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Socially we were sorry to have to cancel the trips planned for Summer 2022. Following a brief survey, we are now focussing on day trips, including London, as possible venues for 2023. We are grateful to our member Rodney Stone who is liaising with organisers, and we look forward to offering some interesting destinations and hope to see as many of you as possible joining with other members, friends and family.

We were pleased to have a very successful Christmas Feast at the Dover Marina Hotel last December. Eighty-three members and friends enjoyed an excellent lunch followed by delightful entertainment from Mr Peter Whibley, and his accompanist, Ms Aileen Dickson. The Raffle raised £267.50 for the Dover Foodbank. Our winter monthly meetings continue to be popular and our speakers interesting and engaging.

The annual February Wine & Wisdom, organised by Quiz Master Clive Taylor, is now, following 'lockdown' run on an American Supper style at £5 each. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Lyn Smith and her team for her work as our new Social Secretary.

This Report does not cover every detail of our activities as there are Civic roles and responsibilities that we as members of the Planning and Executive engage with on behalf of The Dover Society. I hope you are

inspired not only to continue your support but also to consider joining either the teams or as a volunteer with our projects. I also implore you to be more interactive. Let us hear from you, we welcome feedback! We want you to have a voice in shaping The Society as it moves on through the 21st Century and is truly representative of the Dover that is inclusive of all its communities albeit cultural or economic. We are a Society that is proud of its heritage, the potential of Dover and believes in working in partnership for the future of the town, and its' surrounding area, that at last is shaking off its 'post-war' shackles. We look forward to the coming year in continuing to monitor, challenge, partner and inspire those who care and work for the promotion of our town. Let's embrace our heritage, our history and our communities with the shared objectives that aim to preserve, develop and improve for the good of all Dover's society.

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they may enter the state of torpor for just a few hours on an especially cold day, or they might stay in torpor for months!

In the state called torpor, their body temperature falls and their metabolic rate slows, meaning they use less energy and, while their insect food source is unavailable, can survive on the fat they have stored up. Being aroused from hibernation can cost bats a lot of energy, and the loss of body fat can lead to starvation. They wake naturally at times during hibernation, usually to feed opportunistically, when temperatures are warm enough for insects to be flying, or to move to another roosting site.

Bats play an important role in many habitats around the world. Some tropical

plants depend partly or wholly on certain bat species to pollinate their flowers or spread their seeds, while many bats, including all British species, help control insects by feeding on them. In the UK, some bats are 'indicator species', because changes to these bat populations can indicate changes in aspects of biodiversity. They might suffer when there are declines in insect populations or when habitats are destroyed or poorly managed (for example, some bats live solely in large or old woodlands).

Bat numbers are declining, due mainly to the loss of roosts and feeding areas and the increased use of pesticides. Kent is probably under greater pressure for change to the environment than anywhere else in Britain.

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Channel Challenge

Terry Sutton

Thousands of refugees in recent months have crossed the Dover Strait in small boats powered by outboard engines.

One hundred years ago, in the 1920s, there was a craze to cross the Dover Strait in small boats powered by outboard engines.

But those were mostly wealthy people, including a few aristocrats, aiming to go the opposite way from Dover to Calais.

This craze reached its climax in June 1929 when 36 "starters" set off from Dover in a race in various sized small craft, all powered by outboard engines. The result was chaos in rain and fog.

None of the craft arrived at Calais under their own power. Some were towed into French ports by French fishermen while more than a dozen of the speed boat pilots were saved by the crews of Channel lightships. Three of the

starters, although lost in fog, tied their craft together and rowed into Calais!

They were not the only ones trying to cross the Channel with the help of small boats. In 1926 thirty-six "aspirants", from a range of nations, set off to swim across the Dover Strait. Each, setting off from France or from Dover, had a small boat to pilot the way. That year there were only five successful crossings. In 1923 only three swimmers were successful while in 1927 three canoeists were.

In the 1920s a young Parisian woman tried crossing from Cap Gris Nez to Dover in a hydrocycle while a Polish seafarer attempted to walk from Dover to France wearing large wooden shoes. He failed to get far.

Today many of these unorthodox Channel crossing attempts are banned by the French maritime authorities for safety reasons.

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watching the pursuit took the tender damsel, and after I had examined (questioned) her, to Dover there to the mayor to set her in some cage or prison for eight days, and I brought holy father abbot to Canterbury, and there to Christchurch (the Cathedral priory) I will leave him in prison. In this sudden doing extempore, to circumcept (inspect) the house and to search, your servant John Antony and his men marvelled what fellow I was, and so did the rest of the abbey, for I was unknown there of all men. At last I found her apparel in the abbot's coffer (chest). To tell you all this comedy, but for the abbot a tragedy, it were too long. Now it shall appear to gentlemen of this country, and other the commons, that ye shall not deprive or visit upon substantial grounds. Surely I suppose God himself put it in my mind thus suddenly to make a search at the beginning, because no canon appeared in my sight; I supposed rather to have found a whore amongst them in the abbot's chamber...'

Just to put this into context - one of the agents'

injunctions to male religious houses laid down that 'there be no entrance into this monastery but one, and that by the great fore-gate of the same, which diligently shall be watched and kept by some porter specially appointed for that purpose, and shall be shut and opened by the same both day and night, at convenient and accustomed hours, which porter shall repel all manner of women from entrance into the said monastery.'

Langdon Abbey was subsequently dissolved in the first round of monastic closures for houses with incomes of less than £200 per annum - its annual income stood at only £56. The last abbot, William Sayer (the very one imprisoned by Layton at Canterbury) signed the Deed of Surrender, along with ten canons - the document survives today in the National Archives at Kew and has a very fine impression of the abbey seal attached to it - one side showing an image of the Blessed Virgin and Child, the other the martyrdom of St. Thomas. Sic transit gloria mundi...

Curiosity of Dover

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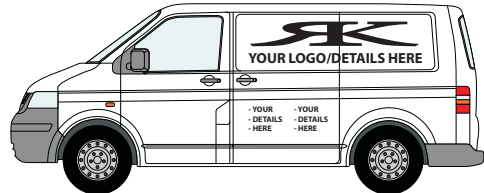


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