

Issue 180 Newsletter July 2010

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| The Ipswich Society | | NEWSLETTER | |
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Members awaiting the start of our AGM and Jonathan Glancy's talk at Suffolk New College on 23 April 2010 - a very new and welcome venue for us

Editorial: A good year, but not all

A number of people have commented on the effectiveness of Brian Jepson's colour cover design for the last Newsletter. The contrast of distinguished buildings both old and new illustrated the Society's interest in both the past and the present. Incidentally, how many of us had noticed that 'cut-off' roof-line of the Ancient House?

The launch of this special year for the Society took place at the Tourist Information Centre on Wednesday, 7 April in the presence of our President, the Mayor, Councillor David Goldsmith, and invited guests. It was also the first exhibition of our splendid new banners which you will see at later Society events.

The recession and various other factors (not least on-line shopping) are not being kind to our town centre. The collapse of Vergo is worrying. The row of six big buildings in Carr Street - stores which still belong to the East of England Co-operative Society but were taken over by Vergo - will take some filling! If it's true that the huge Tesco Extra on Grafton Way will put paid to foreseeable re-development of the Civic Centre and the Mint Quarter, we could console ourselves that these sites are at least relatively hidden. But the Co-op buildings in Carr Street are such a visible part of the street scene and constant reminders of better days.

One wonders whether town centres everywhere will have to shrink in the years to come. But I've no idea how that could happen without threatening many fine buildings and the variety of historical styles which characterise a British town.

The change of Government will affect planning matters. So-called 'garden grabbing' will probably be harder to achieve. And large scale housing developments, much influenced hitherto by nationally set targets, will be increasingly questioned. In Ipswich, for example, one wonders what effect this will have on the 'Northern Fringe' in the medium term. SE England with a growing population needs more houses but we don't know where to put them!

I shall be very pleased to receive articles, letters or drawings for the next issue by 20 August.
NEIL SALMON

Our Anniversary Events

Our Golden Anniversary celebrations continue this autumn on Wednesday, 13 October at Isaacs, Wherry Quay on the Waterfront. The Isaac Lord merchant quarter is a stunning restoration which won an Award of Distinction at our Awards Evening last year.

We will start the evening at 7.30 pm with a talk by Ken Powell, the former Director of the Twentieth Century Society and Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects. This will be followed by a buffet supper, with a pay bar, on the top floor of Isaacs which affords some of the finest views of the Ipswich Waterfront. Tickets for this event are £10.

On Wednesday, 10 November, our Annual Awards Evening will be held in the Old Council Chamber in the Town Hall. Information about this will appear in the October Newsletter. The year will finish with a grand celebratory dinner at Greshams, Tuddenham Road, on Friday, 3 December. Information about this dinner will be sent out under separate cover during September.

SU MARSDEN

Heritage Open Days

Heritage Open Days Saturday and Sunday, 11-12 September

This weekend will again see The Ipswich Society organising the hugely popular Heritage Open Days. We are fortunate again to have Ipswich Transport Museum participating by supplying a veteran bus to link between some of the properties. The bus departs from the Custom House on the Waterfront at 11 am and then every hour until the last journey at 4 pm. The route is as follows: Waterfront - Fore Street - Bolton Lane (for Christchurch Mansion and Freemasons' Hall) - Henley Road (Ipswich School) - High Street (Ipswich Museum) - Museum Street (Arlingtons) - Friars Street (Willis Building and Unitarian Meeting House) - Falcon Street (St Stephen's, Tourist Information Centre) - over Stoke Bridge to New Cut West and Felaw Maltings for an overview of the Waterfront - Russell Road (Grafton House and Endeavour House) - return to Waterfront.

There are approximately twenty-six buildings participating in this year's event. They represent seven centuries in the history of Ipswich, providing a chance to see inside historical buildings, many of which are not normally accessible to the general public. There will be free guided walks on the Saturday and Sunday led by Ipswich Tourist Guides.

All information will be in our leaflet available from mid-August at the Tourist Information Centre, museums and libraries.

DIANNE HOSKING

UCS Phase II

University Campus Suffolk Phase II

This large building on Orwell Quay has gone up quickly - a contrast to the work stopped at Regatta Quay and The Mill, and a reminder how lucky Ipswich is in having had publicly funded work at UCS, Suffolk New College and Suffolk One. UCS II is an academic building not to be confused with Athena Hall, the residential block nearby. It should open in January.

Chairman: Current Affairs

Well, we now have a new Government. Local elections have resulted in an even narrower gap between the Conservative/Liberal Democrat administration and Labour - now only two seats difference. What we can be sure about is hard times ahead, both nationally and locally. One

important change has already happened: the proposed unitary authorities in both Suffolk and Norfolk are officially dead. Things will stay as they are in local government.

The Tesco development in Grafton Way is now proceeding, having received planning permission by one vote, so we shall have to wait to see its impact on town centre businesses and town centre traffic.

On 17 April there was held at DCS on the Waterfront an event organised by the East of England Civic Societies. The theme was 'Rivers in Towns' and some forty members attended representing most civic societies in the East of England together with those representing other groups such as the Environment Agency. There were ten presentations, all of which were well received. The event was hosted and chaired by The Ipswich Society.

Our 50th birthday year is now well advanced and I hope you are able to attend at least some of the events planned. The year should end in December with a members' dinner. The AGM in our birthday year was held in April in the atrium of Suffolk New College and over a hundred members attended. Jonathan Glancey, architectural correspondent of The Guardian, gave a very lively and illuminating talk and there was a useful question and answer session to end. People remarked how impressed they were with the facilities at the New College.

It has been gratifying to note that we have had a greater presence in the local media this year owing partly to our special birthday events and clearly also to the efforts of our Publicity Officer, Pat Grimwade.

Our Blue Plaques scheme is progressing well. There are now thirteen plaques put up by The Ipswich Society, and they are well set out in our new leaflet, complete with a map of their locations. Do get a copy - free from the Committee, Tourist Information Centre and other places.

Finally, a few words to you, our members. I have been concerned of late to note how many articles in the Newsletter are written by Committee members. Whilst it is reasonable to assume that they have rather more expertise, I am sure there are many of you who have interesting points of view which you could share with other members. You do write letters from time to time, but it would be great to see some articles, long or short, on any subject which affects the quality of life of Ipswichians. You are The Ipswich Society - let us hear from you.

JACK CHAPMAN

Pykenham's Gatehouse

This fascinating little building will be open to the public on the first Saturday of the month from August to October between 10.30 and 12.30. If you have not been inside yet, do take the opportunity to get some sense of what it would have been like for those who were responsible for access to, and safety for, Archdeacon Pykenham 500 years ago.

