

**Cornhill  
update  
page 3**

**Bumper  
28 page  
issue**



The Ipswich Society

# NEWSLETTER

October 2016

Issue 205

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HMARK BEESLEY 2016

*Front cover:* Ipswich Society member Mark Beesley has recently completed a commission for a painting about Ipswich from the **Two Rivers Medical Centre**. The work hangs in the new medical centre on Woodbridge Road East, built for two existing Ipswich surgeries which have amalgamated and expanded. The painting contrasts the old and the modern aspects of Ipswich. It is based on views from the roof of the Willis building. It is not a literal view of the town but an impression, emphasising the streets and buildings which give Ipswich its unique character – the medieval churches, the university building, the Mill, the Unitarian Meeting House and, of course, the Orwell Bridge. The aim was to contrast the old centre of the town with the irregular nature of its old timber-framed buildings within the medieval street plan and the new, high-rise skyline of the Waterfront area. Details of the painting have been enlarged and incorporated into the interior design of the building.

### Editorial

One of the pleasures (and concomitant headaches) of being *Newsletter* editor is the wealth of subject matter and material jostling for space. At last on page 10 we can include an article about Shakespeare's link to Ipswich. In a year when there has been media overload about the Bard and when Ipswich's most famous theatrical son, Trevor Nunn, triumphantly directed 'the only Shakespeare play in the canon he hasn't done': *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at The Wolsey Theatre in July, it may be fortuitous that this article is a little late and thus avoids overkill. It was 500 years since the death of the poet in April.

Another held-over piece is the article reprinted on page 25 about the beating of the bounds for St Clement Church, perhaps particularly timely when plans are moving forward for the conversion of the church into The Ipswich Arts Centre.

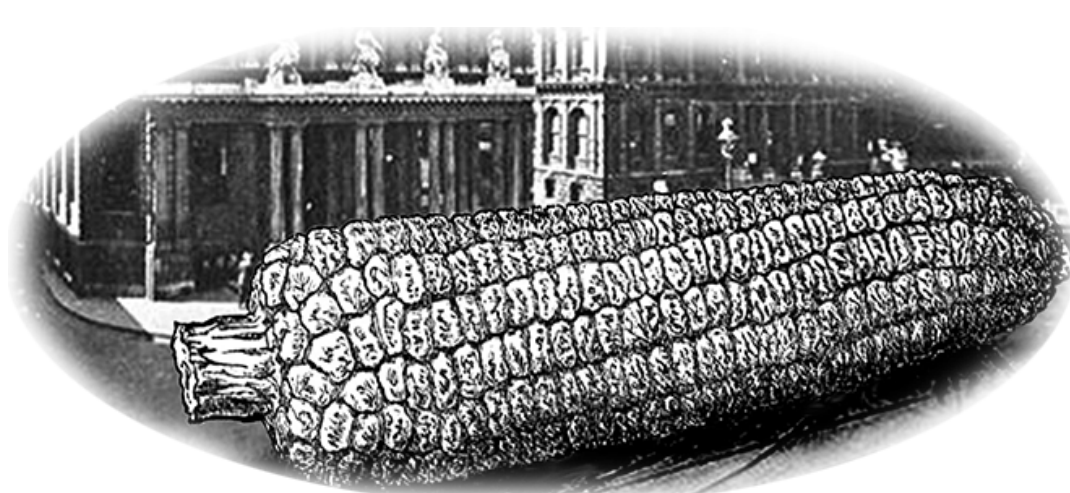
Finally, here is a composite photograph to commemorate the sad demise of British Home Stores. The first floor of the Ipswich branch featured a lively carved bracket showing a lion (now painted white). It was not so when it was in the care of John Field who saved it and offered it to the builders of the new store which followed the Butter Market fire in 1992. Let us hope that we may be able to view the lion again once a new use has been found for the building.



## Chairman's remarks

Result!

Following lengthy campaigning by the Ipswich Society and over 2,000 respondents to the Borough Council's public consultation the proposals for 'levelling' the Cornhill are being revised.



The Society consulted widely with its membership for both the first set of proposals, and for the revised scheme issued earlier this year. Our stance from the beginning has been that we are not against change, not against refurbishment (a carpet that has been walked on for thirty years is bound to look a bit frayed) but we were against a scheme that effectively halves the space for assemblies in the centre of town (and in this case *assembly* very clearly includes the market).

David Ellesmere and others on the 'Vision Partnership' have recognised that the overwhelming voice of public opinion was against the proposals (in our opinion there was no great difference between scheme 1 and scheme 2). The revision did not address our, and that of many others, fundamental criticism. That is, that although the scheme would improve access to the ground floor of the Town Hall it would seriously curtail the free flow of pedestrians, wheelchairs and perambulators across the open space.

To quote David Ellesmere from his press release "I think it's probably likely that we won't go forward with exactly the scheme that we went out to consultation on". David, and Hall McKnight if you're listening, the basis of both scheme 1 and scheme 2 is wrong and a complete revision, including access to the Town Hall is required. It might be worthwhile asking the Statutory Consultees before any further work is undertaken of their requirements and limitations, (Suffolk CC Highways for the line of the Public Highway, Heritage England in respect of the listed buildings, the Emergency Services for their requirements in terms of access for fire appliances and ambulances and the disabled access group about steps and ramps, amongst others).

There is also a considerable amount of public opinion that the business case does not correspond with the cost of the proposed investment (some £3.5 million pounds).

Next, a big thank you to everyone who took part in, or helped to organise Heritage Open Days, almost every venue and historic building open to the public reported record numbers, inquisitive interest and a wide age range of participants. It was the Ipswich Society's most successful event ever.

*(continues)*

I should particularly mention the flyer which was widely distributed to numerous establishments up to 90 minutes travel time from Ipswich, and the superb booklet which became available closer to home from mid-August.

Special thanks to our Treasurer, Graham Smith, and designer, Su Heath, for getting both flyer and booklet together and ready for distribution on time, and thanks to the team of helpers who travelled far and wide ensuring that East Anglia knew Ipswich was holding the event.

A quick reminder that the Ipswich Society Annual Awards evening will take place next month (November 16) providing there are sufficient nominations to make judging worthwhile. I'm sure that there are still projects that we've missed and you've just got time to phone, or email Tony Marsden with a reminder (contact details on page 27). Don't assume somebody else has already nominated it; better to receive two calls than to miss a potential winner.

I am heartened this month by the ban, by York City Council, of 'A' boards in the city streets, and by the campaign led by Griff Rhys Jones for the removal of inappropriate roadside advertising. Attaching a 48 sheet poster to the side of an abandoned artic trailer and dumping it where it can best be seen by passing motorists flaunts the most basic of planning guidelines, and blights the countryside.

The reason they remain is a quirk in the law that quite reasonably allows the name of the company to be attached to the side of their vehicles, allows farmers to park agricultural machinery wherever they deem necessary (on their own land) and providing the offending 'bill board' has wheels (however rusty) it technically remains a vehicle.

Drive south via the A12 or around the M25 through Essex and such eyesores abound. They could and should be removed; the Highways Act specifically forbids hoardings alongside main roads in rural areas.

I studied marketing as a student so I should know the rationale and advantages of 'A' boards. Like all advertising they are designed to draw attention to your business. As Chairman of the local Civic Society I hold that they are a major contributor to street clutter, they are an obstruction to the unhindered passage of pedestrians and a visual intrusion into the street scene.

Well done York City Council; take note Essex County Highways.

*John Norman*

### **The Broomhill Pool**

Following my article in last Christmas' *Newsletter*, just a quick update. The preliminary contract has been won by the Ipswich professionals that have been so supportive both in their time and services since the start of the campaign fourteen years ago. Led initially by Bill Haward and later by Alan Wilkinson, who is now with KLH Architects, the international tendering process has been won. Many of those tendering swam in the pool when young! The operator, Fusion Lifestyle, has commissioned Baker Langham to carry out a public consultation on our wishes and fears. They opened the exercise at the pool on Heritage Open Days.

*Mike Cook*

## Planning Matters

**Land north of the railway & east of Henley Road** (Outline – Crest, Nicholson). 1,100 dwellings, local shopping centre, primary school, sports facilities, Country Park, open space, 2 vehicle accesses to Henley Road, two railway bridges, one for pedestrians and cyclists and one for vehicles. As the application is an outline, most matters are reserved so details are not available. Our concentration will be directed towards transport and services. The overall general plans seem good and the Country Park not just a token. Crest have a good architect and may have changed since Hayhill times. We shall see. However, it is important to realise that this is just the first of many applications to follow for the Ipswich Garden Suburb as we now know it which will transform the Northern Fringe of the town over the next 15 years. Upwards of ten thousand people will live there with schools, shops, medical centres, and leisure facilities including a country park. The implications for the Town are huge and have hardly been taken on board. But it is going to happen.

**Land between John Lewis & the railway.** Ten 2.0 Megawatt gas powered turbines to produce 20 Megawatts of electricity for the Grid and...

