

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,

companies and government into action. In 1966 Lord Duncan Sandys got grudging government support for the Civic Amenities Act which created conservation areas and encouraged public participation in planning. New community spirit was generated and local pride resulted. Nowadays the presumption was in favour of adaptation rather than wholesale redevelopment. Derelict buildings were almost as popular with developers as

Greenfield sites.

It was, however, unfair to blame 'planners'. We all shopped in their superstores and bought fake hall-houses or emasculated Edwardian dwellings. If 'personal service' shops were to survive we should use them. We should encourage developers who were not nostalgia-bound and were confident enough to build houses which belonged to the twenty-first century.

B.O.O.K R.E.V.I.E.W

from Terry Sutton

The Blighted Cliffs *a new book by Edwin Thomas*

Edwin Thomas uses the backdrop of Dover during the Napoleonic Wars to tell his yarn of murder, espionage, money-laundering and smuggling. The author walked our town and, with the help of museum staff, visualised what Dover was like in 1806 when there was illicit cross-Channel trade by smugglers.

He interweaves historical events with imaginary activities of his hero, naval officer Martin Jerrold, who is suspected of murder and gets romantically involved with a smugglers' moll. The story builds with a plot of a wealthy Dover banker who is funding Napoleon's conquests by illegally exporting golden guineas to France in exchange for smuggled brandy and silks.

The climax comes with a French commando-style raid resulting in the capture of Dover Castle. The enemy forces get into the castle grounds through a stepped tunnel that runs from near the shoreline, through the chalk cliffs to exit inside the walls. (Yes, one exists).

Dover Castle is eventually recaptured by the British dragoons thanks to the bravery of our Royal Navy hero.

At one stage he is locked up in Dover gaol but escapes through a network of underground tunnels used by the smugglers to hide contraband. One tunnel, from the Market Square, comes out through a tomb in the churchyard of old St James' Church. (A tunnel through water-laden strata under the river Dour? I find that one unlikely.)

The Blighted Cliffs (Bantam Press) £10 hardback, is obtainable at Dover public library where the author gave a talk in the spring. The book will be obtainable in paperback this summer.