to the belief that a good environment is a good investment.

The area we cover comprises Dover Town Council, Guston Parish Council, Hougham Without Parish Council, Langdon Parish Council, Lydden Parish Council, River Parish Council, St Margarets at Cliffe Parish Council, Temple Ewell Parish Council and Whitfield Parish Council.

All members receive three Newsletters a year and in each year the Committee organises about ten interesting events – talks, tours, visits, Members' Meetings and usually a Christmas Feast.

The Society gives Awards for improvements to the area, monitors planning proposals and supports, joins in or initiates civic projects and arts events.

Editorial

To start, I now require an extra proof reader to proof the text for our newsletter, printed three times a year. This must be someone with a good knowledge of the English language and grammar. If you are interested, can you please contact the editor.

A gentle reminder to our readers of the Zeebrugge commemorations that will take place on 23rd April, St George's Day. Further details will appear in the local press or on the Dover Town Council website.

The Roman Painted House, now managed under Dover District Council and the Roman Painted House Trust, has re-opened to the public. Entrance is free but for group tours there is a small charge. It is closed on a Sunday and Monday. Opening times Tuesday to Saturday are 10am to 4.30pm.

Between 12 and 6pm on Saturday 29th March at Pencester Gardens a free event called Impact Fest will take place. Organised by Dover Town Council it is aimed primary at 11 to 18-year-olds but is open to all. It includes music, dance, bushcraft, fishing tuition, fashion, a gaming bus and various workshops. This is the first festival of its kind and, hopefully, will be the first of many.

Details of this year's Annual General Meeting are in the centre of this newsletter including the proposal to increase membership fees, the first increase for some thirty years.

Refurbishment of the Maison Dieu (Old Town Hall) is due to be completed this year and it will be open to the public 10am to 4pm daily (unless booked for private events) from April 2025.

As usual I am on the lookout for articles for publishing in the newsletter. If you would like to contribute then please contact the editor direct, as then I will have all of your details. I also require people to report on our open meetings.

Alan Lee, Editor

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The owners can be contacted by way of the editor.

Tel: 01304 213668 Email: Alan.lee1947@ntlworld.com

DEADLINE for contributions

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 113 will be Wednesday 28th May 2025.

The Editor welcomes contributions and interesting drawings or photographs.

'Paper copy' should be typed at double spacing. Handwritten copy should be clear with wide line spacing. Copy on computer disc or by e-mail is acceptable. Pictures via e-mail to be submitted in JPEG and not imbedded in the text of the article and must be in as high resolution as possible. Please ring 01304 213668 to discuss details.

Publication in the Newsletter does not imply the Society's agreement with any views expressed, nor does the Society accept responsibility for any statements made.

EDITORIAL AND PRODUCTION TEAM

Editor:	Mr Alan Lee
Proof Readers:	John Morgan and Ann B. Tomalak
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DOVER GREETERS

Dover Greeters have been welcoming visitors to Dover for over 15 years. We love to share the unique and hidden parts of Dover, and signpost visitors to make the most of their time in this iconic town. If you would like to join us please contact:

Email: dovergreeters@virginmedia.com Mobile: 07712 581557

Website: <http://dovergreeters.co.uk>

OCTOBER MEETING

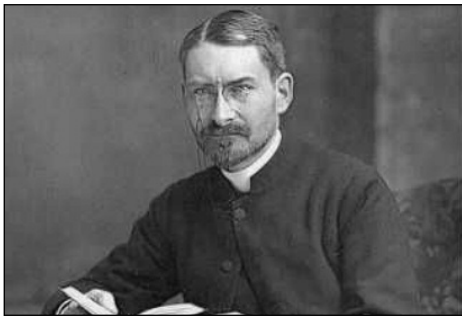
Kent Maps Online

A talk by Michelle Crowther

Reported by Alan Lee

Kent Maps Online is a digital humanities project providing themed essays about the county of Kent. The brainchild of Carolyn Oulton, it is a collaboration between Canterbury Christ Church University and the American company JSTOR. Kent Maps Online publish two or three articles each month. In this talk Michelle concentrated on stories with a Dover connection and showed slides to illustrate how the site works.

The first item was the Dover Wesleyan Methodist Scrapbook and Reverend Hugh Price Hughes, who lived at 1 Buckland Terrace next to the Buckland Street Chapel. He preached his first sermon at the Snargate Street Chapel. This encouraged eighteen people to dedicate their life to Christ, and this at a time when there were over two hundred and twenty pubs in Dover. This then led Hughes to then found a Band of Hope Temperance Society in the town. In Dover, Hughes met



Hugh Price Hughes

feminist and social reformer Josephine Butler. Together they campaigned against the Contagious Diseases Act, first passed in 1864, and which was in force in Dover at this time. In 1871 the Dover Infectious Diseases Hospital was established in the former Ship Hotel on Custom House Quay.

David Baron, born in Suwalki, Poland in 1855 (in 1830 had been pacified by the Russian army). A Jewish convert to Christianity, he married Fanny Kingsford of Dover at Eythorne in 1883. By this time, he was a prominent figure with the Mildmay Mission. The Dover Chronicle, in 1884, reported that a sale of works at the Maison Dieu raised funds for the mission.

Articles about William Burges and his designs for the Maison Dieu, as well as David Copperfield, appear on Kent Maps Online. The group now have twenty articles dedicated to Dickens including his account of staying at the Ship Inn, Dover, from 29th April to 2nd May 1856.

Dover in the 19th century was full of people lodging here, many temporary either coming, or going to the continent.

Michelle then spoke about Dover at Night, an event that took place in March 2024. This was part of the wider Community History Days set up by Kent Maps Online. This led on to details of characters revealed in a number books.

W. G. M. Reynold wrote *Mary Price: or the memoirs of a servant girl*, published in 1851. Abducted by thieves, at night, whilst

at Mr Messiter's grocers, Snargate Street, she was dragged to Shakespeare Cliff and thrown over. She landed on a ledge and after twenty minutes clambered back up. In 1895, F. F. Montresor wrote, *Into the Highways and Hedges*, in which Meg, taking an evening walk, fell off Langdon Cliffs, once again she was lucky to fall onto a ledge.

Kent Maps Online is not just about the 19th and early 20th century. John Lyly's portrayal of Dover in the 16th century, in his book *Eupheus and His England*, is well researched.

On 5th August 1588 Sir Thomas Scott wrote to Lord Burghley informing him that the Spanish Armada had been sighted off Boulogne. Thirty ensigns of infantry and three cornets of horse were assembled on the Downs. Over the period of a day Scott gathered, and paid for, 4,000 men at Dover. On seeing the massed Armada in the channel many of these unprepared troops panicked and fled the town.

May Aldington, a 20th century author who lived in Dover, wrote *Love Letters that Caused a Divorce*. She led a colourful life and for years tried to obtain a divorce from her Catholic husband. Her son Richard wrote, among others, *The Death of a Hero*



George Augustus Sala

and *Life for Life's Sake*, both based on his experiences on the Western Front in WWI.

P. G. Woodhouse spent two years, between 1892 and 1894, at Malvern House Prep School, Kearsney.

H. E Bates (of *The Darling Buds of May* fame) wrote a short story, *An Aspidistra in Babylon*. In this he depicted Dover as a place where soldiers 'come into the town to drink beer, eat fish and chips and get off with girls'. He describes Waterloo Crescent as 'a crescent of cream and white'.

There are over 350 articles on their website. There is Anna Maria Hussey, and her sister Kate, who enjoyed exploring the cliffs and countryside in 1836, and John Edensor Littlewood, a mathematician, and who lived in Dover as a child.

Jessie Challacombe, daughter of Christopher and Martha Worsfold, born at 23 Maison Dieu Road, was a children's author. In 1891 she married Reverend William Challacombe of 44 Clarendon Road, two years later they moved to New Malden. Her first book, *The Brother's Promise*, was published in 1897. She wrote at least 12 novels and many short stories.

Michelle ended with George Augustus Sala, author and journalist, who, with his family, arrived in Dover as a boy in December 1840 and stayed in Snargate Street. In 1841 they moved to a cosy, old-fashioned hostelry, part of *The Gun Hotel*, Strond Street, owned by George Hipgrave. Sala later wrote an article, *The Streets of the World*, in which he concludes "he who knows not Snargate Street cannot be familiar with Dover."

Please visit Kent Maps Online. If you would like to contribute contact michelle.crowther1@canterbury.ac.uk

NOVEMBER MEETING

“The Blue Marble”

A talk by Gloria Barnett MA, BSc.

Science Presenter and Author

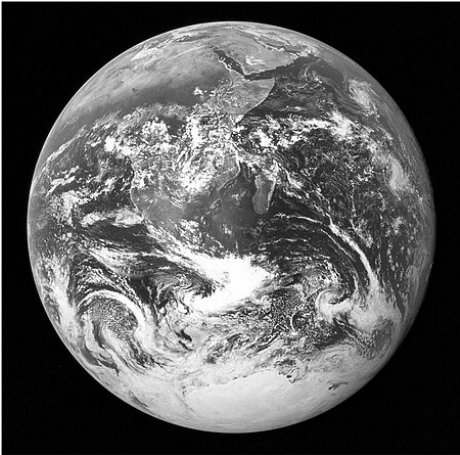
On 18th November, just a few days after returning to the UK following an international speaking tour, I received a call. “Gloria” said a friendly voice, “our speaker tonight has had to pull out, is there any chance you could come and talk to the Dover Society tonight at 7.30 pm.” Well, of course, I said yes! Don’t I always take every opportunity to tell everyone about my subject? The Members of the Society gathered. I could hear gentle, whispered voices - who was the speaker? What is she going to talk about? Then, the first slide was up on the screen, an image of Planet Earth. What were they going to hear?

Everyone waited patiently to hear the Chairman’s announcements, then I was introduced: “Gloria is an educator, an international speaker and an award-

winning author, and she is just back from working as an Insights Lecturer on Cunard’s Queen Mary 2, speaking to hundreds in her audience. We are delighted to welcome her to be with us tonight.”

The audience listened intently; eyes followed my movements. My talk started with thinking about the amount of water in the oceans on Earth. Yes, as I hoped, most people knew the number: 70% of the surface area of our planet is covered by the oceans. Our planet is known by the name ‘The Blue Marble’ and there is more water than land. The audience relaxed, then became engrossed.

My information about the oceans on our planet was just one half of my talk that evening. I began by helping the audience to understand how far the distance was from the Earth to the Moon and how many times humans had explored the moon, compared to only 5% of our oceans being explored on Earth. How much water (as a percentage of the Earth’s surface) is in just one ocean? The Earth’s largest ocean is the Pacific, I felt the intake of breath - 46% of our planet’s surface is in this one ocean. An image of the Earth taken from a satellite, showed the Pacific Ocean covering nearly half the planet.