**Old Cliff Quay power station site.** 48 bio-diesel generators, requiring two tankers a week, producing 40 Megawatt stand-by electricity for the grid. Not on for more than two hours/day, or 200 hrs/year, all between 7.30am & 10.30pm. This is the new pattern of power production; the North Sea and solar panels are producing a lot but instant back-up is required for wind-less and sun-less times. We are looking at the deathknell of huge power stations, however fuelled. These generators will provide that relatively discreetly, if not very sustainably.

**Donalds Volvo & Mazda garage.** Twin glass and steel boxes at the roundabout in Futura Park. The west side of the old Cranes site, now Futura Park, will become a major go-to auto centre with Jaguar, Land-Rover, Audi and now Volvo with Mazda.

**Civic Drive & St Matthews Street** (former Iceland & Queen's Head). Change of use to large global fusion food restaurant. The owners are Chatham-based. No details whatsoever of external appearance.

**The Cornhill.** We've sent our objections to the scheme in and spoken to the architects. We await the results of the 2000+ replies that were sent (they were predominantly strong objections) and a planning application. [See also *Chairman's remarks*, page 3.]

**Orwell Crossings.** A business plan and a proposal for three crossings of the Upper Orwell has been allocated £85 million in the Government's infrastructure list and Suffolk County Council's Cabinet has allocated £10 million to carry forward the planning stages. Details of the connecting roads, how high the bridge is from around the Cobbold Brewery to Bath Street and of the vehicle bridge across New Cut are all sparse. It seems curious to us that ABP have agreed to pedestrians and cyclists crossing the lock when we fought a Rights of Way case a few years ago at which their QC persuaded the Planning Inspector that it was not possible. It is unlikely it will have as beneficial an effect on traffic in the Star Lane gyratory as their advisers say. We shall see. Perhaps it needs Brussels funding.

**Mike Cook**

## Four new Blue Plaques for Ipswich women

*From top left:  
Nina Frances Layard,  
Margaret Tempest,  
Constance Andrews,  
Mary Whitmore*



<http://ipswichwomeninhistory.co.uk>

Exciting times are in prospect for the Blue Plaques with which the society adorns our town this coming autumn. Having received mild criticism from feminist groups for the lack of female candidates for the plaques since inception of the scheme at the turn of the millennium, we now look forward to four Blue Plaques being unveiled during the course of October.

The Ipswich Women's Festival Group, which aims to research and celebrate local women's achievements via their excellent website, in conjunction with the Society will oversee the unveiling in early October of plaques around the town.

Joy Bounds, who leads the women's group and Tony Marsden, Society Vice-Chairman and responsible for the plaques, have spent a great deal of time during the course of the year establishing the credentials of the women in question. With other members of the Festival Group, speedy activity has seen the compilation of data, lengthy negotiations for permissions and detailed discussions in two cases with the Borough Council on the exact placement of plaques themselves.

The role of the Society has been to sponsor this event and to support it fully, procuring the plaques and seeing the new Blue Plaques brochure into production ready for the unveiling.

On October 8th from 2 till 4pm a trail which starts from St Edmunds Road via Foundation Street ending up at the Cornhill will witness the celebration of, respectively the artist/illustrator **Margaret Tempest**, (Lady Mears); **Nina Layard**, the archaeologist; leading Ipswich suffragette **Constance Andrews** and **Mary Whitmore** MBE who was the first woman mayor in 1946.

*Tony Marsden*

## **The 'Woolverstone Wish' has been granted**

Up until very recently if you were living in Suffolk and were unfortunate enough to be suffering from cancer and in need of chemotherapy then you would have received your treatment in the old Woolverstone Wing of the Ipswich Hospital. With room for only 15 patient treatment chairs it was a small cramped space, impersonal and with no room for loved ones to be with you.

Seven years ago a small group of people including hospital staff, volunteers, patients and their loved ones had a strong desire to change this and they set up a fundraising group called the 'Woolverstone Wish' with the aim of raising £800,000. Their will and determination to improve the facilities for the treatment of cancer patients enabled them to achieve their goal within five years. A fantastic achievement, not only to raise the money, but to successfully share their dream with the community and make Macmillan Cancer Support aware of the need for better facilities.

In 2014 the Woolverstone Wish fund was made up to £1million by The Ipswich Hospital Charitable Trust and they joined forces with Macmillan Cancer Support to set about raising a further £3.7 million to enable them to build a brand new £4.7 million treatment centre.

In just two years the new treatment centre was built and paid for, mostly by the generosity of the people of Suffolk. It is an amazing, fully functional place offering space, light and up-to-the-minute treatment facilities with privacy when it is needed. Twice as many people can be treated at any one time and they can be cared for in more comfortable surroundings with their loved ones by their side. Whilst no one wants to have to go through such treatment it is reassuring that it can now be undertaken in the best possible environment, and with the ability to treat twice as many patients at one time; the waiting list is down, as is the need to send people elsewhere.

So well done if you gave your time, put money in the pot, made a cake, drank some coffee, bought a raffle ticket, ran a race or some other fundraising event over the last seven years for either Woolverstone Wish or Macmillan Coffee Morning. You now know where your money went and that your contribution has made a tremendous difference. Please keep giving, as funds are still needed to provide specialist care, Macmillan nurses and those little extras that make a difference.

***Christine Norman***

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### **Planning matters bonus**

A Planning Application for a statue commemorating Edith Cook (born in Fore Street, 1878 - a Blue Plaque marks the house) has been refused permission by Ipswich Borough Council. The Society responded to the application suggesting that the proposed statue was underwhelming for the prominent position at the junction of Fore Street and Long Street.

A further application for a large detached house adjacent to Woodside in Constitution Hill (the top of the sheep meadow when viewed from Valley Road) has been granted permission. The applications for this site have had a chequered history over the last few years, most being refused but an earlier one – having been granted permission – was never built.

## Book review

*Ipswich in the Great War* by Rachel Field. Pen & Sword, 2016, 176pp. (ISBN 9781473828117). £12.99

This is a handsome book, well put-together with an intriguing colour picture on the front cover which encourages one to dip in.

What we find is a warm, generous social history of Ipswich with some reference to the county and surrounding towns and villages. There are informative and fascinating monochrome illustrations which are very well chosen. Furthermore, the captioning of them is in itself abundant and illuminating.

The anecdotal accounts are widely sourced and adjust to the tone of the times - bewilderment and awe followed by incredulity and grief culminating in surprise and jubilation.

The cooler factual and mundane matters of the times are an equally captivating counterweight to the human stories: the excellent reference section at the end has, for example, good details of the Suffolk Regiment's involvement in the Great War. The accompanying concluding timeline is also very useful in encapsulating much of the events of the Great War as they affected the town. Moreover, the bibliography of research at the Suffolk Record Office is extremely detailed and very useful for anyone else who cares to follow up the information provided by the author in this estimable book.

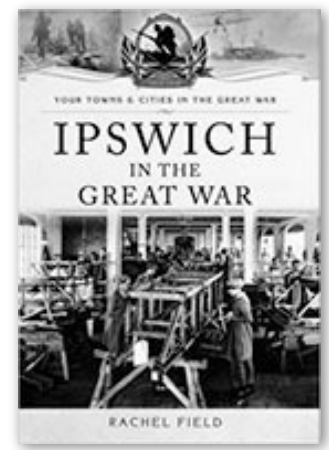
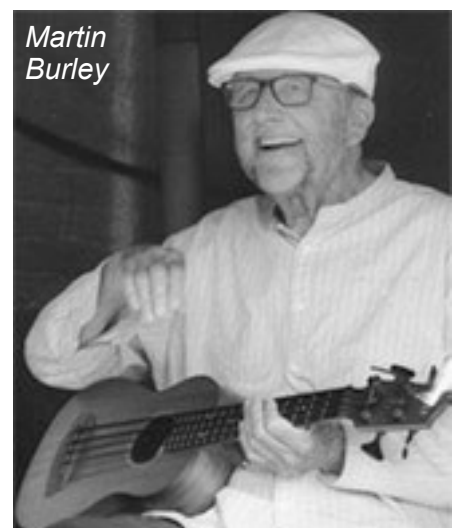
From VC war hero to "conchie", from schoolchild to local worthy, the book captures a sense in the people of the time of the resonant, repugnant and yet ultimately redemptive effect the war had on the town.

The audience for this book is broad; an absorbing quick read or one to refer to from time to time. It would be appreciated equally by a student as by someone who wants to become swiftly familiar with the Great War.