News & Comment in Brief

A blooming year

Good news that Ipswich will again enter the Anglia in Bloom competition. Ipswich in Bloom will include gardening competitions and events for schools.

Challenging art

The former Ipswich School of Art in High Street will be used by the Museums Service as a gallery opening soon with loans from the Saatchi Collection, which will stimulate discussion.

A better choice of films

We congratulate Ipswich Film Theatre Trust on reviving the Film Theatre at the Corn Exchange, Thursdays-Saturdays. Programme leaflets cover several weeks.

A century older

Our winter lectures are held in the comfortable ambience of Museum Street Methodist Church, the foundation stone of which was laid in June 1860. We celebrate our 50th anniversary: the church can go a hundred years better!

Azeris in Ipswich

Ipswich is well placed to host an Olympic squad. Travelling by train to London you can't help noticing the huge scale of work at Stratford barely an hour away. We hope the Azerbaijan teams will enjoy their planned stay in Ipswich.

56 million years old stones from the Orwell

Our April Newsletter included a photo of the Sarsen Stones as originally arranged by the Society near Stoke Bridge. They were clean then as you could see. Good news that the subsequent neglect and graffiti have been cleaned up recently.

Fame or infamy on TV?

Programmes about the Ipswich Murders on TV brought back painful times despite, it is said, emphasising the positives. 'Ipswich Man' on BBC2 about the analysis of a 13th century North African skeleton found at Greyfriars could be viewed more dispassionately.

A window on the past

The second exhibition in Ipswich Maritime Trust's Museum Window on the Waterfront near The Mill is now installed. It features shipbuilding in Ipswich - an important occupation.

Fourth time lucky?

IBC is keen to try again for city status. A new city should be named in 2012 to mark the Queen's diamond jubilee. It's one issue which unites the political parties.

A good year for Willis

Increased turnover and profits have been recorded internationally by the Willis Group which employs 1,200 people in Ipswich. This should be good news for the area.

Students' embarras de richesses!

The new 'sixth form college', Suffolk One, will open in September, catering for up to 2,000 students at London Road. They will have more than 40 A Level subjects to choose from!

Ipswich - A City?

What makes a city? It should have its own song, its famous people, an airport, a port, a metro system, a prominent tower, a shrine, a distinctive bridge. Jonathan Glancey listed these possible attributes in his talk to the Society at our AGM on 23 April. On some of these matters our town would be struggling to match his expectations!

But the audience soon warmed to this entertaining and humorous approach, a teasing way of making us consider and appreciate the identity of Ipswich. Mr Glancey, The Guardian's architectural correspondent, travels the world and knows only too well that both towns and cities are continuing to lose their unique characters in the face of multi-nationals, chains of shops and toothless planning authorities - particularly the case in England, he implied. He has lived in this area for a few years now and knows Ipswich quite well but, as he put it, he can't find the streets where the independent shops are. Those of us who shop here regularly do know where the independents are but there aren't very many and they are scattered.

A clip from the 1960's film of Fore Street (made by the Society's Don Chipperfield) was a reminder of what has been lost.

However, Mr Glancey's keen professional eye has spotted some real positives. He enthused over one of England's finest collections of medieval churches, so splendidly restored and adapted for new uses. Like the City of London churches they are jewels which can juxtapose strikingly with modern buildings. St Mary at Quay, he said, will look even finer when the buildings around it are complete, and if the Star Lane and Key Street traffic could be curbed! He praised the redevelopment of the Dock which is already contributing more urban glamour despite the delays caused by the recession. And as for The Mill, there should be a viewing platform and cafe at the top of its 23 storeys. He also praised our fine and numerous parks.

He commended the Society for helping to make people appreciate Ipswich's special buildings, in some cases saving them from damage or demolition. But finding appropriate uses for them is a different matter. In a great city like Bordeaux local planning laws ensure that shops in the city centre retain their uses and character. In England, we must fight for the character and individuality of our towns.

Very typically he referred to Grafton Way, "a site that could have been anything we wanted". Instead it will house yet another Tesco.

Mr Glancey's talk to us was witty but it contained the equally strong message that Ipswich should take pride in being itself, assert its own glamour and aim to be, if not a city, "the best county town in England", and all of us, particularly members of an organisation like our Society, should work hard to make this happen.

NEIL SALMON

Planning Matters

Great Whip Street

On the site of Graham's, builders' merchants, and the former works of Bolenda Engineering, Stoke Quay New Homes (a subsidiary of Genesis Homes) have submitted a re-application for a scheme, this time for almost 400 residential units with 212 parking spaces. Living-Architects has in our opinion improved on the previous scheme while increasing the density which is now for 100 very sheltered extra-care apartments, 276 apartments (in the main for social housing) and 25 town houses close to Bulstrode Road, which is conveniently above expected flood levels and thus provides a dry escape route from the 12 storey tower blocks.

This scheme is marginally different from other speculative developments in that it is in the main for social housing; we will review the application in detail before making comment.

The burnt-out St Peter's Warehouse, Bridge Street and the site adjacent to Steam Boat Tavern, Felaw Street

It has been five years since these two development sites were granted planning permission and these are now re-applications for an extension of time. By way of reminder, the former was to be replaced by 64 flats in 10 storeys (with associated commercial uses) and the latter scheme was for 47 flats in 7 storeys, again with commercial use on the ground floor. You could argue that we have sufficient empty flats and part-completed developments around the Waterfront but this is not an acceptable objection in planning terms. (St Peter's Warehouse is being demolished. A 70-space temporary car park will look better at least, and be useful: Editor)

Demolition of existing flood defence structures adjacent to the lock gates

Work is well underway to construct a flood defence wall from the lock gates in an easterly direction to Cliff Quay brewery (and the high ground on which the tank farm sits) and in a westerly direction from the New Cut to the railway embankment running down from Halifax Junction. The lock gates have already been replaced and the Tidal Barrier across the New Cut will follow. This application by the Environment Agency is to complete the tidying up exercise once all new structures are in place. There has not yet been an application for the control room but we have had an early sight of the model and it will be a stunning building.

Cooper's Garage, West End Road

This application is for change of use from garage to supermarket (similar size to Lidl across the river) and a fast-food take-away. The Ipswich Society has commented:

"Although we have no objection to the change of use, we remind the Planning and Development Committee that this is a very prominent gateway site when approaching Ipswich from the south, and as such the foremost buildings should be of outstanding aesthetic quality. This outline application suggests that the structure on the junction of West End Road and Handford Road is the refuse storage enclosure - totally unacceptable. The very basis of the layout of the fast-food hut is one of circulating cars surrounding the building. We would prefer to see a building that provides presence, style and quality sitting prominently on the corner. Waste bins and vehicles should be out of sight to the north of the building. We are additionally disappointed that the river frontage is not addressed and feel the applicant has a duty to improve river access and the condition of the towpath (which could be incorporated into these proposals). There could be advantageous planning gain if the towpath was widened to accommodate a short length of National Cycle Route 51."

