



The Ipswich Society NEWSLETTER

www.ipswichsociety.org

July 2022 Issue 230

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The Church of St Clement has recently benefited from removal of the old pew platforms, installation of a splendid, suspended oak floor with voids around the outside to accommodate services, and repairs to the internal plasterwork. All care of the Ipswich Historic Churches Trust.

Editorial

Jackie Sadek, our AGM speaker in April, introduced many of us to the word ‘factoid’. The book *Broken homes* uses the word in its sub-title. The dictionary defines a factoid as: ‘an item of unreliable information that is reported and repeated so often that it becomes accepted as fact’. A variant would be the term ‘Alternative facts’, which was a phrase used by U.S. Counselor to the President, Kellyanne Conway, during the Trump administration in 2017. ‘Fake news’ followed hot on its heels suggesting that all the ‘news’ we hear and read should be treated with scepticism, or even cynicism. This is dangerous stuff and feeds the dragon of conspiracy theory. The KGB are particularly successful in telling Russian citizens – and the rest of the world – that black is white – and that you shouldn’t trust anyone who claims otherwise. However, we should also be aware of sources of such misinformation closer to home... (For more on Jackie Sadek’s talk, see pages 3 and 13.)

Our cunning plan to give members added value by giving away our publications to them started with *Ipswich: a town to be proud of* (2019). This was followed in our *Newsletter* distributions by *Public art in Ipswich* (2021), *Ipswich Maritime Trail* (2021) and *Guide to St Clement Church* (2022) and the new *Ipswich Women’s History Trail* with this issue. For possibly the first time, the Society is mailing out our *Heritage Open Days* booklet in August – this is a tribute to the hard work of our HOD organiser, Neil Thompson. The lack of a TIC to handle the distribution and act as a main outlet for the booklet means that we have to do the work ourselves. Please pass on the booklet to friends or neighbours if you’re away, or not able to visit venues for HOD 2022.

Robin Gaylard

**New
members**



Details of the St Clement renovations showing repaired plasterwork on the interior of the south wall and the cluster of pillars emerging through the suspended floor. The project cost around £150,000 including fees plus VAT. The contractor was F.A. Valiant & Son, specialists in the restoration and conservation of churches.

Chairman's remarks

You will read elsewhere in this *Newsletter* (page 13) a report on Jackie Sadek's talk after the AGM and note that it was based on her book; *Broken homes, Britain's housing crisis: faults, factoids and fixes* co-written with Peter Bill (Troubador 2020). It is a revealing read and outlines how the major house-builders have manipulated the market to build even smaller houses for even greater profit.

Since the end of the First World War ('Homes fit for heroes') the Government has tried to set minimum standards for space in new homes, notably the Parker Norris standards developed after the Second World War. Developers – particularly the big house builders – have resisted, most recently supporting the government's 'Localism agenda' where the local population (and the local planners) set the standards. You will not be surprised to learn the size of houses, particularly the smaller ones, is lower than any standard that has come and gone.

A particular trick is to build two and three-bedroom homes over three floors, one in the roof space – so no chance of later expansion! Three-storey homes are narrower, so sit on narrower plots: more plots in the street but less room for on-site parking.

A surprising outcome, at least to me, is the change in the ratio between daytime space and nighttime space. It was 50/50, for example, in a 1930s semi and no doubt in your house and mine. That is half of the rooms (downstairs) were for daytime use – the kitchen, lounge – and the other half for nighttime use – bathroom, bedrooms. In a three storey house this has changed: one third daytime, two thirds night-time (this achieves three bedrooms, a family bathroom and an ensuite). What this means in practice is that there simply isn't room for a family, with all the paraphernalia they accumulate, and if there isn't a garage there is little or no storage space.

The amount of green space – parks, playgrounds, even verges – has also reduced considerably since the millennium; *The Guardian* suggests by 40 percent on a typical new estate.

Jackie then dealt with 'factoids' (items of unreliable information that are reported and repeated so frequently that they become accepted as facts):-

'Building more houses lowers the price.'

'Changing the Planning system will lead to more houses being built.'

'Prefabs will solve the housing crisis.'

Jackie provided a strong case why none of these are true, whilst at the same time explaining how they have become government policy.

Broken homes is an informative book and if you are in anyway interested in the new-build housing market, I recommend you read it. Incidentally, the copies Jackie left after her talk were sold for the benefit of the Society, for which we are grateful.

Finally, one quick reminder from me. The Executive Committee has organised, in conjunction with Ipswich Historic Churches Trust, an 'indoor Garden Party'. It will take place inside St Clement's Church (on the superb new floor) on Wednesday evening, 20th July 2022 between 6pm and 8pm. Pop in at any time for a glass of wine, a canapé and a chance to look around.

John Norman, Chairman

Correction: in my Carr House development article (Issue 228) should read Joe Fogel, not 'Joe Fogal'; apologies.

Planning matters

2-3 Friars Courtyard, 30-32 Princes Street, Jarman House 2-4 Northgate Street, 8 Great Colman Street.

These three applications illustrate the current trend to convert the upper stories of central town properties from commercial to small apartments.

Land adjacent to 3 Coytes Gardens. This is the third and most acceptable proposal for this site. Permission for three one-bed flats was given last August; they now wish to have one one-bed and one three-bed flats together with a small roof terrace, a lift, solar panels and air heat pumps (as they hadn't started the build, new building regulations now require this). The exterior is unchanged.

Ipswich Garden Suburb. Application for a road bridge and a pedestrian/cycle bridge to serve Ipswich Garden Suburb including drainage, earthworks and ancillary works, and temporary haul roads and construction compounds. The vehicle bridge is to be 150 metre to the east of Henley Road and consist of a 41.5m precast concrete span on concrete piles. It will carry two 2m footways, one 3m cycleway and a 6m wide road. The pedestrian and cycle bridge will replace the current foot crossing west of Westerfield Road and carry a 33.4m pressed steel span on steel pillars. Access will be by stairs or by 1:22 ramps on either side.

Two construction roads will be needed, one exiting Henley Road and the northerly one already constructed. There will be an increase in traffic during construction including tipper trucks and cranes. Both bridges are utilitarian and are not things of beauty. It is a shame that the footbridge with its ramps will be so intrusive. It has been suggested that straight ramps, to the 3.5m height required, would be more attractive.

7 Constable Road. The replacement uPVC windows for this prominent Victorian house are virtually undetectable.

Regent Theatre. The Regent is the largest theatre in East Anglia and is 'a receiving house' i.e. it receives entertainment produced elsewhere. From the date of its build, 1929, it has very limited and inconvenient backstage facilities. To make it more attractive to touring productions of all types, IBC have instructed KLH architects to design three modular units, linked to the grade 2 Manager's Cottage to provide fully accessible changing rooms, facilities and catering areas, all linked undercover to the theatre. It will be in the hard standing area behind the brick wall in Woodbridge Road and will be largely invisible from the outside, apart from new signage. This is a sound and sensible development allowing the Regent to become a more attractive venue without impinging on its listed status.

2 Anglia Parkway North erection of warehouse. The previous industrial use of this site on a 24 hour basis was unpopular and has not been fulfilled. This proposal is for a medium-sized warehouse with six loading bays next to Graham's plumbers merchants. As long as the working hours are reasonable, this is a useful employment scheme.