Earth - The Blue Marble - taken from Apollo 17 in 1972

The audience learnt about the deepest part of the oceans and compared climbing Everest to going down into the deep ocean. I explained the cold, deep ocean temperature and lack of both light and

oxygen. This was not a place for humans. It was a different world. There was so little time to tell everyone everything they needed.

There are millions of weird and wonderful creatures that live in the oceans, but I hadn't time to talk about all the marine life, so I just introduced the Blue Whale, the largest creature on Earth. Then I introduced algae, tiny oceanic life forms such as microscopic plankton, which uses photosynthesis (like trees and plants on land) to produce the essentials of life, our oxygen and our glucose. The audience became amazed at the revelation that it is the ocean which puts most of the oxygen into the atmosphere. The plankton and seagrass in the oceans together produce 80% of all the oxygen on our planet. The rainforests and trees/plants on land provide just 20% of atmospheric oxygen. Without the oxygen from the ocean, there would be no life on Earth. I spoke about the science of convection currents, the movement of heat from the Sun, the formation of the water cycle in the oceans, the development of rain, and the importance of ocean currents moving the heat about the planet.

Now the audience had the basis of the scientific knowledge they needed to start to look at the second half of my talk, 'Human Effects on the Ocean.'

I could feel the disgust in the audience at the images of waste pollution in the water, the harm being done to ocean creatures by nets and fishing tackle pollution, and how the super trawlers can kill thousands of ocean creatures with one net.

I explained how the heat in the atmosphere traps the excess carbon dioxide produced by burning fossil fuels and how the oceans keep the Earth's

atmosphere in balance by acting as a natural carbon sink, taking in excess carbon dioxide whilst producing the oxygen we need in our atmosphere. I asked if humans could change their thinking and their behaviour. Could all humans stop using fossil fuels and live sustainable lives?

I explained some good news, the ocean (and river) clean-up and planting of seagrass, with people working together across the world. I recommended the World Wildlife Fund list of how we could all help to 'save' life on our planet. 'Use your voice,' it said, and I explained what I do and why I speak about my subject. As an educator, I am passionate about helping the next generation to understand the Earth, its beauty and its problems. I help, through my books and my talks, to encourage everyone to be caring about their environment.

I finished with a film from two Cornish schools, where the children told us what we had to do! Yes, an emotional film - and, to be honest, an emotional evening when, once again, I shared my passion with an audience.

Don't forget we saw the slide with a placard reading "Never doubt that a small group of people can change the world..."

You were my small group of people on 18th November 2024.

Thank you, Dover Society, for allowing me to join you and share my passion.

If you have any questions, please contact:
Gloria Barnett MA, BSc.

Science Presenter and Author at
gloria@barnettauthor.co.uk

Or visit the website at:
<https://barnettauthor.co.uk>

JANUARY MEETING

Reawakening the Maison Dieu

A talk by **Martin Crowther**

Reported by **Derek Leach**

Our speaker Martin Crowther is Public Engagement Officer for the Maison Dieu Refurbishment Project and was making a welcome return visit to update us as the project nears completion.

An impressive and colourful number of recent images, coupled with Martin's enthusiastic explanations, gave a fantastic picture of the work in progress and some of its many complexities. With the repair of the roof and flintstone walls completed, the exterior scaffolding has been removed at long last and the clock reinstated after repair and conservation. The recreation of William Burges's 1883 decoration scheme in the Connaught Hall and Mayor's Parlour and other rooms is absolutely stunning. The new main entrance with its glass doors into the new reception area is impressive, which also gives a clear view into the Connaught Hall above; the new lift gives much better access into both the Stone Hall and Connaught Hall for those who cannot manage the stairs. The walls of the Stone Hall have been repainted, the incredible stained-glass windows cleaned, the many paintings cleaned, and the armour cleaned and conserved by the

Royal Armouries. The very fragile military colours, dating from Napoleonic times, have been successfully conserved, but are too fragile to be hung as before so they will be on display in a special showcase. Both halls have new lighting. There is also a new kitchen and servery.

No major work has been possible in the former Court Room and Council Chamber, but a café/bar is planned for the former Visitor Information Centre and some of the old prison cells.

Once the main contractor hands back the building to Dover District Council (DDC) by the end of February, work will start fitting out – kitchen, furniture, paintings, display cases etc. By the end of April, it is hoped to have held some trial events with formal opening planned for the autumn.

One of the big changes in the use of the building will be free public access six days of the week when there are no commercial



Connaught Hall



Council Chamber

bookings. This will enable local people and visitors to the town to 'drop in' and wander round making use of the nine audio visual packages, show cases and interpretations in the various rooms. There will also be prebooked group tours with volunteer guides. A 'Friends of the Maison Dieu' group is being formed to help organise and assist at events.

The project required an activity programme for five years to involve the public and for the last three years Martin Crowther has masterminded an incredible and varied range of events, most of which have had to be held whilst the building was unavailable or with limited access. The Maison Dieu has been promoted and has participated in many town events, which have involved people of all ages including many schools and pupils. This will continue into 2026.

The Dover Society first raised its concerns with DDC (the owner) and Dover Town Council (DTC) (former owner) about the state of the Town Hall in 2010 with a great need to make the building waterproof and some tender loving care internally. But instead of this rather modest ambition, it was decided that a major project was needed to conserve the building and to give it a sustainable future. A Development Group was formed of three partners: DDC, DTC and The Society. As a first step, The Society agreed to make the public and visitors more aware of the building's 800 years of history by organising guided tours every Wednesday, staffed by Society/Dover Greeter volunteers; these continued until Covid lockdown. In the meantime, specialist consultants were appointed in 2014 to manage the project. It took some time to prepare a major grant application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, but was eventually successful, although the scope

of the project and cost had to be reduced. The grant from the Lottery Fund toward the £10 million budget required match-funding with the majority from DDC plus contributions from DTC and £10,000 raised by The Society.

Having been closely involved in the project since 2010, representing The Society, I have been greatly impressed with the quality, skills, determination and commitment of the many responsible for what will be a fantastic outcome to a very complex project: the DDC team, the specialist consultants, the conservators of the Burges' decorative design, the 1883 furniture, oil paintings, stained glass windows – I could go on. Not to be forgotten is all the unseen work, such as the new heating system, rewiring, asbestos removal etc. It has been a privilege to work with all of them. Soon, you will have the opportunity not only to admire and appreciate their efforts, but to attend events of your choice in glorious surroundings.



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A Successful Celebration of Christmas for Dover

Peter Sherred

For the second year in succession the church of St Mary-in-Castro, Dover Castle hosted a superb 'Celebration of Christmas' event on Sunday 22nd December in the afternoon. The event was supported and promoted by the Rotary Club of South Foreland and the church was full as people attended what was clearly a popular event in the run up to Christmas.

Members of the Pharos Chamber Choir, under the direction of Stephen Yarrow, attended and led the singing for the congregation as well as performing several items on their own. Half a dozen or so Mayors from local Cinque Ports towns, together with the Chairman of Dover District Council, (Councillor Gordon Cowan), were present as well as the District Governor of Rotary District 1120, (Brian Dunne). They were joined by a number of representatives of the Dover Street Pastors Initiative.

At the start of the event all were welcomed by the Honorary Co-ordinating Chaplain of St Mary-in-Castro who thanked the civic representatives for their presence. The Speaker of the Confederation of the Cinque Ports, Sandwich Mayor Councillor Paul Carter was in attendance accompanied by his wife.

Those attending were treated to a few scripture readings, highlighting key moments leading to the birth of Jesus Christ. These were supplemented by well-known carols from both the Advent and the Christmas seasons. The event was rounded off with some popular seasonal songs including Deck the halls with boughs of holly, Rudolf the red nosed reindeer, White Christmas and Winter Wonderland. As the event came to its end

spontaneous applause broke out showing appreciation for the holding of the event. The Church Council and the Rotary Club of South Foreland shared equally voluntary donations received which will be donated to the Dover Street Pastors Initiative and other local charities.

"This event has clearly struck a chord with local people who wish to celebrate Christmas in a very inclusive way" said the co-ordinating chaplain, adding "as this was the second year in succession, we have had the pleasure of the church being full." Grateful thanks were offered for the vision of the Church Council members of St Mary-in-Castro as well for English Heritage's support of the event. Thanks were given also to Dover Community Radio and Martin Turner for promotion of the event in the weeks leading up to the date. Those attending included many who had travelled some distance from other Cinque Ports towns. No decision has been made as to whether this will become an annual local event, but it is clearly popular with the general public. In the words of one who attended: "A full Church, lovely choral pieces and hearty singing by us lot! It must happen next year, it's too good to not happen."

No pressure then!



Capacity Congregation leaving the Church after the event

Planning Committee

Graham Margery - Co Chairman

Planning Activity: Over the last twelve months the Dover Society Planning Committee reviewed some 181 planning applications that are potentially of interest and made formal response to the Local Authority in respect of 58 of them. In total since the last newsletter, we have reviewed some 56 applications and made response in respect of 17. This is a further reduction in the level of activity compared to usual but may simply be a recognition in the slowdown of work during the winter period. As ever we would encourage members to look at planning applications that may be of interest to them and make comment to Dover District Council (DDC) as they feel appropriate or contact our Planning Committee with their views. Applications can be found on the DDC website or the Dover Society website under planning.

Former Leisure Centre: The plan to create a drive-through MacDonald's restaurant on the site of the former Leisure Centre at the corner of Townwall Street and Woolcomber Street must surely be the most controversial planning application we have seen in a long time and possibly ever. There have been over five hundred responses from the public including the Dover Society with the vast majority being to oppose the plan. At the meeting of the District Council Planning Committee, it was resolved to approve the application subject to 27 planning conditions the details of which are being resolved prior to the formal publication of the Decision Notice. We understand this will include a legal agreement to provide public realm improvements such as the provision of railings around the ruined St James church which is a long outstanding recommendation of an independent heritage consultant.

Members have been made aware of an on-line petition that seeks to get the decision overturned by the Westminster government. Whilst we wish this every success, I'm afraid it is unlikely to succeed. The applicant is the only person who has a legal right of appeal against a planning decision and third parties have no access to such a process. Judicial Review is the only course of action open, but this can only assess the legality of the process and not the actual decision itself. However, the approved plan is an improvement on that initially submitted and will not be quite as obtrusive as some of the images currently being circulated would suggest.