JOHN NORMAN

The Tesco Story

To me, and to many Society members, this saga has ended in total and ignominious defeat. A Tesco Extra store with over 700 free car parking spaces will be built on the old B&Q site, together with 129 apartments, two hotels and a large public space. This will increase the traffic on the Novotel roundabout by 16% and clearly result in tailbacks on the Star Lane gyratory, across Stoke Bridge and to Princes Street, even assuming that Tesco pay for the widening of the Novotel roundabout to three lanes. The height of the bulk of the building will be eight storeys, thus cutting off views between Over Stoke and the town. Ipswich Town Centre, outside which it lies in official boundary terms, is slowly dying in quality terms and this will surely lower it further and more rapidly. It's hard to see, for instance, that J Sainsbury, the market and Primark will survive. We have in place the approved Ipswich Plan, to be superseded in the next few months by the Local Development Framework; neither of these has been acknowledged to be against such a development.

And yet, the Head of Development Control, in summarising the proposals at the Planning and Development Committee, recommended the plan, the Head of Highways didn't realise that the parking was free and the Portfolio Holder for Finance of the Borough Council stated that Tesco was investing Â£75m in Ipswich. Despite objections from Ipswich Central (the business consortium for the town centre), Turnstone (developers of the Civic Centre site) and of course your Society, the plans were given approval after a second vote because the first proposal was botched. Many of those present thought it a sad day for local democracy.

Since then, neither the Government Office for the East of England nor the Department of Local Government and Communities has responded to letters from many individual members, the Society, the local business community's planning consultant nor the developer of the Civic Centre site. We all demanded a review and at least a planning inquiry. Nothing will happen. The tiny crack of hope would be that the conditions of approval are that all must be built within a short time limit, together with stringent and expensive Section 106 requirements added to paying for the roundabout, will make it economically unviable for Tesco to proceed. Some hope! And they would be back.

MIKE COOK

Thomas Wolsey in Ipswich

On 7 April in St Lawrence Centre, those attending the re-launch of the appeal to commemorate Thomas Wolsey in the town of his birth will have heard our Chairman, Jack Chapman, give his strong support to our efforts. Jack is indeed one of the patrons of the campaign and took a full part in the selection of David Annand of Fife as the sculptor. The international field of 57 applicants was very strong. Shortly afterwards the Society showed its support in the best way possible, and I write for all the patrons to thank the Society for adding £1,000 to the fund.

David Annand will soon be commissioned to make the figure of the great man at 110% life-size in hollow bronze mounted on a low stone plinth, and we hope to have it unveiled next spring. Because Wolsey was schooled here and near the end of his life greatly enlarged his old school to be the Cardinal College of Mary in Ipswich as a feeder to his Oxford foundation, now Christ Church,

we wish to portray him, not as the great man in church and state which he undoubtedly was, but for his enlightened educational ideas. In the book he wrote to be used in his Ipswich college school (and in all the schools in England) he reminded schoolmasters that:

"Pleasure is to mingle with study, that the child may think learning rather an amusement than a toil. Tender youth is to stiffer neither severe thrashings nor sour and threatening looks, nor any kind of tyranny, for by such usage the fire of genius is either extinguished or in great measure damped. "

Wolsey's figure, with the sentence in bold lettering above running around the base, will stand between the former Curson House and its extant guesthouse, Curson Lodge, on Curson Plain. Here, he planned to retire as Provost of his College, and Robert, Lord Curs on had agreed to move out in three years from 1528, but by then Wolsey had fallen from grace with the King and died broken - hearted.

Curson Plain is at the junction of St Nicholas Street, St Peter's Street and Silent Street, very near the site of his butcher father's premises and within sight of St Peter's Church which he adapted as the chapel of his College. His favourite cat will look out from the side of his chair, and children drawn to the cat will read or have read to them Wolsey's inspiring words.

The statue will be the focus of the already popular Wolsey Tudor tours in Ipswich, and a celebration of all that is best in teaching and learning in the town and county. With any surplus funds we receive we plan to extend the educational side of our project by an annual lecture at our new University. We are now within £16,000 of the required total of £90,000. The website:

www.wolseyinipswich.org.uk

has more details of the campaign and The Ipswich Town Trust (Registered Charity No. 243288) acts as banker for the Patrons. We still need your support, and will acknowledge every donation we receive promptly. We want as many Ipswich and Suffolk people as possible to feel that they have a stake in what will be a popular landmark in the town, and no gift is too small.

JOHN BLATCHLY, Chairman of Patrons

The Magic of Ipswich

Discover the Magic of Ipswich

(Thanks to Jonathan Glancey for inspiring this title)

I read with interest Geoff Knight's article "Walking in Ipswich" in the April Newsletter. Here is another one about walking in our town. Happily, Ipswich is enjoying a boom in guided walks. For some time the Association of Ipswich Tourist Guides has been conscious of the fact that the number of people enjoying walks is increasing rapidly. This is good news but the need for additional guides has become more urgent. To address this need a course was designed during 2009-2010. This was open to any member of the public with a keen interest in our town who wanted to extend their knowledge and understanding of its history and current developments. The course consisted of a series of lectures by Keith Wade, John Blatchly, Frank Grace and John Norman followed by an intensive training in Town Walks, a written examination and practical tests for those who wished to become involved.

The culmination of this effort was the award Ceremony held at the TIC in April. Four new guides were welcomed- Robert Burlinson, Mike Garland, Evelyn Hewing and Ken Nichols. Eric Hickman and John LeMare were made Honorary Fellows in recognition of their long and valued service. The presentation of badges and certificates was made by the Mayor of Ipswich Councillor David Goldsmith and Lesley Dolphin of Radio Suffolk.

The programme of walks for this season is designed to have a wide appeal. In addition to the well established Thursday afternoon Town Centre and Waterfront Walks new themed walks are offered on Tuesday afternoons. Any of the following could be repeated in future. The following walks have already taken place once:

Barley, Beer and Brewing
Selig Ipswich - Glorious Churches
Victorian Ipswich
Ipswich and the New World
Ipswich Riviera - the Modern Face of Ipswich Waterfront
Cardinal Wolsey
Discovering Art in Ipswich
Authors, Artists, Poets and Performers
Holy Ipswich - Lost, Closed and Open
The walks still to take place are:

Felix Cobbold - Philanthropist and Parliamentarian (20 July)
Merchants and Manufacturers (27 July)
Priors, Friaries, Churches and Chapels (3 August)
Old or New, True or False (10 August)
Marvels of Medieval Ipswich (17 August)
Anglo-Saxon Ipswich (24 August)
Hidden Corners of Ipswich (31 August)
What the Victorians Did for Us! (7 September)
Theatre in Ipswich (14 September)
Historic Ipswich (21 September)
Victorian Visionaries (28 September)

You can of course book your own group walks to suit your requirements. Some ideas might include:
I've never noticed that before!

