



The Ipswich Society NEWSLETTER

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October 2021 Issue 227



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Editorial

Cover photograph: hemmed in by road works, an uprooted bollard and paving in the pouring rain, Cardinal Wolsey coolly continues his teaching in St Peters Street (31.7.21).

Another telecommunications monopole and array of boxes, this time painted dark green, appeared on Vernon Street near to top of Felaw Street in early September. The short terrace of houses on Tyler Street is separated from the pole by a row of trees – perhaps that’s how the company got away with it. As our Chairman noted in the last issue, with public demand for greater connectivity (being able to access the internet on their phones), it’s almost inevitable that our towns and cities will be cluttered with this very tall brand of street furniture. That is, until another leap in technology, perhaps a processor implanted in our brains, makes them all redundant. Meanwhile just above the earth’s atmosphere, millionaires are going on joy-rides – let’s hope they don’t hit one of the hundreds of thousands of satellites they keep launching, provided to maintain the aforementioned connectivity.

One day we might think that there must be better ways of doing things.

I’m extremely grateful for the positive comments about the *Newsletter* and the continued excellent contributions which make my job a great deal easier.

Robin Gaylard

New members



Nethaniah Almshouses in Station Street, Over Stoke designed by Brightwen Binyon in 1890. Article on page 16.

Chairman's remarks

It has been twenty months since the pandemic struck and life, as we knew it, changed forever. The difficulty we now face is how many steps forward into the future do we take? And for an organisation like The Ipswich Society, how willing our members are to step forward with us.

Are sufficient members prepared to commit to sit on a coach with fifty others, to sit in a lecture room breathing the same air as everyone else? The feedback I am getting is 'soon, but not just yet'. Our proposal is an Awards Evening in November, providing you send the Hon. Secretary – details p.27 – your nomination(s). Let us know what is new or renovated in your neighbourhood, have there been any works to the public realm or has your local school had an extension?

The Awards evening will take place in the university's new, large lecture theatre within The Hold, one of the first public meetings to be held in that space.

It has been interesting to witness the changes and developments in Ipswich throughout the pandemic; as we are all aware, some major players have disappeared from the high street but I am reassured by the number of new retailers that have opened, notably in Carr Street. For the most part these are independents which add interest and variety to the shopping experience.

The disappointment has been the number of vehicles on the road, the hope in the middle of the pandemic was that habits would change, particularly the take up of cycling for short journeys. The Government, through Suffolk County Council, made a substantial investment in cycling infrastructure (not all well spent) but as we get out and about it is obvious that there are more vehicles on the road than there were in 2019.

A further disappointment was the decision by Ipswich Borough Council's planning committee to allow the demolition of the Co-operative buildings in Carr Street, notably the 1908 building on the corner with Cox Lane. There is no justification for this illogical decision; there is more than sufficient space behind the store to build a dozen schools, space that has been largely undeveloped since the slum clearances of the 1930s.

We know that there is little point in trying to get things changed at the committee meeting but we have been pointing out alternatives to the developers since the beginning of the year. The consultants invited comments on their proposals using a variety of different channels including the local paper. All to no avail. The mosaic (see p. 14) will, hopefully, be saved and moved into storage with the other 'works of art' saved from Civic Centre and Eastern Electricity's Russell House.

We think that the latest changes the architects made to the elevations just before the committee meeting are a retrograde step. 'Each for All & All for Each' will be written in two metre high letters around the top of the new school.

John Norman

Central Ipswich Primary School, Carr Street: architect's visual.



Planning matters

104 London Road. The photographs of the current cottage show a building that could have been restored and possibly enlarged; the repeated denial of the possibility of building a residence in the garden only adds to the feeling that this is a developer determined to get his way.

Billiard Hall, Upper Brook Street. In the absence of a master plan another failure is going to overtake 'The Mint Quarter'. Already we have the development in Upper Orwell Street, roundly condemned last month as is the proposed destruction of Carr Street. The architects have amended the plans in the light of the previous refusal. We felt that it should be refused on the grounds that buildings of multiple occupancy can quickly become unfit for human habitation unless carefully managed.

Old Post Office, Cornhill. This was granted planning permission on 1 July 2021 as The Botanist Restaurant.

Monopole, Derby Road. Another 60 foot high monstrosity, accompanied by a row of street level cabinets which are even more obtrusive. A condition should be that the trees are not interfered with in any way. In the search for technological prowess and ultra-high speed internet connections via 5G, Ipswich and, indeed, most of the developed world will have these intrusions dropped into their neighbourhood.

Old Social Club, Bolton Lane. This wooden building, full of asbestos and up close to the listed, much used, St Margarets Church Hall should certainly be demolished. Let us hope that the Parish Council can find a better outcome than surrounding it with a high fence.

Canopy, New Wolsey Theatre. The papers available to the public are difficult to interpret as is the effect the canopy will have on the facade of Roderick Ham's theatre. Currently there is what I take to be a mock-up scaffolding which doesn't damage the appearance greatly. At least it could be removed in the future.

2-4 Russell Road. Erection of an additional retail unit. We have an excess of unused retail units. If and when all the spaces granted permission in Russell Road are up and running, it would be reasonable to consider an application. This application, which presumably is speculative, would mean the loss of two trees and thus some CO₂ mitigation.

3 Coytes Gardens. Surely the existing rights of way passage precludes a wide enough ground floor room for new-build human habitation in 2021; it must be right to retain the ground floor as parking with a cycle and bin store enclosure with three two bedroom apartments above.

7 Constable Road. We have no objection to the double garage. It would be better if the public were provided with a list of materials proposed, particularly in a Conservation Area with an Article 4 direction.

16 Westerfield Road. An Article 4 Conservation Area. The proposal is for the erection of a garage, albeit in a pastiche design, forward of the building line and thus will obstruct the view of, and from Westerfield Court.

New building for Suffolk New College, Dove Street/Rope Walk. At four stories too high it fits with Suffolk New College but not with Dove Street. It would be nice to have seen some street elevations of the existing build with the new build and Suffolk New College in order to compare heights. We would have expected a better quality design adjacent to St Helen's Conservation Area.

St Joseph's College. This is a very large scheme to ensure the economic future of the college. Led by Wince Kievenaar, Goldrood House would be converted to 11 apartments, the mews boarding house demolished and replaced by a further five dwellings; four blocks of houses totalling 35 will be built on the green sward between Goldrood House and the main college, (all listed, including the wall and gate at Grade II).

Additionally, school boarding houses of 121 rooms of modern design would be erected to the north of the chapel. Our objection is to the siting of the four blocks of housing so close to the listed wall and southeastern aspect of Goldrood House and to the loss of the greensward. We think that an adjustment to the positioning of the blocks northwards would ameliorate the effect considerably. Overall this proposal, though a full application, if granted could well not be built; a different but equally invasive and less attractive plan could well be, submitted on the basis that a precedent has been set.

50 Russet Road (old Driving Test Centre, Woodbridge Road). This is a good site for a Special Educational Needs School (SEND) though it has meant the loss of a Site Allocated to Housing in the previous Local Plan. The whole school has been planned and designed by consultants selected by the Department of Education to the standards and criteria laid down by the D of E. So it utilises SIP* elements surrounded by largely prefabricated off-site structural elements. The resultant building is largely two storey and functional. The school is much needed but this does not excuse the poor architectural design. It could be done much better. I am disappointed to see that the Government is installing a gas-fired boiler in 2022; it should surely do better than this. [*Structural Insulated Panel]

Fringe Area Application. Taylor Wimpey, the nation's third largest house builder, now owns or has powers over most of the land west of Chantry Park to the A14 and north of the A1214 London Road as far as Sproughton, surrounding The Red House. It is in Babergh District Council so IBC has no real power over decisions made in what should be a part of the town. The latest application consists of 750 dwellings in four parcels. The detailed plans and appearance are still reserved matters. There are no shops, medical centre, community centre or cycle provision. There are some junction improvements and a primary school. It will lead to an enormous increase in vehicle traffic because of the lack of amenities. The nearest house is within metres of Chantry Park, upon which the development relies for green space; it will destroy The Wilderness.