Local Government: The Government has announced its intention to bring about greater devolution of powers to regional authorities, the formation of Unitary Authorities and directly elected Mayors. All of this is complex, and the details are not yet clear how this would impact our part of the country, but we should expect to see some specific plans being announced soon. For Kent we anticipate that the County Council and the District Councils will be abolished and replaced by four Unitary Authorities such as East Kent, Mid Kent, West Kent and Medway with an elected Mayor covering these regions. We are concerned that with larger authorities controlling our area, decisions will be made by people who are distant from the local situation and not sensitive to its needs. To counter this, we would expect to see a strengthened role for Town and Parish Councils. Having said all this, it is merely speculation on our part at this stage, but it is important that we give it our careful consideration so that we can engage effectively with the expected consultation process.

Castle Hill Road & Castle Street: You are no doubt aware of our great concern about the uncontrolled proliferation of Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) which results in Dover town having by far the greatest number of such properties compared to the whole of the rest of the district and compared to other neighbouring Districts. We are particularly concerned when this affects Listed Buildings or those in Conservation Areas. We have, as usual, objected to two such recent planning applications in Castle Street and Castle Hill Road both because of the detrimental effect of the HMOs in this Conservation Area and also because of the damage or loss of historic fabric to the interiors since this affects Listed Buildings. In one case work was started before Listed Building Consent was obtained and the applicant has now suspended the plan and is undertaking re-instatement work as required by enforcement officers. In the other the application has been withdrawn. We are of course pleased with these outcomes. Although we are often critical of planning decisions made by the Local Authority it is gratifying to see that swift action can be taken to protect what is left of Dover's diminishing built heritage.

Malvern Road: Back in 2022 a planning application was submitted for a development of 52 flats on land adjacent to no 1 Malvern Road. We, the Town Council, and many others objected to this as it would have been a huge, ugly block of flats over seven storeys which would have had an overbearing and dominating impact on the character of the locality. The application was refused, and this decision was upheld at appeal. A new application has now been submitted in which a number of changes have been made to address some of the reasons for refusal and these have indeed improved the situation. But they don't go anywhere near far enough in our opinion. The 5/6 storey building is still far too high and dominating

in an area of predominantly two or three storey terraced housing and should be reduced in height by at least one storey with corresponding reduction in the number of flats. There is also the question of parking. Although parking is not required when there is proximity to bus routes and the railway station, the provision of just 10 spaces for 66 potential residents seems woefully inadequate and does not reflect the practical reality of modern life in an already over-stressed residential area. This will seriously impact the amenity of existing residents.

Clock Tower Square: The Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club (RCPYC) has been asked to vacate its current premises in Waterloo Crescent and is proposing to relocate to the Clock Tower Square on the Marina Curve. The planning application shows a modern structure as an extension to the existing building adjoining the Clock Tower and Old Lifeboat Station. A location on the Marina Curve is undoubtedly a good location for the RCPYC but we object to the details of this proposal. The modern existing building which forms part of the plan was built to be completely sympathetic with the adjoining Grade II Listed Clock Tower and Old Lifeboat Station, but the proposed extension does not fit at all. We recommend that the building be redesigned or relocated.

Albany Place Car Park: Dover District Council has announced its intention to build twenty-six affordable homes on this this greatly underutilised car park. This will go a long way to satisfying Dover's housing targets so is to be welcomed. There are no details yet and certainly no planning application, so we await developments with interest. We trust that the development will move forward under the control of the Local Authority rather than private developers, so that the scheme actually proceeds to completion and delivers in accordance with expectations.

Environment Committee Janet Dagys, Chair

Members: James Benjafield, Pam Brivio, Jeremy Cope, Carol Duffield, Ben Elsey, Deborah Gasking, Michael Jukes, Mary Margery, Mike McFarnell.

The Environment Committee continues to meet at the Dover smART premises, now located on Bench Street at the top of the underpass, on the first Monday of January, March, May, July, September & November. Members also communicate and share information through a WhatsApp Group. We continue to focus on the appearance of the town, cleanliness, litter, rights of way and tourism, taking action when and where we can be effective and can make a positive difference.

The Dover Society includes many rural areas around Dover, and we would welcome new members from these areas to have their voice heard on these topics.

Ongoing areas of interest and monitoring have been the Dover Beacon Project and the underpass on Bench Street, also the lights on the seafront near the Premier Inn that are in a very poor state of repair, The Discovery Centre and the Roundhouse Theatre. We monitor the state of buildings in the Market Square and town centre, the availability and condition of toilet facilities



Cedar of Lebanon Tree

in the town and on the seafront, and litter, plus the conservation of listed buildings and trees.

We encourage Dover Society members and members of the public to post photos of excessive litter they see to the Dover District Council (DDC) website at <https://www.dover.gov.uk/Report/Report.aspx>

We also encourage Dover Society members and members of the public to post photos of buildings in a poor state of maintenance in the town centre on the DDC website at <https://www.dover.gov.uk/Report/Report.aspx>

The <https://www.passion4dover.co.uk> website displays many of the projects that the Environment Team is working on and is maintained by a member of the team.

The team is currently working on Project 11, Documenting Trees in Dover. If you are passionate about a tree in your area, please send a digital photo of it to passion4dover@gmail.com and include the type of tree and its location (preferably using What Three Words).

We continue to liaise with our colleague and Dover Town Council 'Walkers are Welcome' promoter Pam Brivio, on walks in the town, Jayne Miles & Kelly Green (Town Centres Managers, Dover District Council), Chris Townend (Growth & Development, Dover District Council) local Kent Police and other local town, district and KCC councillors.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Ann Burke

New Members since the last Newsletter

Louise Nixon, Julie Stanley, Phil Martin, Aileen Devonport, Steve Conroy, Susan Penn, Vic Matcham, Jane Shopland, all of Dover. Julie Kemp of Deal, Chris Tough of Deal.

Time to Renew Your Membership.

It is that time again and as a Society we are doing well with members but need people to renew to continue receiving the Newsletters and emails that we regularly send out with events of interest in Dover District. Also, you can keep up to date with our winter meeting speakers, which are always interesting. You do not need to be a member to attend these.

There are quite a few members that have not renewed and unfortunately, they will not be

receiving this Newsletter. We contact members and remind them that their subs are due, usually by email.

How to Renew

You can take out a standing order with us; please contact me on the details at the bottom of the page and I will get a form to you as soon as I can. You can pay through your bank account; our bank details are:

Sort Code 20-02-62; Account number 80864803, Barclays Bank.

You can pay by cheque made out to The Dover Society or by cash of course. Send your cheques to Mrs Ann Burke, 20 Victoria St, Dover, CT17 0EL Tel 07454 128512, Email annandjeff02@gmail.com

Letter to the Editor



Dear Sir

With ref to the new entrance to the Maison Dieu (Dover Town Hall).

I cannot believe what I see has been done to the front of Dover Town Hall, a grade 1 listed building. One cannot just change windows and doors if one lives in a grade 1 or 2 listed building but that this can be done to an ancient town hall is unbelievable!

When contacted about this new entrance Historic England's comments state: "introducing a new entrance and step free access to the Connaught Hall thereby allowing for its use independent of the Stone Hall causes a low level of harm to the buildings' significance, but we think this is capable of being justified by the very great heritage benefit of increased public access and an enhanced income stream which can contribute to the buildings future maintenance. We acknowledge the architectural language of new work is entirely contemporary, but we think such an approach is an elegant way of handling a major new opening in the buildings principal elevation and works well with the robust character of the building."

I hope others share my concern. What next a new entrance to Dover Castle?

Graham Wanstall (Dover Town Councillor).

The comment from Historic England was in a response to a freedom of information request from Councillor Wanstall. Other points he raised were addressed by Kerry Scott, Corporate Services Officer, Dover District Council. All Historic England's comments are

publicly accessible on the DDC website. Details for the new entrance door to the High Street can be seen on Listed Building Consent application number 20/00537 on the planning portal on the DDC website.

Editor



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The Gift Aid Legislation allows us to reclaim basic tax rate on your subscription and any donations. To do so, The Dover Society will provide your details to HMRC. Please state that you are happy for us to do this by signing the declaration below. This will come into effect from the date of signing and you can change your mind and withdraw consent at any time. (You must be a UK taxpayer and pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax we re-claim on your subscription or donation.) For joint membership, the first named is asked to sign as the taxpayer.

I wish/do not wish* the Dover Society to benefit from the Gift Aid. (* Delete as applicable)

Signed: Date:

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Please indicate how you would like to receive your Newsletter Electronically Delivered

Data Protection

The Dover Society holds personal data i.e. names, addresses, email and telephone contact details electronically. We will only use them for sending Newsletters, related local information and news about our projects and forthcoming events. Telephone numbers will be used when quick contact is necessary relating to subscriptions or clarifying booking details for an event.

You can change your preferences or withdraw consent at any time by contacting us at: secretary@thedoversociety.co.uk.

I consent to my data being held and used in this way by The Dover Society. (*Please tick box) If you have a preference for how we contact you, please let us know.

Signed: Date:

Practical Help

I/We could sometimes give practical help with the following (please tick relevant sections)

Social events Writing for newsletter Projects e.g. clearance, surveys

Photography Any other interests or expertise

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THE DOVER SOCIETY
37th Annual General Meeting:
7.30pm Monday 21st April 2025 at St. Mary's Parish Centre

Resolutions for discussion and nominations for officers and committee members should be submitted to the Hon. Secretary Carol Duffield, 46 Friars Way, Dover, CT16 2WD, cddoversociety@gmail.com by Thursday 10th April 2025. Nominations should be supported by a proposer and seconder and the written consent of the potential candidate.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies.

2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 15th April 2024

3. Matters arising.

4. Chairman's report – Jenny Olpin

5. Treasurer's Report – Jane Jones

6. Society Membership Subscription Proposal

The Dover Society Executive have, for some time, been discussing the need to increase the annual membership subscription. At its meeting on 9th January, it was agreed to propose at the 2025 AGM meeting in April, in accordance with the Society's constitution, that,

The Annual Membership fee of The Dover Society from 1 April 2026 be increased as follows,

Individual Subscription – from £6 to £10

Couple Subscription, at same address, – from £10 to £14

Please read the notes in this newsletter that go with this proposal.