*Tony Marsden*

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**Global Rhythm**, Ipswich's annual free festival which showcases the best of world and roots music and dance in the perfect setting of Christchurch Park was in its sixth year this July. The main stage has been renamed in memory of Martin Burley to recognise and celebrate his contribution to the musical life of Ipswich. Martin, who sadly died earlier this year, was a founding member of Peppery Productions and a musician himself, playing in the blues/jazz/Americana duo The Hofners. He also presented a Peppery world music programme on Ipswich Community Radio (105.7fm). A family man and retired teacher, Martin was always recognisable at music events by his trademark white cloth cap. His legacy to our town is the establishment of Ipswich as a host to world-class bands and musicians performing ska, country, Afrobeat, reggae, Bollywood, Latin jazz, Congolese rumba, folk, bhangra (and so much more).







## **Creeks, cockles and Cockneys: a Society outing**

On Tuesday July 19, the hottest day of the year, we had a trip to Southend. First we stopped at Hadleigh [to the north of Canvey Island] near the Olympic Mountain Bike course. We had refreshment at Hadleigh Farm overlooking the ruins of Hadleigh Castle, guarding the Thames Estuary. The Farm was built by William Booth in the 1890s as a place of refuge and training for the destitute Cockneys; the Salvation Army still owns the site today.

A coach tour followed, exploring the creeks and wide open spaces of today's landscape. We made our way to Southend to enjoy lunch at the Palace Hotel, overlooking the sea. Free time was spent here and some of our party went on the pier: the longest in England. The EU has given millions of pounds to help with the developments of the sea front. Many Cockneys came here on the train in the past for a day out.

We drove a short distance to Leigh-on Sea, a thriving fishing and smuggling village when Southend was naught but a sleepy hamlet. The Leigh fishermen, who were once condemned as smugglers, are today celebrated as Dunkirk heroes and they keep alive Leigh's reputation as the world centre of the cockle trade. We enjoyed walking down the main street with a ramshackle mix of cockle sheds, sailors' inns and clapboard cottages. Thanks must go to our guide, Martin, of the City & Village Tours who made the day so interesting.

***Barbara Barker***

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## **King's Lynn and the New Hanseatic League: a Society outing**

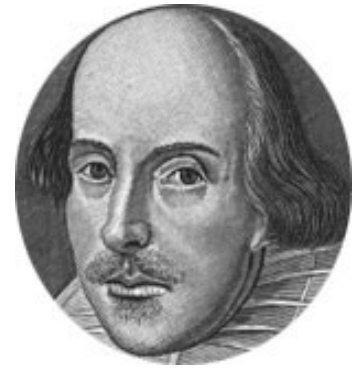
We were so lucky to have Dr Paul Richards, local historian and one-time Mayor of King's Lynn for our guide on our visit there on June 8th – with him we visited 'behind the scenes', gardens, courtyards and more in this lovely historic town. Clifton House for example, the best merchant house in Lynn, is privately owned but we visited the garden because Dr Richards lives next door and shares the garden. Like our own 'Isaacs' warehouse, Clifton House extends back from the quay to the shopping street and has medieval origins, including a beautiful Tudor tower. We were guided round Hanse House, one of the original 'kontors' or warehouses of the Hanseatic League - indeed the only surviving intact Hanseatic warehouse in England. King's Lynn, according to Dr Richards, is an *Edge Town* – on the edge of the Fens, on the edge of East Anglia (it is closer to Leicester than to Great Yarmouth), on the edge of the Midlands and on the edge of the Hanseatic League – it was a partner town along with Great Yarmouth and Ipswich.

The Hanseatic League or Hansa was a confederation of merchants stretching from the Baltic to the North Sea in operation from the 13th to 17th centuries. A New Hanseatic League has been formed, with its headquarters in Lübeck, for those with connections to the medieval Hansa – King's Lynn was the first English town to join in 2006. Great Yarmouth followed soon after and we look forward to Ipswich putting in its application and becoming a member of this historic economic association.

A big thank you to Jessica Webster and Margery Sheldrake for organising this splendid day out with so much relevance to our own town.

***Caroline Markham***

## Shakespeare in Ipswich?



A recent BBC web article examined this subject in some detail. Shakespeare's company visited Ipswich ten times – an unusually high number for that company. They first visited Ipswich in 1594-5, the year in which the troupe was re-formed as the Lord Chamberlain's Men. As a young writer-actor, Shakespeare himself would probably have travelled with the troupe.

James Stokes, Suffolk editor from the Records of Early English Drama, writes: "Ipswich had been a port, perhaps England's oldest, since AD 600, and the city (*sic*) had been a chartered borough from 1200. It was counted among the ten richest provincial cities during the period. An important trading centre since before the Conquest, it was the hub for converging river traffic; it had become an important cloth town; engaged in continental trade. In addition, the city, as was Suffolk in general, was home to nationally important families of the first rank. For those reasons and others, East Anglia was the favoured playing circuit among major troupes."

The town paid Shakespeare's company 40 shillings for its performance (four times as much as four of the other troupes visiting the town, and twice as much as the Queen's Men, which was mainly a provincial touring company. Clearly Shakespeare's company was perceived locally as the most important of the six troupes. The date, venue, or play title for this first visit by Shakespeare and his colleagues are not recorded, but the company would have had access to Shakespeare's early history plays, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Richard III*, among others: all of them huge crowd-pleasers.

The troupe next visited in 1603, now as the newly formed King's Men or His Majesty's Players. For that performance they received 26 shillings 8 pence. They were the only professional troupe to visit Ipswich that year, but the town did pay considerable amounts to its own company of waits (singers and musicians). Given the extensive use of music in many of Shakespeare's plays, perhaps the waits became part of the performance; other records confirm that the Ipswich waits acted as well as played music.

Whether Shakespeare was present with his troupe in Ipswich in 1603, the records do not say. But this was their first visit representing the new monarch, King James I: a rather important moment. During the intervening eight years since the company's first visit, the Bard had written his great history plays, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, other great comedies, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Julius Caesar*. Why would the troupe have picked something other than one of those masterpieces – accessible in their repertoire – for the mayor, burgesses, and others in the Ipswich audience?

Shakespeare's company performed again in Ipswich on 9 May 1609, by which time The Bard had written all the great tragedies, and two of the romances. The King's Men visited again in 1617-18, as did the Queen's (Anne's) Players. The two troupes were each paid one pound, six shillings, eight pence, an amount that appears to indicate both monetary inflation and the growing importance of royal troupes throughout the kingdom. Although Shakespeare had retired in 1613, the company still had access to the complete canon of his plays.

During the reign of Elizabeth I, Ipswich was a magnet for the most important national troupes. During her long reign, between four and seven of those troupes visited annually. In the reigns of James I and Charles I, the number fell to between two and three troupes each year.

Two striking features occur in the records. First, the Queen's Players (the royal troupe committed to provincial performance) visited far more often than those of any other patron. Second, during the reigns of James and Charles, most troupes fell away. Only the various royal troupes (Queen's,

Prince's, Princess, King's, Children of the Revels, and Lady Elizabeth) visited regularly. The Queen's Men certainly would have had access to Shakespeare's plays as their performance texts. Appearances by The King's Players in Ipswich tapered off. Eventually in 1634-5, on 2 May 1637, and on 20 February 1638, each time when they arrived, the town paid the players not to perform; in consideration of their royal patron, the worthies of the town gave the troupe what the city called a gratuity, essentially a payment to go away.

Whether the town worthies feared the spread of illness, or local puritans objected, three refusals in four years seems a significant pattern. The company's appearance in 1638 marks the melancholy end of sponsored professional drama in Ipswich until the Restoration.

Between 1564 and 1572, some records indicate that the plays were staged in the Moot Hall (also called the Guild Hall or The Hall), 'converted from, or erected immediately to the north of, the redundant medieval church of St. Mildred.' which was located on The Cornhill. Shakespeare's troupe probably performed in the Ipswich Moot Hall in 1594-5, 1603, and 1609, during the peak of Shakespeare's time with The King's Men. In 1614, the town ordered that no plays be staged in The Moot Hall, indicating that officials were putting an end to a common practice.

[See also John Southworth's book *Shakespeare the player*, History Press 2002.]



Photograph from the Society's Image Archive

Above is a view of the north side of the narrow Tankard Street (now Tacket Street) looking east. The Tankard Inn had begun life as the home of Sir Humphrey Wingfield (Wingfield Street is nearby). It was transformed into an inn during the early 18th Century. The Salvation Army Citadel in the foreground began life as the first permanent theatre in Ipswich; it was built by Henry Betts, a local brewer and owner of the Tankard Inn in 1736. In 1741 an unknown actor called Lyddal made his debut appearance as an African slave called Aboan in Thomas Southerne's play *Oroonoko*. This unknown actor was in fact the soon-to-be-famous Shakespearian, David Garrick. All of the buildings in this view were demolished during the road widening of Tacket Street. Today's entrance to the NCP car park on the site of the old Steam Brewery is to the left of this picture.