Step back: Look Up

A Baker's Dozen: Some Ipswich Personalities

The Ipswich Wall Hangings

Look out for advertised pre-booked "specials" ending with a civilised cuppa and a bite to eat in attractive surroundings, e.g.

In the Footsteps of Darwin

Education in Ipswich from Tudor Times to the 21st Century Remarkable

Women of Ipswich

The History of Theatre in Ipswich - Shakespeare to Dance East

The Guides also offer Children's Walks generally suitable for "under elevens", e.g.

Horrible History

Tudor Ipswich

Victorian Ipswich

A Walk for the Eagle-eyed

To find out more, please phone 01473 258070 or email tourist@ipswich.gov.uk or pop into our award winning Tourist Information Centre and pick up a leaflet.

One of my flights of fancy is the re-establishment of the Promenade - a popular Victorian and Edwardian walk. This was a shady avenue planted with limes and poplars, running parallel to the New Cut. It had seats along the way and at the southern end there was a graceful canopied shelter known affectionately as The Umbrella. Could it ever happen? How magical would that be!

DIANA LEWIS

Our Heritage Bus Tour

Heritage Bus Tour: 'The Markhams' Magical Mystery Tour'

On 26 May a very large group of Society members boarded two buses driven by volunteers from Ipswich Transport Museum. We set off from the Custom House on the Waterfront for a nostalgic tour of the town. We had the choice of two double-deckers, both sporting the smart green and cream livery of Ipswich Corporation. AX1, the first of six motorbuses to be purchased by Ipswich Buses, was built in 1950 and had just celebrated its 60th birthday. ADX 63B was of 1964 vintage and one foot wider. Most of us took turns to ride on both vehicles. To add to the authenticity of our memorable journey, Caroline Markham adopted the role of bus conductor and issued tickets (sadly in decimal rather than imperial currency).

As numbers were so great and a running commentary virtually impossible, Bob Markham provided us all with very detailed and informative notes on all the places we would visit or ride by on our route.

We passed several buildings which have been given Ipswich Society Awards, including Isaac Lord's, now a thriving waterfront bar and cafe, the stunning university building, the restored Grimwade Memorial Hall (now apartments) and Endeavour House, home of Suffolk County Council, which was presented with an Award of Distinction in 2004.

Those waiting for modern buses at Tower Ramparts bus station must have had quite a surprise when we drove by and stopped temporarily in our vehicles from a much earlier age.

We paused to stretch our legs at New Cut West, from where we enjoyed a different view of the Waterfront from that most familiar to us, and saw the location of the original lock gates from the 1840s. One fascinating feature of our journey was our visit through Constantine Road depot of Ipswich Buses with a rare opportunity to glimpse the bus wash, bodywork shop and maintenance pits - fortunately none of which was required by our 'fleet'. From the upper decks of both buses we experienced a wonderful view of our town.

Many thanks to Bob Markham for a most enjoyable evening.

LOIS TERRY

Alice in Fiascoland

Alice's Adventures in Fiascoland

Once upon a time not so long ago, Wonderland held its local elections. The creatures of Wonderland had no time for politics and simply voted for their favourite letter of the alphabet. Not surprisingly, the As got the most votes, closely followed by the Bs, with the Cs mopping up the remainder.

Now anyone knows that if you keep only three chickens there is a danger that one will be ganged up on by the other two. So when the Bs and Cs realised that their combined vote was bigger than the As' they formed an alliance to govern Wonderland. Protest as they might, there was nothing the As could do about it, and they were eventually excluded altogether from the Executive. The portfolios were shared out among the Bs and Cs, with Business and Economic Development going to one of the Cs, the Mock Turtle. This was very pleasing for him since the initials B&ED are such important letters of the alphabet, bringing opportunities undreamt of

Some time later, a developer applied to regenerate a derelict site near Wonderland's Waterfront. The centre piece would be a marvellous Fiasco Extra superstore with a wonderful atrium and ample car parking, with lovely hotels, new shops and smart flats, some of which would even be affordable.

As it happened, Alice fell through a rabbit hole and landed right in the middle of the Wonderland Planning and Development Committee meeting where the proposal was being considered. The Wonderland Society's Planning Officer was urging the Committee to listen to the arguments and vote accordingly, rather than alphabetically, to which the Queen of Hearts blustered, "Why, the very idea! This Committee has a distinguished record of not voting along alphabetical lines! Off with his head!"

And so the meeting progressed. Everyone agreed that the site needed regenerating, and the Queen of Hearts launched a spirited support for the proposal saying it showed that Wonderland was open for business at a time when new jobs and investment were very valuable. But the As were concerned that Wonderland's other shops would be driven out of business, leaving the creatures of Wonderland unable to buy their daily essentials without using their cars. So there would be much more traffic along the Waterfront, which was already too often gridlocked and not at all pedestrian-friendly. All in all, the proposal went against all the good consultation work that had gone into Wonderland's Local Development Framework (the LDF, whose champion had been the Mock Turtle) which wanted less traffic and a more pleasant environment for all the creatures.

This unsettled the White Rabbit who was chairing the meeting, but then the Case Officer pointed out that the LDF hadn't yet been adopted and the increase in congestion didn't sound very serious to him, and it wasn't the Committee's job to protect the other retailers, so none of those objections applied. The other Bs and Cs all agreed with the Queen of Hearts, which cheered the White Rabbit who then called for a vote. In fact, he was so excited that he cast his own casting vote prematurely, before the Mock Turtle had satisfied himself about the free car parking arrangements. "Free car parking?" exclaimed the Highways Officer. "No one told us about free car parking! That will need to be examined!" So the casting vote actually fell to the Mock Turtle who was in two minds about which way to vote. "Once," he would muse wistfully, "I was a real Turtle." So the Queen asked the

developers if the car parking could be managed, though no one heard quite what, if anything, was actually agreed. But the Mock Turtle proceeded to vote in favour.

"Objection!" protested the As. "Off with their heads!" countered the Queen, adding ironically, "That Rabbit is chairing the meeting, not you!" The proposal was carried, with the votes falling alphabetically.