7. Election of Officers

*Chairman to stand down for election of incoming Chairman.
to be supervised by Vice-Chairman or another Executive Member.*

7a. Chairman - Jenny Olpin (proposed Alan Lee seconded Derek Leach)

The incoming elected Chairman to take control of the meeting. Named Executive posts to be voted on, then existing Committee, then any other nominations received by the deadline

7b. Vice Chairman - Graham Margery (proposed Jenny Olpin seconded Alan Lee)

7c. Treasurer - Jane Jones (proposed Jenny Olpin seconded Alan Lee)

7d. Hon. Secretary - Carol Duffield (proposed Jenny Olpin seconded Alan Lee)

7e. Election of Executive Committee

Existing members willing to stand Ann Burke, Deborah Gasking, Derek Leach, Alan Lee, Jean Marsh, Alan Sencicle, Patrick Sherratt, Lyn Smith, Martyn Webster, Paul Wells. (all proposed Jenny Olpin seconded by Graham Margery)

7f. Nominations from any other society members

Name (proposed ? seconded ?)

The Executive will appoint elected Committee members to fill the following roles at the earliest opportunity. Until that time existing holders, if elected, will remain in post. Membership Secretary, Editor, Advertising Secretary, Environment Planning & Local Government, Ecological Projects, Minutes Secretary, Web Master, Plaques, Winter Social Secretary, Summer Social Secretary, Dover Heritage Open Days. Non-Executive Roles will be appointed by the Executive Committee if and when required.

8a. Appointment of Audit Committee

John Morgan and John Widgery

9. Any Other Business.

10. The meeting will then break for refreshments followed by the drawing of the raffle.

After the interval, the speaker will be Barry O'Brien "Dover Tales".

Membership Fee Increase Proposal

The Dover Society Executive have, for some time, been discussing the need to increase the annual membership subscription. At its meeting on 9th January, it was agreed to propose at the 2025 AGM meeting in April, in accordance with the Society's constitution, that –

- **The Annual Membership fee of The Dover Society from 1 April 2026 be increased as follows,**
- Individual – from £6 to £10**
- Couple at same address – from £10 to £14**

This proposal will be put to those members present at the AGM.

To give some understanding as to this proposal we would like to give you some updates on what has guided us to reach this decision. The Membership subscription has been fixed for thirty years and during that time there has been significant increases in our outgoings, such as

- Room Hire
- Public Liability Insurance
- Blue Plaques
- Newsletter x3 p.a.
- Wreaths x3 p.a.
- Website design and maintenance
- Equipment (Cowgate Cemetery)
- Winter Monthly Meeting (speakers, raffle, teas and coffees)
- Society promotion i.e. Gazebo

In addition, it might be useful for you to know our activities during a year of the Society.

- October to April. 3rd Monday. St Mary's Hall. Speakers. February, Quiz. April – AGM
- Meetings with Dover District Council x4 annually with Chief Executive and Officers
- Meetings with Kent Police x2 annually
- Regular Meetings with Planning Director and Planning Officer
- Executive meet monthly except August and December
- Environment Team meet bi-monthly (have regular WhatsApp connection)
- Planning Team meet monthly and submit comments to DDC where necessary.
- Blue Plaques installation – usually annual (19 Blue Plaques to date)
- Cowgate Cemetery working party
- Xmas Feast
- Summer Trips (currently on hold)
- The Society have both a Facebook page and a website, <https://thedoversociety.co.uk>
- Coordinates Dover Heritage Open Days annually
- In partnership with DDC and DTC managing the Maison Dieu project
- Led the Dover Bluebird Heritage Trail community project
- Conservation Area Appraisals for DDC

Should you wish to know more about our activities and/or wish to join or make any suggestion, or indeed comment, then please come and speak to us at the monthly meeting or email us via contact in the Newsletter or Website. N.B. Our annual figures are audited, and our auditors have commented that our expenditure continues to exceed our income.

**Minutes of the 36th Annual General Meeting
of The Dover Society
7.30pm Monday 15th April 2024
At St Mary's Parish Centre**

- 1. Apologies:-** Jean Gavin, Mary Margery, Penny Matthews, Graham and Vanessa Fletcher.
- 2. Minutes** of the 2023 Annual General Meeting. Carried unanimously.
- 3. Matters arising.** There were none.
- 4. Chairman's report – Jenny Olpin**

Those present stood and observed a minute's silence in memory of those members who had died in the past year. Names reported in the Newsletter over the year. Bill Browning, Gloria Morgan, Phil Headon, Helen Miller, Jennifer Simmonds, Meryl Lilley, Nina Woolhouse and Terry Sutton

The Dover Society is continuing to engage with a range of issues and agencies to meet our objectives. (Do please revisit these objectives which are listed on page 2, next to the Editorial, in our Newsletter. Our Vice-Chair, Graham Margery, President, Derek Leach and I have frequent meetings with Dover District Council (DDC) officers which enable us to keep informed as to local developments and to discuss current initiatives. In addition to this engagement, we have been busy promoting the Society at the Dover Regatta and Urban Fete and have this year purchased a gazebo to protect us in both the rain and sunshine!

The Society has over many years been working to conserve and protect the environment at Cowgate Cemetery. However, this is now proving a challenge as our volunteers are depleting. We are pleased that support is now being given by White Cliffs Countryside Project with the grass cutting and general maintenance. If you have an interest in helping with our much-reduced team at Cowgate Cemetery, then please do contact us. Fresh air and good company are assured.

We have been pleased to install two Blue Plaques during this year. In Temple Ewell we erected a plaque to commemorate the life of Laura Bomford, an artist (Paris Salon), the first female Kent County Councillor, Justice of the Peace, and a leader of the Dover Suffragette movement. Secondly, we installed a plaque on the St Paul's Church Vicarage, commemorating The Lord Lewin, Admiral of the Fleet, who was born in Dover in 1920. Our Executive Team will be discussing our next allocation of a Blue Plaque over the coming year ready for installation in 2025.

The Environment Team now have a hybrid approach to meetings including a WhatsApp group. They are busy mapping 'trees of interest' and particularly focussing on the extremely neglected lampposts at the eastern end of the sea front. I am extremely grateful to our member Micheal Dukes for his continuing hard work in gaining some resolution with these much-neglected lights. This team has, amongst many other things, persisted in challenging the provision and quality of toilets in our town. We have been pleased with upgrading of those at Stembrook but continue in seeking increase in availability.

The Society Planning Team meet monthly at The Beacon and have been engaged with the plans for the return Fast Track bus route. Earlier in the year they were involved the issue of Air Raid Shelters which highlighted the lack of recording of such locations. The Local Plan remains a

current focus for the Team, and members continue to represent us with planning for the Beacon Development at Bench Street. Our Planning Team has developed a strong relationship with the DDC Planning department and has regular meetings and email contact that results in constructive dialogue that is welcomed by all participants. The Dover Society also has a strong relationship with the Dover Town Council Planning Group.

To commemorate the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Society is commissioning a Queen Elizabeth Maple in Pencester Gardens. This is in progress, and we are hoping for its completion this year. The Society also continues to take every opportunity possible to raise the problems with lorries being held at Aycliffe during Port delays. It is not only the noise and inconvenience that is very apparent, but the potential health issues.

We have been pleased to support our member Peter Sherred in seeking possible City Status for Dover. The opportunity to apply for this requires a national occasion and currently this is not available. However, Peter's hard work is in place for when that opportunity arises and is now held with the Society.

Our regular meetings continue with Kent Police who are now well embedded back in the Ladywell station. Our discussion covers a range of issues. Just a reminder that if there is anything you wish us to raise with the Chief Inspector then do let us know, but do remember that parking is the responsibility of Dover District Council.

Socially, we had a very successful summer trip to Windsor and the Thames. Our Quiz and winter monthly meetings attract both new and old members, as well as non-members. We offer a range of interesting speakers that have included The Duke of York's Military School, R.N.L.I. and Dover's Sky at Night. Over 80 members enjoyed our Christmas lunch once again held at the Marina Hotel.

The future of The Dover Society is assured as we recruit not only new members but also new members for our Planning and Environment teams. We are committed to promoting and protecting the wellbeing, development, heritage, safety and natural environment in partnership with our local authorities and charities. We have been saddened by the loss of Terry Sutton. We will very much miss his contribution to our Executive meetings where he would regularly share his experience and knowledge, correcting us when necessary and allowing no room for 'small talk'!

Finally, my sincere thanks to my fellow officers and to all those who help with the social events, trips, campaigning, projects, recruitment, Newsletter, website and representing us at the many meetings throughout the town. The Dover Society has a respected 'voice' in Dover so do come and join us as we collectively work towards making our home a 'very nice place to live'!

5. Treasurer's Report – Jane Jones

A comprehensive Financial Statement was circulated at the meeting. Chair thanked Jane for her diligent efforts in supplying these figures.

6. Election of Officers

6a. Chairman - Jenny Olpin,

(proposed Alan Lee seconded Carol Duffield) Carried unanimously.

6b. Treasurer - Jane Jones,

(proposed Alan Lee seconded Carol Duffield) Carried unanimously.

6c. Vice Chairman (Acting) - Graham Margery,
(proposed Jenny Olpin seconded Alan Lee) Carried unanimously.

6d. Hon. Secretary - Carol Duffield
(proposed Jenny Olpin seconded Alan Lee) Carried unanimously.

6e. Election of the Executive Committee

Existing members willing to stand, Ann Burke, Deborah Gasking, Derek Leach, Alan Lee, Jean Marsh, Alan Sencicle, Patrick Sherratt, Lyn Smith, Martyn Webster, Mike Weston.

(All proposed by Jenny Olpin, seconded Graham Margery) Carried unanimously.

6f. Nominations from any other society members

Paul Wells, (proposed Jenny Olpin seconded Alan Lee) Carried unanimously.

The Executive will confirm appointment of elected committee members to fill the following roles at the earliest opportunity. Until that time existing holder, if elected, will remain in post.

Membership Secretary, Editor, Advertising Secretary, Environment, Planning & Local Government, Web Master, Winter Social Secretary, Ecological Projects, Plaques, Dover Heritage Open Days, Minutes Secretary.

Non-Executive Roles (ex-officio) are not subject to election and will be appointed by the Executive Committee when required.

7. Appointment of Audit Committee

John Widgery, John Morgan. Carried unanimously.

8. Any Other Business.

MCW 50th anniversary of DDC clearance of St James graveyard to be commemorated. Executive Committee to investigate.

Then the meeting broke for refreshments followed by the drawing of the raffle.

After the interval the speaker was Josianne Murrel from “The Alkham Valley Community Project.”

AGM

A reminder to all members

The Annual General Meeting this year will be held in St Mary's Parish Centre, Dover at 7.30pm on Monday 21st April 2025.