## The Ipswich Flood Barrier

The Environment Agency is the main organisation driving this project, in partnership with Ipswich Borough Council and The Haven Gateway Partnership. The initial task was to produce the *Ipswich Flood Defence Management Strategy*. This was approved by DEFRA (Department of Food and Rural Affairs) in March 2006 with an estimated price tag of 45 million pounds. The objective was to ensure that the centre of Ipswich would have only a 1 in 300 chance of tidal and fluvial (river-flow) flooding each year in a 100 year period that is, until 2106.

The works connected to the project go much further than just a river barrier which can be raised and lowered. They involved strengthening the defences all around the upper part of the river estuary to the east and west of the lock gates, which were built in the 1970s. To quote the Agency's :-

“Similar to the Thames Barrier, although quite a bit smaller, the 20 metre wide gate will rise during periods of extreme high tides to hold back the North Sea and, with the help of the sheet piling, keep Ipswich dry.

When finished, the works will reduce the risk of flooding to 1,608 homes and 422 businesses and support key infrastructure such as the fire station and council buildings. Everything upstream of the barrier will be protected against a tidal surge like the one experienced in 1953 and, more recently, in 2013. That will be hugely reassuring to the home and business owners on the waterfront, many of whom suffered thousands of pounds worth of damage and disruption after the tidal surge in 2013.”

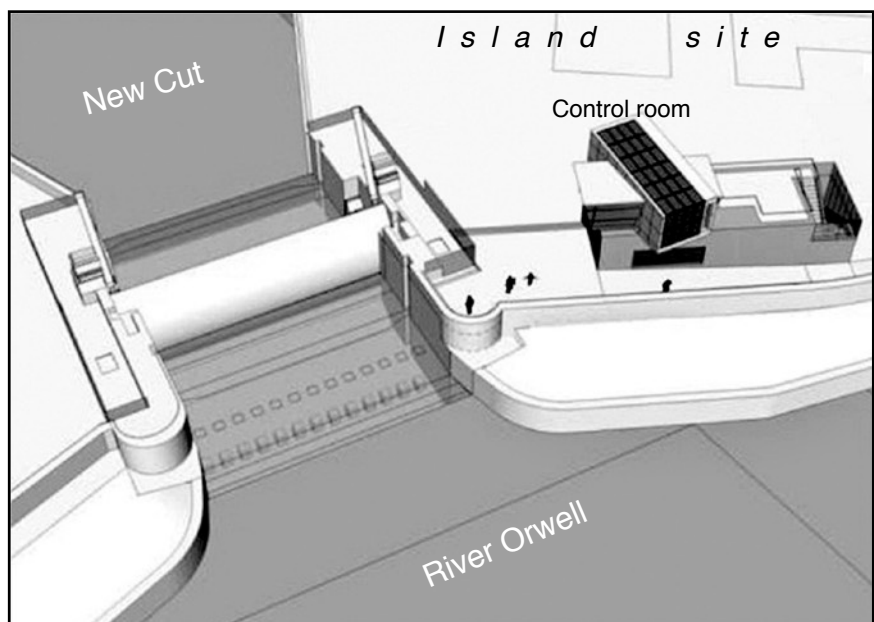
*Andrew Osborne, Project Manager for the Environment Agency*

The other works required were to replace and relocate two huge power cables in sizeable vertical and horizontal shafts taking them well beneath the Wet Dock lock entrance in a chalk layer. One of the main consumers of this electricity is the Port of Felixstowe, so breaking the power supply was not an option. Also there was flood gate replacement at the Wet Dock entrance and refurbishment of the Handford and Horseshoe Weir sluices. The tripartite project involved Associated British Ports (ABP), UK Power Networks and the Environment Agency.



*Ipswich Society members view the Ipswich Flood Barrier in the evening sunshine; composite picture taken on Tuesday July 19, 2016 from offices near the end of Bath Street.*

The tender for the movable tidal barrier was awarded to the main contractor, VBA in Holland, in November 2014. Anyone aware of the history of the silting up of the Orwell will not be surprised that dredging works were important to ensure that the barrier would fit. Dredging, unsurprisingly, will play its role in the future, too. A cofferdam, a temporary watertight enclosure pumped dry to enable the barrier's construction at the southern entrance to New Cut, was completed in 2016.



The tidal gate itself will be delivered in April 2017 and will become operational in the spring of 2018. This is a major engineering project happening at the end of Bath Street with a shifting cast of medium cranes, huge cranes, pile-drivers, concrete-pourers, metal structures and changing staff specialists, labourers, engineers and managers. It required an Act of Parliament to build it with a range of licences, conservation consents and legal agreements. When complete there will be an unmanned control room on the southern end of the Island site (see illustration). Sophisticated monitoring and modelling systems will give ample warning of potentially extreme weather and tidal conditions – then staff will operate the barrier appropriately. However, most of the time the 20 metre high radial gate will remain underwater in its recess in the river bed.

The projected final cost is 58 million pounds. Once completed the scheme will unblock various developments in the town, so the effect of the barrier goes far further than managing water. We should all be grateful for this investment in our town and the wider benefits upriver. The original prediction was that the Ipswich barrier would be raised once every four years; the computer projections for global warming suggest that this might rise to six times per year in 100 years time.  
**R.G.**



## Not now 'a nation of shopkeepers' – unless you are internet savvy

The writer of the letter in Issue 203, William Thompson of Norwich, said he worked for Smyth Brothers in Fore Street. During the years which he describes, Smyth's were on both sides of Fore Street. They operated extensively on the north side, but also with small premises on the south side next to Wells' the pork butcher. That south side shop was, I think, their glass department. Bernard Welton was Smyth's 'glassman'. I went to school with his son.

This story is to remind us all of the dramatic changes that have occurred in towns such as ours, where shops like Smyth's that you could walk into, have largely disappeared – not really about my youthful experiences as an amateur telescope maker. But I describe the latter to highlight the former.

In around 1950, when I was aged 14, I was seized with a fascination for gazing at the heavens and astronomy. I joined the newly formed Ipswich & District Astronomical Society – at the time their youngest ever member, I was told. Several older hands took me 'under their wing'. One in particular, Norman Whatling who worked for CEGB at Cliff Quay, was the Society's 'practical expert'. At this time it was not possible for amateurs to buy small astronomical telescopes so he had built his own and encouraged me to have a go myself. Not only would this involve my constructing the tube and mountings but also more critically the optics, including a six inch diameter concave parabolic section mirror.

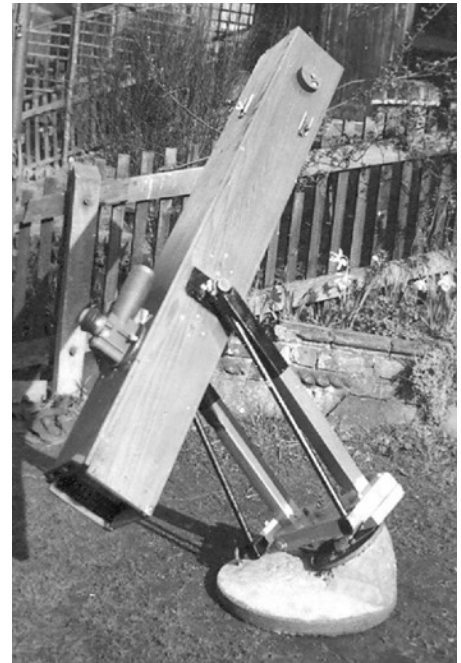
After visiting all the ships' chandlers around the Ipswich docks looking for porthole glass, I concluded that such ready-made disks were far too thin. This brought me back to Smyth Bros in Fore Street. I approached them and asked if they could get for me a seven inch square of inch-thick plate glass. I

can remember the humiliation to this day, when I tried to explain what I wanted it for and how I would accurately cut out a circular disc which I would grind and polish (and silver) to precision optical standards. My recollection is that kindly Mr Welton and his colleagues 'fell about laughing'. "A kid here who says he can cut out a circular disc from inch thick plate – it can't be done boy".



I was crestfallen and near to tears. But I insisted, and eventually got my square of glass for seven shillings and six pence, I believe, paid for out of my choirboy's pay.

I won't relate the rest of the triumphal story, because most of that is in a three part article ('Astronomy on a Shoestring') which I wrote for the present local Astronomical Society – where I describe the whole process. Along the way, I suffered similar humiliation and gentle mockery at the hand of Mr Wiggin the chemist (one time Pharmacist in St Matthews Street) when I attempted to buy the chemicals for silvering. Many of them were highly toxic. "This is not the sort of thing that 14 year olds do". Telescope mirrors, to function, must be silvered on their face – although I think he suggested that all mirrors were silvered on the back. How wrong he was!



Materials such as silver nitrate, caustic potash and nitric acid were required for the job. Where now could anyone (still less a 14 year old) buy locally what I had on my shopping list. Either Health & Safety rules would intervene or perhaps firearms and explosives laws. I was told that you could easily, even by accident, make silver fulminate from silver nitrate which is much more powerful and unstable than many high-explosives. Other ingredients were sourced from Martin & Newby's, Cornell's in The Walk, Smith & Daniels in Westgate Street and Croydon's the jewellers. I think that the staff in all the shops were less than impressed when I had to reveal what I was attempting to do – especially in Smith & Daniels who had to order a whole range of optical grade Carborundum powders from America.

