

THIS AND THAT

— DOVER CHAT

215

Members like to chat to each other and there never seems to be enough time to organise enough situations when this is possible. Usually a time is slotted in at a Member's Meeting in each Society year. This year there is a session after the interval at the Members' Meeting of March 25th, just too late, alas, for the results to be included in Newsletter 25, which goes to print about that time.

Getting into groups to do a bit of "brain-storming" has proved a very useful exercise over the last few years and it is to be hoped that this year will prove no exception. Members always suggest a wealth of ideas for outings, meetings and speakers, more than enough to provide the social planning committee with material for twelve months ahead.

One of the topics for discussion on this occasion, the compilation of a "shopping list" of improvements still needed in Dover, will be of use to Julian Owen of Impact, before he gives his address to the Annual General Meeting in April. Readers may remember that, in this way, Dover Society members made a comprehensive list of suggestions three years ago before IMPACT started its three-year programme in the Dover District and that many of these ideas have been implemented since then. Now there is time to review the situation and make more suggestions for the future, when a Town Management team will be responsible for new developments. A list of members' ideas will be reported in the next *Newsletter*.

Another new topic for discussion is the organisation of visits in small parties of twelve members. These outings are additional to those already advertised on the programme page of this Newsletter. As this is a pilot scheme it is to be tried out this summer, initially by offering these visits to those who sign up for them at the March meeting. Members will be asked to give their opinions and ideas. Obviously the task of organising these trips will entail a lot of extra work for Joan Liggett, our Social Secretary and it is envisaged that only one of each trip will take place in summer 1996. Suggested tours are of the Coast-guard Station, the Port Control and a Faversham-Swale barge trip (each has a maximum of twelve people). If the scheme is a success then additional trips can be planned in 1997 and offered to more members.

Many of our members may have walked past the site of the new BP petrol filling station on Townwall Street and wondered what the archaeologists have discovered there. A bulletin has now been posted on the railings. I called in at the site to chat to Keith Parfitt and obtain a copy of Bulletin 1, which gives the news to date.

The very earliest soil layers on the site are likely to predate the Norman Conquest of 1066. This area of Dover formed an important region of the town in Mediæval times. Soil deposits and buildings of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries have been located and, overlying these, traces of eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings are being recorded. The most interesting of these, so far, is a large square building in the middle of the site which could represent a blacksmith's forge. The site lies within the grounds of the former Burlington Hotel, destroyed during the last war.

Sometimes in Archaeology what is not found may be as interesting as what is found! Of the fourteenth century old town wall, a section of which was glimpsed when the Bronze Age Boat was uncovered and believed to run in this direction, so far there is no trace! The CAT archaeologists have until the end of May to continue their investigations. So look out for further bulletins which will be posted as the work progresses.