All resolutions for discussion and nominations for officers and committee members must be received by Thursday 10th April 2025. They should be supported by a proposer and seconder and nominations must include the written consent of the potential candidate, then submitted in writing to,

Hon. Secretary: Carol Duffield, 46 Friars Way, Dover. CT16 2DW

Tel: 07855 045650. Email: cddoversociety@gmail.com

As this is the last of the winter meetings until October and the most important meeting of the year all members are urged to attend.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

To be Presented at The Dover Society Annual General Meeting 2025

Jenny Olpin - Chairman

The Dover Society continues to be busy with various meetings, projects and Society development activities. Our Membership remains steady but, as with my predecessor, I still aspire to break the 500-membership ceiling!

The Society Executive have recently taken the difficult decision to propose an increase in the subscription to The Society for the first time in 30 years and, should this be agreed, I hope that it does not impact too greatly on our membership. The rationale for the proposal was explained and perhaps I can take this opportunity to give further substance to that rationale.

We have been pleased to have had our Dour Street Appraisal passed and accepted by the Dover District Council. Following this we now await the outcome from our Town Centre Appraisal which, following some update, it is hoped will also meet full approval during the coming year. This is work that The Society is commissioned to accomplish in partnership with our District Council colleagues.

On behalf of The Society my colleagues and I attend and lay a wreath on Remembrance Sunday, the Zeebrugge Memorial at St James' Cemetery, Merchant Navy Day on the Seafront and the Service of Remembrance at the War Memorial on the Marine Station (Cruise Terminal 1). These are Civic events at which we are proud to represent you.

The Society still has members who are working hard to maintain the Cowgate Cemetery and we have a range of our equipment that is still in use. The Cowgate Team numbers have been depleting, and we have been encouraged to

have the assistance of the White Cliffs Countryside Project team. We also have two members who have further interests in the Cemetery. Martyn Webster, who has researched in depth those interred there and Patsy Allen who regularly posts her research on Facebook.

We have been delighted to have our member Paul Wells, of Facebook's 'The Dover History Pages', join our Executive. He was keen to resurrect the Heritage Open Days which had fallen into abeyance during Covid and this he successfully achieved last September. The Heritage Open Days for 2025 are shaping up to be even better with not only venues to explore but also walks and talks, so do look out for these. The Maison Dieu Project has supported these with promotion leaflets and to them we are grateful.

As your Executive we have been extremely pleased to have been invited to the re-opening of The Roman Painted House. Along with many we have persisted in promoting and campaigning for this vital piece of heritage to be available to the public once again. It will be open to the public Tuesday to Saturday, closed Sunday and Monday.

Due to our long-term involvement with the Maison Dieu, our President, Derek Leach, continues to be a member of the project Core Management Team. Derek regularly updates us on the progress of the stunning refurbishment of this beautiful building of which we are extremely proud to have been a key partner in accessing the Heritage Lottery funding that has made this viable. We are, as I am sure you as members are, excited as to the future of the Maison Dieu as a future major attraction for our Town.

We are honoured to be about to install, in Wyndham Road, our 19th Plaque to commemorate Dover's first lady Mayor, Mrs Dorothy Bushell. The blue plaque project has been increasingly costly, and we have been pleased to have received financial contributions to help with our last two plaques. Our Executive maintains a very fluid list of potential recipients of a blue plaque and each one that reaches the stage of installation has been subject to much deliberation. Martyn Webster, who manages and operates our Blue Plaque installations, has also worked tirelessly, along with our Planning Team, to instigate a Memorial Plinth at Charlton Cemetery to commemorate those burials that were transferred from the 'old ruin' preceding the building of the demolished Leisure Centre.

Last December 83 Members enjoyed another Christmas lunch at the Marina Hotel with entertainment by Graham Mart. It is hoped that we can repeat this again this Christmas so do look out for the details later in the year. We are also in

discussion with Iain Robertson regarding some trips this Summer. He has 40 years of experience with the travel industry, and I am sure we can look forward to an interesting trip or two.

As your Chairman I am conscious that you rightly keep us accountable in maintaining the Objectives of The Society. Our Environment Team continues to monitor and intervene on the aesthetic and quality issues, whilst the Planning Teams work hard, especially with the MacDonalds Development, to ensure that we remain focussed and operational within our Constitution, as do us the Executive. My grateful thanks to all our teams and certainly should any member wish to join then please contact us.

During the coming year we will hopefully begin to see a change in the town as the Town Hall and the Painted House now open. I look forward to our next year's report which I am confident will reflect an energy that will ignite investment in our future.

D & L Wondercrafts

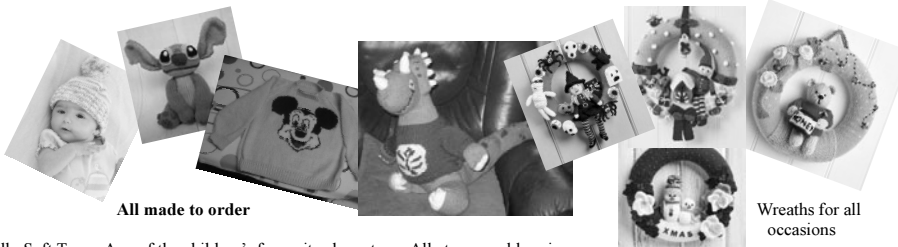
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Fly-fishing Workshops on The Dour

A Step Towards Sustainable Fishing

Deborah Gasking

In the summer of 2024 Dover had the privilege of hosting a series of fly-fishing workshops on the Dour, one of the world's rare chalk streams. Part of the "Dour to Downs" project and funded by Kent Downs National Landscape, these workshops were organized by the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership (WCCP) to promote sustainable fishing practices and raise awareness of the river's unique ecology. Renowned angler Charles Jardine and local expert Brian Szukala were key figures, sharing their knowledge and passion for preserving the Dour.

Participants not only learned fly-fishing techniques but also took part in river fly surveys and river dipping, gaining a hands-

on understanding of the aquatic life that depends on the river. The brown trout in the Dour are genetically unique, making them particularly vulnerable to harmful fishing practices, such as improper fish handling or the use of barbed hooks. Over 26 participants attended the workshops, learning everything from the river's ecology to responsible fish-handling techniques. One participant was so inspired that they returned to volunteer in a river clean-up, further supporting conservation efforts.

These workshops are a positive step toward ensuring the Dour remains a thriving habitat for future generations of trout and wildlife.



Fly-Fishing Workshop



Fish Handling



Casting Lesson Pencester Gardens



River Dour at Pencester Gardens

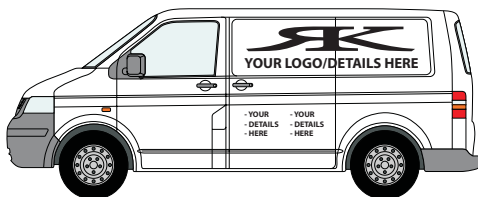


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The Victorian Banquet at The Lord Warden Hotel

Patricia Allen

The Victorian Banquet was a grand, flamboyant and opulent affair. An elaborate social occasion filled with formal speeches and social etiquette rules. The cluttered table settings: the gilded china, gleaming glassware, silver cutlery, fresh hothouse flowers, lush green foliage and ornamental centre pieces, together with the choice of venue were always designed to impress the illustrious guests and show off one's wealth and standing in social society.

The dress to wear was the most important decision for the ladies. But what of the banquet menu itself? Well, this was a sumptuous, gluttonous affair. Picture an endless procession of soups, fish, meats, salads, vegetables, puddings, pastries, meringues, ices. Pity the pot washers.

Here is a menu reported in the Dover Express and East Kent Intelligencer of Saturday 15th November, 1862. The Banquet was held at The Lord Warden Hotel for the double purpose of celebrating the election of the new Mayor and celebrating the 21st Birthday of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

The Bill of Fare...

Soups - Mock Turtle. Queue de Boeuf aux Crécy. Julienne. Mulligatawny.

Fish - Turbots with lobster sauce. Codfish with oyster sauce. Stewed Eels. Fried Smelts. Soles au gratin.

Entrees - Côtelettes de Porc with sauce Robert. Vol au Vent de riz de Veau. Olives de Boeuf en ragout. Curried Fowls.

Relevés - Roast Turkeys and Sausages. Roulade de Veau. Haunch of Mutton. Sirloin of Beef. Hams. Tongues. Boiled Fowls with oyster sauce. Raised Pies of Game. Boeuf braze a la flamande. Roast Goose.

Rots - Pheasants. Wild Ducks. Partridges. Snipes.

Entremets - Gateaux a la Russe. Compote de Poires. Pommes Meringues. Gelee varie. Vases de Patisserie. Crème de Kirschwasser. Pains à la Mecque. Boudins aux Cinque Ports. (Cinque Port Blood Sausages).

But of course, the majority of Victorians could afford (health-wise if not money-wise) to dine as magnificently as this. They ate far more calories than we do today, but they were much more physically active. Obesity was rare.



Banquet at The Lord Warden Hotel



Lord Warden Hotel, Dover

Lady Emily Constance Crundall

Martyn Webster

There is a photograph taken in 1894 showing Lady Emily Constance Crundall (1859-1935), the wife, for nearly fifty years, of Sir William Henry Crundall (1847-1934). Its occasion is evident. Despite intensive searches, only this one photograph of her so far can be found, plus one other as an etching of a photograph with her husband. Very little, if anything, has ever been written about her. Her background and origins are very obscure. They will probably now never be fathomed out properly despite exhaustive attempts by me to do so. No one ever seems to have attempted it till now, perhaps with good reason.



Lady Crundall 1894

Sir William Henry Crundall, a very successful, almost monopolising Dover family timber merchant, is well known as Dover's thirteen times mayor, chairman of

Dover Harbour Board from 1906, contentious local politician, ubiquitous entrepreneur with a finger rightly or wrongly in many pies, cartooned as being at the centre of a spider's web of local political intrigue, once queried by the late Terry Sutton as being quote "Rogue or Hero?" Who can say one way or the other after all this time?

In many ways Sir William's work, by one means or another, ran alongside that of another controlling contemporary influencer, fellow knight, Town Clerk, Sir Edward Wollaston Knocker (1838-1907). In tandem Sir William and he achieved an enormous amount of good work for Dover, including the development of the Clarendon and other housing estates, the naming of streets, the creation of a tramway system, the calling to the port of German transatlantic liners (for a time) and many other local enterprises. He will be subject of a more detailed essay in due course.