Planning Permission has been granted to the enlarged **new Lidl in Futura Park** on Nacton Road (see page 6) and to **the demolition of the Coop Department Store in Carr Street** and its replacement with a much needed 430 pupil Ipswich Central Primary School. This is a Department of Education funded exercise, so the consultants and the design are central government chosen; we have no choice in *realpolitik*. A recommendation for a condition to remove, retain and re-erect the Cox Lane mosaic was passed. (See the letter to the Editor on page 14).

Path Labs, Ipswich Hospital. Some will have noticed a large two-storey extension to the Pathology Laboratory without apparent planning consent. The building was constructed following confirmation from Ipswich Borough Council that the proposal complies with emergency permitted development rights related to Coronavirus as demonstrated under newly formed Schedule 2, Part 12A, Class A of the Town and Country Planning Order 2020 following the coronavirus outbreak in 2020. The permitted development rights are in force until 31 December 2021 unless the time period is subsequently extended and thus planning permission is required for continued use. The application contains a note that such applications should be dealt with at speed! This a local example of central government stretching its own rules and then proposing laws to include them.

Mike Cook

Christmas 2021 – the ideal gift

If you would like to give someone a Christmas gift of membership to the Ipswich Society for 2022 please contact the Membership Secretary for further details.

The recipient will receive our highly acclaimed quarterly *Newsletter*, as well as information to members about activities and other matters of interest which are circulated to members.

Individual membership is £10 and family membership £15.

Contact: Celia Waters, Membership Secretary. Email: celia.waters@btinternet.com.

Address: 32 Cowper Street, Ipswich IP4 5JB. Telephone: 01473 721618.

Lidl, Nacton Road

The supermarket chain, Lidl, has recently received planning permission for a new store on Futura Park (which is also the home of John Lewis and Waitrose). Planning applications of this nature usually require some financial information, although this is not normally made public. I have interpreted the snippets of financial information which was included in the Officers Report for the Development Control Committee meeting in August.

These figures are an estimation and should be regarded simply as an indicator of relative size, rather than absolute. The proposal is for a new store on the north east side of Nacton Road, opposite the Ravenswood District Centre.

Turnover of the existing Ravenswood Lidl is in the order of £11 million, 90% of which is convenience goods (food and household necessities). Lidl predict that the new store will enjoy an increased turnover of £15.5 million. The increase in trade will be felt across the town but unsurprisingly Sainsbury's, Warren Heath may take a 2% drop in customer spend (Waitrose, serving a different socio-economic group are less affected).

My calculations would indicate that current turnover figures are in the order of:-

Sainsbury's: £74 million

Aldi, Hines Road: £30 million

Waitrose: £22 million

Other facts and figures from the planning application include:

Vehicle movements (into the new store) –

85 two-way vehicle movements between 8 am and 9 am on weekdays;

272 two-way vehicle movements between 11 am and 12 noon on a Saturday.

The applicant also proposes an under-provision in respect of car parking against the planning requirement, plus an under-provision of electric vehicle charging points and PTW spaces (powered two wheelers). I am pleased to see that staff bicycle parking is safely located within the store.

Ipswich Borough Council accepted the advice of their officers and granted planning permission.

John Norman

A new 'Blue Hotel' – the need for town centre hotels?

I was pleased to see that plans had been produced showing a 99-bed Travelodge hotel in Russell Road, Ipswich, next to Suffolk County Council's Endeavour House. There is, I believe, a need for hotel accommodation within the centre of towns such as Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds. For, if the visitor is to be able to enjoy the cultural and night life of the town centre, then hotel accommodation a short step away from the entertainment is an absolute necessity.

When growing up in Ipswich, many a night out would start in the Vaults Bar at the Golden Lion Hotel on the Cornhill. And this would be the starting point for an evening visit to the Bluesville Club at either the Manor Ballroom or St Matthews Baths Hall. On the bill would be luminaries such as John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, or, in 1971, the mighty Led Zeppelin. The Golden Lion itself was extremely well appointed to serve the business traveller.

Also, much sadly missed, is the great White Horse Hotel in Tavern Street, with its associations with the author Charles Dickens. In my twenties, this was the location for memorable 'black tie' dinners on a very regular basis. The venue was always the superb ballroom with its wonderful beautiful crystal chandeliers; the location also of a talk by the late Sir Bobby Robson on the management of Ipswich Town.

Over the years, Ipswich town centre also lost the Crown & Anchor in Westgate Street, but has also gained The Novotel in St Peters, the Easy Hotel in Northgate Street, and a Premier Inn and Travelodge, both in the Waterfront area.

Other towns in Suffolk have also suffered the same fate. For example, in Bury St Edmunds, the Angel Hotel is still in business, but others have gone. Everards Hotel, in the town centre was closed. Given its proximity to the Corn Exchange, this was the location to meet before gigs; one which has forever been burned into the memory was that in the early 1970s by Duster Bennett, a multi-instrumentalist and one man blues band. The last ever visit to Everards and, sadly, the only time we saw the talented Duster who died in a road traffic accident a few years later. Lost hotels in Bury St Edmunds have also been replaced by a Premier Inn in the former County Council premises on Honey Hill, and also now a proposal to re-establish a boutique Suffolk Hotel in the Market Place.

Town centre hotels are an important building block for the visitor and entertainment economy. Although they are likely to be less grand than previously, they should be encouraged. With Ipswich in particular, this would also give credence to the vision of the town as a short break destination. From personal experience travelling around the UK, hotel accommodation on the periphery of towns is fine, but often they may be difficult to find on business parks (a particularly difficult experience in 2019 in locating the Premier Inn at Postwick, Norwich come to mind – a replay of another bad experience in Derby a few years earlier), and once you have checked in there is very little incentive to go out and explore. The local night-time economy is the loser. The location of the proposed Travelodge in Russell Road, would be a short 'throw in' from Portman Road football ground. Bearing in mind that it is proposed to construct it in brick with blue, white and grey render, it should perhaps be christened 'The Blue Hotel'.

The singer Lena Lovich memorably sang a song entitled, not unsurprisingly, *Blue Hotel*. The chorus contained the line: 'stay a while at the Blue Hotel'. A suitable way to market the hotel, with football connections perhaps!

Graham Day

St Clare House, Greyfriars

During my regular, pre-recycling bin collection day, 'filletting' session of the newspapers of the week just gone, I came across a short article about St Clare House, in Greyfriars, Ipswich. Now that the Inland Revenue has departed at the beginning of April, the building is up for sale. The agents state that 'it is an exciting opportunity for someone to breathe new life into what is a prominent building in an important area of Ipswich'. It is also suggested that the first three floors could retain some commercial purposes.

During the middle 1960s my route home from school would often be changed so that I could watch how the construction of the spiral underground car park next to the New Wolsey Theatre and, importantly, also how the Greyfriars development were progressing. I recall looking at a model of Greyfriars in an on-site marquee prior to construction and thinking how impressive it looked.

Fast forward to 1967. After a year of working in my first job with the Inland Revenue in no. 39 Princes Street, the office was moved, lock stock and barrel, to St Clare House. We were excited by the move, not only was my tax district Ipswich 1 accommodated in floors four and five, but a new district, Ipswich 3 was now occupying floors two and three. The Schedule D section where I worked, together with the tax inspectors, occupied half of floor five, the other side of the corridor was the collector of taxes. Finally, the newly created Land Commission occupied floors six to eight.

The idea of a mezzanine floor was intriguing to us and this was where the lifts commenced. There was a traveller arrangement for accessing the mezzanine from street level, but this seldom worked. It became usual to use the crowded lifts to work; the stairs would have taken a long time to climb up!! Exiting the building at the end of the day at the mezzanine level, one had the impression of the brave new architectural world first described in the 1930s. The vision had become reality.

The building was not without its interesting idiosyncrasies. There was no air-conditioning so, if the temperature rose, then windows had to be opened which led to papers/documents becoming airborne and swirling around! There were acres of glass, so even a weak winter sun caused the office temperature to rise. Windows were cleaned on the outside by men in a 'cradle'. The result was often smeared glass and regular complaints to the cleaning contractors. The staff restaurant (beloved by us when working overtime – by buying a meal we could claim a late duty allowance as well as expenses for the food) was on the first floor. The disadvantage was that the smell of cooking (usually fried food) wafted upwards through the building. During the day there was a trolley service for teas and coffees; it was not unusual for some staff to wind up the tea ladies by complaining if they were late, even if they were not.