Alice couldn't believe her eyes and ears, so she wrote to the Bs and Cs and asked them if they had taken any notice of the As' objections, or if they simply thought the pros outweighed the cons. (She could only guess at how the Queen of Hearts would respond!) But the Committee's legal advisor must have advised against that, and instead sent Alice a reply that all representations had been taken into account and that due process had been followed.

But Alice wasn't reassured. "No jury would convict by such a slender margin, not even for stealing a few tarts, let alone a serious matter such as this. What kind of 'due process' gives approval without addressing any of the problems, and with no explanation, on a single casting vote from a portfolio holder having to oppose his own LDF, which had already been endorsed by the Wonderland Council?"

"Indeed you might wonder," said a Cheshire Cat, who had evidently appeared from nowhere. "After all, this is Wonderland. We're all mad here!" And he promptly disappeared again leaving just a sickly grin hanging in the air.

"Thank goodness this couldn't happen in the real world," thought Alice.
MIKE BRAIN

The First Aeroplane in Ipswich?

Having lived the first thirty or so years of my life in Belstead Road - the third generation in my family to do so - any mention of the area raises my interest. I recently learned that an acquaintance lived in the road opposite Salmet Close. She sadly commented that she did not know where the road name came from. So I told her -at least what I knew at the time.

Hemi Salmet was a French aviator. He flew Bleriot aeroplanes, designed, if not built, by Louis Bleriot who made fame by his English Channel crossing on 25 July 1909. It was, however, Salmet who first flew non-stop from London to Paris. Working as a mechanic at the newly established Bleriot Hendon School of Flying in 1911 he quickly gained his flying 'ticket' having been recorded as flying a Bleriot 50 hp craft on a 50 mile trip. Within months he was Chief Flying Instructor at the School. After reports of several first time flights and landings along England's Channel coast, in 1912 he was sponsored by the Daily Mail to undertake an aeroplane tour of the country. By the summer of that year he was working his way up the east coast, certainly dropping in on Southend, Colchester, Frinton and Walton.

A newspaper report at the time said, "Hemi Salmet, one of the 'Daily Mail Airmen', arrived at Ipswich during the evening of Saturday, 10 August 1912. Large crowds watched as he landed in one

of the meadows belonging to Gippeswyk Hall Farm, situated between Stone Lodge Lane and Gwydyr Road, having flown from Clacton via Felixstowe. At seven minutes to eight, he took off again and demonstrated his Bleriot aeroplane to the assembled multitude until it was almost dark. The Bleriot was then bedded down for the weekend but M Salmet did not stay in Ipswich." Having 'parked' his machine for the weekend, he gave over its security to the Stoke Police Constable (who incidentally was the grandfather of one of our Society members). Photographs are in existence of the constable with M Salmet and his aeroplane. On Monday 12 August, he returned to the town by train and left for Gravesend in his monoplane at about five minutes past six that evening.

It appears that Salmet's Daily Mail epic flights continued with tours of Wales, N W England and Ireland as well as London to Manchester flights and numerous further 'firsts' where his craft was adapted with floats to land on water. He went on working for the Daily Mail by delivering their Riviera Supplement to resorts on the Mediterranean coast - often dropping bundles by parachute. Throughout the First World War he flew for the French Army in early aerial combat, bombing and reconnaissance missions, earning himself the Military Medal.

I have been assured that this was the first landing in Ipswich of an heavier-than-air machine. Is the forthcoming centenary of this event an opportunity (or an excuse) for the residents of Salmet Close - or perhaps the people of Ipswich - to have a celebration?

JOHN BARBROOK

Improving Traffic Movement

One of the key ways of making traffic movement more effective (i.e. smoother and therefore swifter) is to remove obstructions, and this mainly means other motorists and pedestrians. Local authorities are being pushed into introducing enforcement strategies (fines) for existing regulations, and for infringement of Highway Code guidance. Examples include parking in bus lanes, blocking yellow box junctions, jumping amber traffic lights and waiting (parking) on yellow lines in busy streets. There is consideration of a count-down for pedestrians at pelican and toucan crossings with fines for jay-walking (common in Northern Europe), the removal of traffic lights from some road junctions allowing a free-for-all. It works if traffic proceeds at walking pace and eye contact is made between drivers - in much the same way as you avoid other shoppers when you push your trolley around a supermarket.

Other innovative traffic management techniques aimed at reducing traffic disruption include issuing permits for minor road works, lane rental charges for works on major roads and over-running charges for schemes that continue beyond their predicted timescale.

However the biggest single factor in traffic delays is motorists themselves and it is these inconsiderate vehicle drivers that the Government is pressing local authorities to control. Examples include parking on yellow lines in the rush hour, either because the car hasn't been removed from its overnight parking spot before 8 am or because the driver is only stopping for a second or two (typically in London to drop the children at school) and blocking junctions to ensure nobody pushes in (more frequently the vehicle entering from the side road wants to cross the line of stationary traffic rather than push in).

It is likely local authorities will engage additional traffic wardens or extend the role of the existing parking enforcement officers to meet the Government directive. In Ipswich the Â£25 million Local Transport Plan focuses on walking, cycling and public transport but includes linking traffic lights to smooth vehicle flow and reduce stop-start motoring.

Whether the new Government will continue with these proposals remains to be seen.
A view we might never see?

"Ipswich fit for the 21st century" was the multi- faceted scheme put forward by SCC with support from IBC. One aspect of it was these proposed changes for Princes Street/Civic Drive, removing the roundabout and installing traffic lights with priority for pedestrians (providing a better walking route from the station to the town centre) and pedal cycles. This is one of many schemes being held back pending the Government's spending review.

Celebrating People and Place

This was a conference held at the Royal Institute of British Architects in February. The setting had been chosen with a distinct intention of at once soothing and daunting the delegates. If you ever happen to be in the vicinity of Broadcasting House in Portland Place merely venture northwards about a 100m to Number 66. The exterior of RIBA is a marvel of a Grade II Listed 1930s building designed by Grey Wornum. The Jarvis Auditorium on the lower ground floor, where the presentations and panel discussions were held is a spacious comfortable hall with tiered seating, floor to ceiling wooden panelling and state of the art audio-visual equipment. This headquarters should go on your list of places to visit when next in London - access is free and the cafe with outdoor terrace, bar, restaurant and bookshop should not be missed.

The two days were hosted by English Heritage and were devoted to the discussion of issues to do with Blue Plaques. It provided an opportunity to have a say on a national level- to inform guidance and policy which is being devised by English Heritage and to share experiences with other interested groups. We discussed selection criteria, plaque design and inscription, historical research, consents, promotion and the development of schemes. For many delegates it was successful in providing an impetus to begin a scheme; for others like The Ipswich Society it was a way of validating practices which were already well advanced. Many of the speakers were from the English Heritage plaques team and a studious and well informed group they were - historians mainly and researchers of the first order and fine communicators in their diverse fields.