Eight similar applications for the **replacement of BT Phone Boxes by 'BT Hubs'**. A BT Hub is a free-standing structure, 3m high, 1.25m wide and 35cm thick. Each side has a 75 inch LCD

screen which will be advertising for 95% of the time, 5% being devoted to the Local Authority and the Community use, free of charge. They provide free outgoing phone calls, 999 calls, ultra fast wifi, power USB ports for device recharging and environmental sensors. The chosen sites are:-

Amenity Land Old Foundry Road. No objection. Replaces 3 BT phone boxes.

Highway land outside 56 Westgate Street. Unnecessary as there is an information standard nearby. Historic area.: No BT phone box. Refuse.

Highway land opposite 6 Civic Drive. This would be a distraction to drivers on an extremely busy road. An advertising screen on Theatre Square has been refused on these grounds. The existing phone box site would be better.

Highway land outside 283 Duke Street. Very close to the street and thus distracting. No phone box. Better site by the layby nearby.

Highway land outside Electric House. No local objection. No phone box. Acceptable

Land adjacent to Waterloo House, Lloyds Avenue. Historic area. Refuse

Amenity adjacent to 19 -21 Neptune Quay. Position too prominent; should be set back from quay and nearer to apartments. No phone box. Refuse.

Highway land outside 46-48 Buttermarket. Inappropriate site. No phone box. Refuse.

114 Fore Hamlet. Handford Homes have commissioned Barefoot and Gillies to design a mixed size 30 flat development, all affordable for rent, replacing the Hope Church. In two blocks, the street elevation will run from six down to three storeys. It will be constructed in brick and masonry, the ground floor being 'rusticated'. Adequate car parking with charging points to each. The existing plane trees on the site will be retained. This is a welcome and well designed proposal.

37 Berners Street. This grade 2 listed building, originally a house, then a doctor's surgery and now The Lighthouse/Women's Aid is proposed for conversion to six one and two bedroom flats. At present, only a small part of the building is in use. The conversion would not impact on the the very attractive exterior but there would be some loss of minor heritage detail within due to the previous users.

Closure of pedestrian through route from Silent Street to Turret Lane : This is part of a pedestrian through route across town. Some of it is in private ownership, is ill-lit, has blind corners, has no signage and is subject to much objectionable anti-social behaviour, both by day and night. Improvements could be made but the owners and the police would be much happier to see it closed completely. This has been approved.

Theatre Square. (The New Wolsey/NWI2) has been granted a RIBA award.

Mike Cook

St Clement spring clean

Our Sailors' Church has had a much needed interior clean. The Ipswich Historic Churches Trust has brought in professional cleaners, Shirley Shelley, to give the tops of its walls, roof spaces and upper windows their first deep clean since the restoration of the roof following the disastrous fire of 1995. The dust and massed spiders' webs can be imagined.

The Ipswich Society made a considerable contribution to the cost of the cleaning. A further £100,000 is needed for new sewerage and water services to enable the installation of toilets for the full use of the facility by the public.

Albert Clarke: 'Art Smith'

One artisan metalworker we should be aware of in Ipswich is Albert Clarke (1868-1950) who was operating in the town in the years around 1900. His great-great-granddaughter, Michelle Clarke lives in Victoria, Australia and has been researching his work.

Albert's most recognised contribution to the Ipswich street scene is the bespectacled gate to the former Scarborough optician's (now Pickwick's tea shop) in Dial Lane. The Charles Rennie Mackintosh-style Art Nouveau shop frontage is one of the gems of Ipswich. The gates in iron and copper, once had lettered 'lenses' (long gone) and the fine porch have survived the years well. The design would have been provided by local architect, John Shewell Corder. (It is notable that Albert, the Designer Art Smith, advertises "Architects' Designs carefully followed".)



All images from the Ipswich Historic Lettering website



NORWICH DIOCESAN CONFERENCE
A MASS MEETING
 for MEN ONLY
 Corn Exchange, Ipswich
 on THURSDAY, October 19th, 1911
 THE LORD BISHOP OF S. DAVID'S
 THE REV. DEACON F. M. W. GOULDEN
 CHURCHILL & TURNER
 Subject
**PROPOSED DISESTABLISHMENT
 AND DISENDOWMENT OF THE
 CHURCH IN WALES.**
 Chairman
 THE LORD BISHOP OF TRURO
 QUESTIONS

The wrought iron gates into the graveyard of St Mary-At-The-Quay are Albert's work and integrate the key motif and 'SM'; they were refurbished during the renovation and rebuild of the church. The poster advertises a diocesan meeting to propose the disestablishment and disendowment of the Church of Wales.

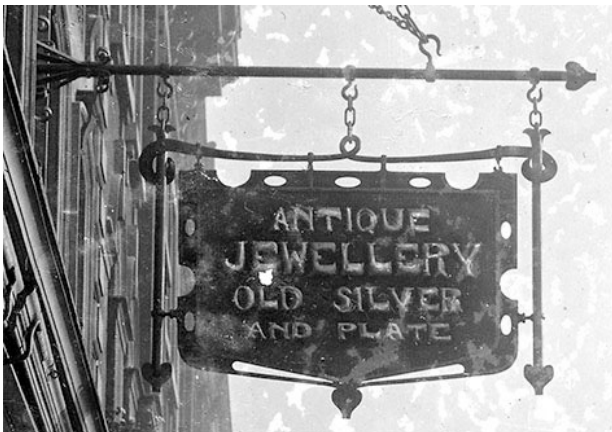
He worked at one stage at 102a Fore Street which must have been close to Mellonie & Goulder's coal yard which backs onto Neptune Quay. Albert was a keen photographer, so it is almost certain he also took the photograph of the Scarborough gate and other work. The gates of The Felix Hotel (opened May 1903) in Felixstowe, which is now Harvest House (converted into retirement apartments in



1985), has Albert posing near the gate. He would have carefully placed his bicycle in the shot, presumably using a shutter delay on his tripod camera. The photographic prints come from a portfolio of Albert's work which was saved by a relative when the house was being cleared out.

Albert emigrated with his wife and three children to Melbourne in November 1911. He set up his business there in Hampton and continued to produce a range of quality metalwork for building projects there, including significant residences in that city; some of his work is now on listed properties. **R.G.**

Below: gate to F. Corder & Son's department store Millinery Show Room, probably in Butter Market and long gone.



Repoussé lettering in copper on iron: hanging signs from Frasers furniture store on Princes and Museum Streets which burnt down in April 1912.



Archaeology maps and aerial photograph archive launched

It is good to see Historic England's publication of the 400,000 images which it has digitised, brought to our attention, in the papers and on TV. The Aerial Archaeology Mapping Explorer is a fantastic tool which gives access to years of aerial photograph mapping projects across Great Britain.

You can explore the layers of archaeology in and around your personal location and you can browse the map and zoom in to the feature you're interested in. It is all easily manageable and quite intuitive in a format with which most of us are becoming familiar these days.

What is also brilliant is you can see photographs taken by the RAF as well as sideways aerial views from locations all over the country – search by postcode, address or place name. I was immediately reminded of one of the Society's albums on the Image Archive 'Mateer' after its donor the late Brian Mateer who contributed over 600 images which he had taken himself. After twelve years in aerial photography in the RAF, Brian joined Fisons as part of their Farm Photo Plan in which two cameras, one colour Infrared film and the other with 120 negative film were used. The infrared film could pinpoint any disease in the crop.