Emily Constance Landmann and William Henry Crundall were married on 23rd September 1886 at the Strand Registry Office, London. She recorded as being 27 years of age, a spinster, her given address being the very large nearby Golden Cross Hotel (now the site of South Africa House). She recorded herself as being daughter of George Landmann, deceased, Gentleman. Witnesses were A. H. Maddocks and Anthony Hart who

No.	When Married	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at the Time of Marriage	Father's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Father
18	23rd September 1886	William Henry Crundall	39 years	Bachelor	Merchant	London	George Landmann (deceased)	Gentleman
		Emily Constance Landmann	27 years	Spinster		Golden Cross Hotel	George Landmann (deceased)	Gentleman
Married in the <u>Registry Office</u> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the <u>Church of England</u> by <u>W. H. Maddocks</u>								
In the Presence of us, <u>W. H. Maddocks</u>			In the Presence of us, <u>Anthony Hart</u>			Signed by the Registrar <u>W. H. Maddocks</u>		

Birth Certificate, Lady Crundall

were unrelated, unconnected and evidently were local employees, summoned for the purpose. For his part William Henry Crundall noted himself as 39 years of age, bachelor, timber merchant, of Lord Warden Hotel, Dover, son of William Crundall, Gentleman.

The decennial census returns for the years 1891,1901,1911 and 1921 note Lady Crundall as giving her place of birth as either London, Middlesex or London, and on one occasion only as Hornsey. At her death she was recorded as 76 years old. From all of this her year of birth estimates a range from 1859-1863. There is nothing more specific or revealing than this.

Absolutely no trace can be made of her birth registration in official records despite exhaustive time-consuming research. Furthermore, her supposed father, George (Thomas) Landmann (1780-1854), a very distinguished engineer and a Colonel at Woolwich with the Royal Engineers, who features in the National Biography, was dead several years before her estimated birth year. There is no reference either to her under these names, or any conceivable combination or alternatives of them, in the 1861,1871 or 1881 censuses where she might have been expected to be found.

What does all this therefore mean? My best conjecture is that she was possibly born out of wedlock to the youngest of George Thomas Landmann's four children (he had a daughter and son born of his first marriage and a son and a daughter by his second). His second daughter was Helen Catherine Landmann (1832-1910), who disappeared from the record after her father's death in 1854, not to be found in the 1861 census (which is crucial to this narrative), only to reappear upon marriage in 1865 to the Reverend Thomas Hacket Massey (1830-1919), rector of Farrington, Hampshire. They were childless.

One unproven conjecture could be that Constance Emily was born or fostered under other names, either in the United Kingdom or very possibly abroad, or even that she was not a Landmann at all but simply assumed the names for decorum purposes. It is not insignificant that Hornsey as a place of birth for Lady Crundall is very plausible as, until 1854 Helen Catherine Landmann had been living at the home of her father in nearby Shacklewell Lane, Hackney (the adjacent parish).

How William Henry Crundall and Emily Constance Landmann first met one another is anyone's guess. Actually it is but part of what appears to have been an intriguing double life for him. The location of the marriage and the information given by the two parties are very curious in the circumstances. The couple had three children together and lived at Woodside, Temple Ewell. Whether their marriage was happy remains to be seen, but on his death in 1934, by the specific terms of his very long will, although in failing health, she was made all but homeless, but on a modest annuity till her own death eighteen months later at the Grosvenor Hotel, London in 1935. She left a meagre estate of little more than £200. Both Sir William and Lady Emily Crundall were, unusually for the time, cremated at the Golders Green crematorium, an innovation.



Woodside, home of Sir William and Lady Emily Crundall

Beating The Bounds

Patricia Allen

The tradition of Beating the Bounds has been a custom for many centuries in our Parishes of England and Wales. The ritual goes back to Medieval times when the villagers, headed by the local parish priest and the church wardens, would walk around the parish borders as a way of preserving the folk memory of where the boundaries existed. It was once a magnificent ceremony and, from time immemorial, it was generally considered a day's holiday and an occasion of somewhat noisy hilarity. The choir sang hymns, and the parson read the Gospel for the day under the so-called Gospel Tree. The boys carried willow or birch branches which were used to beat the boundary markers such as stones, gate posts, walls or trees. Occasionally the boys were whipped themselves or thrown into a river or bumped against the stones to impress upon their memories the exact position of a boundary. It was all good fun for the lads who were rewarded with pennies. During the procession money and other gifts were handed out to the needy.

The event was usually held on Ascension Day which is thirty-nine days after Easter. Nowadays this ancient tradition has largely



Beating the Bounds

died out due to the advent of modern maps and the dwindling number of churchgoers. But fortunately, there are numerous parishes which are keeping this tradition of Beating the Bounds alive, organising an event which brings people together for an exciting day out in their local parish.

Here is an excerpt from the delightful account of a Beating the Bounds ceremony.

Beating The Charlton Bounds

Published in the Dover Express of Friday Evening October 9th 1874.

The ceremony was performed on Wednesday after an interlude of nearly five years. Meeting at the Church were the Churchwarden, the overseers, many influential inhabitants, and several boys holding banners and flags aloft. The procession started by scaling the walls at the back of the edifice and thence onward to Barton Farm along Frith Road. The operation of climbing the hill by the Copt Hill Cemetery to near its top and then on to the extreme Northern stone in the parade ground was a fatiguing task. This is where the first 'bumping' took place, and where it was felt necessary to fix the memory on the chosen boy.

The party then crossed Fort Burgoyne, went through Castle Hill Farm and down the steep Castle Hill. Then it was across the Waterworks and down Maison Dieu Fields to the Roman Catholic Church. The journey continued along Maison Dieu Road passing through number 15 and across the gardens belonging to Mr Pay and Mrs Mummery and into the stream.

Next the journey went into the High Street

and across Mr Finnis's land where about half the party were 'bumped'!

Tower Hill, Fan Edge and Diggles Tower were visited next and then it was on to Chapel Hill where they converged. The inhabitants hearing the noisy masse turned out of their houses thinking that an enemy invasion was imminent.

The mob of Charltonians passed peacefully through their own territory to much relief and merriment and arrived at the Brook where a rough raft was provided by Messrs. Chitty to carry the participants to the end of their journey.

The perambulation was finished by 3.30pm and by 4pm nearly fifty gentlemen were sat down to a substantial repast at the Falcon Inn at the junction of London Road and Bridge Street which was admirably

and generously provided by Mr George Birch the Landlord.



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Old St James' Churchyard and the Rawlinson Report

Derek Leach

During 2024, the Dover Society Executive took a special interest in the former Church of St. James the Apostle, known as 'The Tidy Ruin', and the adjoining site of its former churchyard. Severely damaged during WWII, the building was not demolished, but preserved as a 'tidy ruin', a memorial of the suffering endured by the people and town of Dover. Concerned about the deterioration of the building, our representations to DDC resulted in essential repairs being undertaken. We also lobbied DDC for protective railings around the building, which has not been successful to date.

The churchyard site became a car park for the new Dover Leisure Centre in the 1970s. The remains of those buried for centuries were first removed and then reinterred in Charlton Cemetery on Copt Hill.

The Leisure Centre was demolished following the opening of the new Dover District Sports Centre at Whitfield. During 2024, a highly controversial planning application, covering the empty site and the car park, was submitted for a drive-through McDonald's. The Dover Society objected strongly to the application because of the likely adverse impact on both local and ferry

traffic, but we were also concerned about its close proximity to 'The Tidy Ruin'. After a lengthy delay, and despite a considerable number of objections, the DDC Planning Committee approved the application just before Christmas.

Our interest in the churchyard site revealed that the removal of human remains and their reburial elsewhere in 1973 had not been recognised at the time or since. Discussions with DDC have resulted in a commemorative plinth being erected close to the remains in Charlton Cemetery. The Society and DDC are planning a suitable 'unveiling' of the plinth in the spring.



Old St James



Plinth

Edwin Chadwick, one of the great social reformers of the 19th century, produced a national report in 1842, claiming that poor sanitary conditions, bad drainage, poor water supplies and overcrowded living conditions were the causes of cholera, typhoid and other prevalent diseases. As a result, the 1848 Public Health Act created local boards to oversee street cleaning, refuse collection, water supply and sewerage systems. Councils all over the country were soon enquiring about the state of their towns. Dover appointed Sir Robert Rawlinson (1810-1898) as first sanitary inspector and engineer under the Act to report on the state of the town, as he did for other towns and cities around the country.

Rawlinson's 1849 report makes terrifying reading today. There was no combined system of sewers and drains. Better class houses had cesspools; others made do with a tub under a privy seat, which was emptied at night into the scavengers' carts. The worst slums had no sanitation at all. Carts toured the town with clean water and collected waste water. Drinking water came from pumps and wells. Samples were taken from wells and were found to be contaminated by cesspool material and nearby burial grounds. These were full to overflowing, with the same plots being used over and over again, with some corpses only three feet underground. The smell was overpowering.

Rawlinson's research included the inspection of the town's churchyards and interviewing the local church officials responsible for them. The following is that portion of the Rawlinson Report concerning old St. James: "Intermural internment is not regarded as a monster evil and the feeling is very generally entertained in Dover by clergymen, grave diggers and many of the inhabitants; yet such was the state of the law that no local authority possessed the

power to prevent certain contaminated portions of ground being opened, if parishioners having what are termed family graves, demanded burial for their dead relations. The subject of fees is also found to induce pernicious interments.

John Carswell, sexton of St. James' parish, stated: 'The burial ground is attached to the church. There are dwelling houses bounding three sides of the graveyard. The ground is old but not full, I have, however, no wish to receive any more other than those who have ground here at present. Burials take place in vaults inside the church. There was a committee appointed some time ago to provide another ground and I have constantly asked for additional ground in which to bury strangers. I live near the churchyard and get more stench and nuisance from the dwelling houses near than I do from the graveyard.'

In this graveyard there are vaults formed in the face of the cliff and above the general surface of the ground, all of which have perforations for ventilation before spoken of. Up to this time there has not been any other burial grounds provided for this parish and great annoyance and inconvenience is suffered by the parishioners in consequence. In Woolcomber Street a small burial ground formerly existed, which belonged to the Society of Friends, the ground is now used as a coal yard. Full half the burial ground is occupied by brick vaults and brick graves; the other half part is not all applicable to general burial purposes, there being a custom to keep graves for twenty years and upwards where the deceased's friends are able to pay to the sexton one shilling or two a year. This causes the graves of paupers, soldiers, their wives and children, to be greatly crowded and, in many cases their graves are opened for the reception of a body, which is placed one on another in three weeks or a month

after the burial of the first. In these cases, the smell arising has been very great; so that your informant and the minister officiating have often complained of it, and the sexton has often complained of the difficulty he has had in opening them, arising from the nauseous smell. There are many corpses not more than three feet under the ground. I know of no part of the churchyard, excepting the small piece in the bank aforementioned, that can be opened without disturbing the remains of the dead in a very improper manner. The churchyard is also much crowded with tombs, headstones, rails, etc., and is altogether inapplicable for the purpose of a burial place for the parishioners of the parish and has been so considered for upwards of twenty years; the old sexton having, at that time, often told me he knew not where to dig a fresh grave.