Other eminent knights, professors and doctors led and summarised in plenary sessions, followed by workshops where it was possible to share ideas and examine closely the activities which resulted in the celebration of people and places in such profusion around Britain. The panel discussion was extremely interesting because it enabled individuals to present five-minute expositions about their areas of expertise. The questions and comments which followed these sessions were fruitful.

David McLaughlin, the conservation architect from Bath, informed us of a method by which commemorations of the recipients of the plaques could become regular or annual events. The hook which was built into the casting of some Bath plaques would have a wreath attached to it on

birthdays or other memorable occasions. It meant that people with an interest - not just the civic society- could be reminded of the subject from time to time. The discussion on materials used for plaques fascinated many - especially when the cost of ceramic plaques was mentioned. Our practice of using roundels made in the same materials as road signs received a mixed response. However, the cost element and life expectancy of ours surprised many.

There were opportunities for the Society to show how well developed our scheme is - at the same time on a modest scale. The clearest interest was in our brochure - soon to be superseded - which may feature prominently in the English Heritage guidance and policy, to be published soon. (Editor: Yes, it does!) One member of their team, Dr Susan Skedd, has expressed a great interest in the design, production and costs of the brochure and there have been e-mails from other societies on the subject.

The Society is well regarded and we placed ourselves in a consultative position which may burgeon. The conference was certainly stimulating and successful.

TONY MARSDEN

National Trust Free Pass

The Ipswich Society has joined our new national body, Civic Voice, and as an introductory offer all Ipswich Society members can download a National Trust free day access pass. Use this link: [Fill in your contact details and then you are transferred to the National Trust website \(this is rather slow, so be patient\)](#) which gives you your pass to print.

Your pass will provide free access to any National Trust property during normal opening hours subject to a small number of restrictions and it is transferable so can be given to friends or family if you are already a member of the National Trust. If you do not have internet access you can obtain your free day pass by sending a stamped addressed envelope to Civic Voice, Unit 101, 82 Wood Street, The Tea Factory, Liverpool, L1 4DQ requesting one and providing contact details and stating that you are a member of The Ipswich Society.

Band in the Park

The Ipswich Society is once again sponsoring a Friends of Christchurch Park Sunday afternoon band concert in the park. This year the event is on 18 July and the music is by the Suffolk Concert Band. Come and join us for a pleasant afternoon - 2.30 pm at the bandstand in the Upper Arboretum, near the Henley Road entrance.

Stoke Tunnel SSSI

A new community information panel, sponsored by Abbey New Homes with information by GeoSuffolk.

When the tunnel approach was dug in the 1840s no one expected to find elephants! These and many other 210,000 year-old fossils are celebrated on this board. They represent a warm phase in the 'ice age' when the area was a shallow river or lake. Many animals came to drink at 'Lake Ipswich', including lions, rhinoceros, wild horses, oxen, mammoths, bears and tortoise. Their fossil remains, now in Ipswich Museum, bear witness to this interglacial when the climate was perhaps slightly warmer than at present.

The SSSI, a triangular area between the new housing development, the railway line and the tunnel approach is protected for future generations and for research. The panel explains the science behind this for the benefit of those who live in the new homes and for the people of Ipswich.

BOB & CAROLINE MARKHAM

A Towering Success

The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors has awarded the 23-storey The Mill (Cranfields) their accolade of 'Project of the Year', the overall winner of their East of England awards. It also won top award for regeneration. Architect John Lyall expressed his delight. It is certainly a 'landmark' as was said. The Society's view was that it was too tall. Our members probably have mixed opinions - seen from the town centre it is either massively blank or a bold statement. Most people seem to prefer the south facing side towards the water. But when lit up at night, the northern facades of the whole complex might impress even sceptics?

The Challenge of Empty Homes

David Ireland, Chief Executive of the Empty Homes Agency, came from London in February to talk to us on one of the coldest days of the winter. The two dozen souls who braved the ice and snow enjoyed an excellent talk and a lively discussion. The Agency is an independent charity set up some twenty years ago with governmental help. It exists as a focus for individuals and communities who are appalled at the number of homes known and seen to be empty while the Government is urging local authorities to build ever more dwellings.

David described some initiatives involving flats and houses - on a large scale in Liverpool. In Leeds, the Canopy Charity had taken on the renovation programme of a derelict block and over a period of time had renovated fifty dwellings. In another instance two people, one autistic and the other blind, formed a mutual partnership enabling them to lead useful lives in renovation work. More locally, a community organisation, Housing Action based in Saxmundham, operates across Suffolk and Norfolk. They are expanding rapidly and have recently brought one empty house into use in Ipswich. They are keen to develop more and would like to speak to landlords in Ipswich who have empty property.

There are many empty flats above shops, the owners of which (particularly those of national chains) are very reluctant to combine residential accommodation with retail use - something which was

pioneered in Ipswich in the 1980s, at a time when grant aid had been made available. Local authorities do have certain powers when faced with long-term empty properties but are usually reluctant to use them because of the amount of officer time and the resultant costs involved.

The problem of surplus flats such as those on the Waterfront was discussed. An unusual solution was adopted by a developer who modified a block of existing two- or three-person flats into larger numbers of single person units and met a particular need. The Waterfront flats in Ipswich pose a different challenge. They are not in disrepair, although many are unfinished. The problem is there are too many for the size of the market here. Experience from elsewhere is that over time the market finds a solution. Owners are forced to reduce rents to a point that the market will accept. This resolves the vacancy issue, but may not be the end of the problem. In Leeds and St Helens where this has occurred, students and low-income households have moved in.

The buildings in these places were designed for light users and have not weathered well with heavier use. Management of the blocks has also proved unsuitable and anti-social problems have developed. A further consequence is the knock-on effects elsewhere in the local housing market. Students in Leeds have flocked to the new apartment blocks causing the private rented sector in traditional student areas to collapse. Similar problems could develop in Ipswich. Some people have already commented that the private rented market in Ipswich is fragile and a flood of new properties could reduce margins and viability for many existing landlords.

David also spoke about newly announced Government funding for Ipswich Borough Council to tackle empty homes. The Agency campaigned for this fund and persuaded the housing minister to include Ipswich as one of 17 recipients. The money is revenue intended to help the Council resolve the 500 empty flats on the quayside. Hopefully this may help to turn the empty property in Ipswich into an asset for the people who live in the town.

TOM GONDRIS

(1350 empty homes in Ipswich, 844 of which empty for more than 6 months. IBC brought 80 of these back into occupancy in the past financial year. Evening Star, 18 March 2010.)