The best feature, however, was the unrivalled view the office gave over Ipswich. From my window seat I could see clearly the house on Stoke Hill and the railway station, together with the railway yards in the Commercial Road area. At dusk, flocks of birds flew across the sky on their way to roost. I always remember our old filing clerk, Steve, standing by the windows every night and remarking how wonderful this sight was – a sentiment not shared by section head Mike who was trying to work.

The best feature, however, was at the end of the corridor by the lifts: large plate glass windows gave uninterrupted views of the Ipswich Town Football Club ground, because on the Portman Road side of the ground the stand for spectators was low in height. This was excellent as most overtime took place from Monday to Thursday. Tuesday, then as now, was the night for Ipswich Town home games. There was on these nights, first a trickle, then a flood of staff watching football. This continued for a long while, until one Tuesday when the District Inspector, Mr Mason, came back and unexpectedly caught everybody out. The cheering was probably a giveaway. Strict rules were then made to prevent a re-occurrence.

My time at St Clare House finished when I left in June 1969 to go to a job at County Hall. Despite passing an examination for promotion, I was unable to accept what was offered. I opted for another government department, but nothing materialised. My career had suddenly become too taxing.

Then on the last day came one of those memorable career moments. One of the tax inspectors, Mr McGregor, saw me and wished me well. Then he told me that I should have taken the promotion offered as ‘there was a difference between bread-and-butter money and bread-and-marge money’.

He then said: ‘I expect you will be earning a lot less money than if you had become a Tax Officer’.

Then came my first ever quick-as-a-flash moment – I was normally quiet and shy – ‘On the contrary,’ I said, ‘I shall be earning more’. His face dropped down from the fifth to the first floor. Priceless.

I swapped a modern building for a historic building with a courthouse where Mrs Simpson obtained her divorce. It was the beginning of a twenty-two year local government career.

The time in St Clare House was enjoyable as it was an optimistic period of great change, utilising ‘the white heat of technology’ when national computer centres were also planned. It was the first office I worked in which had such a tremendous view; the worst was at Romford in the late 80s; our conference rooms were right next door to the Liverpool Street main line.

I am sad to know that changes are being proposed, but hopefully a new compatible use will be found so that the building does not disappear from the Ipswich skyline. No doubt similar changes may occur with the office buildings in Civic Drive; the unavoidable consequence of changes forced on working lives by the pandemic.

Graham Day

St Clare House in 1968. Photograph courtesy Paul Smith (Ipswich Historic Lettering website).



My time at Willis Faber & Dumas from 1974

Whilst chatting to our esteemed editor about the iconic Willis Towers Watson building, I began reminiscing about my youth working there. This casual ruminating on the past prompted him to request an article on the subject. He suggested you may find it interesting! We'll see.... If you were there, please forgive any errors. It was all a lifetime ago.

In 1974, as a callow youth of seventeen, I embarked on the dubious adventure of my career in the insurance industry with Willis Faber and Dumas, as it was back then. Along with numerous other new recruits from Ipswich, I caught a coach from the town centre which transported us to sunny Southend-on-Sea where Willis had an office above a large department store called Keddies, a bit like Debenhams.

My first job, along with other teens, was calculating the signed lines on insurance covers from the written lines. Frankly, it was tedious, so I won't explain further, suffice to say it's probably left to a computer these days. I do recall that we were supervised by a dragon of a woman. Think Mrs Slocum from *Are You Being Served?* without the humour. I also recall being ordered to my feet during a visit by Lord Chelmsford, a large Churchillian type who sat on the Board of Directors.

In early 1975, I forget exactly when, we excitedly relocated to the newly-opened, glass-walled spaceship that had landed in Ipswich town centre. All the newbies thought the Lego plastic flooring in reception, bright green carpets in the office space, yellow walls and royal blue upholstered chairs were amazing. Most of the 'old lags' who had relocated to Suffolk from dismal buildings in London and elsewhere, bemoaned the passing of the old days and sneered at their garish new surroundings. It

may seem commonplace now but in 1975 open plan office space and bright airy buildings in the shires were a pretty new concept.

For the teens, this was a magical place: modern and bright with its hanging glass outer skin and a fabulous, subsidised, staff restaurant on the roof, surrounded by a roof top garden with wonderful views. Then there was the *pièce de résistance*, a swimming pool. I loved that pool; my dad



Brian Mateer's photograph of the Willis building, 1980s (from our Image Archive)

dropped me off every morning around 7 am, on his way to work, and I swam for half an hour or more before work. Often there was just me; it was eerily quiet and my imagination conjured up ‘things’ lurking at the deep end that were battered down by logic as I crawled through the water toward them.

After washing the chlorine off and knotting a tie, the next stop was the cafeteria which sat on the ground floor next to the pool and behind the escalators. A mug of coffee and a sausage in a bap with mustard and brown sauce, then a short ride up the escalator to work. Sadly, for modern day employees, the pool has been covered over to make more office space and the cafeteria is a distant memory.

The escalators, of course, are still an imposing sight as you enter the building. They rise up through a large light-well in the centre all the way to the roof top restaurant. Maybe you can get your morning sausage bap up there now.

I remember potted palm trees at the top of each escalator. Jokes weren’t uncommon, we once left a plastic jug and a memo on a colleague’s desk, advising that it was her turn to water the trees on our floor. She queried this task with the manager who gathered us together and tried to tell us to grow up whilst fighting a grin.

We weren’t allowed to make private phone calls from our desks and had to go down to the ground floor to use payphones. How did we survive without the mobile? We were allowed to smoke at our desks – ah, the old days! I can remember the outrage when the budget increased the price of a packet of 20 to £1. Of course, the cost of living is relative; at that time I earned less than a £1,000 gross per annum.

From around December until late February, each division was treated to an annual party, held in the restaurant. These events, known as ‘Beer & Bangers’, were for staff only and free. Imagine several dozen teenagers and twenty-somethings being given access to food and loads of free booze from 6 pm till late. Oh, the things that went on! But this is a family publication so probably safest to leave it with ‘a good time was had by all’.

They were great days and I remember good friends. I won’t name names, but I recall one young lady who now lives in the States, another who sadly died from cancer a few years back – as did my sister-in-law, also a Willis alumni, not that long ago. Others stayed and married each other and occasionally divorced each other, and/or rose to the dizzy heights of senior management. Some, like me, went to the City, either with Willis or, as in my case, to pastures new.

At least one guy, there may be others, profited handsomely from a staff share option scheme and retired early. Someone told me the chap made a million plus but that’s possibly an exaggeration. As mentioned, I worked for Willis Faber & Dumas and I believe at some point the Dumas name was dropped.* Later the Willis Group merged with an American company, Towers Watson & Co., to form Willis Towers Watson.

Whoever runs the shop, I hope all those 21st century teenagers starting life’s journey in the glass spaceship have as much fun as I did.

Neil Thompson

*[*We recall also ‘Willis Corroon’ in the 1990s. –Ed.]*



The Willis entrance hall with escalators

Barnard Brothers update

In our April *Newsletter* (Issue 225) we featured a 1950 photograph, courtesy of David Kindred, of 'St John's Mill' on Woodbridge Road. The following passage explains the large chimney seen behind the building.

"Lattice Barn", Woodbridge Road (1899, 4483)

This tall smock mill appeared in the 1850s, possibly as a result of a move, as suggested earlier. The miller in 1858 was T. Elvin; it soon passed to Charles Smith, whose family continued to use it until it ceased work in 1922. The shutters were then taken out and the cap and sails removed in 1925. It succumbed to Amos Clarke's axe c.1930, after which the site was built over. Smiths also ran a steam mill on the Woodbridge Road which had its stones replaced by a "Tattersall" roller mill in 1898. The mill building still stands, now occupied by Messrs. Barnard, who sell flour and meal from the premises (though it is milled elsewhere).