He told us that a precarious method of photographing was employed in which he had to stand on the pilot seat and photograph through the open window using a fast shutter speed. Generally pictures were taken at five hundred feet and the whole job would take about half an hour.

What was wonderful to see was that amongst the photographs featured on the Historic England's Explorer web page one was of a Cessna aircraft – almost identical to that used by Brian in his work taking photographs of Ipswich and Suffolk. Check out the Historic England website – but don't forget you can see acres and acres of Ipswich and Suffolk from the air in Brian's album.

Historic England:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/results/aerial-archaeology-mapping-explorer>

Image Archive – Mateer album:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/ipsoc/albums/72157683061590890/with/38318162425>

Tony Marsden

Public viewing area, Ipswich tidal barrier (update)

More on the tangled web surrounding public access to this facility; see our article *Problems, problems, problems: the public viewing area, New Cut West and the Griffin Wharf branch* (Newsletter, April 2022).

I am reliably informed that (at the time of writing) just one aggregate train has used Griffin Wharf (West Bank Terminal) since the start of 2022.

On 25 April a set of wagons arrived, were filled with aggregate and were hauled away behind 66084 destined for Neasden Engineers' Sidings, London. (ITS Journal No. 688)

The future? The hoardings around the tramway have just been given another 6 months extension of time, so no decision is expected for a while. They may be awaiting a decision on a new nuclear power station at Sizewell where there will be a requirement for a massive amount of aggregate, probably imported through the West Bank Terminal and then transported to Sizewell by rail, a potential daily use for the branch line.

John Norman



Not 'time gentlemen please!'

The place of Ipswich in the development of themed hostelries

In 1804, in north London, a tavern was built in the style of a Swiss chalet becoming, ultimately, Ye Olde Swiss Cottage. As a consequence it gave its name to an underground station and a geographic area. This was at a time when the tentacles of the London conurbation were reaching out northwards into the area which eventually became known as 'Metroland'. The building of 'Swiss chalets' was a vogue of the Victorian era. In Peasenhall, the local community hall is built in this style; the owner of a firm of local agricultural engineers who had holidayed in Switzerland, wanted to look out of his Suffolk home at a Swiss chalet.

During trips to the Hendon area of London in the early 1970s, Ye Olde Swiss Cottage became a place to visit occasionally. In 1975, after travelling from York to London independently, it became a useful rendezvous and place to stop for the night.

In 1965, the Running Buck on St Margarets Plain, Ipswich began construction of some wooden lodges behind the main pub buildings. The new area was opened as a restaurant and bar in January 1966 with a Scandinavian ambiance, and rapidly became a 'go to' place. I can recall going there to meet friends returning from college and university, and a current work colleague took his soon to be wife there for a restaurant meal. It would naturally create a good impression. It was quite something and unusual for the times.

Eventually, it became Cindy's night club, finally closing its doors in 1993. Subsequently, it was bought by the Bethesda Church, who sadly demolished the lodges and constructed a church centre. The centre was opened by the harmonica-playing Manfred Mann singer and radio presenter Paul Jones in 1999.

Also, in the mid 1960s, a German themed restaurant and bar, The Old Heidelberg Inn was opened in Upper Brook Street, near to the Lucania Billiard Hall (another 'sport' I could never master or see the point of) and the Cock and Pye public house. The Heidelberg became a favourite late night rendezvous for myself and friend Dave; he travelling on his Lambretta to meet me in the Bishops Hill area, after we had taken our respective girlfriends at the time home.

Later on, at the time of the successful lunar landing and walk by Neil Armstrong, The Man in the Moon was opened in 1969 in the Crofts area of Ipswich, and is still going strong today.

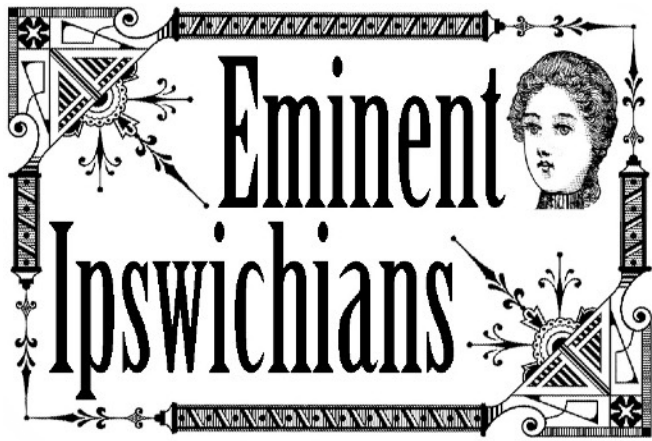
On a trip to the north-west of England, before visiting Liverpool and going on a 'Magical Mystery Tour', we visited Rochdale, home of Gracie Fields and the original 'Rochdale Pioneers' Co-operative Shop in Toad Lane. After an afternoon visit to the tented arena of the acrobats of the Chinese State Circus, we were looking for an evening meal, and stumbled upon 'The Alpine Gasthof' incongruously situated amidst an area of Victorian terraced houses. I believe the Gasthof may have been built in the 1980s. The meal was very competitively priced (i.e. much cheaper than in Suffolk) and very good in a superb atmosphere. I can also recall a visit we made to The Swiss Centre in London around 1982, but this was a restaurant within the Tourist Centre, and not specifically a hostelry.

At the moment, therefore, apart from those outlined above, my research has not found any earlier examples of themed bars/hostelries. Do any members of The Society know of others?

Although themed bars are becoming more of a vogue these days, I believe that Ipswich in particular was instrumental in their development in the United Kingdom. Perhaps, another first for our county town.

Graham Day

[Some readers may recall when, in 1984, The Running Buck became 'Canes' – another themed pub/club with a dubious requirement of female staff to wear skimpy school uniforms (we understand). The Kingfisher on Hawthorne Drive was rebranded as 'Kings' at around that time, with lots of chrome and plastic in the bar. –Ed.]



Genius awakens genius Professor Edward Byles Cowell F.B.A. (1826-1903)

Not far from where Edward Byles Cowell (EBC) discovered the beautiful Persian manuscript of Hakim Umar Khayya'm of 1460 in the Bodleian Library, Oxford that went on to become a world famous multi-million selling poem as translated, pruned, adapted and first published in 1859 by his

friend Edward FitzGerald (EFG) of Woodbridge 1809-1883, EBC may have also seen & studied copies of the *Ashtavakra Gita*, a Sanskrit esoteric text born of India & the Hindu tradition that shares the self-same mystic insights that underpin and overarch the universally-loved *Ruba'iyat of Omar Khayya'm* - OM & Omar* indeed.