The New Wolsey Theatre

The New Wolsey Theatre: Achievements and Ambitions

It was fascinating (on 9 December) to hear David Edwards, Chairman of the New Wolsey Theatre's Board of Directors, talking about theatre in Ipswich. He explained why the old repertory system, last seen successfully operated in Ipswich by Dick Tuckey at the Arts Theatre, is no longer sustainable, particularly because of funding. He said it is essential now to broaden audiences - which the New Wolsey has succeeded in doing.

Their productions fall into three categories. The first, In-House Productions like *Noises Off* and *A Wonderful Life* are crucial but can only constitute a minority of the programme. Secondly, there are collaborations with other theatres and companies. (Some of us were surprised to hear that working with Colchester's Mercury Theatre has been successful because both theatres have fairly distinct catchment areas.) The third type of production is the touring company, of which there are many offering great varieties of this kind of work, although constrained by the Wolsey's 400 seating

capacity. He also spoke warmly of the Pulse Festival which after ten years has established itself as second only to the Edinburgh Fringe for new work. Also, working with young people continues to be a high priority, with four performance-based groups. Such schemes help to create new audiences and attract valuable grants.

He said that ticket sales had not been much affected by the recession, although programming has involved more 'playing safe'. Just under half of the Theatre's needs are covered by subsidies from the Arts Council, the County Council and Borough Council- subsidies which are secure till 2011, after which the Theatre will need to make a case for the following three years. "Subsidy is an investment," he maintained. For the investment of Â£1m per annum of public money, the local economy benefits to the tune of £6.2m through employment, eating out, car parking, etc. However, he remains concerned about future funding and about plans to extend the Theatre which are held up by the developers of the Civic Centre site being unable to make progress. The developers had intended to provide the 'shell' of an extension which the Theatre would have to fit out. Tesco's Grafton Way scheme could remove any such prospect from the town centre. However, we were left in no doubt that the New Wolsey is a valuable part of the cultural scene in Ipswich.

NEIL SALMON

Two Suffolk Naval Families

Two Suffolk Naval Families - Broke and Saumarez

This was no routine history lesson from Tim Voelcker, retired Ipswich businessman and member of The Ipswich Society. He described his coming across the careers of these two great sailors as "a chance discovery". His research which followed has clearly been an intellectual hobby and a labour of love, culminating in his recently published book and giving us the benefit of a talk on 10 March infused with enthusiasm.

Broke's fame derives from his command of the Shannon which defeated the American vessel Chesapeake off Boston in 1812. In one sense it was an old style naval duel; Broke sent his companion vessel away and challenged the Chesapeake to single combat. He had wanted to defeat an American warship so he could retire with honour. Much more important for the future of the British Navy was his professional development of the art of gunnery. Instead of merely closing on the enemy and firing at all and sundry, Broke perfected the precision firing at the enemy's gun deck to silence their guns. At his own expense he had fitted gun sights on his cannon and provided awards for his best marksmen. The battle was over in only eleven minutes. Tim said that it was an American DVD which had inspired his interest in the subject. The DVD explained away the defeat as being caused by their ship being built of fir unlike the good oak of the Shannon: whereas it can be deduced that Broke's expert gunnery was the main reason. Broke retired to live quietly at Nacton.

Tim's interest in Admiral Saumarez of Shrub land Hall stemmed from his reading of the Admiral's letters to his wife. As he said, they are a "goldmine" of information and more interesting than most official documents. Like Broke, Saumarez joined the Navy as a boy and by the time he was 25 commanded a 744gun Ship of the Line with 600 men. He was second-in-command to Nelson at the Battle of the Nile and prominent in many other sea battles. At home "he was the toast of every

table". But again his greater significance, we learned, was his political influence. His diplomatic restraint when on duty protecting British trade routes in the Baltic earned him the respect of the Russians and he became similarly trusted by Sweden. Tim argued that both Russia and Sweden allied themselves to Britain against Napoleon's France "largely because of Saumarez".

I rather think that most of his listeners would agree with Tim that Suffolk should be proud of these distinguished sailors. (The Saumarez family continued to live at Shrubland Hall until very recently.) Neither man was much concerned with prize money, unlike most of their contemporaries. And both contributed to their country's lasting successes in the 19th century.

NEIL SALMON

Sandringham House & Gardens

Sandringham House and Gardens (1 May)

A pleasant coach journey in fine weather delivered us to Sandringham and the private home of Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh. As we entered the gardens a notice by the gate informed us that this was a 'Protected Site under Section 128 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005'.

Such information was soon forgotten as I saw what I had really come to see (I am a retired geologist) - the use of Carstone, a local iron-rich brown sandstone, within the grounds and buildings. They were using the classic massive form of this rock to renew steps by the pond (top marks for this), whilst the thin-slabbed form was much in evidence in many of the buildings including Queen Alexandra's Nest by the lake.

I was also much impressed by the lamp posts with the Royal Coat of Arms, with one even having a crown on its top! One of the buildings sported a sun dial and, for the mathematical members, an Equation Table showing that this timepiece was slow by three minutes on the day of our visit.

And then into the house, a part of which is open to the public (the staff inside were most helpful - more top marks). A quick look in the bookcases soon found the 1830s Bridgewater Treatise by the Rev William Kirby of Barham near Ipswich - I wonder who last read them? There was of course so much to see, but I was interested to see that the State Rolls Royce Phantom V (used 1961-c.2002) had an 'AA' badge on it (were they ever called upon?) and that the Duke of Edinburgh collected Royal-related cartoons - there was a fine specimen of the Duke featuring in a Giles cartoon. Then off to the Visitor Centre (getting an ice cream on the way) where people were exchanging pictures of the Queen on coins and banknotes in return for pictures of Her Majesty on other items!

Thank you June Peck for an excellent 'June day' in May

BOB MARKHAM

Civic Voice

The Civic Trust collapsed at Easter 2009. Our Society, like 650 others, was affiliated to the Trust, an organisation which gave out some useful information and organised conferences now and again, but

really didn't do much for us. In its place Tony Burton and Ian Harvey have set up a new national body now called Civic Voice after a year of transition when it was called the Civic Society Initiative.

As Tony Burton explained to us at our meeting on 12 May in St Peter's Church, the aim of Civic Voice is to be a more pro active body than the Civic Trust. It wants to bring societies together so that their influence will be more than the sum of their parts. By encouraging a "civic sense" the organisation and its member societies could exercise more influence, especially as it would be the largest grouping of people interested in the environment and, unlike most other comparable bodies, Civic Voice wouldn't have a particular axe to grind. At the same time Civic Voice would encourage active localism which Tony Burton illustrated by reference to Oxford where "street clutter" is being removed, Bradford and Grimsby where very large old buildings are being re-used, and towns where public clocks were being monitored (as Brian Jepson has been doing for us in Ipswich).

