

The Western Heights Preservation Society

report from Chris Taft

THE FEW MONTHS SINCE THE LAST DOVER SOCIETY UPDATE have been very busy for the Western Heights Preservation Society (WHPS). The coming months promise to be just as busy. Detailed below are some of the things the Society has been up to.

Open Days

In April the WHPS were pleased to be able to once again open the Drop Redoubt. This event was part of the European Historic Fortifications Network's Euroregional Days for Fortified Sites. Historic sites were opened across Kent, Western Flanders and the Nord Pas de Calais. The special open days were begun in 1987 by The Journées Régionales des Villes Fortifiées in the Nord Pas de Calais and have now grown to include the other regions. On this occasion the fortress was opened for both the Saturday and Sunday and once again proved a real draw.

For those that missed this opportunity more openings are planned, including at the annual Western Heights Open Day on 27th June, sadly too late for this publication date. However, it is hoped that plenty more opportunities will arise to offer tours of the Drop Redoubt and readers interested are advised to keep an eye on local press where events are always publicised or the WHPS website where a notice board features all forthcoming events relating to the Heights.

Much work has been ongoing of late relating to these open days and at present details are being finalised for the June event.

Publicity and Promotions

The open days, while an important aspect of the work of the Society, are not all the WHPS has been involved with. Naturally lots of time has gone into publicising these events but the team have also been working on producing a much more professional leaflet. As mentioned in the last update, work is now underway and has developed significantly since the last report and it is hoped some designs will be ready in the near future.

The WHPS website also continues to improve and is an excellent place to keep up-to-date with events. *Dover Lines*, the Society newsletter, is also being regularly produced and is available to WHPS members. Work in publicising Western Heights continues and as a result the Western Heights are now much more widely known. The Society has been contacted in recent weeks by a number of organisations or individuals who have been made aware of the Heights through the work of the WHPS and who are interested in getting involved or finding out more.

Project Days

The last issue of the *Newsletter* reported the work on clearing the North Lines. Further work has been undertaken here although this has now stopped for the

First Foot Guards in Drop Redoubt lines



season. Project work is now focused on the open days and in particular the Drop Redoubt. The last open days have allowed access only to a small part of the fortress and in future the Society would like to open more. To do this work is needed to clear some areas and to maintain those already opened. For this to happen help is, of course,

required from Society members without whom nothing would ever be achieved and whose assistance is invaluable. Those wanting to help in any capacity or simply to be kept up-to-date with the WHPS's work are advised to join to Society, details of which are below.

Membership

The Western Heights Preservation Society is not all about getting your hands dirty clearing trees, it is also about supporting and moving the Society forwards in promoting the Western Heights and help is needed at all levels.

For more information or to join please contact the Hon. Secretary at 66 Union Road, Deal Kent CT14 6AR or visit the website

www.dover-westernheights.org

and please remember to say where you read about the WHPS.

40th KFAS AGM & SPRING CONFERENCE

BROADSTAIRS PAVILION, 15 MAY 2004.....by Jack Woolford

Hosted by the Broadstairs Society in the splendid Pavilion on its beautiful beach, the highlight of the 40th AGM of the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies was the address by its Founder Arthur Percival, now D. Litt, MBE, FSA, former officer of the Civic Trust, founder of the Faversham Society which created the first Heritage Centre in the country, and distinguished author. He said that in 1964 the number of amenity societies (*including the New Dover Group*) incrementally increased because of post-war

development plans which gouged out the heart of historic and irreplaceable communities without any public consultation. Drastic railway pruning meant that increasingly heavier and faster lorries wreaked environmental havoc. Tower blocks were fashionable and old buildings useless without 'modern amenities'. Communities were uprooted and re-planted in urban jungles...

Things had changed for the better through the hard work of local amenity societies which shamed councils,