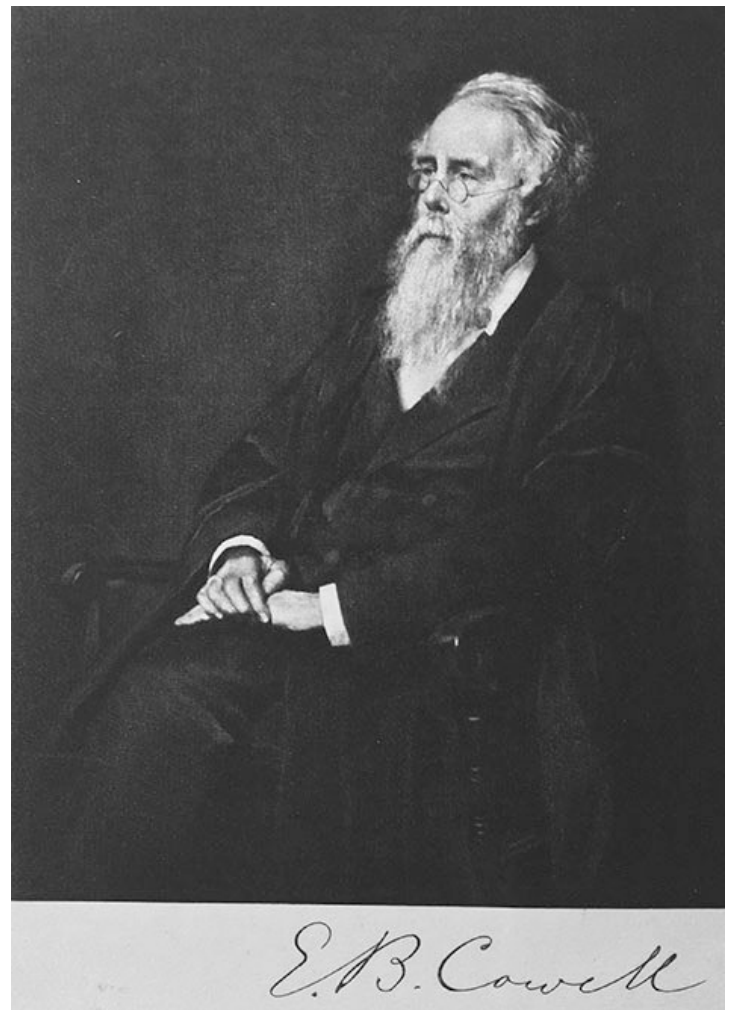
India fired the imaginations of both EBC and EFG early in their lives – before they met in 1844. EFG made the acquaintance of Major Edward Moor of Great Bealings who served in India and had written *The Hindu Pantheon* published in 1810 (inspiring William Blake) and at the age of fifteen EBC bought a copy of a Sanskrit grammar having already mastered the Persian language aged 14! Happily sharing this knowledge with EFG, both in this country and from Calcutta, India where he was appointed Professor of Political History and Modern Economy in 1856-67 likewise becoming Principal of Sanskrit College 1858-64 and eventually first Professor of Sanskrit at Cambridge University.

Pop along to The Hold in Ipswich (close by where EBC was born) and you can view the Byles Cowell scrapbook containing several touching family photographs, paintings, letters and press cuttings, two of which stand out: one, stating that Professor Cowell was one of the greatest minds that East Anglia has produced and another relating the opinion of an Indian scholar that Professor Cowell was a reincarnation of a Sadhu – a Holy Man.

Do you wish to know more about this whirlwind of scholarship, this gentle, humble, splendid teacher and devout Christian who translated several Hindu and Buddhist texts which are still in print and is laid to rest alongside his wife Elizabeth in Bramford churchyard? Then dip into *Wikipedia*; the *Life and Letters of Edward Byles Cowell* by George Cowell (Macmillan & Co.); *The Letters of Edward FitzGerald*, four volumes (Princeton University); *The Heart of Awareness* by Thomas Byrom, (Shambala) and *Tantra* by Imma Ramos, (Thames & Hudson and The British Museum) that will lead you to further light and delight.

Charles Mugleston

Artistic Director of the Omar Khayyam Theatre Company www.omarkhayyamtheatrecompany.com
wide screen



*OM (alternative AUM) is the Hindu mantra/sound which 'Awakens'. It is said to invoke, evoke, provoke 'All Knowledge'; and every time we say Omar, by happy coincidence/synchronicity, we repeat the Hindu mantra! Unconscious/conscious; "as gesture that rises up out of the depths of time" (R.M.Rilke). it is a profound poetic play of sound through words, adding yet another subtle dimension of universality to the poem.

More early work experiences and beyond

Reading Derek Lay's experience on starting work at R and W Paul's (Issue 228) has prompted me to put my own experience of early work day on paper and hope your readers will be able to associate them with their own early days at work.

I left school in 1951, aged 15, without any qualifications as 'O' level exams were not available at Tower Ramparts Secondary Modern School. I started work at Tollemache's Breweries Ltd whose office was in Upper Brook Street. My first position was Junior Clerk in the Accounts Department and, like Derek, we sat on high stools in front of sloping desks and entered details of invoices for beer, wines and spirits supplied to our customers – mainly tenants of pubs owned by the company – into large leather-bound ledgers.

We worked 9.00am until 1.00pm and 2.30 until 5.00pm, Monday to Friday and 9.00 until noon on Saturdays with one Saturday off every four weeks. All for £1 10 shillings a week (I found that my fellow school leavers who got jobs in local government got £3.00 a week). After the first week I had to call in at the Post Office on the Old Cattle Market on my way to work to collect the company's post which was in a rather large leather bag and return same on my way home.

Christmas was a busy time for the brewery and as we were a family firm it was usual for staff to receive a monetary gift. This entailed the widow of The Hon. Mr Douglas Tollemache coming into the office and each member of staff being presented to her, whereupon she would hand the recipient an envelope in which there was a bank note, mine was £5. Before this all happened, we had to donate a small amount of cash in order to buy the Hon. Lady a bouquet. This procedure had to stop after a few years as it was found to be untaxed income!

In 1955 I had to do my two years National Service after which I returned to the brewery as they were duty-bound to give me a job. For six months I worked in various offices covering for people on holiday and got various work experiences.

39 Upper Brook Street

The office buildings are, I think, still there and are, in part, single storey. In hot weather the men in the brewery were instructed to hose down the building and passageway to cool down the offices and somebody would walk up to the milk bar further up the road to buy ice creams.

At this time, I was offered two jobs: one in the Transport Office and the other in the Surveyor's Dept. I opted for the latter which entailed me attending college one day a week plus evening classes for at least three years. Throughout this time I continued to learn the building trade and passed the Ordinary National Certificate in Building exam.

By this time I was married and had moved into a newly built house with a mortgage of £8 16s 5p a month and I have a tax return dated March 1961 showing that my gross salary was £494 per year with a tax deduction of £20 11 shillings. I will leave your readers to



compare with current days. By now the company had amalgamated with Cobbold & Co. and all employees moved to Cliff Quay.

It was normal practice to be informed of a yearly salary increase each September; this entailed being called into your boss's office to be told your new salary. Two years on and, having passed the Higher National Certificate in Building, I anticipated a higher than normal salary increase. I was disappointed and made comments to the fact that I had completed my studies. The Company Surveyor said that 'I was doing nicely, with my wife out at work as well' and I had to explain that we were expecting a family and my wife would be leaving work shortly – I got a further increase in salary! I guess the policy was that you were paid what you needed not what you were worth to the company.



In 1963 I was able to buy a car, an Austin A30, and could use it for company business on occasions (9p a mile as expenses) and, after a while, I was regularly driving to London as I was responsible for a contract at the company's brewery in Walthamstow. In 1965 I took delivery of a company car, a Ford Cortina Series 1.

