

CHRISTMAS FEAST

2000 _____ by Sheila Cope

One of the minor dilemmas which the committee faces in deciding about a venue for our annual Christmas feast is that the event cannot be held at Dover College Refectory until after school has broken up. Thus we are restricted to a Saturday when some members may have alternative commitments. Last year on December 16th some familiar faces were inevitably missing. Nevertheless we welcomed several guests who were attending for the first time and who commented favourably on the unique character of the Refectory. College caterers cheerfully served a buffet which was outstanding in quality and quantity and the wine was commended too. Moreover we no longer need speculate on the hardiness of former monks and schoolboys because heating is now adequate.

Musical entertainment this year was of a partly background nature with Mike Scurfield bringing a fresh perspective to some familiar Christmas tunes. Subsequently we sang carols together and appreciated the surprise (to him) solo given at Mike's request by Gordon Cowan, the Town Mayor. Gordon and his wife Jeanette were our invited guests and his youthful choirboy training was apparent on this occasion.

The purpose of our Christmas Feast is simply to provide a happy occasion when members and guests may enjoy each other's company alongside good food, wine, music and a flutter on the raffle. The evening concluded with thanks to all our organisers, and especially to Joan Liggett who, in addition to being a superb Social Secretary, manages a very pretty curtsy.

Footnote: Joan welcomes suggestions for entertainment at the Christmas Feast, particularly in view of the need to book it several months in advance.

The January Meeting

There were two speakers at the meeting held at St. Mary's Parish Centre on Monday, 15th January. The first speaker was Jack Woolford, one of the founder members of the Society. His subject was 'The Prehistory of the Dover Society' and he has been kind enough to write his own summary of his fascinating talk.

The Prehistory of THE DOVER SOCIETY

*Jack Woolford's
Address to Members
15 January 2001*

The Dover Society was founded in May 1988 and its predecessor the New Dover Group which founded in 1982, in 1964. Obviously they were part of a trend: but when did it begin?

In between 11 and 14 billion years ago there was the original Big Bang, and 10 billion years later the formation of the Solar System including the Earth. In the last million years homo sapiens has evolved and (only) five thousand years ago became civilised. Pyramids (from 3/2000 BC) in the the first cities in Egypt were oriented to heavenly bodies, which means that town planning is as old as civilisation. Fifth century BC Athens with its Parthenon, Agora and Theatre, much influenced by Hipparchus of Miletus, the father of town planning, shows how far the process had gone. Moreover Athens had a democratic constitution (women and slaves apart) in which free citizens not only debated and voted but were elected to office. The Roman Senate was similar, and Roman cities even more impressively planned with their baths and aqueducts, fora (forums) and amphitheatres. Both Greek - in Asia Minor