

### **March 2017 Lunch**

Following a three course lunch in the Stone Hall of Dover Town Hall, 70 members of the Dover Ladies Luncheon Club were entertained by speaker Jim Buttress. Armed with just a certificate in cycling proficiency, he entered the world of horticulture and began training at RHS Wisley. This was to be the start of a career that would span over half a century. Jim recounted his love for gardening which grew from childhood to responsibility for Royal parks and gardens all over London. Jim Buttress is a familiar figure to garden lovers. As head judge at the RHS he presides over shows like Chelsea and Harrogate, as well as the colossal Britain in Bloom competition where the local rivalries and politics are terrifying. He's also known to millions from the BBC's Big Allotment Challenge. Jim, who was superintendent of the Royal Parks for 25 years and whose clients include Her Majesty the Queen and the Queen Mother. Jim shared his knowledge and experiences with the lunch Members, as he told anecdotes of encounters with members of the Royal family. His advice was "keep both feet firmly on the ground" He considered himself a lucky man and to this day, following retirement, is involved in judging gardening competitions all over the country, not least the Royal Chelsea Flower Show. Mr Buttress also holds the Victoria Medal of Honor, the highest accolade in horticulture

Members eagerly purchased Jim's Book "The Peoples Gardener" With an introduction by Alan Titchmarsh