After about two years of spare time and exacting labour, still aged 16, I completed my mission, producing the telescope which still works – though it hasn't been out for a while. But that's a different tale.

Reminiscing about how most of the shops which were in Ipswich during my youth – both now long gone – prompts me to realise how different our town and world have become.

**John Barbrook (with his eye to the telescope)**

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### **Long time, no see...**

On September 9, Ken Hammond of the Transport Museum alerted Bob & Caroline Markham to the unearthing of the old tram-rails during work on the road surface in Princes Street. Bob says they were laid in 1903, last used by trams in 1923 and covered up in 1924. Tim Leggett had got there first and put the photographs on to the Society's popular Facebook page.



*Photo by Caroline Markham*

## Snippets 1

### **The Cornhill saved, for the present**

“THINK AGAIN” was the *Ipswich Star*’s front page headline on 12 September. Welcome news indeed for most Ipswich Society members! IBC’s consultation with the public did succeed in killing off that absurd scheme of levelling access to the Town Hall door with a long platform flanked by hazardous steps. We hope to see more sensible new proposals.

### **The Year of the Pig**

The Pigs Gone Wild project has probably exceeded all expectations. The forty large pigs were a constant source of interest during the summer holidays. Parents and grandparents were to be seen everywhere with their children studying their maps and putting stickers in their albums. But even quite young adults were often fascinated and some people who don’t usually come into the town centre made an exception for this. We hope that the final stage of auctioning off the pigs will have raised substantial sums for St Elizabeth Hospice.

### **Sailmakers**

The £4m investment in modernising Sailmakers has borne fruit in that several new units have opened recently and most of the complex is well used. So it should be – on a site so close to the town centre and with a sensible use of the rising land providing ground level access at both front and rear. But it is clear that prospective retailers prefer the lower floor because of the footfall in Tavern Street. Direct access from the town’s main bus station to the upper floor doesn’t make that equally popular. The eventual doubling of the capacity of Crown Street car park should make a difference.

### **Ipswich Hospital**

The Society expressed its pleasure in the April Newsletter that the Hospital had been able to acquire the large site of the former school between the Garrett Anderson Centre and Heath Road. Hospital managers say that it could be used for a ‘health village’ which would address health issues like childhood obesity and social factors affecting health. Such a valuable preventative facility would depend, however, on securing substantial funding.

### **Progress on the Waterfront?**

We welcome IBC’s purchase of the burnt-out site of St Peter’s Warehouse and the Listed old house in College Street which should help to make re-development more likely. (Perhaps a handsome block of flats with a good convenience store at ground level?) The former Paul’s concrete silo on the adjoining site is owned by an investment company. Let’s hope these two very different bodies can work together. This ‘gateway’ to the western end of the Waterfront has created a bad impression for far too long. If the promised ‘Wine Rack’ development into flats starts at the end of this year, then this precious ‘new’ part of town will really benefit.



*Spotted on Albion Wharf in July:  
the lifting of the remaining railway  
lines of the Dock Tramway*



## Whitechapel Bell Foundry: an Ipswich Society outing, 13 August 2016

By coach to the Art Gallery at London's Guildhall where a wooden scale model of the City of London, with all its buildings, was on display. It was colour-coded and our guide explained which period each colour referred to. She took the most important of the 'skyscrapers' that have been erected in the financial district and talked about the architects, building materials and designs. The model-makers had used a tiny piece of material from each skyscraper to create its relevant model, which added interest.

The 'Five sights' convention is a legal requirement for St Paul's Cathedral to be visible from five vantage points around London, thus creating, some control over what is built, and where. There is also a height limitation because of aircraft; that prevents the London skyline looking like New York's, although the gimmicky designs of the skyscrapers threaten the aesthetic unity of the City and beyond.



In 1985, excavation for the building of the art gallery on the east side of the Yard revealed the east entrance to the Roman Amphitheatre which stood here c. AD100 and held up to 6,000 people: a third of the city's population at that time.

Despite my fear of heights, I took the opportunity to whizz up the 40 floors of the 'Walkie Talkie' building in Fenchurch Street in less than 30 seconds. The Sky Garden is a welcome bit of greenery in what is, basically, an office block. From the viewing terrace (360 degree views) we could see the Shard across the Thames – we came about half-way up – and many other sites.

The Whitechapel Bell Foundry was established in 1570 and is Britain's oldest manufacturing company; it has occupied the present one-third of an acre site in Whitechapel Road since 1738. The original works had been built in the countryside beyond Aldgate and the City walls. The Hughes family have owned the business since 1904 and company director, Alan Hughes, was our guide. I never realised that bell founding was so complex and skilled. Medieval techniques are still in use here today. After being cast, a bell has to be tuned: a highly-skilled job.

We also heard about the art of change-ringing (a British thing) with its multiple permutations. A steep, narrow staircase took us to the handbell workshop. The woodwork shop for bell wheels was cramped, hot and low-ceilinged. Famous bells cast by this foundry include Big Ben (1858) and what later became known as the Liberty Bell (1752). There is also an over-400 year link to Westminster Abbey. The workforce today is 23 and often vacancies only arise on retirement. We owe John Norman many thanks for organising such a fascinating and unusual outing (the second such).

**Richard Worman**

[See *Society Outings* on page 27 for information on a similar outing in December. The 15th C. bells of St Lawrence Church were overhauled by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry; rehung in 2009.]

# *“There’s now’t to do in Ipswich”, Part 1*

Groups and organisations which relate to our town:  
a list to challenge those who claim that ‘nothing ever happens in Ipswich’.

## **Greenways Countryside Project**

It exists to protect and enhance the countryside, landscape and open space across an area of about 100 square kilometres in and around the town of Ipswich, and home to around one quarter of the population of Suffolk, for the benefit of wildlife and local people. The project relies on volunteers to complete much of its practical conservation work. ([www.greenlivingcentre.org.uk/greenways/](http://www.greenlivingcentre.org.uk/greenways/))

## **River Action Group**

The RAG was established in 1997 when the Borough Council's Environment Panel decided that the area of the Gipping from Stoke Bridge to Sroughton needed particular environmental improvement. Initially the Group comprised volunteer groups, Ipswich Borough Council planning officers, Greenways Project, Anglian Water and the Environment Agency. More recently members have included Sustrans, representatives from Suffolk County Council, the Inland Waterways Association and the River Gipping Trust. (<https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/rag>)

## **Ipswich Arras Association**

The Association warmly welcomes new members and family members to share in our friendship with the people of the city of Arras in northern France. Ipswich has long had an Accord with Arras which is a city steeped in history from Roman times through to the French Revolution, the Great War and World War 2. In medieval times Arras was renowned for the quality of its tapestries and that heritage is still celebrated today. (<http://ipswicharrasassociation.onesuffolk.net>)

## **Ipswich Heritage Forum**

Ipswich Heritage Group was set up around 2001 by Ipswich Museums so that heritage-related organisations could provide some mutual support and exchange information. Since the latter has been predominant the Group decided in 2011 to change its name to 'Forum'. It makes possible the spread of information about the activities of participating organisations when we could easily remain in ignorance of each other, however active in our field. (<https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/content/ipswich-heritage-group>)

## **Friends of Ipswich Museums**

The FOIM is a group which enjoys the Ipswich museums (Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich Museum, Ipswich Art School Gallery) and supports them by raising funds from membership fees and special events. Sometimes it initiates the projects but mostly it responds to suggestions from the Museum Service. (<http://friendsofipswichmuseums.org.uk>)

## **Ipswich Building Preservation Trust**

includes conservation enthusiasts, Council members and officers, and the business community. Since 1978, all these groups have been represented on the committee of the Ipswich Building Preservation Trust, a daughter organisation of The Ipswich Society. We monitor buildings at risk. We support the officers of the Borough in working to secure historic buildings. We are ready to play our part when buildings become available for restoration. ([www.ipswichbuildingpreservationtrust.org.uk](http://www.ipswichbuildingpreservationtrust.org.uk))

## **Ipswich Historic Churches Trust**

The Trust's aims are 'the preservation and maintenance for the public benefit of redundant churches of all denominations in the Borough of Ipswich which are of historic or architectural value'. For the churches in our care we want to keep them in good repair, find suitable new uses and tell people about their history and special features. ([www.ipswichhistoricchurchestrust.org.uk](http://www.ipswichhistoricchurchestrust.org.uk))

## **Ipswich & District Historical Transport Society**

The Society provides a forum for all those interested in the history of transport. A small group of local transport enthusiasts formed the Society in 1963 to cover transport by air, road, rail and water. Invited speakers at meetings, visits and a newsletter are included in their activities. ([www.ipswichanddistricthistoricaltransportsociety.co.uk](http://www.ipswichanddistricthistoricaltransportsociety.co.uk))

