

Annual General Meeting

19 April 2004

Reported by Merrill Lilley

The sixteenth Annual General Meeting was held on 19th April 2004 at St. Mary's Parish centre and was, as usual, well attended. The Chairman, Terry Sutton, began by listing apologies for absence and mentioning, sadly, the loss of members who had died during the last year. The minutes of the last meeting were accepted and there were no matters arising.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, with especial mention of our President, Brigadier Maurice Atherton and his wife, Wendi, several Vice Presidents and Mr. Barry Smith, who was the first Secretary of the Society.

In presenting his report, the Chairman said it had been a very successful year, including many excellent talks and interesting social events. After three years he was pleased to hand over to Derek Leach, OBE, and to thank all members of the Society who had helped him throughout his term of office. He went on to mention the success of a new venture of the Society, the piano recitals organised by Jack Woolford and Jeremy Cope, held at the Astor College for the Arts and sponsored by Dover Town Council.

Next he thanked various members of the committee: Mike Weston, the Treasurer, who compiled meticulous monthly reports; Bill Naylor, the Secretary, for his compilation of the minutes; Joan Liggett, Social Secretary, for her excellent organisation of Society outings and meetings; Jack Woolford and his committee for keeping an eye on local planning matters; Merrill Lilley for her

production of the popular Newsletter; Jeremy Cope for his constant support and advice and Sheila Cope for her work as Membership Secretary, adding that, at 446, our membership of the Society had never been higher. Our finances, he said, were in excellent shape and he thought that our acceptance in the wider community had never been so good. He said that after three years 'on the bridge' he handed over the position to a new captain who would steer us to an even brighter future.

The Treasurer then presented the end-of-year accounts. He was happy to report a surplus in the general fund. This was in part due to the success of Society outings which made a profit. He thanked our Social Secretary for all her hard work and all members who supported outings generally. Only one had to be cancelled through lack of support. He again urged members to book early for outings so that the viability of numbers ensured that cancellations did not take place, causing the deposit money to be lost. Another feature which boosted the general fund was that of raffles which take place at meetings throughout the winter months and this year brought in £495.00. These raffles made a difference between our meetings running at a loss or making a surplus and this was due to the efforts of Sheila Cope who organises them. Thirdly, he mentioned several things which had helped towards the production costs of the Newsletter. For two issues this year help had been given by Steve Franks doing the page-setting, but he was no longer able to

continue with this. Advertising revenues always contributed towards the cost and for two years we have been grateful for sponsorship towards one issue from Pfizer Ltd. He thanked Merrill Lilley, Editor, and her husband, Bruce, Advertising Manager, for their work and commitment.

He spoke of administration costs and hire of hall, much the same as the previous year. The cost of membership of the Civic Trust and insurance with the Trust had risen considerably. Donations made by the Society to various organisations were itemised. He ended with the good news that interest on the Society's high interest account was slightly up on last year but, best of all, the real benefit to the Society of the 'Gift Aid'

money received from the Inland Revenue, amounting in total to £1262.00, since the scheme started in the year 2000.

The Chairman then called on other members of the committee to give reports on their areas. Jack Woolford spoke for the planning committee, Jeremy Cope for the project team, Joan Liggett on outings and Merrill Lilley on the Newsletter and publications.

The elections were rapidly dealt with. There were no objections and the officers were reselected en bloc. Two new committee members were elected, Marjorie Wright and Adeline Reidy.

After the interval the speaker was Martyn Webster. His talk is reported by Anthony Lane.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

SUMMER 2004

Thanks again this year to all those members who simplify my task by paying subscriptions promptly and/or by Standing Order. Our current membership exceeds 450 and we trust that this number will be maintained once the few outstanding payments have come in.

We may feel optimistic because we have gained 14 new recruits since the spring, including newly wed husbands of 2 lady members. We therefore welcome:- Mrs A Knott, Mrs C & Mr M Walker, Mrs D Charlton, Mr M Groombridge, Mr P Harding, Lady Jeane Dutton-Hill, Mr T Fuller, Mrs I Small, Mr A May, Mr I Pascall, Miss S Rashidally, Mr C & Mrs D Hall.

Sheila Cope

Letter to the Editor

An error spotted in the April Newsletter.

Miss de Bourbel says that workmen killed during the construction of the London, Chatham and Dover Railway 'along the foot of the cliffs' are buried in Cowgate Cemetery. But the LC&D railway line reached Dover from Faversham via Canterbury. The line along the foot of the cliffs from Folkestone was constructed by the South Eastern Railway and was actually the first to reach Dover. The Minster-Sandwich-Deal-Dover line was also built by the SER. However, in 1901, without actually amalgamating, the two railway companies set up a joint operating committee and were henceforth, until the grouping of 1922, known as the 'South-Eastern and Chatham Railway'. So Dover got left out in the end!

Neil Turns