This information is taken from the Suffolk Mills Group Newsletter, March 1979 in an article by Peter Dolman. The Lattice Barn windmill was sited to the south of today's public house of the same name.

Ipswich Building Preservation Trust AGM

The IBPT's 2021 AGM is on Thursday 21 October, 6.30 for 7pm in the Sale Room at Isaacs on the waterfront. Very light refreshments will be served and all Ipswich Society members are welcome to attend.

We are delighted that **Kate Chantry**, the strategic manager of the Suffolk Archive Service has kindly agreed to give an illustrated talk after the (brief) AGM entitled:

A 21st century building for Suffolk Archives

(No prizes for guessing which one.)

If further details are required, please contact IBPT chairman Nick Jacob on 01473 221150 or email njacob@njarchitects.co.uk

Photograph: looking up 'The Street' in The Hold.



Photograph courtesy R.G. Carter

Letters to the Editor

The fabric of Christ Church URC in Tacket Street from Andrew Kleissner (Rev.), Cardiff
I was browsing your website and came across the article *Ipswich Rocks* in the January newsletter [Issue 224]. As a former Minister of Christ Church – the former Congregational Chapel – in Tacket Street (2005-2017) I was pleased to see the building mentioned. However investigations carried out some years ago prove that appearances can be deceptive! The main structure of the building is in fact made of brick, with Kentish ragstone cladding and poor quality infill between the two. If you walk down the passage to the side of the similar Museum Street Methodist church (also Frederick Barnes) you will see the naked brick – clearly an economy measure as this wall cannot be seen from the front (which, since reordering, is now the back!)

You will know that many of the decorative features such as the twin spires above the entrance and the decorative parapets have long since disappeared, though the latter can (or could in 2017) still be seen on the building of the International Elim church (Barnes again) on Norwich Road. Sadly repair work using the wrong kind of hard mortar was carried out on the Tacket Street building, probably in the 1950s/60s, and this has had a detrimental effect on the stonework. Much conservation work has been done over recent years, with the elegant Rose Window facing Tacket Street being substantially recrafted about 10 years ago. At the time of my departure repairs were still outstanding to the western façade. There is an interesting ‘artist’s impression’ of the Tacket Street building hanging in the church’s office; this is slightly different to the church as built and does not have the later additions at the east end; I suspect this may have been an architect’s drawing to ‘sell’ the project to the congregation.

Tacket Street Congregational Chapel was mentioned by Dickens in one of his works – he didn’t like it as he felt it was far too fancy for a Nonconformist chapel:-

‘In Tacket Street stands a grand quasi-gothic edifice which would do credit to the most fanatical worshippers of medieval architecture. Such spires and such entrances, and all so new and clean: it is enough to put one’s eyes out; and as for the parish churches in the town, which are all more or less imposing in their aspect, they are reduced to utter insignificance by comparison with this gorgeous congregational chapel, for such indeed is the Tacket Street Temple.

‘So was the erection of this chapel a cause of universal triumph? Nothing of the sort: it was a cause of schism! Dissenters of the old school lamented the shabby chapel that once occupied the same spot and retreated in numbers from a building that savoured of Popery, while Christians of a more genteel kind were mostly pleased with their new edifice. The local newspapers took up the subject with immense spirit, and an imaginary dialogue between the old and new chapel is still remembered as a masterpiece of sarcasm.’

There is also a doggerel poem (worthy of McGonagall) in which a person buried in the chapel’s graveyard comes back to life, and is horrified to see the dear old Meeting House torn down and the monstrous new chapel built in its place. As the ghost is musing on this, a Catholic ghost hops over the wall from the newly-built St Pancras Church, claiming that it’s all part of a Catholic plan to take over – such were the fears of some Christians in the mid-19th century!



The *Harvest* mural, Ipswich Co-operative store from Merv Russen



'Harvest' photograph courtesy John Norman.

stored in boxes at the time of the demolition of the building and is now lost. I know it was not to everyone's taste and of its time but that is not the point.

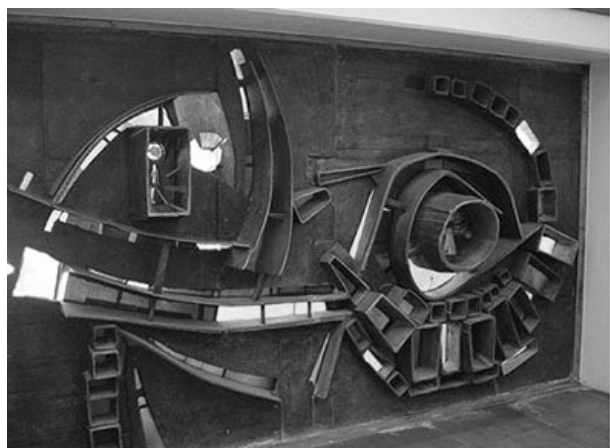
The *Longship* screens in the Old Cattle Market would have been lost if a group of like-minded people had not rattled some cages with the help of Mandy Gaylard.

I wonder if we could ensure that this valuable artefact does not also disappear – never to be seen again.

John Norman replies:

The Ipswich Society lobbied the consultants and the architects for the saving of the *Harvest* mural. All to no avail; the Planning Statement included in their application was that the mosaic was too difficult to remove, too expensive, impossible to save, is already damaged and firmly attached to the concrete frame of the building.

'Eye' photograph courtesy John Norman.

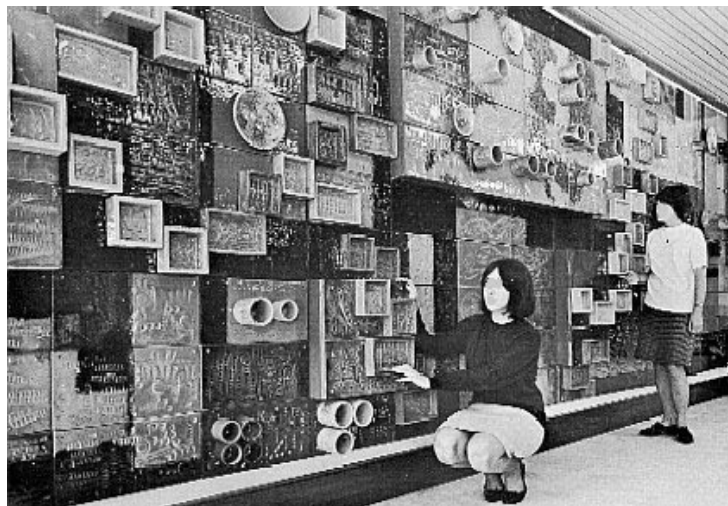


I am a trifle concerned about the Co-op *Harvest* mosaic (see photograph) on the Co-op building overlooking the car park in Cox Lane. I believe the Society have had assurances that it will be saved and installed elsewhere.

Installation in the school precincts has been suggested – I hope this means it is still accessible to the general public – if it happens at all.

Ipswich Borough Council/Suffolk County Council have given those assurances in the past. An example was the Hutton ceramic mural commissioned by the former Eastern Electricity Board in Ipswich in 1966 for their new headquarters building in Russell Road. (pictured below). This was apparently

John Hutton mural; photo from cover of an old Eastern Electricity booklet.



Luckily the Councillors decided that it should be carefully removed and consideration given to its relocation in the new school.

Incidentally, I did remind both Councillors and consultants of the Geoffrey Clarke *Eye* (see photo). I organised the demolition of the tower block at Civic College but arranged with the contractor to remove the 'concrete panel' (wall section) containing the coloured glass window and cart it to Geoffrey Clarke's studio in Hartest.

Teresa Wiggin remembered and the Crane metallurgical laboratory

I was so sorry to hear the sad news about Teresa [Issue226] . Please pass on my sincere condolences to Nick.

Though I have had no contact with her for years – and didn't make the connection of her involvement with The Ipswich Society – because you may be aware that I was Personnel Manager at Crane's for around 35 years, we would have been aware of each other's presence. The Crane metallurgical laboratory was industrially ahead of its time in the way it operated, the excellence of its staff and the advanced work which they did. I can still name at least a dozen now and describe their roles.