### **Ipswich Archaeological Trust**

The Trust was formed in October 1982 to inform the people of Ipswich about, and involve them in, archaeological work being undertaken in the town and surrounding area. The archaeological deposits which underlie Ipswich town centre are of international importance. Excavations carried out since 1974 demonstrate that Ipswich is one of the earliest English towns and one of the first in north-west Europe. The town was probably founded by the East Anglian Kings buried at the famous Sutton Hoo cemetery in the early 7th century. The archaeology of Ipswich provides a unique opportunity to understand the early development of our present-day urban society. (<http://ipswichat.org.uk>)

### **Ipswich Maritime Trust**

The Trust was formed in 1982 from the Maritime Ipswich Committee, which organised a year long series of events as part of the Maritime England Initiative. These included a summer exhibition in the 'Home' warehouse (now Ashton KCJ office). IMT then prepared a visionary plan for the then run-down Wet Dock. It aims: 'to educate the people of Suffolk in all matters maritime'. The Trust runs the Window Museum on Albion Quay celebrating the town's rich maritime heritage, organises talks and other events. (<http://www.ipswichmaritimetrust.org.uk>)

### **Ipswich Women's Festival Group**

The group aims to research and celebrate local women's achievements – organising events and developing resources including the Ipswich Women's History Trail. The Group started in the 1980s and was continued by Community Education Local Women's History Group in the 1990s, which compiled the first leaflet, and also held an exhibition of Women and Work. In 2011, the group decided to celebrate the 100 year anniversary of the Census Boycott, when 30 local women avoided completing their Census forms by staying at the Old Museum Rooms overnight in a campaign to get Votes for Women. (<http://ipswichwomeninhistory.co.uk> for the Ipswich Women's History Trail illustrated guide)

**Friends of Christchurch Park** (<http://focp.org.uk>)

**Friends of Holywells Park** (<http://www.holywellspark.org.uk>)

**Friends of Chantry Park** (<http://chantrypark.org>)

**Friends of Landseer Park** (<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfLandseerParkIpswich/>)

They exist to secure the preservation, protection and improvement of the Parks as a places of historic and ecological interest, beauty, tranquillity, rest and recreation; to promote the conservation of the natural plant, animal and bird life in the Parks; to encourage appropriate use of the Parks through a range of activities; to educate the public in the history, natural history and other aspects of the Parks.

### **Ipswich Transport Museum**

It has the largest collection of transport items in Britain devoted to just one town. Everything was either made or used in and around Ipswich, the county town of Suffolk. It was founded in 1965 as the Ipswich Transport Preservation Group, and since that time a collection of over 85 vehicles has been built up to give a fleet of exhibits second to none in the country. In 1988 the Museum was granted a licence to occupy two-thirds of the former Priory Heath Trolleybus Depot, and this enabled the many exhibits to be gathered together under one roof for the first time in their lives. Open to the public on around 100 days throughout the year. (<http://www.ipswichtransportmuseum.co.uk/index.html>)

### **Suffolk Local History Council**

The purpose of the SLHC is to encourage and support the study of local history and to act as an umbrella organisation for groups and individuals with similar interests in the county of Suffolk. It administers a Local Recorders Scheme throughout Suffolk, publishes a journal and newsletter and arranges events. (<http://www.slhc.org.uk>)

### **Suffolk Preservation Society**

The Society is a small self-funding charity that stands up for Suffolk's special heritage and landscape qualities through the planning system - its historic buildings, towns and villages and distinctive landscapes. With no political or commercial affiliations, it takes a long term strategic view. It helps communities to protect and promote their valued landscapes and historic environment and provides independent advice to district planning authorities. (<http://www.suffolksociety.org/home>)

**There are many more active organisations in and around our town, most of them relying on enthusiastic volunteers – just like The Ipswich Society.**

*See our back page* ➡

## Letter to the Editor

**St Matthews Street paint job** from James Empson, *founding owner 1964 of Anglia Cameras, for many years at 15-15a St Matthews Street.*



When I arrived in Ipswich in 1964 this ‘beautiful’ 1960s brutalism was just being built. I watched its demise over the decades – but where is the town council now? I was chastised for putting a very small sign at first floor level and had to remove it (in the days of Bob Kindred MBE!). I look forward to the next issue of *The Ipswich Society Newsletter* to see if any action has been taken...

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### Ipswich Building Preservation Trust brief AGM followed by

**Guest speaker, Jay Merrick**, Ipswich-based architectural critic, journalist and novelist.  
‘Build, build, build: Are planners, developers, and architects destroying the idea of excellent ordinary urban fabric?’

**Wednesday October 19 2016, 7pm**



Jay will outline, and illustrate, his concerns about slackening planning controls in relation to the government's desire for accelerated project approvals and construction, in a climate where bad architecture is routinely marketed as "landmark" or "icon". He will also, in deference to the central interest of the IBPT, offer an exotic secondary amuse bouche: an illustrated description of how the Qataris, using British architects, are preserving key heritage buildings in Doha.

**Venue: Isaac's Crossway Room on the Waterfront.**

The evening is free and open to all; it includes a light buffet and finishes by 9pm. Our friends in the Ipswich Society are very welcome to attend and the AGM is short. Please book a place by contacting [njacob@njarchitects.co.uk](mailto:njacob@njarchitects.co.uk)

## Ipswich Society membership boomtime

There are 863 paid memberships, of which 18 are corporate members. Of the 845 remaining, 353 are family members so there are currently **1,198** members plus **18** corporate members.

Going through all the back copies of the *Newsletters* to get an idea of how long people have been members, when they left etc.; there are a lot of gaps, but it was an interesting exercise.

Here are some notable features:-

March 1963: individual membership was 2/6: 12.5 pence in today's (devalued) money,

January 1970: it was 50p

and in January 1976 it was £1.

- Issue 25, July 1971 there were 438 members – no names;
- Issue 26, October 1971 there were 477 members and 17 groups;
- Issue 44, April 1976 there were 561 members and 22 groups. This issue was the first to have a *New members* list – perhaps unsurprisingly, there is no-one still on the current list.
- Issue 52, May 1978 there were 468 members but there was a note that only 272 had paid, so this was likely to be their last *Newsletter* unless they paid up. Some things don't change!

The Society finds itself in a very strong position just at the moment. The most recent count of the new members shows that we gained 109 in the six months up to 1 July 2016. This compares with 85 new in all of 2015 – 54 new in all of 2014 and 107 new in all of 2013 – itself a very good year.

There are currently 1,200 members, a figure which does not include corporate members. We must be doing something right: John Norman's *Ipswich Icons* weekly press article, national recognition for one of our great projects in the town, not forgetting the scrutinising mode we seem to have entered into with views on the Cornhill, the Wet Dock crossing and the Northern Fringe; or perhaps it is the Society's greater internet presence via Facebook, Flickr and the great new website.

**Celia Waters, Membership Secretary**

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## e-Newsletter

For those who prefer reading publications on a screen and avoiding paper-clutter, our e-Newsletter can drop into your Inbox every quarter. It's very much in the spirit and ethos of the Society that we offer both paper and electronic versions and don't just say: "only available by email", which some societies do.

Please let the Membership Secretary know (contact details on page 23) if you would like to receive the e-Newsletter, rather than a paper version.



## Courses at Suffolk Record Office

Would you like to broaden your social circle this autumn? Meet a celebrity or two? Let us introduce you to St Edmund, King John or Samuel Pepys. Ipswich Society members interested in World War I can opt to meet Alice Packard, a farmer's wife from Shotley who kept a diary during the war, or David Empson, a twenty first century historian whose research on Suffolk soldiers has produced many tales of courage under fire. Simply set aside a Saturday morning, arrive at the relevant branch of Suffolk Record Office and prepare to enjoy one of the exciting range of talks we have put together.

With a little luck, we can even arrange for you to meet your ancestors or the people who lived in your house long before you moved in. At Ipswich Record Office, we offer a five week Introduction to Family History and a Hands on History session: 'Who lived in your House?' The Family History sessions take place on Thursday afternoons starting Thursday 29 September; the next course for property historians is on Monday 21 November at 10.30am.

For the first time we are running Study Days: Bury Record Office presents an in-depth look at a trio of eighteenth century 'horticultural revolutionaries' on Saturday 29 October. Here in Ipswich, we are delighted to offer an opportunity to taste medieval food and drink courtesy of food historian Monica Askay on Saturday 3 December.

To find out more, request a brochure or book a place please ring Ipswich Record Office on 01473 263910, email: [ipswich.ro@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:ipswich.ro@suffolk.gov.uk) or check out our fabulous new website [www.suffolkarchives.co.uk](http://www.suffolkarchives.co.uk).