The inhabitants of the parish in the year 1831 consisted of 1674 persons and 272 inhabited houses; in the year 1841 of 3056 persons and 521 houses, and extra-parochial district adjoining 205 inhabitants and 37 houses. The extra-parochial district having no burial ground of its own, [residents] are, with the parishioners of the parish, compelled to seek a burial place in the new burial ground of St. Mary's, (Cowgate), which is fast filling up, and subjects the parties to payment of double fees. Burial is allowed in the church in brick vaults and brick graves but is seldom applied for, and, when such is the case, proof is required that the corpse is in lead, and the vaults and brick graves are properly secured.

William Minter Bushell, parish clerk, your informant, has resided in the parish for upwards of forty years and succeeded his grandfather in the office in the year 1826, having officiated for some years previous. The churchyard of St. James, on the north, south and west sides is surrounded with

dwelling houses; those on the north and west sides having recently been erected. On the east side is a steep bank, adjoining a government battery, which has not more than two feet of earth on hard chalk rock. This bank, which was originally covered with trees and shrubs, has, within the last few years, been all excavated for the purpose of brick vaults and brick graves, excepting a small piece at the south end, which cannot be applied for general burial purpose. There are three tiers of vaults in the bank aforementioned; many of them have air bricks and apertures for ventilation, which I consider highly injurious to the health of the residents adjoining, and to children, who are generally, when allowed in the churchyard, peeping into and smelling at them.

The rector and the parishioners are desirous of obtaining a new burial ground."

The report led to the closure of the town's churchyards and the opening of the Copt Hill cemeteries from 1855 as legislated in the Burial Acts 1852-1857. It also recommended that the town should take over the three independent water companies and new waterworks to be built on Connaught Hill, drawing 2,000,000 gallons of water a day from 200-foot wells. Construction began in 1850 and was completed in 1854, followed soon by a sewage works and main drainage system. Following the 1853 Public Health Act for Dover, £70,000 was spent on a mains water supply with the whole of Dover covered over the next 25 years.

It is of note to record that nearly two hundred years later the Law Commission produced in 2024 a consultation paper (no.263) entitled Burial and Cremation which, interestingly, revisits the whole question for review and re-legislation in the modern context.

Fighter Pilots Over Dover

Vronni Ward - Dover Museum

Tom Cruise in his role as flying ace Maverick in *Top Gun* could have been easily talking about the fighter pilots of WWII. His famous quote has a special resonance, "Up there with the best of the best." The flying aces of WWII were brave, daring and incredibly young. The average was 20 years of age; the youngest being Thomas Dobney who joined the RAF as a schoolboy dare and went on to fly heavy bombers over Germany at only 15 years of age!

Thousands of planes and pilots kept the Germans at bay and stopped them inflicting even further death and damage. Two flying aces in particular who stand out for me are Pilot Officer Keith Gillman (1920 to 1940) who came from River, Dover and Commandant René Mouchotte DFC (1914 to 1943) the first Frenchman to become an RAF Squadron Leader of the 341 RAF Squadron with personnel of the Free French Air Forces. Both pilots flew over the skies of Dover in their Hurricanes and both pilots flew out of Hawkinge and Biggin Hill. What beautiful, brave souls they were.

Pilot Officer Keith Gillman

Keith Gillman joined the RAF in 1939 straight from Dover County School. At first, he didn't take to flying and during training was seen as poor to average. He then undertook an armament course, achieving a 'fail' and showing 'little interest'. However, once he joined 32 Squadron at Biggin Hill this all changed as he fell in love with his beloved Hurricanes. This squadron was involved in the Battle of France and was at 'the front line' of the Battle of Britain. For months the 32 sqn took the full brunt of the German attacks over Kent and London. As John Rawlings put it, "Day after day its aircraft took off, fought, landed, refuelled

and took off again, by the same pilots and ground crews." They fought from dawn to dusk, and the crews were totally exhausted. Keith's first combat victory came in July 1940 when he shot down a one of twelve Messerschmitt Bf 109s. He was then in continuous action for the whole of July and into August.

On the 24th August, the 32 sqn were involved in two huge battles 20,000ft above Dover involving twelve Messerschmitts, one of which Gillman shot down. On the 25th August they were up again in the evening to 'patrol Dover' and intercepted twelve Dornier Do 215 light bombers (an aerial reconnaissance aircraft and later a night fighter, named 'the flying pencil') and 36 Messerschmitt Bf 109s. Gillman and his fellow pilot Rose were shot down, Rose was rescued from the sea as 32 Squadron's pilots had been issued with packs of fluorescein, a greenish-yellow dye, to sew on their life jackets. In the sea this would create a stain around the pilot to attract the attention of searching aircraft. According to Rose's



Pilot Officer Keith Gillman

recollection, he sewed his pack on and was saved from the sea later that day. Others, including Gillman, did not. Gillman was report 'missing in action' three miles south of Dover at the age of 19.

Whilst taking a break from flying at Hawkinge in July 1940, Gillman was photographed by Fox Photos. Keith's image was widely used in magazines and recruiting posters during the war; several had been published before the time of his death, so he would have been aware he was becoming 'famous'. No one would have realised then, but Keith's image would become a symbol of the Battle of Britain with his photograph and images depicting the youthfulness of 'The Few'. The resulting image became the iconic photograph of a Battle of Britain pilot.

Commandant René Mouchotte

Rene Mouchotte was born to a wealthy family who resided on the outskirts of Eastern Paris. He began his military career in 1935 with the French Air Force. He rose to Sergeant and gained his wings in 1937. He became a training instructor but made several requests to become a fighter pilot. He was posted to Algeria where, upon occupation by German forces, he and five colleagues escaped, flying just above the wave tops in a stolen, partially disabled plane to Gibraltar. From there he made his way to England and RAF Fighter Command.

Once in England he flew Tiger Moths and Hectors, and like Gillman, he operated out of Biggin Hill and Hawkinge and flew Hurricanes over the Straits of Dover. In 1941, he was made a Flight Commander, in 1943 a Captain and awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC), on 1st September 1942, for his flying during the Blitz. The medal is awarded to RAF officers for acts of bravery whilst flying in active service against the enemy. On 18th January 1943 Mouchotte commanded 341 Squadron. In May the

squadron was at Biggin Hill and on the 15th excitement was running high as to who would claim the sector's 1,000th victory. Mouchotte destroyed a Focke-Wulf 190, apparently coinciding exactly with the destruction of another by Squadron Leader Charles. It being impossible to decide who had been the first to fall, the two pilots shared the honour and the cash sweepstake, getting £90 each. The party at the mess went on late into the night!

Unfortunately, on 27th August, 1943 Mouchotte failed to return from a bomber escort to the V2 rocket launch construction site near St. Omer and was reported 'Missing'. His body was washed up on the beach in Belgium on 3rd September and he was buried in nearby Middelkerke, Belgium. Mouchotte was awarded the Croix de la Liberation on 14th July 1944 and the Croix de la Légion d'honneur (Chevalier) gazetted on 20th October 1943.

His body was exhumed in 1949 and returned to France. In a ceremony at Pere-Lachaise Cemetery, Paris on 3rd November 1949, Mouchotte was buried in the family vault.



Commandant René Mouchotte

René's wingman, Pierre Closterman, wrote in his book on aerial combat, entitled, 'The Big Show': "For us he (René) had been the pattern of a leader: just, tolerant, bold and calm in battle, the finest type of Frenchman, inspiring respect whatever the circumstances."

If you would like to learn more about René Mouchotte, the St Margaret's History Society in their 2025 programme have guest speaker Jan Leeming talking about him on 18th March in St Margaret's Hall, Reach Road, St Margaret's at 7.30pm. You can book ten talks for £14 or £4 per talk at stmargarethistorysociety@gmail.com

Here at Dover Museum our temporary 'Animals Everywhere' exhibition continues until May, 2025. There is an Animal Safari trail for children to complete and we have tokens for children to put in our vintage

RSPCA donation dog. Our 2025 - 2026 temporary exhibition will display fascinating models of local buildings through the ages. We open: Monday to Saturday 9.30am to 5.00pm. Open Sundays in the summer (April to September) 10.00am to 3.00pm. Admission is FREE. Tel: 01304 201066 Visit www.dover.gov.uk/museum

Sources

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Installation of a Lord Warden

— Peter Sherred —

Following the death of Admiral the Lord Boyce KG, GCB, OBE, KStJ, DL in November 2022 His Majesty the King having agreed to the appointment of Admiral Sir George Zambellas GCB, DSC, DL, as Lord Warden and Admiral of the Cinque Ports and Constable of Dover Castle, the installation of Lord Boyce's successor (Sir George Zambellas) to these historic posts took place on 29 October 2024 in the grounds of the Duke of York's Royal Military School. This location came about principally because the Maison Dieu was not available due to the continuing extensive renovation works so it was decided by the Confederation that, in the interests of economy and logistics, all the elements of the installation should take place on one site. The school graciously offered to make its facilities available for this latest Installation of a Lord Warden. It must be remembered such an event is a logistical challenge as well as being an event with significant financial implications. Considering all current circumstances at the time it was deemed appropriate, sensible and viable, to contain all the elements of the ceremony in one place. The Duke of York's Royal Military School very helpfully cooperated with the Confederation and made available its resources to enable the Lord Warden's Installation to go ahead on one site. While this may have been disappointing to some Dovorian, realistically this was the only possible solution having regard to all current circumstances.

The day began with a Hallowing Service at 10.45am held in the school Chapel conducted by the School Chaplain, Stephen King. Such services in past ceremonies were held in the



Admiral Sir George Zambellas

church of St Mary-in-Castro, Dover Castle. The school Chapel was full of dignitaries and representatives of all the Confederation towns together with Confederation officers, military chiefs and other guests. The Bishop of Dover, the Right Reverend Rose Hudson-Wilkin, was present as was the former Bishop of Dover, the Right Reverend Trevor Willmott as the Chaplain to the Lord Warden. The

Judge Official and Commissary of the Court of Admiralty of the Cinque Ports, The Honourable Sir Nigel Teare, was present wearing his long red court robe and full bottomed wig. Members of the Court of Shepway also formed a significant element of the congregation. As the Surrogate Judge of the Court of Admiralty of the Cinque Ports, accompanied by my wife Mary, I was also privileged to be present.