With a workforce in excess of three thousand, I was responsible for recruitment for over three decades and may well have participated in her appointment. Although I left Crane in 1994, I still maintained a close contact with the company and the hundreds of people I got to know over those years – and they inevitably knew me. Sadly, I seem to be outliving so many of them.

Although the company finally closed in 2008, I voluntarily set up and managed a huge rescue exercise to save some of its archive collection – both documents and photographs – only hours before their destruction by the demolition contractors. I recruited a team of former Crane staff and we sorted and recorded thousands of documents and pictures which I persuaded the Suffolk Record Office to accept, in particular a photographic collection. Unfortunately, the majority were on glass plates, which the Records Office would not accept; I had to scan them (at home) into a digitised format for them.

Sadly, the foundation stone laid by the Ipswich plant founder, James Bennett, in 1921 was lost in the demolition process and is probably now buried under John Lewis' car park. But, through force of argument, as the development of the site got under way, I at least succeeded in getting the two principal access roads named after the company and J.E. Bennett, its founder.

I now look forward to soon getting back to face-to-face meetings of the Society – though there may be significant constraints for some time to come. I have been a people-person all my life, and Zoom is useful but no real substitute for me

John Barbrook



Ipswich 1921. Mr J.E. Bennett and party drink a toast after the Crane's foundation stone was laid.

Brightwen Binyon (1846-1905)

Notes taken from Michael Gray's talk to The Ipswich Society – 10 March 2021

Brightwen Binyon was born in Manchester, in 1846. His first name of Brightwen was his mother's maiden name. The family were Quakers and he was educated at a Friends' School. He knew the architect Alfred Waterhouse, who was also a Quaker and responsible for the design of the Manchester Town Hall and the Natural History Museum in London. Brightwen was indentured to Alfred Waterhouse from 1863 to 1871. He later became a member of RIBA.

The accepted form was that after training, the Grand Tour would be taken to study architecture, construction of buildings, different styles etc. Brightwen duly travelled to Europe, Egypt and Jerusalem, the last of which he found very disappointing. He was also an excellent, and prolific, watercolour artist and produced very detailed drawings. On his Grand Tour he was introduced to the Duke of Hamilton, of Easton Park, who became a lifelong friend.

Whilst on the continent, Brightwen's father had died causing his mother to move to Ipswich, to be closer to members of her family. On his return to the UK he moved in with his mother at 43 Fonnereau Road. His first commission was to design new stables at Easton Park for 50 horses – that building has since been demolished. He also worked on the interior of Easton Hall and these commissions enabled him to 'set himself up'. He had offices at 36 Princes Street, Ipswich.

Quakers support each other, and this enabled Brightwen to receive a commission in 1874 to build the Fennel Memorial Homes in Bury St Edmunds – these being flats for Christian women in reduced circumstances. The building consisted of diaper brickwork and elaborately carved bargeboards – today it is a listed building.

As well as buildings, he also designed furniture for Capel Cabinet Making, and wallpaper for Jeffrey & Co. The latter primarily consisted of borders and friezes which became extremely popular during the Victorian period, and samples can be viewed at the Victoria & Albert Museum. One commission he received was to re-design the interior of the yacht belonging to the Prince of Wales. He worked primarily for aristocrats but he also had lots of contacts with leaders of Ipswich – many of whom were non-conformist.

As a Quaker he was very supportive of education. The Education Act led to many new schools being built. In 1874, Brightwen built the Board School at Westbridge, Ipswich (then London Road Infants School) and one at Cavendish in 1877. They are of a similar style but significantly there were no corridors, so pupils had to move around the outside of the building to go from room to room. His support for education and continued learning led to him travelling abroad on holiday each year to study buildings, which in turn influenced his work. Quakers are very tolerant of other religions and contact between him and the local Baptists led to him designing the Baptist Church, London Road, Ipswich in 1875. In 1877 he designed a country house for his uncle – The Grove, Harrow, where the influence of the Arts & Crafts Movement can be seen.

The late 19th century saw an explosion of public buildings being erected – the designs of which were often selected via an architectural competition. Disputes over the choice of winning designs lead to entries being submitted with a non-de-plume rather than the actual name of the contributor on the plans. As well as the design, the architects were also required to include the projected building costs of their plan. In 1878 a competition to design Great Yarmouth Town Hall received 42 entries, one of which was from Brightwen Binyon but he failed to win that commission.

He did receive a commission in 1879 to build a new branch for the Alexander, Birbeck, Barclay & Buxton Bank in Sudbury – certainly the Alexander and Barclay families were also Quakers. In September that year, in Darlington, he married Rachel Cudworth – they lived at 5 Henley

Road, Ipswich, and went on to have four children. In 1892 they moved to ‘The Cedars’, Angelsea Road, Ipswich.

Another competition in 1879 was for the design of Ipswich Post Office in Cornhill. Again his entry was not successful but competitions often led to interest by architectural magazines, such as *The Builder*, so the publicity could be very useful particularly if the entrant was judged in the top three. Also in 1879 he entered the competition to build the Ipswich School of Art but again was unsuccessful. The following year, in 1880, he organised the renovation and improvements to Thistleton Hall, in Suffolk. This elegant country house was demolished in 1955.

More Board School commissions followed, with Dixon Street Board School in 1880, Birch Street Board School and Sanford Street Boys School in 1881, all in Swindon. At the time Swindon was a developing town of railway workers, and Brightwen was always passionate about education for the working class. In fact, his design for the Sanford Street Boys’ School was copied and built in Yarra, Australia.

He received a commission from Ellen Hollond, the widow of Robert Hollond, to build a Memorial Lodge in his memory. Robert Hollond had been a lawyer, entrepreneur and MP. His passion was aeronautics, particularly ballooning. With two friends he had flown, in a balloon, from London to Nassau, Germany taking 18 hours to cover 500 miles. It was a world record unbeaten for 70 years, and then only by powered flight. He was the founder of the Aeronautical Society of Great Britain. The Memorial Lodge was built beside the churchyard of St John the Evangelist, Harrow in 1881. It is an attractive Arts and Crafts style cottage, built in red brick and half-timbered with terracotta displaying sunflowers and an armorial crest.

1882 saw him enter another competition, this was to design the Ipswich Corn Exchange. There were 50 entrants and this time he was successful. The judges were impressed by the fact that the Corn Exchange Building was ‘wrapped around’ with commercial buildings. It was built using Portland Stone and the stonework is recognised as ‘excellent’. Bramford Road Board School, Ipswich was also built in 1882 (up until recently occupied by the Suffolk Record Office and the John Mills Theatre run by the Eastern Angles Theatre Group – now the theatre group has taken over the whole building) and followed by the Shire Halls School, Smart Street, also in Ipswich.

Brightwen Binyon was the ultimate networker using friendship and marriage connections. He was commissioned by Ransome (also a Quaker) to re-model and extend his house – Albion Hill House in Ipswich. Plans were produced for a completely new building in the form of a ‘butterfly plan’, and the house was then re-named Holme Wood. It subsequently became a Girl’s School and was later converted into flats.

1886 saw him enter the competition to design the Public Library and Museum in Folkestone. 51 entries were submitted. The judges, unable to decide the ultimate winner, invited the potential winning architects for interview. They were so impressed by Brightwen Binyon that they awarded him the contract and he received 50 guineas.

The next competition he entered was to submit a design for Sunderland Town Hall. Alfred Waterhouse was the adjudicator in an attempt by the authorities to avoid objections to the outcome. There was only three weeks to prepare for the submission, which was very short. Alfred Waterhouse was paid 100 guineas for his role but ironically the winner would only receive 50 guineas. Brightwen Binyon won the competition but it was dogged by accusations of corruption due to the link between Binyon and Waterhouse. However, it was an impressive submission. It cost



*Binyon's
Sunderland
Town Hall
drawing, 1886*

£50,000 to build and was lined with marble. Brightwen was also involved in the design of the furniture. By the time it was finished it was considered too small. In 1971 it was secretly demolished by the local council.

Closer to home, Felixstowe was developing, and Binyon published plans for seaside villas in numerous magazines. Many were built according to his design e.g. Hyldon Court in 1888, which is still standing.