Ipswich Record Office is based in a Victorian school on the corner of Bramford Road and Gatacre Road; we share the building with our dramatic 'other half' – the Eastern Angles. Buses run from the town centre and we have a large, free car park. The Record Office is open every day except Wednesday and Sunday from 9.30am to 4.30pm. Staff are always on hand to guide you whether you are researching your home, family, sports club or a local right of way. Amongst a wealth of other material, we hold Victorian OS maps of Ipswich, electoral rolls and street directories. Our archive includes a huge selection of photographs of Ipswich from the nineteenth century to the present day plus extensive cuttings files from the 1950s onwards. You may even find a photograph of yourself in a school play, sports team, or street party.

When our new website goes fully live this autumn, you'll be able to order research and copies of documents online. You'll even be able to download digital images (where the documents have already been scanned). Customers can already order documents online – this means your documents can be viewed as soon as you arrive. Of course, we'll still be delighted to respond to queries via email, letters and phone calls.

We know that many members of The Ipswich Society are already 'regulars' at the Record Office but we'd like to meet more of you, either in person or online. We look forward to welcoming you this autumn.

**Anne Murray**

*(Searchroom Assistant at Ipswich Record Office and Ipswich Society member*

*[N.B.: all of the Society's wonderful Image Archive slides now reside at Suffolk Record Office.]*

## Ipswich Society Chairman honoured

Our chairman, John Norman was recently honoured by the Ipswich Rotary with a prestigious award. Established in 1957 the Paul Harris Fellowship acknowledges individuals who contribute to The Rotary Foundation of Rotary International; here in the UK it is awarded for good works undertaken.



As a child John is remembered as a fundraiser for local projects involving underprivileged children, the poor and lonely elderly: the experience of which has stayed with him for life. All this and John's passion for walking, climbing, camping and cycling, sharing his experiences with his own children, foster children, students, friends and adult groups has exerted an influence well beyond a personal and professional life.

On arrival in Ipswich in 1979 he became a foster parent, with Christine, his wife, sharing their home, life and experiences with numerous foster children, improving their lives and also organising, on behalf of the Ipswich Foster Care Association, many outings and activities for the families and children.

Hugely helpful and caring he has been involved with countless youth groups including the Scouts, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, cycling proficiency and school camps. In the late 1980s he became County Co-ordinator for Operation Raleigh (now Raleigh International). This was to select young people for gruelling three-month challenges in foreign lands focusing on working through, for and with youth to inspire and make positive changes in the areas of careful use of natural resources and building resilience in vulnerable communities.

For years he led groups on rock climbing trips to Derbyshire's Peak District, the Lakes and Scotland; he has stewarded at fireworks in Christchurch Park and Ipswich maritime events. Currently he is a volunteer for the National Trust working as a warden at Orford Ness during the summer months; as well as this he sits on the Northgate Foundation's Board of Trustees, an educational charitable trust based in Ipswich.

Working at Suffolk College, as a lecturer and latterly Head of Construction, he organised 'study tours' for his students providing real-life experiences of major construction projects. A great believer in life-long learning he continues to educate people through his many talks about Ipswich and he has assiduously researched and written almost two hundred 'Ipswich Icons' articles in the local newspapers reaching large numbers of the population with his informed and critical accounts. To add to this he writes and gives interviews to the Talking Newspaper and can often be heard on the local radio or television giving the Ipswich Society point of view on local issues.

A member of the Ipswich Society for many years he is our Chairman but also sits on Ipswich Borough Council's Conservation and Design Panel reviewing planning applications in Conservation Areas. Moreover, he finds time to be a Trustee for Suffolk Building Preservation Trust and a Trustee and Chairman of Suffolk Architectural Heritage Trust. As an Honorary member of the Suffolk Association of Architects (part of the RIBA) he judges the Craftsmanship Awards for Suffolk. The depth of knowledge he possesses and the commitment he shows for the preservation of Ipswich and its history is outstanding.

Rarely orthodox, untypical, and not always a team worker, he is however, an achiever. Pragmatic, determined, in all he does, he always puts himself out to help others. He is single-minded, focused, sometimes dogmatic, but warm and totally dedicated to the task in hand.

The Paul Harris Fellowship award is among the highest of honours to be bestowed. We in the Society, who have known John's attributes for so long a time, can only be grateful to Christine for her support and forbearance but loudly applaud the work shouldered by John and marvel at the amount that our worthy Chairman manages to undertake while not 'on duty'. **Tony Marsden**

## Snippets 2

### **Ipswich Traffic**

'The traffic in Ipswich is getting worse.' How many times have you heard that phrase? Assuming by worse we mean that the traffic is increasing and as a consequence queues are getting longer, we are absolutely right. As well as more vehicles on the road there has been an increase in the number of miles driven nationally.

The total number of miles covered has increased by 7 billion miles and is now a staggering 320 billion miles annually. The sector that has shown the greatest increase is 'light vans', no doubt delivering your internet shopping. You may no longer go into town to purchase a new washing machine, camera or your weekly food shop but these items still make the journey from store to door.

### **Park and Ride wobbles?**

It appears that Colchester's Park and Ride is not doing as well financially as had been hoped. The figures after the first year of operation are not promising.

It is common practice that a commercial investment, such as the Park & Ride service should 'pay-back' the initial outlay over a period of ten years. Given that the Colchester operation cost £6.2 million it needs to recover an absolute minimum of £620,000 per annum. It does of course need to recover an income much greater than this to pay for its daily outgoings, (fuel, wages, bus lease payments, etc.).

However with passenger numbers at only 77,000 over the first year (May 2015 to April 2016) it is well short of break-even!

77,000 annual users equates to some 300 people per day, an average of less than ten on each bus! The service is run by the TGM Group, a company within Arriva plc one of the largest commercial transport organisation in Europe, but the operating losses are met by Essex County Council.

### **Using the 'gaps'**

The Society and other organisations have long regretted that there is insufficient linkage between the town centre and the Waterfront, particularly in the Turret Lane/Lower Brook Street area. The principle of having many more people living there is a good one, so proposals for building new retirement homes on the Archant (EADT) site sound promising. The proximity to the town centre is important for residents. But to make it more appealing, for those who would also like to go to the Waterfront, better crossing facilities at Star Lane and Key Street would help – as they would for all pedestrians.

### **New trains, at last**

Abellio's nine-year contract has brought the promise of new trains on every service, starting in early 2019 and to be completed by October 2020. In addition to the new InterCity trains, there will be hybrid trains (electric and diesel) for routes like Ipswich to Cambridge which are only partly electrified, and Bombardier Aventra commuter trains. Doubling the service to Peterborough, making it hourly, should greatly encourage more passengers travelling north and north-west. The future prosperity of Ipswich will be enhanced by better transport.

### **Bigger Primark**

Whether you ever go into the shop or not, it is quite clear that Primark is popular, as could be expected in a relatively low wage town. By taking over the splendid building next door, vacated by Gap, Primark is now double in size. Its future success seems more guaranteed than the presence of the many new restaurants.



## Beating the bounds, St Clement's 1895

*The following notes were written in 1965 by Henry Lewcock who, with his brother Bill, was a chorister at St Clement Church in 1895 when this particular Beating of the Bounds took place. Given to the Society by Jim Lewcock for publication in The Ipswich Society Review 1981.*

“The proceedings opened with a service attended by a congregation which included merchants, tradesmen, church servants, scholars and singing boys. The service was taken by the vicar, John Powell, known to the scholars and singing boys by the irreverent name of “Greasy Jack” due to the large quantities of Macassar oil which he placed on his hair to keep it in order and which stained not only his clerical collar but also his coat.

The Rev. Powell had two helpers in the performance of the Sacrament. They were Samuel Jones and Mr Scriber.

These Men of God prayed on behalf of the people assembled a long prayer called the Litany which, although possibly understood by the older merchants and tradesmen, certainly caused much fidgeting amongst the scholars and choristers. Even the Rev. Powell appeared to find the whole thing irksome because he took to fumbling about in his surplice causing one of the scholars to remark in a rather loud voice: “Gosh, I believe he’s got a ferret in there”. This brought the service to a rapid close and we hastily set forth on our journey with the blessing of God.

All the men and children were given long willow wands, whilst two or three carried ladders for climbing over walls and fences and two of the more quiet and trustworthy elders carried a map and a paint pot for the purposes of refreshing the Boundary Stones to ensure that no man might say “This is our land”, except those who came from the congregation of St Clements. The first part of the journey had to be made on foot and we started along Church Lane westward onto Fore Street.