During the service, the Confederation of the Cinque Ports' hymn "Honoured in our island's story" was sung to the tune Rhuddlan with words by the late Robert Willis, the former Dean of Canterbury Cathedral. The National Anthem was also sung. The sermon was given by the chaplain to the Lord Warden, Trevor Willmott, who had served as Lord Boyce's chaplain.

At the completion of the service, the second of three elements that comprise the Installation process, a formal session of the Grand Court of Shepway, was convened in the Nye Hall but immediately after the service and before processing to the Nye Hall a fly past, comprising several aircraft, in honour of the Lord Warden, took place. The fly past was observed by all who were present, standing just outside the school



Dover Mayor and Recorder at Installation of Lord Warden

chapel. This most impressive feature was made possible because of the benign weather conditions. After the fly past the Lord Warden inspected a guard of honour formed by the Royal Navy before joining the procession to the Nye Hall being preceded by the Admiralty Sergeant bearing the Silver Oar of Admiralty. The Court of Shepway, where Admiral Sir George Michael Zambellas formally took on to himself the duties of the Office of Lord Warden, was coordinated by the Registrar and Seneschal of the Confederation, Ian Russell MVO MA MSocSc, ably assisted by the Solicitor to the Confederation working with the Counsel to the ports. Ian Russell has been the Registrar and Seneschal of the Cinque Ports since 2005. He was formerly Director of Central Services and Solicitor to Hastings Borough Council. He previously served as Joint Solicitor to the Confederation from 1991 to 2020. The Registrar and Seneschal is appointed by the Lord Warden and Ian Russell was originally appointed by the Lord Boyce. The holder of this post carries the traditional title which refers to the fact that this official was Registrar of the Admiralty Court of the Cinque Ports, when it was in regular session. The word seneschal is an old Norman French title for a High Steward, responsible for administering the estate and affairs of a feudal lord.

Following the meeting of the Court of Shepway the band of the Royal Marines gave an impressive marching and musical display on the small Parade Square before lunch was

taken with the Lord Warden and members of the Court of Shepway in the school dining hall. Following lunch all who had attended the colourful and historic installation event left the school grounds. The event will no doubt feature in the Dover film which will be shown in the spring of 2025 by Honorary Freeman of the town of Dover, Mike McFarnell. While the present Lord Warden and his predecessor both held/hold the rank of Admiral in the Royal Navy, Lord Boyce was a former submariner while Sir George is an Aviator.

The Confederation of Cinque Ports is an historic group of south-east England coastal towns in Kent and Sussex. The name is Old French, meaning "five harbours", and alludes to the original five members of Dover, Hythe, New Romney, Sandwich and Hastings. Originally formed for military and trade purposes, the Confederation was at its peak in the Middle Ages when the Lord Warden was one of the most powerful people in the Kingdom. The Cinque Ports currently has a total of 14 members, comprising of five "Head Ports", two "Ancient Towns", and seven "limbs". All the ports are situated on the southern coast of England where the distance of the English Channel to the European continent is at its narrowest and which needed the most protection historically. While the Cinque Ports played a significant role in the defence of the realm during the 13th and 14th centuries the Confederation role in modern times is largely ceremonial, although it works with the member-towns in promoting local tourism and other activities to support their local communities. Dover is one of the "Head Ports" of the Confederation. *Few people were aware of this ancient ceremony taking place as there was little publicity. Those of us who knew were disappointed that the ceremony was held behind closed doors by invitation only at the Duke of York's Royal Military School with no opportunity for the general public to participate in the event.*

Editor

Evacuated To Caerleon 1940-1943

Derek Leach - From an article by Bessie Newton (nee Laurie)

During the Second World War most Dover schoolchildren and their teachers were evacuated to South Wales. Bessie Newton (nee Laurie) attended Dover County School for Girls from 1937 to 1943, and some years later wrote this account of her three-year evacuation.

The various and varying circumstances of life in Caerleon must make younger, post-war old girls wonder why this period is remembered so vividly. What is obvious is that the experience was different for each of us. Hardly surprising for, though we were all County School girls, we ranged in age from 11 to 18 years old and were an amalgam of fee paying and scholarship pupils from a wide socio-economic background. Yet, in the space of 24 hours, this heterogeneous group came under one uniform label, 'evacuees', and were alienated from the prime influences in their lives as far (apart from school) of family and familiar surroundings.

Very much later I came to realise the extent of the burden imposed on the teaching staff, who up to then had been involved with us, apart from extracurricular activities, only in normal school time. Yet now they were expected to take on our pastoral care, with all that entailed, as well as coping with the resultant academic and personal problems that arose. The manner in which they did this earned the long-lasting affection and gratitude of many girls. Strict yes, but tempered with humour, patience, tolerance and empathy.

Most of us thought evacuation would only be for a short while when we steamed away from Dover Priory on that bright June day, all of us suitably labelled and

complete with suitcase, sandwiches and gas mask. We reached Caerleon after a tedious and devious journey, filled with apprehension. Betty McPherson (nee Robson) and I were taken to a tiny cottage by the river where, troubled by our inability to understand our Welsh hosts and terrified by the sight of water rats on the riverbank, we spent a sleepless night. In the morning, we untruthfully told them that our stay was only meant to be one night and left. No doubt the teachers were dismayed when we marched in, vowing we would not go back there!

Though I did not realise it then, from that day a three-year period began, which challenged all previously held concepts. I came from a closely-knit family severely affected by the economic climate of the thirties. Though my mother was my rock, encouraging me always, neither she nor my father were able to help me much with academic subjects. Discipline at home was strict, reasons for it often unexplained of the 'because I told you to' variety. From this background I was put into (I realized later) an upper middle-class environment,



Caerleon School Class 2 Photograph 1943

which, up until then, I had only experienced through books and films. The house was large with many spacious rooms and back stairs, which continued up to the attic where the maid slept. The gardens and conservatory were lovingly tended by the gardener.

It is hardly surprising that adjusting to all this was, in the early stages, reflected in rebellion and questioning authority at school. Helen Bradely's memories of Caerleon brought back many shared experiences, though when she talked about 'biddable' girls I doubt whether any member of staff would have so described me in the early days. I did adjust, admonished by letters from home, following adverse reports from the Head, benefitting from teachers' guidance and the advantageous environment provided by my hosts, Mr. and Mrs. Davies and their widowed daughter.

Apart from the restraints the Davies thought any 14-year-old girl needed, they expected me to organize my own life. They discussed current affairs with me in an adult way, encouraging me to voice my own opinions and also to work hard at school, closely monitoring my progress. The great bonus for me was their wide range of books; with my reading uncensored I drowned in a sea of poetry and prose.

Mr. Davies was great fun. With business connections in the farming community, we went on many sorties, returning with untold delights in those days of rationing. I ate very well! They took me out often, visiting beautiful homes and gardens and much of south Wales. Their friends were quite generous. One in particular always gave me half a crown, which was very much appreciated. With these activities plus school, Girl Guides, music and

outings with friends, the time passed quickly.

Should you think that it all sounds unclouded bliss, I assure you it was not. I missed my family and growing up with my brother and sister. We trekked from one teaching venue to another, often in abysmal weather, seemingly never dry or warm. The trauma of Miss Rusbridge's death affected us deeply. The problems of adolescence were not so readily discussed then; we had to face them, often ill-informed.

"After three years I left Caerleon, enriched and matured by the experience, indebted to my parents for their unfailing support throughout and to staff for understanding the reasons for my rebellious behaviour and doing something to help. I also left with the gift of friends who remain so today and gratitude to my hosts, not only for the obvious material benefits, but for the independence of thought and action which they nurtured in me."

From Molly Davies memories of Tanhouse Farm, Caerleon (1940's)

Before the War, Mill Street was very quiet. Nearly all of the traffic travelled through High Street, which was then 'two way'. During the War, there was a lot of military activity in Caerleon. Soldiers were stationed here which meant the 'toing and froing' of many vehicles - including ones for producing a smokescreen.

In 1943 a tragic accident occurred in the congested High Street. A teacher from Dover High School for Girls, who was evacuated to Caerleon along with her pupils, was knocked from her cycle and killed. The local authority, seeing that something had to be done to ease the traffic congestion, trialled a one-way system. Traffic travelled up High Street and then returned to Newport down Mill Street.

Editor

ben elsey
piano tuner

phone: 07579 008 217
ben.pianotuner@gmail.com



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Contact the editor at:

8 Cherry Tree Avenue
Dover, CT16 2NL
Tel: 01304 213668

Email: Alan.Lee1947@ntlworld.com

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PROGRAMME 2025/26

Non-members are welcome at all meetings except that only members may vote at the Annual General Meeting. You may join, pay on the night and vote at the meeting.

- March 17 **Dover Society General Open Meeting**
Monday 7.30pm **Speaker: Mr & Mrs Roger Knight** "Bee Keeping"
- April 21 **Dover Society Annual General Meeting**
Monday 7.30pm **Speaker: Barry O'Brien** "Dover Tales"
- April 23rd **Zeebrugge Raid Commemoration**
St James' Cemetery and Dover Town Hall
- September 20 **Dover Big Local Urban Fete – Pencester Gardens**
Free Event. Annual community fun day. A day of music, food, activities and fun! An alcohol-free event for families and all age groups. There will be a variety of entertainers providing live music throughout the day.
- September
12th to 21st **Heritage Open Days**
Free Event
- October 20 **Dover Society General Open Meeting**
Monday 7.30pm **Speaker: tba**
- November 17 **Dover Society General Open Meeting**
Monday 7.30pm **Speaker: tba**
- December 7 **Dover Society Festive Lunch & Entertainment**
12.30 for 1pm **The Marina Hotel, Dover Waterfront**
£?.?? pp Price to include arrival drink, three course meal, tea, or coffee and entertainment. Extra wine or other drinks may be ordered and purchased at the venue. Arrival drinks are available from 12.30 pm. Finish at 4pm.
Entertainment, Menu, price, payment details and booking form will be published in the next newsletter.
- 2026**
- January **Dover Society General Open Meeting**
Monday 7.30pm **Speaker: tba**
Meeting Date tba
- February **Dover Society Quiz Night**
Monday Our ever-popular light-hearted quiz evening held in
7.00 for 7.30pm St Mary's Church Hall. Make up your own table of six,
£ tba p.p. or, if you are unable to, we will fit you in where
appropriate. Full details in the November Newsletter

*All indoor meetings are held at St. Mary's Parish Centre
Non-members are welcome on all society outings.*

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