He then moved onto his next commission, for William Knox-Darcy, the founder of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company which later became BP. He was also a Quaker and, having purchased Stanmore Hall in Harrow (from the Hollond family – see above), he wanted it to be fitted out to include a new dining room and a billiard room. Large houses were required for weekend entertainment amongst the ‘higher set’ and Brightwen Binyon fell into that niche. A fire in 1971 destroyed Stanmore Hall.

Using his connections he next built the Mechanics Institute, Swindon in 1891 – another educational facility. In the same year he entered the competition for the Town Hall in Swindon. Most of the 20 submissions would have been too costly to build, 6 were short-listed including Binyon’s design. He calculated it would cost £6,000 to build, and won the contract. It was basically one of his Board School designs with a few frills. Today it is an Arts Centre.

He designed semi-detached houses in Victoria Road, Felixstowe in 1892. In fact he had several commissions in Felixstowe which was an upcoming tourist resort, including the impressive Kilgarth Court in Tomline Way. During the 1890s, public funding became available for Public Libraries which inevitably led to many being built at the time. Brightwen Binyon entered a competition to design the Colchester Public Library, and was successful – it being built in 1893.

He was next involved in the design of the Nethaniah Almshouses for the Aged, in Over Stoke, Ipswich. The memorial tablet was laid by Mrs. Paul in 1890 – she was married to the founder of the William Paul Tenements Trust. This commission fitted in nicely with his Quaker beliefs of helping the working class. Another bank was built in 1895 – this was for the Gurney & Alexander Bank. It is now a Barclays Bank in Felixstowe.

Another competition was won in 1896, beating 44 other entrants, to design the Barrett Browning Institute at Ledbury, Herts. It was built as a memorial to the poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who had lived nearby. The influence of the Arts & Crafts Movement is very evident. The exterior is of the Tudor Revival style with timber framing on the first floor level and terra cotta detail. A prominent feature of the building is an impressive clock tower. Today it is a Grade II Listed Building, despite it not being appreciated by Nikolaus Pevsner. The Institute was opened by Henry Ryder Haggard in 1896 and then as a Public Library in 1938 by the Poet Laureate, John Masefield.

In 1897 he won the competition to design the Felixstowe Spa and Winter Gardens but the design was not implemented. Binyon was a member of the Ipswich Fine Art Club between the years 1875-1903, and frequently exhibited his work. He also exhibited at the Royal Academy. After being in practice for over 25 years, in 1897 he stopped work, gave his practice to his assistant, sold 20 buildings in Ipswich and retired to Bushey, Herts to live with his great aunt. It is speculated that he was probably ill and sorting out his affairs. Over the next few years he worked on small projects for friends and travelled widely. He died on 21st September 1905.

He was the second cousin once removed, of the poet Lawrence Binyon, who wrote the poem *For the fallen* which is recited in memory of casualties of wars. His brother George was in partnership with William Whitmore, engineers and mill-wrights, as Whitmore and Binyon of Wickham Market.

Janette Robinson

The closure of our TIC

It is a truism that national events and Government decisions often impinge directly upon local government. The current Government policy is that those who benefit from tourists should be the ones who pay for the marketing and promotion of tourism. This policy fails when you realise that the greatest beneficiaries are the multinational hotels who have no interest in contributing to, or promoting, one area over another – where they inevitably have another hotel.



Photo: Margaret Hancock

The economic conditions caused by a global pandemic – and no doubt the UK's withdrawal from the European Union plus other factors – continue to have reverberations at local level. The reported ten million pound shortfall in the income for Ipswich Borough Council has resulted in the decision to close the Tourist Information Centre in St Stephen's Church, Arras Square. This follows its prolonged closure during the Covid lockdowns. Its closure will save £160,000 a year: a significant saving as the council tries to close the funding gap. We should not be surprised by further cuts to our public services in the longer term.

Of course, it can be argued – and is very strongly – that promoting the town as a tourist destination through the TIC and by other means brings great financial benefits to the local economy and to the profile of Ipswich in historical and cultural terms. It is also true that footfall at St Stephen's was falling over recent years, but certainly revived when special events and exhibitions were staged at the centre. The Borough has been performing a balancing act in this regard for some time. The TIC staff have done a wonderful job in welcoming residents and visitors alike, providing information about the town, its clubs and societies, taking bookings, selling goods and so on. As ambassadors for the town they couldn't have done more. Perhaps they (and we) are just as much victims of social media and other means of digital communication as any presumed (or imagined) decline in interest in the town.

This might suggest that the online promotion of Ipswich in the future – which, of course, will have to be funded – will bring greater benefits than a physical tourist centre. Other places lost their tourist information centres long before the pandemic. Latest figures seem to suggest that around 12% of UK population don't use computers or the internet so local authorities (and other bodies) must ensure that they treat all residents equally and fairly, rather than relying wholly on putting everything online.

There are also knock-on effects of the Ipswich TIC closure on a number of organisations and individuals. We were on the *Sailing Barge Victor*, the free monthly magazines which used the TIC as their distribution point (*Grapevine*, New Wolsey Theatre annual programme, *ArtEast*, *Ipswich24*, *Ipswich Flyer*), local authors with their individual books, local organisations, such as The Ipswich Society who used the exhibition space and sold our occasional publications, are just a few examples. Visitors 'in the know' also went to St Stephen because of its history as one of our medieval churches, also to view the interior, notably the wall memorial of the 16th century Lehmann family in the north-east corner of the church. In addition the Ipswich Tourist Guides have had to use The Hold on Fore Street for bookings and as a gathering/starting point for guided walks and take-up is not as it once was.

While, in 2021, we all live in these new health, social, political and economic circumstances, we will have to adapt to the changing face of our town. Ipswich does have many things in its favour over comparable towns, but the future is unclear at present. Eventually, many of the best features of Ipswich life may revive, or be replaced by something better. However, we have already lost familiar friends and gathering places and this will probably continue. Human energy, ingenuity and enthusiasm can (and will) make good things happen in bad times. **RG**

Eminent Ipswichians

An occasional column of notable people from, or connected to, Ipswich who don't quite qualify (yet) for an Ipswich Society Blue Plaque.

Sir Thomas Slade – the designer of HMS Victory. A visit to Portsmouth is not complete without a visit to Nelson's flagship; *HMS Victory*, the ship on which he died heroically at Trafalgar in 1805.

She has been the flagship of the First Sealord since October 2012 and is the world's oldest naval ship still in commission, with 243 years' service as of 2021 (launched 1778). It is not surprising therefore that she has physically deteriorated rapidly in her later years and has recently undergone emergency repair works to prevent the hull decaying and sagging. The hull is moving at a rate of half a centimetre each year, about 20 cm over the last 40 years although there are plans to create new hydraulic supports that will better fit the ship. The ship will benefit from a £35 million restoration project, utilising Scottish elm and oak trees as wood for the restoration project.



She was constructed using around 6,000 trees. 100 acres of oak trees were cleared using simple hand tools in Kent and Sussex. Around 90% of the wood used was oak, some of it two feet thick. Huge oak trees were used so that as much of the ship was made in one piece to increase strength.

After service in Ushant, the Siege of Gibraltar and the Battle of Cape St Vincent she was completely reconditioned in 1800 and became Nelson's flagship in 1803.

Her designer was Thomas Slade. He was a member of a shipbuilding family based in Ipswich and Harwich. Sir Thomas was born in 1703 or 1704. He designed over seventy fighting ships across fifteen classes, including frigates and giant warships like *HMS Bellerophon*, *HMS Windsor*, and *HMS Agincourt*.

Sir Thomas died in 1771, seven years before his ship, *Victory*, was launched and thirty-four years before she fought at Trafalgar. He died in Bath but

was buried in St Clement's churchyard in Grimwade Street in Ipswich. St Clement's has always been regarded as the seafarers' or mariners' church. Slade's wife Hannah and her parents were

Sir Thomas Slade painted by an unknown artist (Photograph in the public domain)



buried next to the west boundary of the churchyard and there is a memorial to Sir Thomas outside the west front of the church.

Tuesday, February 23rd 2021 marked the 250th anniversary of the death of Slade and to mark the occasion, the bells of St Clement's Church rang out and played appropriate tunes including the sea shanty *A Drop of Nelson's Blood* and the naval hymn *Eternal Father, Strong to Save*.