Life continued and I must admit that I always enjoyed my varied work, sometimes dealing with architects on new pubs both locally and further afield, a large new depot in Norwich and many other projects. On one occasion I was responsible for a project which was commended by The Ipswich Society.

I had a connection with R. and W. Paul's in that, in my final years at college, I and my classmates had a site visit to have a ride on the travelling formwork which was raised hydraulically whilst concrete was poured 24/7 to form the walls of the silo referred to in Derek's *Newsletter* contribution.

So my work experience continued with the company being taken over on more than one occasion. Finally, with a management buyout which created Pubmaster, I became responsible for 900 public houses in the south of England assisted by eight Area Surveyors.

I retired early after forty three years service with many fond memories and occasionally meeting up with old colleagues to reminisce.

Ken Brock

Heritage Open Days, Saturday 10 & Sunday 11 September 2022

The Ipswich Society is very pleased to report that after a two year hiatus, Heritage Open Days is back! Fingers crossed for a dry, sunny September.

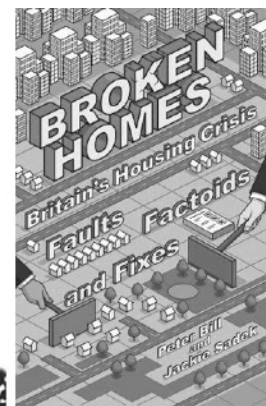
As usual, we are planning a free book to tell you all about it, who's open and when. If you're a member of the Society, we will send you a copy. For the tech savvy amongst you there will also be a digital version to view online and a PDF file for you download.

Many of our old friends are opening their doors and there will be new sites to visit. So, put the dates in your diary and look forward to a great weekend exploring historic Ipswich.

Neil Thompson

Ipswich Society AGM speaker, Jackie Sadek

I didn't know Jackie Sadek before her appointment to become Chair of Ipswich Vision, although I had seen her name as a participant on Bill Grimsey's report into the future of the High Street. I suggested to the Ipswich Society Executive that we invite her to speak after the AGM. Some were sceptical, they didn't know her, or know of her, but others supported the idea.



Her new position should, at least by the time of the AGM (which was still months away), give her an insight into the rights and wrongs of the town. Jackie agreed and the date was set.

Unfortunately, her new post didn't last and she wrote to us, not backing out as I expected but offering to talk about Britain's housing crisis, and how it affects Ipswich. Very relevant given that Crest Nicholson are just starting to build 1,100 houses at Henley Gate, Mersea Homes are applying for 1,020 at Red House Farm and Bellway, 815 west of Westerfield Road; all are part of Ipswich Garden Suburb (or the Northern Fringe).

Jackie has just written a book (with Peter Bill) *Broken Homes, Britain's Housing Crisis* copies of which she brought along.

At the AGM Jackie was brilliant, knowledgeable, well-informed and with lots of insight into the inner workings of the large-scale house builders – 60% of all new houses are built by the top eight house builders, i.e. they control the market, they control the price and by each building less than one a week they control availability. Thus increasing output to solve the national housing shortage won't be easy.

Jackie's take on this is that it is the economy that has the greatest influence on the market, evidenced by the rise and fall of house sales between and during periods of recession. Jackie spent some time working for Greg Clark, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. At the time they were working on the Devolution and Local Growth Agenda, the very beginning of the Government's solution to increasing the number of homes being built.

It has taken a considerable amount of time to get the Government to admit that there is a housing crisis, however they still cannot agree the cause. Gavin Barwell, MP for Croydon, worked on the initial White Paper under Teresa May and Sajid Javid, but they would still not admit publicly to the crisis. Javid simply wanted to increase targets (300,000 per annum by building on the Green Belt). The Treasury felt that the problem was the planning system and Number 10 simply wanted market reform – but not on the Green Belt.

Meanwhile, the house builders hold a land bank (with planning permission) of somewhere near one million homes nationally. To a certain extent this is true in Ipswich where planning permission has, in the past been granted for new homes for the vacant lots on Orwell Quay, Eagle Wharf and the plot bounded by Slade Street, Fore Street and Salthouse Street. The application was for 47 Key Street. Jackie suggested that we could build 800 units almost immediately if we sorted the traffic gyratory system in and around Star Lane.

However, during her short spell working in Ipswich, Jackie realised that solutions to what appeared on paper to be simple problems, weren't going to come easily. No politician would dare interfere with 'traffic' for fear of losing votes.

John Norman

Snippets

High Street health

There is, I consider, a magic way of measuring footfall in our high streets. A company, *Locomizer*, measures and analyses anonymised mobile phone data and offline credit card spend. That is every time you, or any body else, takes their mobile phone into the shopping area, or uses their credit card in a shop, *Locomizer* will count that as a visit. So, they know on a monthly basis how well the high street is doing and can make comparisons with their pre-Covid data.

Unfortunately, Ipswich isn't doing particularly well. The results of the March data suggest Ipswich is Moderately Weak (their words) with 21% of High Street Services vacant. *Locomizer* also suggest that Ipswich's Spend Index is at 93 compared with a baseline of 100 prelockdown.

By way of comparison (and neither of these two are comparative towns): Norwich is 'Strong' and Cambridge 'Moderately Strong'. The other East Anglia towns measured are Luton, Basildon and Southend, all described as 'Weak'.

(Data published by *Centre for Cities*)

HS2

One of the unsung advantages of HS2 is that it will increase capacity on the routes north out of London, in the short term to Birmingham but fairly soon thereafter, London – Manchester and eventually London – Leeds.

Will that help us here in Ipswich? Surprisingly, yes. By moving people on the new HS2 route the number of passenger trains per hour can be reduced on the existing West Coast Main Line (WCML). This will free up space for freight trains, both from Felixstowe and London Gateway. It is estimated that an additional 19 trains per day will be able to be accommodated on the WCML when HS2 is fully operational.

There are, of course, other constraints to train movements across East Anglia: the single section of track between Soham and Ely and the complex multiple junctions at Ely but an additional 19 freight trains per day equates to 1,500 container-carrying artics off the road.

Planning update

The Planning Bill in the Queen's Speech

The Queen's Speech last month set out that, rather than a separate Planning Bill in which the Government had proposed to radically overhaul the planning system, significantly scaled back changes to the planning system will now take place as part of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill.

I tentatively welcome some proposals in the speech and the Bill, including:

- confirmation that some of the most concerning proposals, such as zoning, nationally-set mandatory housing targets and permission in principle, have been dropped
- that the lighter reforms now proposed still seek to enable local people to have more involvement in the planning process
- measures aimed at helping to bring empty buildings back into use
- strengthening neighbourhood planning, allowing local priorities to be set
- greater priority for the environment and consideration of the landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage.

I particularly welcome the proposed new requirement that local plans and other planning documents must ensure that the use and development of land will contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.

John Norman, Chairman

Letters to the Editor

R&R casting spotted from Bernard Stafford
I am wondering if your readers might like another Ransomes and Rapier “guess what/ where” question. South of York near Naburn village is a fine set of tidal locks on the River Ouse, where this – no longer in use but very well-preserved – hand-cranked winding mechanism stands. ‘Ransomes and Rapier Ltd Ipswich England 1935’ is cast in relief around the top.