Among the characters I remember are:-

Alfred Sizer	Church Warden
William Orvis	Church Warden, Ship Builder and Repairer
James Widgery	formerly a school master of the school belonging to the church and now Parish Clerk
Charlie Keel	Vestry and Clerk to the Overseers
Joseph Turner	Grocer
Edward B. Lewcock	Ship Agent
Charles Hawk	Grocer
George Jary	Outfitter and Draper
Arthur Cook	Baker
Walter Mills	Clerk and Chorister
Henry Card	Engineer and Chorister
Percy Hawk	}
Edward W. Lewcock	} Scholars of the Ipswich Middle School and sons of the aforementioned
Henry C. Lewcock	}

Jack Fearn carried the paint pot and six singing boys from the choir the ladders. Having arrived in Fore Street we made our way along Salters Lane to the Jewish Cemetery which, being surrounded by a high wall demanded the services of a ladder, much to the joy of the lads carrying it. Having descended into the Lower Wash [Lower Orwell Street] the company proceeded northerly to the “Prince of Wales” which stood on the corner of Fore Street and on into the Upper Wash [Upper Orwell Street] to about 100 yards on the eastern side where there is a stone in the wall about 10 feet from the ground marked “St. C+B”. This stone was duly tapped three times by

the company holding the wands, perhaps three in the name of the Trinity as this custom of Beating the Bounds goes back into the early ages. The stone is still in position.

From thence over the walls into the Rope Walk via the cold dung hills and I believe we went into the yard belonging to the prison which stood somewhere near where, in 1965, stands the Labour Exchange. Across Pottery Street and Hill Street, through Bennett's brickyard to Byles Park [Alexandra Park] where there is another stone upon which a bumping took place on the ground in what is now the eastern part of the park close to Grove Lane and above what is now Kings Avenue.

And so to Hill House [home of the Byles family which once stood on Hill House Road], through which the boundary ran, through one of the windows on the ground floor we had to climb with some difficulty. John, the Man of God, had not the agility to negotiate this window easily and was stuck and had to be helped by two maids from inside with the scholars and singing boys administering sundry smacks on the Reverend bottom from the outside.

This difficulty being overcome, Back Hamlet was reached and so on to Foxhall Road to the Asylum grounds through which the assembly went, to a spot near St Augustine's Gardens where there is another stone. I cannot remember whether we took in Warren House cottages or not. I think that they were described as extra-parochial and so perhaps we had no need to. We arrived at Felixstowe Road where the heath was somewhere opposite to where now stands the church of St Augustine. Here was another stone on which the local policeman, one Pyett, was well and truly bumped, much to the delight of the assembly and much to his loss of dignity. Thence across the heath to Gainsborough Lane and to the very end of the parish, Pond Hall Farm, which was a land flowing with milk and honey in the shape of refreshments. It was a gladsome sight as we had been going since before 8 and it was now past 1 o'clock.

The merchants, Church Wardens, Overseers and grown up members of the assembly partook of food and wine in the farmhouse, but the scholars and choristers were provided with sandwiches and other meats outside on the grass; because the weather was favourable it was most enjoyable. After a good rest for food and talk we launched a number of boats, as the farm is close to the river, and rowed out into the middle of the stream and then proceeded up midway between the banks to the cliff bite and the lock gates (new) which were opened and so up the middle of the dock to a wharf in front of the Wherry Inn. Here we disembarked to walk up a narrow passage [Wherry Lane] to the corner of Salthouse Street and Fore Street where we had started so many hours earlier.

The journey being ended a portion of the Rogation hymn *To Thee O God We Fly for Mercy and Grace* was sung and the blessing which begins "The Lord Bless Thee and Keep Thee" was given by John Powell, who was very fond of this particular one and always said it as if he meant it.

The parish of St Clements had various alterations and adjustments made when the parishes of Holy Trinity, St Bartholomew and St Augustine were formed and no doubt the boundaries were altered, but in 1895 these formed part of the parish of St Clement.

I believe that the boundary covered that day extended to seven miles."

*Climbing the wall of the Jewish Cemetery*  
(photo from Ipswich Historic Churches Trust website)



## The Ipswich Society

www.ipswichsociety.org.uk

email: [secretary@ipswichsociety.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ipswichsociety.org.uk)

Registered Charity no. 263322

This Newsletter is the magazine of Ipswich's civic amenity society established in 1960  
(views expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Society).

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### Dates for your diary

**Winter Illustrated Talks** at Museum Street Methodist Church; all talks start at 7.30pm and free tea, coffee and biscuits are provided afterwards.

*Wednesday October 26:* Tim Miller on The History of Shingle Street illustrated with photographs from his book *Life on the Edge*.

*Wednesday November 16:* **Annual Awards Evening**, 7.30pm, St Peter's by the Waterfront

*Wednesday December 21:* The Orwell Tidal Barrier project, its purpose, planning, installation and protection of Ipswich. Speaker tbc.

#### **Society Outings (2016)**

*Saturday December 3:* John Norman's City of London Tour, including the Whitechapel Bell Foundry (booking form included). *Similar November 19 tour is fully booked.*

#### **Society Outings (2017)**

*Thursday April 27:* Tour of Bungay and St Peter's Brewery, South Elmham.

*Thursday May 11:* Evening Walk with Bob Markham – Barrack Corner to Bobby Robson Bridge.

*Tuesday July 18:* Watts Gallery Artists' Village, Guildford.

*Wednesday October 19, 7pm:* **Ipswich Building Preservation Trust brief AGM;**

guest speaker: Jay Merrick – 'Build, build, build: Are planners, developers, and architects destroying the idea of excellent ordinary urban fabric?' Venue: Isaac's Crossway Room on the Waterfront. See page 20 to book a place.

## *“There’s now’t to do in Ipswich”, Part 2*

Here is a selection of clubs and societies not mentioned elsewhere in this issue which are based in our town. So, if you fancy bagpipe playing, underwater hockey, bardic storytelling, Morris dancing, community gardening, mountaineering or Paganism, Ipswich is the place.

Clifford Road Air Raid Shelter Museum      **Co-op Art Class**      Co-op Ladies  
 Choir      **Cyclist’s Touring Club (CTC) Suffolk**      FILM Suffolk      **Green Bike Project**  
 Groovehunters Djembe Drum Group      **Iceni Computer Club**      Ipswich Anglo  
 Scottish Society      **Ipswich Art Society**      Ipswich Arts Association      **Ipswich &  
 District Electrical Association (IDEA)**      Ipswich & District Ramblers      **Ipswich  
 Beer Festival**      Ipswich Bicycle Club      **Ipswich BMX Club**      Ipswich Chamber  
 Music Society      **Ipswich Chess Club**      Ipswich Choral Society      **Ipswich  
 Creative Writing Classes**      Ipswich Croquet Club      **Ipswich & District  
 Photographic Society**      Ipswich Divorced & Separated Social Club      **Ipswich  
 Electrifiers**      Ipswich Engineering Society      **Ipswich Fencing Club**      Ipswich  
 Film Society      **Ipswich Flower Club**      The Ipswich Horse Society      **Ipswich  
 Hospital Community Choir**      Ipswich JAFFA Running Club      **Ipswich Jazz Club**  
 Ipswich Juggling Workshop      **Ipswich Junior Chamber**      Ipswich Model  
 Engineering Society      **Ipswich Mountaineering Club**      Ipswich Numismatic  
 Society      **Ipswich Octopush Club (underwater hockey)**      Ipswich Organic  
 Gardeners Group      **Ipswich Outdoor Group**      Ipswich Operatic & Dramatic  
 Society      **Ipswich Pagan Council**      Ipswich Philatelic Society      **Ipswich  
 Paranormal Investigations**      Ipswich Piping Society (bagpipes)      **Ipswich Radio  
 Control Model Club**      Ipswich Ravens Volleyball Club      **Ipswich Recorded Music  
 Society**      Ipswich Silver Spinners (majorettes)      **Ipswich Transport Society**  
 Ipswich Wildlife Group (IWG)      **GeoSuffolk (geology)**      Lagabag Morris  
 Dancers      **Margaret Catchpole Bowls Club**      Merchant Navy Association  
 (MNA) Ipswich Branch      **Orwell Art Club**      Orwell Astronomical Society,  
 Ipswich      **Pagan Social Moot**      River Gipping Trust      **Roundwood Tennis Club**  
 SAMBOOMBA (Afro-Brazilian Rhythms band)      **Scrabble Club And Other  
 Games**      Seckford Dolls House & Miniatures Club      **Soroptimist International  
 Ipswich & District**      South East Ipswich Cage Bird Society      **Storytelling with  
 Bards Aloud**      Suffolk Fabian Society      **Suffolk Industrial Archaeology Society**  
 Suffolk Mac User Group (Apple Macintosh computers)      **Suffolk Naturalists’  
 Society**      Suffolk Soul Singers      **Suffolk Theology Forum**      Team Ipswich  
 Water Polo      **The Cameo Club – For the over 50s**      The Ipswich Bach Choir  
**The Landseer Players**      The Oddfellows (Ipswich Branch)      **The Peoples’  
 Community Garden – Ipswich**      The Springfield Follies      **The Vintage Motor Cycle  
 Club (VMCC)**      The Waterfront Book Club      **The Woolpack Bowls Club**  
 Trianon Music Group      **University of the Third Age (U3A)**      Wolsey Writers  
**The Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History** ..... and so many more