A wreath was laid at Slade's memorial by Captain Geoffrey Hartgrove, former chairman of Ipswich Maritime Trust and chairman of the Merchant Navy Association, and Peter Brooks, chairman of Ipswich Historic Churches Trust.
Merv Russen

Photographs by Mervyn Russen except where stated.



Introducing... Ipswich Heritage Icons

This Ipswich Society initiative is driven by our annual tradition of opening up buildings and places of interest to the public on Heritage Open Days (HOD).

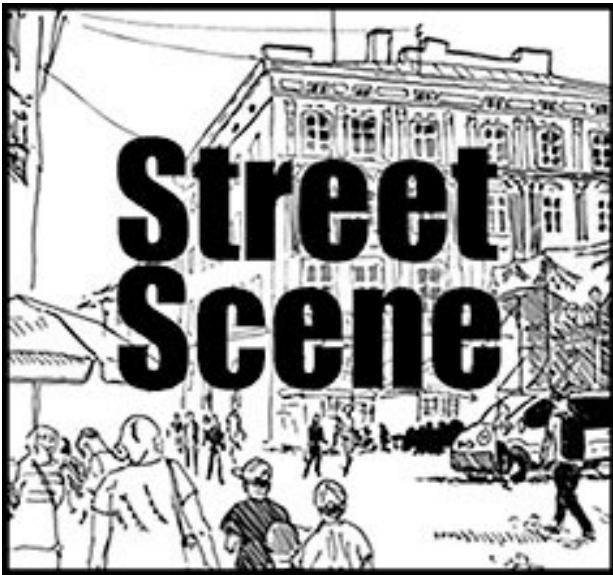
The pandemic has had a major effect on one of the Society's highest profile and popular events. In both 2020 and 2021, local

organisations and groups were, understandably, reluctant to open their venues in the usual way. The uncertainty surrounding infection-rates, new virus variants and potential public caution means that we have had to be imaginative in response in the expectation that normal Heritage Open Days can return in 2022.

Rather than make a one-off 'virtual HOD', we are developing an online resource as a mini-site on our website called 'Ipswich Heritage Icons' launched to coincide with the traditional HOD weekend. This is intended to bring all sorts of information, locations, history, photographs, videos and further links together in one place to promote Ipswich in the future.

Each web-page will deal with one notable building or feature of the town. Society members will know that there are many such heritage assets in Ipswich, so the *Heritage Icons* website will grow and develop over time to show the world the riches of the first Anglo-Saxon town and the historical legacy left by successive generations of inhabitants.

We intend to include not only notable buildings (Ipswich has over 600 statutory listed buildings), but locations such as our Wet Dock and historic Waterfront, our magnificent parks and rivers and so on. If you are a regular volunteer or just interested in helping us, please check the current list of heritage assets: www.ipswichsociety.org.uk/heritage-icons and see where there are gaps in coverage. Then contact our HOD organiser Neil Thompson, whose details are on the inside back page of every issue, to say what you would like to do. Neil will maintain a master list to ensure that there is no duplication of effort. Help us to put Ipswich's *Heritage Icons* on the World Wide Web in a user-friendly and attractive way.



Despite Brexit, the pandemic, dwindling town centres and the weather, there is still plenty going on in the streets and surroundings of Ipswich.

Completed projects

The NEW WOLSEY THEATRE facelift and NW2 Pavilion construction, plus Theatre Square work are all completed and looking very smart. In the theatre are the new downstairs bar and upstairs lounge with balcony; also a new canopy over the theatre entrance. Total cost £3.5 million.

The UNITARIAN MEETING HOUSE restoration has been completed and the house is open to the public again and looking very clean and fresh – now with level access for the disabled.

The controversial conversion of the ‘Croydons’ building into a TESCO express is now complete and as far as the exterior is concerned, it's not looking too bad. The shop sign is discreet for a Tesco sign and many agree that the shop looks better now from the outside than when it was Blacks and when it was empty for seven years prior to Jack Wills moving in.

New town centre shops

Two new shops have opened in Sailmakers (Tower Ramparts) which include NTOURAGE clothing store on the ground floor (former Java Store unit) and BEX BAIT AND TACKLE on the upper floor who also have a shop on Upper Orwell Street.

FIREAWAY PIZZA have opened in a former betting shop in Upper Brook Street.

PHONE UNIVERSE has opened in Butter Market in the former Riley and Riley.

WAFFLE and Co. have opened in Carr Street filling half of the old Superdrug unit with Cake Box filling the other half.

Also in Carr Street MICROSHOPS ‘indoor market’ with small units for start up businesses is gradually filling up with about 10 units and a coffee shop already open with more signed up to open soon.

As already mentioned a new TESCO express has opened in Tavern Street. Also, IPSWICH BIKE PROJECT have taken over the former Waterfront Bikes unit on Orwell Quay.

Shops and businesses opening soon

HONEY + HARVEY Patisserie and Tea Rooms is expected to open in Giles Circus before Christmas.

THE BOTANIST restaurant is scheduled to open around November in the old Post Office on Cornhill.

BURGER AMOUR have taken out a 25 year lease on the former Little Waitrose unit in the Corn Exchange. They are part of the Dough & Co. group who have recently opened a restaurant in the former Frankie and Benny's unit in Cardinal Park.

New projects around Ipswich

BREWDOG Craft Beer have applied for an alcohol licence in the former La Tour Cycle Café unit on Albion Wharf where they propose to strip it out and completely redesign the unit.



Butter Market, photograph by Tim Leggett.

A proposal has been put forward to convert ST MATTHEW'S BATHS into a gig venue with live music.

A proposal has been made to turn ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH (former TIC) into a live music venue.

A planning application has been accepted for a 99 bedroom TRAVELODGE on the car park next to Endeavour House (SCC) on Russell Road where the developers also plan to revamp the retail units once occupied by Staples and Better Gym for retail and office use.

Work has started on a 4 million pound scheme constructing 22 flats for people with physical and learning disabilities on a former car park on Handford Road, next to the McCarthy & Stone retirement complex which will be known as 'Handford Place'.

LAY & WHEELER Wine Merchants have applied for a space on the new Wherstead Business Park at the top of Bourne Hill which is yet to be constructed.

The go-ahead has been given for a new PRIMARY SCHOOL with roof-top Multi-Use Games Area on the site of the former Co-op department store in Carr Street. This will involve completely demolishing the former store despite efforts by The Ipswich Society to retain the original facade on the Cox Lane corner with Carr Street.

The second stage of a Heritage Lottery Fund bid has been submitted for an 8 million pound reconfiguration of the IPSWICH MUSEUM and Arts Centre on High Street with planning permission already granted.

TIM HORTON CANADIAN RESTAURANTS have submitted plans to convert the former Pizza Hut on Anglia Retail Park into one of their Canadian Restaurants.

Continuing projects around Ipswich

Work on the 'BLUE LIGHT HUB' on Princes Street continues where the town police station, fire station and ambulance station will all be housed together on the one site.

Work is in progress preparing the former Burtons building on St. Peters Wharf for conversion as premises for the GECKO THEATRE COMPANY. The Burtons building will receive an additional floor with a restaurant overlooking the Waterfront if these plans come to fruition. It is hoped to complete the work in 2022.

The former east building (T Block) of the former Suffolk College, now part of the University of Suffolk complex, is currently being restored and updated and converted into a HEALTH AND CARE CENTRE and should match the already restored buildings' exteriors when the work is complete. This is the last of the former Suffolk College buildings to be refurbished and will complete this phase of development for the University of Suffolk.

SOFA STORE and LIDL are both expected to open units on the Futura Retail Park (formerly Crane's; see page 6). Lidl will be replacing their current store in the Ravenswood shopping complex with a bigger store at the Futura Retail Park.

Work has started building the McCARTHY & STONE retirement complex on the former Archant Newspapers site in Lower Brook Street after a long hold-up, partly because of an archaeological dig followed by the Covid pandemic and more.

Work has started again to complete the reshaping of the entrance to the BUTTERMARKET SHOPPING CENTRE. It appears to be slow at the moment, but it is progressing.