Tony Burton asked us to recognise how societies are viewed by the general public. On the one hand people often think of civic societies as caring and well intentioned: on the other hand they can be seen as having a low profile or being old-fashioned, "organisations for intelligent crumbies". (That produced a laugh!) He urged societies to get more people involved, to be more inclusive and to avoid being almost routinely negative so that when it's really necessary to say "NO" that would be more noticeable and weighty.

For Civic Voice to be more helpful and influential, member societies would have to pay more than they did to the Civic Trust. Mr Burton only spoke about the present rate of subscription. Your Committee will have to debate what more could or should be done by our Society.

Before the talk we were able to admire the skill and energy of the Ipswich Youth Steel Band which rehearses regularly in St Peter's on Wednesdays. The ten players were not only impressive but they showed us the value of such community groups using St Peter's - a fine example of Lottery money being put to good use in the renovation of this important church.

TIC on the Waterfront

Information for visitors to the Waterfront

A small branch of the Tourist Information Centre has been opened on the Waterfront. It is housed in the offices of Viking Mariners on the corner of Wherry Lane and the quayside, close to Isaac's. The Society welcomes this initiative, the result of a partnership between IBC and a local business, because it will contribute to forging more links between the Waterfront and the town centre.

Letters to the Editor

GLOBAL WARMING

From M L Chelk

I read the Society's April Newsletter with interest until I was surprised to find an article 'Do You Trust Science?' by Mike Brain on the subject of global warming. Surely this is not an appropriate

subject for the Newsletter. If we have articles on global warming we can go on with articles about evolution, religion, the war in Iraq and other contentious subjects but that is not what The Ipswich Society is for.

Mr Brain argues that his boiler is sound and we should therefore trust that claims of global warming must be correct. This does not seem much of an argument. We now know that the scientists at the Climatic Research Unit at the University of East Anglia made their case for global warming by manipulating the evidence and illegally withholding the data it was based on. Mr Brain refers to this as errors but those concerned deliberately misled the public and the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change who relied on their reports. This is not science and the results of such manipulation are certainly not to be trusted. Besides, there is no single scientific view on the matter. There are many professional climatologists who do not accept global warming. That is why the CRU found it necessary to play these tricks.

A REPLY TO MR CHELK'S LETTER

From Mike Brain

I thank Mr Chelk for his interest in my article, and the opportunity to seek to reconcile our divergent views. Locally, adapting to climate change is recognised in the Borough's Local Development Framework as one of the key challenges for Ipswich over the plan period to 2025, being prominent in Policy CS1 on Sustainable Development and Climate Change.

It must therefore also be an essential element in the Society's business.

And with regard to the University of East Anglia, very many more newspaper column inches were devoted to the alleged manipulation of climate data by the Climatic Research Unit than to reporting that two independent enquiries have since vindicated UEA of any such

At eight sides of A4, my complete reply to Mr Chelk is far too lengthy to print in full in the Newsletter, but I welcome e-mail requests to mikebrain1@btinternet.com from any Society members who would like to receive a digital copy.

[P.S. Mr Chelk has replied at length to Mike Brain, who has replied in turn, also too lengthily for the Newsletter, important though the correspondence is. Editor]

SHARED SPACE

From Roger Jarrold

In respect of the interesting article by John Norman in April's Newsletter on Shared Spaces I would just like to make one important point.

My Best Man and ex-National Service colleague has been blind since the age of 40. He is now 75 and lives in Brighouse, Yorkshire. He is now on his fourth guide dog Sparky and when we have discussed Shared Space schemes he has said that the total absence of kerbs makes the job of the dog impossible as normally the kerb gives it the signal to stop.

VIVID MEMORIES OF THE ORIGINS OF CLIFF QUAY POWER STATION

From David Routh

On page 19 of the April Newsletter, 'Selling the Town's Silver', the new power station at Cliff Quay was built after the Second World War and not in 1935. The main contractors were Edmund Nuttall Sons & Co (London) Ltd.

I was a young 17 year old Sales Representative for Bayleys Printers Ltd of 24 Falcon Street, Ipswich and always looking for new business in the Ipswich area. I went on my cycle late one afternoon in December 1946 (almost dusk) to Cliff Quay and met a workman whom I knew helping

to level the site and he directed me to a large wooden shed in the middle of the area which served as Nuttall's office. I banged on the door and was invited to enter, to be confronted by three gentlemen, Mr Bradford, the manager, Mr J Gethin, the clerk and a Mr Knights. They asked me what I wanted and I informed them I represented Bayleys and could I sell them some printing and stationery. They replied that I was just who they were looking for and gave me an order - mainly scribbling pads to a value of £5-2 shillings, which was a decent order as I was earning about £2-10 shillings a week. We continued to supply them for the next few years. In February 1949 we supplied and billed British Electricity Authority, Cliff Quay Power Station in the newly built office. Our first order for £3-17 shillings must have been soon after they opened.

Incidentally, in the same Newsletter page 20, 'Blue Plaques', the last paragraph should read 'Sir Daniel Ford Goddard' and 'Clifford Grey" should be with an 'e'.

Student Pubs

Week in and week out acres of newspaper column inches, hours of conference debate and term after term of staff room gossip are dedicated to the ways in which students learn whilst engaged in tertiary education. Despite the best brains in the land, one crucial area is always overlooked - the development of young minds whilst they are 'down the pub'. Learning resource centres have replaced libraries, smart boards have replaced blackboards and laptops are now used for production of essays, dissertations and projects, but at lunchtime, late afternoon and most evenings students still meet and discuss life 'down the pub'.

In the pursuit of academic achievement and vocational advantage students are reputed to work into the small hours, and this is true, but it is true because they have spent all evening' down the pub'. The pub is where students learn essential social skills, coming face to face, perhaps for the first time, with members of the opposite sex, and discovering that there are people who come, not just from down the road, but come with different accents, different tongues and different ideas about life, politics and religion. The pub is also where students pick up essential educational techniques (plagiarism, speed reading* and false friendship to enable the borrowing of an already completed text).

Going to the student bar is not the same. The eclectic mix of characters is limited to young people, the range of conversation and the advice proliferated much narrower and the choice of music limited. If students want to develop their souls and their self-esteem they need to go 'down the pub'. ['Speed reading' is the grabbing of selected words from the academic's published text immediately before a seminar in an attempt to convince the lecturer that the student has actually carried out the recommended reading!]

JOHN NORMAN