[*Editor’s note*

This email arrived just as the Editor had finished reading Andrew Martin’s period railway detective novel *The Somme stations*. This features a plot twist located at Naburn Lock on the River Ouse: the scene of a suspicious death in 1914. Curiouser and curiouser...
For other R&R photographs, see page 24.]

Praise and memories from Graham Day
What an excellent issue the April *Newsletter* was as it was packed with useful information and stories.

I have yet to see ‘Yoxman’ as the pandemic has meant that normal excursions up to the Southwold area have not happened. More useful knowledge on Cardinal Wolsey and an excellent and thorough analysis by John Norman on the problems with the viewing area by the flood barrier on New Cut West. Needless to say, it’s a pity all the parties involved in this debacle all have different agendas, so in reality a solution (if ever) to the problems may never be found, at least not in our lifetimes.

The contribution which really caught my eye was that by Chrissy Norman who, like me, also worked in St Clare House, Ipswich, for the Inland Revenue in the 1960s. Like me, she obviously decided that a career in the Revenue ultimately too ‘taxing’ and there were other, perhaps better things to do. I remember the racks of dusty files and concards, spending hours addressing and enveloping tax returns, and for me also the different feel of the Schedule D section for the self-employed, with papers being prepared for Tax Commissioner meetings and a steady stream of accountants hurriedly bringing in their clients ‘accounts’ at the eleventh and a half hour.

I well remember Rose, the tea lady, coming into the Schedule D section with her trolley. Always helpful and happy, until some of the staff deliberately moaned that she was late in coming, which of course was a wind-up. At one stage, the Land Commission occupied the 6th-8th floors, but we really had no knowledge of what they did all day.

I was sad in the 1980s when the wonderful Art Deco Cavendish Hotel in Felixstowe was demolished. I, too, have fond memories of the annual Dinner Dances; a coach from the office, an excellent dinner and dancing to I believe a dance band from Clacton-on Sea whose leader was the brother of one of the Tax Officers Higher Grade on my Schedule D Section A. A wonderful time, with some superb company, and as a result memories which will always be with me.



Mellamphy's *Wolsey* from Jean Hill.

Having read the article on Robert Mellamphy with interest (Issue 229), I have a reminiscence that may be of use.

Many years ago, a small and select group of we volunteers sat in St Peter's by the Waterfront on a Thursday afternoon. The aim was to keep this lovely medieval church open to visitors in order to show that it was of importance.

At the time, Robert Mellamphy visited the church regularly in order to check on his maquette of Cardinal Wolsey. This was stored in the back room of the church and I believe was to be the forerunner of a full size statue of the Cardinal, to be placed outside the front of the church. I never knew what happened either to it or the proposed statue.

[Editor' note: this legendary sculpture was later moved to the vestry of St Clement Church – probably when St Peter was being cleared out for refurbishment in around 2006. John Blatchly told us that, unfortunately, the damp conditions there caused a deterioration in the chicken wire and plaster maquette. It was eventually returned to the artist's studio, probably by the Ipswich Historic Churches Trust. A gentleman at the Woodbridge Longshed told us that it was a full-size figure and included two cats. We believe that, if the maquette was saveable, the cost of producing such a large bronze would have been prohibitive. Where's a Russian oligarch when you need one, eh? If any reader can add to this hearsay evidence, do get in touch. We always wondered whether the maquette had been photographed whilst it resided in Ipswich...]

The Defiance from Ken Brock

Having spent all my working life with Tolly Cobbold, I find that I occasionally have to make corrections to items in various publications relating to local pubs.

In the April Society magazine it states that the pub in Stoke Street was The Defiant. It was in fact The Defiance. Incidentally, there was a row of 3 or 4 cottages behind the pub, one of which was occupied by my grandparents and my father was born there. I was also involved with the demolition of the adjacent house in order to create the Defiance car park.

I will readily help in giving info. on other pubs in the area.

Co-operative Wholesale Society mosaic from Tony Cross

Thank you for your enlightening article on the 'Harvest' mosaic in the latest *Newsletter*. The mosaic is an impressive and interesting work of art in its own right. It is very much an integral part of CWS and Ipswich history. It would indeed be a tragedy if it could not be saved for posterity.

It is sad that it has, for many years, looked out on a bleak and unloved part of the town centre. It surely needs to be brought back into the public eye. I would think that The Hold would be a perfect setting for it to be fully appreciated.



Image based on an Image Archive photograph

More mosaic musings

Co-op mural and Banksy in Lowestoft

In November 2021 the Banksy mural sprayed onto the wall of the empty Lowestoft Electrical shop was carefully removed and the work of art sold for £2 million. This demonstrates that artwork applied to masonry can be safely removed if it is financially worthwhile.

It also throws into question the claim by the contractor of the proposed school on the site of the Carr Street Co-op, that the 'Harvest' mosaic mural will be too difficult to remove and is bound to be damaged if they attempt to remove it and so they are going to take a photograph and destroy the original. If the original was by Banksy a method of safe removal would surely be found.



The Lowestoft Banksy. We hope that the new owners recreated the sandcastle accurately. Photographs by John Norman

‘There is good news from Hull regarding the future of the *Three Ships* mural designed by Alan Boyson, one of Britain's leading post-war muralists, which featured in the *Co-op Architecture* article in the journal *Current Archaeology*, issue 382.

‘Though work is set to start shortly on demolishing the landmark former Co-op building on Hull's Albion Square, the giant mosaic attached to the facade is to be saved. Made of a million pieces of Italian glass, the 66ft by 64ft mural

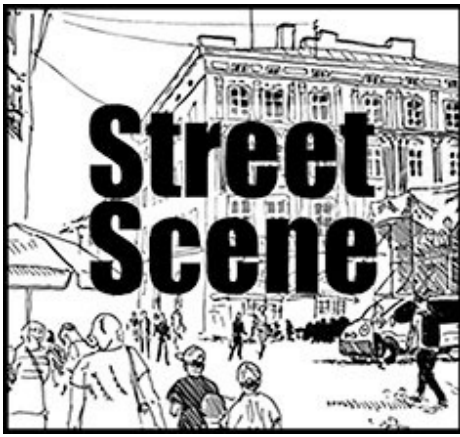
depicts three stylised trawlers spelling out 'Hull' with their masts.

‘Local heritage groups had been campaigning for its retention, and were buoyed up by Historic England's decision to list the mural at Grade 2 in November 2019 – a rare example of a public work of art being listed, rather than a building.

‘The mural will now be retained and kept *in situ* throughout the demolition, before being incorporated into the new office and residential building being constructed immediately behind.’

JN

N.B. The Co-op mural by Gyula Bajo in Stevenage was listed Grade II in May, 2022. Hope for Ipswich?



A couple of weeks ago the *Ipswich Star* reported on a UK survey by the South Western Railway on the number of independents per 100,000 population per town where Ipswich was rated 9th in the UK with Cambridge 1st and Norwich 4th – the only three East Anglian towns/cities in the top 10.

To follow this up The Ipswich Society Facebook page photographed 140 Ipswich independents and have been bombarded by shop owners ever since saying ‘Why didn't you include us?’. The town is absolutely crammed with independents of all shapes and sizes from third generation **Coes** to younger, smaller shops like **Dial Lane Books** but many locals seem blind to this. **The Purple Shop** is celebrating its 50th year in 2022.



