

THE DOVER SOCIETY

MINUTES of the SIXTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held at St. Mary's Parish Centre on 6th April 1994

1. The Minutes of the 5th Annual General Meeting, 26th April 1993 were accepted as correct. There were no matters arising.
2. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** The President's presence, notably at the presentation of a seat to Lydden Parish Council to mark the completion of our restoration of Lydden Pond was welcomed. The resignation of Press officer Jenny Olpin as Press Secretary was regretted and the co-option of Terry Sutton, MBE to the Committee was welcomed. The Committee had been flattered by a request for membership but itself decided on the criteria of eligibility.

Membership had risen from 378 to 395, and was much higher than average in relation to total population. However inspired and brilliant were submissions to councils, harbour boards, government departments and commissions, it was the size of membership which enforced respect. 'Budge' Adams had dedicated himself to double it and had produced an excellent recruitment leaflet. Membership Secretary Sheila Cope was tireless in pursuing subscriptions and enrolments and had sensibly suggested lowered joint membership subscription and a Standing Order facility. Original five-year membership covenants had expired and were not renewable.

Constructive inputs to the community, organised by Projects Officer John Owen, included the award-winning restoration of Lydden Pond and the de-brambling of replanted Lousyberry Wood. This year's clean-up had been of the main street rather than the river by the friendly competition of various cadet forces in collaboration with Dover District Council's 'Mr Clean', Mike McFarnell. The beach and the river at Crabble Mill had been cleaned by members. The 'anonymous' donation of £1000 towards the improvement of the Riverside Walk had not yet been made. John Owen had also represented the Society on the Front Line Britain Committee and the Society had contributed to the funds of the East Kent Light Railway, Crabble Mill Trust and the Dover Transport Museum. Members had helped with the questionnaires and research of the S.E. Kent Community Health Council, in the effort to keep full hospital services in the Town and Port of Dover.

Members had also contributed more than £100 to the East Kent Hospice Project, including sponsorship of the so-called "Le Walk" through the Channel Tunnel and had made an histrionic contribution to the Dover Pageant.

On planing issues the Society had ruffled the feathers alike of Dover District Council and Dover Harbour Board, the Department of Transport, the Property Department of the Kent County Council, Southern Water Services and IMPACT. The Society was not, as had been alleged, anyone's poodle. The economics of pumping sewage from Folkestone to Dover and the delay in the completion of the new A20 in the Town Centre had been queried and the stupidity in not dualling the Lydden Bypass from the beginning re-emphasised. Dover District Council had been told to differentiate outline planning from detailed planning applications, not to permit office development on the Farthingloe Village site and that the best location for Dover's Market was Dover's Market Square. IMPACT was rebuked for apparently ignoring our recommendations, and Dover Harbour Board for reviving the sea-front filling-station proposal. The Harbour Board was requested to improve the design and the approaches to the projected new hotel on the site of the Dover Stage.

The Society had failed to persuade Southern Water to do their sewage pumping on the Shakespeare Platform but the Department of Transport immediately issued monthly newsletters to reassure roadside residents. The quality of the underpass was commended. Southern Water, Dover District Council and Dover Harbour Board had all attended meetings of our Planning Committee. Dover District Council had agreed to hotel and access road improvements and Dover Harbour Board was re-opening The White Cliffs Hotel as The Churchill. IMPACT had given the Society representation on its Forum, Town Centre Management and Seafront Memorial Committees and Julian Owen and his team were congratulated on the proposed reinstatement of the Grand Shaft entrance. Dover District Council had respectfully received comments on the Local Plan. The National Trust had consulted our Committee on the design of the proposed Langdon Cliffs Visitors Centre and the Property Department of Kent County Council was unlikely to forget our strictures on the sale of riverside frontage to car breakers. In these matters the Society was particularly indebted to Lawrence Gage and Jeremy Cope who had also been appointed co-Vice-Chairman.

Ken Wraight and John Gerrard had expertly articulated doubts to British Rail on Meridian TV about the maintenance of the railway line to Folkestone after the opening of the Channel Tunnel and the High Speed Rail Link. The Society congratulated both Council and Harbour Board for the preservation and exhibition of the Bronze Age Boat. The façade of the old Co-op had not been preserved, unlike that of the Royal Victoria Hospital. The Society anticipated a leading rôle in the national competition for a Millennial Memorial project. The refurbishment of Burlington House had been commended and Leo Wright had continued monitoring the water problems of the Dour and, if necessary, to bring Folkestone and District Water Company before the European Court for over-extraction. 'Budge' Adams had continued to spearhead concern for the relocation of the Rolls statue. The White Cliffs Countryside Enterprise was commended and the publication of the Peverley Papers on the Western Heights pursued.

Joan Liggett as Social Secretary replenished funds as well as entertaining members with domestic and foreign visits, lectures, quizzes and Christmas Feasts. Clive Taylor and Philomena Kennedy were thanked for their respective organisations of "Wine and Wisdom" and "Conundrums and Conviviality". It would take years to catch up with the social programme suggested by the Discussion Groups organised by Merrill Lilley. Merrill and 'Budge' were jointly congratulated on the continuing excellence of the Newsletter. Bruce Lilley's success as Advertising Manager had substantially reduced printing costs. The Town Mayor and the local Campaign for Real Ale had been congratulated for the Beer Festival. Committee meetings were now held in the Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club in whose bar any disagreements were amicably liquidated.

Two public meetings had heard the respective cases of County, District and Parish Councils on the reform of local government and submission for the retention of the status quo and the creation of a Town Council submitted to the Banham Commission. The Society had been selected as one of the amenity societies to advise the nascent environmental movement in Japan.

3. Treasurer's Report: Mrs Jennifer Gerrard reported a satisfactory financial position but because of the time shortage from the end of the financial year, the audit had not been completed. It was agreed that this could subsequently be submitted to the Committee. On the whole the Society had a successful financial year. The General Fund's surplus increased overall, but there was a significant drop on the previous year. Income from personal donations and social events was down and administrative costs had risen. However the *Newsletter* made a surplus for the first time.

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| 4. Election of Officers: | Chairman: | Mr Jack Woolford |
| | Co-Vice Chairmen: | Mr John Gerrard and
Mr Jeremy Cope |
| | Secretary: | Mr Leo Wright |
| | Treasurer: | Mrs Jennifer Gerrard |
| 5. Election of Committee: | Membership Secretary: | Mrs Sheila Cope |
| | Editor: | Mrs Merrill Lilley |
| | Social Secretary: | Mrs Joan Liggett |
| | Chairman, Planning Committee: | Mr Lawrence Gage |
| | Chairman, Projects Committee: | Mr John Owen |
| | | Mr 'Budge' Adams |
| | | Mr Adrian Galley |
| | | Mr Mike McFarnell |
| | | (Advisory Member) |
| | | Mrs Margaret Robson |
| | | Mr Terry Sutton |
| | | Mr Ken Wraight |

6. There were no items of Any Other Business.

After the raffle and the service of refreshments, the meeting was addressed by Mr Bob Ratcliffe, President of the City of Rochester Society, on "The Coming of the Railways to Dover".