WATERFRONT PAVING is in progress after the successful ban on parking during Covid19. A parking ban between Ashtons solicitors/the Mariners floating restaurant and the University Waterfront Building is now permanent. The former parking bays are being paved to match the other pedestrian areas and it has been reported that the scheme will include planters and seating to enhance the area. It is hoped that perhaps more outside dining will evolve along the quays and wharfs. The area between DanceEast and PizzaExpress is already a no-traffic zone and has attracted much outside dining.

16 housing association flats in conjunction with Ipswich Borough Council are well advanced along Grimwade Street where a row of shops was demolished last year. With a mixed colour brick facade and hanging tiles on the upper sections these flats should not look too bad and certainly help to tidy up Grimwade Street.

A NEW ENTRANCE TO HEATH ROAD HOSPITAL is under construction and this 23.2 million pound phase (more to come) includes an Urgent Treatment Centre and new shops.

*Work continues on THE HOPE CENTRE in the former Odeon cinema at Majors Corner.

Office block conversions

A proposal has been put forward to convert ST CLARE HOUSE (the former Inland Revenue offices) on Princes Street into around 100 flats, many of them single room studios.

Direct Line are selling their GILES PLACE call centre office block between Princes Street and Friars Street where it is proposed to create 35 flats. Many Direct Line workers will continue to work from home, while it is reported that Direct Line will also be taking space in the Crown House office complex on Crown Street – already partly occupied by LV Insurance.

CENTURY HOUSE, 39 Princes Street (on the junction with Friars Street) is to be converted into 12 flats.

Tim Leggett

[See the back cover for more Street Scene photographs.]

Image Archive: album of the month

Harvey 2 - An Ipswich Society Album

From time to time our Hon Secretary receives requests from all kinds of people to use the Society's resources for various novel purposes. Our view is that they should be shared whenever possible, but that the Society is always acknowledged.

Recently when a professional historical researcher contacted us requesting inclusion of some of our photographs in a residential historical piece of research we were able to permit the use of images which were relevant to the subject. The sort of work undertaken by such researchers includes social and structural house histories; the origins and development of businesses and enterprises such as hotels, cinemas, stations and even industrial sites; often they provide a service to authors preparing fiction and non-fiction material.

The photographs in question had been located in one of our albums in the Image Archive on the Flickr website. This particular album is one which was donated to us in 2018 called Harvey 2 and was subsequently joined by Harvey 3. The two albums comprised nearly 550 monochrome photographs which were digitised by our Newsletter editor and added to the burgeoning Archive.

The album depicts the life of the fire service in the town and neighbouring areas between the years 1949 -1955, including some historical images of great interest and some which present possibly distressing images of damage and calamity befalling property and people.

Billy Griss was a fireman and good amateur photographer who collated the albums which were bought by the retired Ipswich firefighter John Harvey, he lent them on to the Society for scanning. The photographs are annotated from the albums, supplemented by John's memories.

The sight of burning buildings, capsized boats, fire uniforms developing over time and the way that the equipment and vehicles changed and improved are very well documented in both the albums.

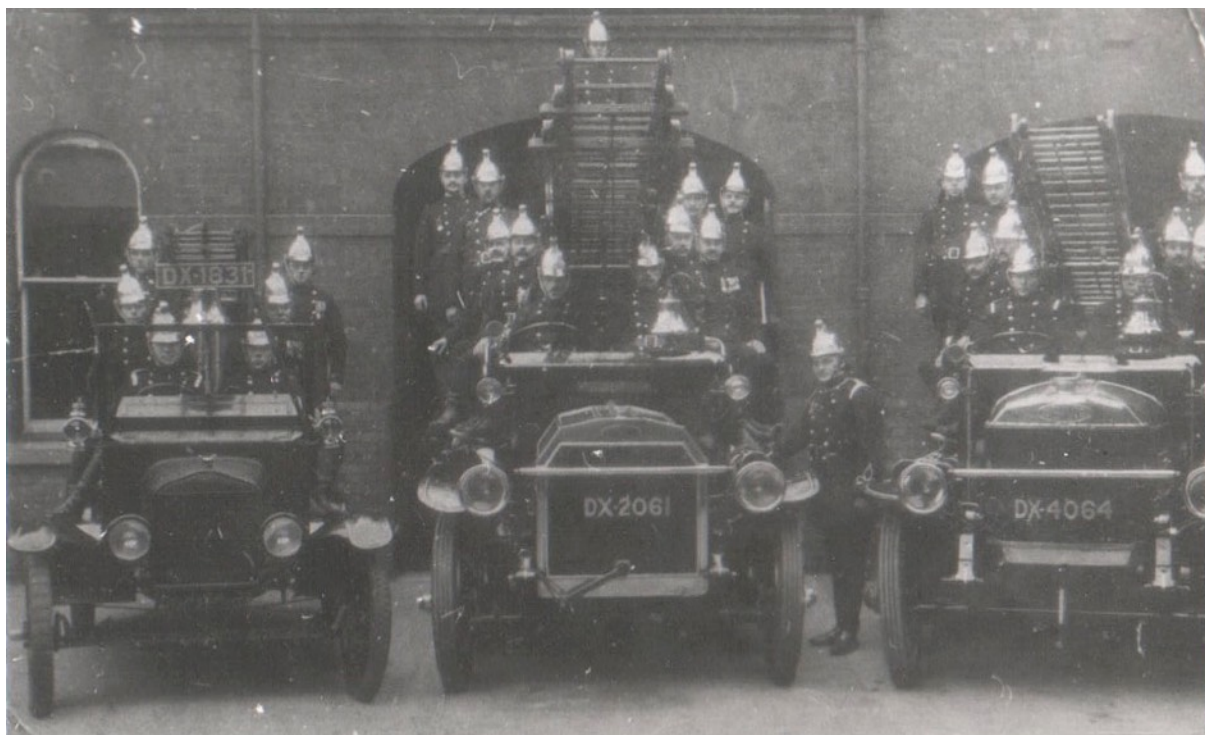


From our Image Archive: Fire at Paul's maltings, New Cut West, Ipswich 1889.

The images requested were of a grisly nature as it turned out because they were of a nineteen-fifties house fire in which a father and children perished. We hope that the recipients are not affected by the pictures and if they relate to their own residence they are not too touched by what they reveal.

Look at our Image Archive on Flickr – see the link on the homepage of the Society’s website.

Tony Marsden



Above: Ipswich Fire Brigade, 1928.



Snowy scene photographed from Bond Street Fire Station, Ipswich on December 27th 1962. The Ragged Girls School is on the right with County Hall beyond.

Both photographs are from our Image Archive.

The Ipswich Society

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Diary dates

Wednesday October 20, 7.30pm: Illustrated Winter Talk at Museum Street Methodist Church.

Wednesday November 24, 7.30pm: Annual Awards Evening at The Hold.*

Wednesday December 15, 7.30pm: Illustrated Winter Talk at Museum Street Methodist Church.

*We are hoping that the **Awards Evening** will go ahead this year and have booked the Hold for the 24th November - start time is yet to be finalised. It is to be hoped that the evening will incorporate a number of as yet uncelebrated presentations. The plans are in flux, but members will be kept informed with the progress. *Tony Marsden* . **All the above dates are subject to Covid restrictions.**

Quest for a rare book by Harriet Isham Grimwade

Can you help? We have been asked by Dr Peter Shwarz from Edinburgh if anyone knows the whereabouts of a copy of *In Memoriam: Jessie McFarlane*, by Harriet Isham Grimwade, Ipswich's first publicly elected woman (written anonymously as 'HIG').

Please contact the Editor (details above) if you can help.

Newsletter deadlines & publication dates (the latter may vary by a few days)

Deadline for material:	1 December;	Publication date:	22 January;
	1 March;		2 April;
	1 June;		17 July;
	1 September;		9 October.



4. Carr Street.
5. Cardinal Park.
6. Lower Brook Street (visual).
7. Tavern Street.

1. Sailmakers shopping centre.
2. Theatre Square, Civic Drive.
3. Sailmakers shopping centre.



See the full article on page 22.