Storico, Northgate Street



Ipswich Combat Academy, Princes Street

up today at the new **Ipswich Combat Academy Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu** unit on Princes Street in the former Spokeworx cycle shop. **Oakheart Estate Agents** have opened in Butter Market in the former Swarovski jeweller's shop. They also have branches in Colchester and

Sudbury. **Orient Chinese/Asian food** has moved across Carr Street to a larger unit vacated by SmartMobile and a new **Romanian food outlet** has filled their old shop.

Perhaps the most notable non-independent to join us is **The Botanist** in The Old Post Office on Cornhill. With its posh seating spilling out down Princes Street this plant-filled bar, restaurant and coffee shop is a welcome addition to the Ipswich mix. Although smart, it is not ‘posh’ and there is a warm welcome by staff. In the meantime,

It's six months since we did a *Street Scene* and in that time more independents have opened including the long awaited **Honey + Harvey** facing Giles Circus; the **Storico Pizza Restaurant** in Northgate Street; **The Free Book Shop** in Upper Brook Street; **Tea Mix** in Museum Street; **La Cueva Restaurant and Bar Twenty One** in St Nicholas Street; also the **CHip Community Hub** in the empty Curson Lodge further down on St Nicholas Street; **Fresh Start & Coffee** in Carr Street and more. The sign went



The Botanist outside seating, Cornhill

we have lost the Town Hall Tea Room because the Registry Office has moved there from Grimwade Street into its much better location on the Cornhill.

The **Boom Battle Bar** activity centre (which includes axe-throwing) has opened in the Buttermarket Centre filling two empty units, leaving the

former Boots shop as the only empty unit on the ground floor. This tends to be busy during evenings and weekends and it is open all day with its cocktail bar and limited food offer.

The **Buttermarket Centre** makeover is very nearly complete. The promised new fresh, clean and more modern sign over the entrance facing Butter Market has not yet materialised as I write.

Other projects in progress include the restoration of **4 College Street**. With the scaffolding removed this is now beginning to look very smart and will be open to the public on Heritage Open Days in September.

The **Blue Light Hub** on Princes Street progresses; also looking very smart, this is expected to complete around June. Close by, the new **Travelodge** is fast taking shape beside Endeavour House, Suffolk County Council's headquarters. This is expected to open in early 2023.

No signs of any progress on the old **BHS building** yet (which apparently requires floor-strengthening), now owned by the Fraser Group. Recently, staff in Sports Direct and Game, now sharing premises in Carr Street, were expecting to move in with other brands around January 2023. Fingers crossed.

No progress yet on Albion Wharf where **Brewdog** are expected to start work on the former La Tour Cycle Café, reshaping it for their new outlet in Ipswich. New solar lighting has just been installed along Albion Wharf.

The **St Clement's Church Arts Centre** has progressed with Phase 1 completed, which includes a stunning oak floor covering the nave and side aisles (see our front cover). Fund-raising continues for Phase 2 which will include toilets and other upgraded services. The tarmac scars by the **Wolsey Statue** have been replaced with new paving.

The **McCarthy Stone complex** is well off the ground in Lower Brook Street and the Handford Road flats for the disabled are nearly complete. The attractive **council-built flats on Grimwade Street** are complete.

Work has started on **The Ipswich Garden Suburb** (formerly known as the Northern Fringe) and house-building is in abundance around the town including Bourne Hill and Wolsey Grange on London Road – near the Holiday Inn.

Tim Leggett





IpSoc: The next generation...

In 2022 The Ipswich Society looks into a murky future and wonders where the next generation of Ipswich devotees will come from. The members of the Executive Committee, the bods who keep the ship afloat and make things happen for the members and the wider public, is composed of Ipswich residents who love their town and want to see it enjoyed; to see it flourish despite uncertain economic times. The Society has valued Trustees who keep an eye on the organisation and have its best interests at heart. We also have two stalwart Vice-Presidents: Chris Wiltshire and Bob Allen – well known to members who have attended our Awards evenings – both of whom have been Chair of the Society in the past. Of course, our President has a rolling occupancy, dependent on whoever is elected the Mayor of Ipswich.

Our membership numbers are reasonably good, considering that, for the two years of pandemic restrictions, our Society couldn't carry out many of its regular activities. We use these to promote membership, often through giving away spare copies of the *Newsletter* and leaflets.

So far, so good. Now, it is quite understandable that as people mature and move towards retirement, they might well find themselves with some spare time on their hands during which they might volunteer with the Society – we are 100% a voluntary body; no sponsorship, no paid advertisements. They might even be moved to come along to a committee meeting as an observer. Eventually, they might like the cut of our collective jib, and decide to join the Exec. and even stand for election as one of our officers (Hon. Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Membership Secretary for example). When a society like ours is doing well, these often unseen roles could be taken for granted; however, we do know that the membership values the work which goes on behind the scenes.

All this is fine, but one can't help wondering whence the next generation of Society members, Exec. members and officers will come. Given that an average 18 to 30 year-old can spend seven hours a day in the virtual world – the same period of time they spend sleeping – is it possible for The Ipswich Society to occupy a small part of that world? For several years we have run a successful Facebook page which is positive about Ipswich, because we feel that there's enough negative opinions of our county town in print and on-screen. It reaches many followers and does its best to respond to points and questions in the comments section. It is a part of the digital lives of many, but many of those posters and browsers may mainly be interested for nostalgic reasons.

In addition, we have a popular Instagram presence. All this takes time and effort to run for the benefit of the public and for the Society. In the meantime, we run an ever-expanding Society website and online Image Archive. If this isn't breaking into "the TikTok generation" should it worry us? Surely there will be teenagers, young adults and middle-aged people living in Ipswich who will want to support and promote the town: to get involved in planning and the future of the Ipswich? Will they pay their modest annual subscription and join us so to do? A cynic might ask whether they will be able to break out of the 280 character text limit, to escape from shallow instant gratification of the 30 second video to immerse themselves in longer-form, thoughtful texts about their town and its environment.



The Ipswich Society peers through the keyhole of an uncertain future.

Needless to say, this is a dilemma faced by many voluntary organisations throughout the country, including civic societies. This includes our sister historical, cultural and heritage societies in Ipswich. Inevitably, key players retire from regular activity or die; the same goes for members. When the membership dwindles and isn't replaced, so does the vigour of a society.

Perhaps we should just carry on doing what we're doing until we drop off the twig one-by-one. As in all things, we do what we can, providing opportunities to become involved in our Society and issues in our town when we can, spreading reliable and, often, authoritative information about the rich story of Ipswich, its present and its future.

Tourism in its broadest sense is the economic lifeblood of the town because of:-

its enviable rivers and waterfront/historic harbour,

its wealth of wonderful listed or locally-listed buildings, many of great architectural interest,

its status as the earliest, continuously-settled town in the country and the first Anglo-Saxon town,

its medieval street layout, preserved and celebrated through the efforts of The Ipswich Society,

its excellent railway links to London and other parts of the country,

its range of quality shops and restaurants,

its cultural life of clubs, societies and individuals who practice and celebrate the arts in Ipswich,

its museums, galleries and other attractions; its wonderful public parks,

its proximity to the beaches of Felixstowe and the Suffolk Heritage coast,

its excellent sports facilities, swimming pools, its famous football club and speedway stadium,

its place as the business and commercial beating heart of Suffolk,

its excellent planning system which curates our housing and business developments,

and so much more...

