

2nd Talk

Dover Arts Development (DAD)

A talk by Joanna Jones reported by Alan Lee

Dover Arts Development (DAD) has been in existence since 2006. In 2008 DAD became a limited company with Clare Smith and Joanna Jones, both artists, as directors. Joanna arrived in Dover in 1997 and was later joined by Clare. They both had many contacts in the art world and many of them have since visited the town.

Their first major project involved five international photographers and each artist offered an event for local people to participate in. All of their projects evolve naturally and this has helped them to interact and get to know many local residents. Both of them are now settled in the town and have been surprised to discover how many creative people have lived, and still do live in Dover. In 2009 they ran the Here and Now workshop, which involved young artists. Others were the Fake Cake Bake and a drawing workshop. They have worked on projects that have included French partners in St Omer with Pierre Yves Brest. Another was to exhibit artists' work in the windows of the old indoor market to help brighten up the town.

Many younger people in the district have been involved with and taken part in local projects. One of these was "Remade". This involved designing objects from discarded waste products. A diverse range of goods were created from tables to jewellery. These were sold at a number of retail outlets throughout the country, including the National Gallery, Liberty's and the Remade shop in Bench Street.

Another project based in Bench Street saw the Remade shop turned into a film studio. Here they produced the much acclaimed documentary "Watermark" about Dover and the demise of Buckland Paper Mill. This was to eventually involve over 300 former employees. Clare and Joanna try to ensure that all of the projects are linked in one way or another to education. Schools in the area are also very much involved and are encouraged to play an active part.

"Bunting Forever" was then launched with the aim of woollen bunting being produced and hung throughout the town to celebrate the coming of the Olympics. All ages from junior school children to older retired people took part with some 6,000 individual pennants being made by over 500 people. Many of these proudly pointed out their work to friends. This bunting has been stored and is set to be put to use again at various events and venues to commemorate the 1914-18 war. Other notable events have included volunteers planting and watering some 1,000 plants in the shingle along Dover's award winning Esplanade. "War and Peace" set to run throughout the year, is this year's major event.

Clare and Joanna are full of energy and have many more plans and projects in the pipeline. If you would like to help or become involved in any way then do not hesitate to contact either one of them; E-mail: info@dadonline.eu or contact the editor: details inside front cover.