So, let's prove the internet trolls wrong when they continuously run down the town. Most individuals and families are in for a tough economic time in the immediate future and this is already dealing yet another blow to town centres. But Ipswich is doing better than many – just read our *Street scene* column (page 18). It's about time that Ipswich celebrated its unique story far and wide and, surely, embraced a remarkable future instead of keeping it to ourselves.

RG

2022 Awards

It's getting to that time of year when we need to keep a very clear look-out for new developments, structures and projects which are reaching completion around the town. I am sure all our members will have a fine knowledge of what is going on in their local area. They will have their eye on progress being made in projects which might be of interest to the Society for the awards this year. This year's Awards Evening will be on Wednesday 23 November.

We had a grand turnout at last year's celebration at The Hold; I look forward to a similarly successful evening in late November later this year. We are not able to determine yet where the award ceremony will take place but, before that, we need to have entries.

Until the closing date in early September, I will be looking forward to hearing from members about potential nominations for awards for this year.

Any nominations which you might have should be sent to our Hon Sec. by email, or you may contact me directly: my address is in the *Newsletter* (page 27).

The full specification for the Annual Awards is available on our website if you care to check it prior to contacting us. I look forward to hearing from as many of you as possible, we generally are able to muster between 15 and 20 entries every year, I hope that will be the case this time.

Tony Marsden, Vice Chairman

Transition from Ipswich Dockside to Ipswich Waterfront

I've chosen the above title to explain how the business of Isaac Lord, Corn and Coal Merchants, together with others, pioneered the transition and development.

My name is Stuart Cooper and I had the pleasure of working for Miss Irene Lord (daughter of Isaac Lord) and my father, Reginald Cooper, from 1962. I was invited into partnership in 1978 and one of my responsibilities was to find new uses for our long warehouses, which were used for storing sacked grain prior to cleaning or drying. They had become redundant as more and more farmers harvested in bulk and used storage bins instead of sacks. Many ideas were tested including creating a storage facility for toys imported by our neighbours, General Cargo Brokers, and one year we stored the sultana crop from Cyprus for Whitworths. These and many other ideas were too labour intensive as all the goods had to be manhandled through the long floors, and competing open warehousing using fork lift trucks was substantially more cost effective.

The catalyst for the dramatic changes that took place was the Maritime Year of 1982 and this report seems appropriate forty years on. During the year-long celebration, the Ipswich Maritime Trust was formed and a highly successful exhibition was created in Pauls Maltster's Home Warehouse. The founders of the Trust were, Alan Swann, Colin Meek and John Lamming, all local businessmen with whom I worked closely in developing ideas and formulating plans for more development of what was hitherto a declining and, in some parts, derelict area. Tall ships from the Baltic and Northern Europe converged on Ipswich Dock prior to making their way to the Tall Ships race starting in Falmouth. During this momentous year, visitors came from far and



Isaac Lord in transition: Stuart is on the right, alongside Cllr Peter Gardiner, Mayor 1984-1985.

wide, and for the first time, many admired the mix of interesting and historic architecture around the Dock. One of these tall ships, a two masted schooner named *Stina*, enquired if they could moor on our quay frontage for several weeks in preparation for their trip to the south-west. This was a major step in our plans for upgrading and creating an appealing appearance, although I incurred considerable opposition from Ipswich Port Authority, operators of the dock. Understandably, their mission was to operate a commercial port, but the size of the lock gates limited the increasing size of vessels visiting Ipswich. Incidentally, it's interesting that the subsequent port operators, Associated British Ports (ABP) developed and own one of the two marinas within the dock complex. The other marina, Neptune Marina, is the brainchild of the aforementioned Alan Swann and family.

Incidentally, the original Dock Act of 1840 contained a clause that allowed the 'people of Ipswich to enjoy the air and perambulate' around the Dock.

Our first modern day conversion took place during Maritime Ipswich '82 by creating an office overlooking the Dock for a sail training company run by Pat Abbot. Other redundant parts of the building were converted to a showroom for a pine furniture company, Pine Ultimate.

St Katherine's Dock in London was being developed and my wife, Georgina, and I visited the Dickens Inn in the centre of this interesting scheme. Although a wet and windy day, the inn was buzzing with activity and we knew a public house facility would help kick-start development in Ipswich. We had within our buildings a redundant malt kiln, which faced the Wet Dock. It was in desperate need of renovation and, being listed, Ipswich Borough Council was closely involved and granted planning consent for conversion to a public house. Prior to World War II there were several public houses around the dock and indeed one within the Isaac Lord curtilage known as the Wherry Inn.

The pub and restaurant was opened in 1984 by the Mayor of Ipswich, and became a very popular leisure facility. The investment required to convert the building was substantial for a small family business and we take pride and satisfaction that this development together with various other activities, including the creation of a venue for the John Russell Art Gallery, pioneered the development of the dockside leading to what is seen today. Major developers saw the interest that was being created and so began the construction of residential apartments around the enclosed water. For our part, we continued to repair the long warehouses and bring them into sustainable modern day use by creating eleven suites of offices on the upper floors. None of this could have been achieved without enormous support from the whole team at Ipswich Borough Council. Successfully converting sensitive, historic listed buildings involves not only foresight but also massive co-operation from all those involved. Not least among our supporters over many years has been The Ipswich Society, which has played such an important part in the overall progress of the waterfront. I am proud and privileged to record that we received from The Ipswich Society three Awards of Distinction for our restoration over the years.

In 2004 we had completed our repairs to the west side of the site and the frontage to Fore Street, where one of the timbers in our old office was dated, through dendrochronology, to 1419 potentially making it the oldest secular building in Ipswich. By this time, we had exhausted our family resources and although our bank were willing to help fund development of the east side we decided it was time to find someone more able to continue our work.

Our sales agents worked tirelessly to find a buyer that could progress our ideas and also create a revenue stream to support this incredibly important complex. Aidan Coughlan, a successful local businessman, expressed not only his interest in the historical nature of the site but also his vision to sustainably take the development forward. And so 'Isaacs' was born. The variety of bars, restaurants and even wedding venues in the most architecturally attractive parts of the building, give great satisfaction in what we started over forty years ago.

Stuart Cooper



The return of an old plaque

At the AGM in April, our Mayor and President, Cllr Elizabeth Hughes, told us about the clearance of overgrown shrubs in Handford Road, close to the end of Elliott Street. It revealed the plaque shown in the photographs:

'THE IPSWICH SOCIETY
LANDSCAPED & PLANTED
IN MEMORY OF
DIANA COWLEY 1934-95
WHO CARED ABOUT
IPSWICH
MAR...'



This clearly dates back about twenty-five years and celebrates an Ipswich Society member of note. The Society tidied this neglected piece of land – ownership is uncertain – and planted it, seeding an area of grass. Later crocus bulbs were added. Our Chairman thinks that the grass used to be maintained by IBC Parks Dept who would mow whenever they cut the grass on the adjacent triangles but, he thinks, when the Agency for Highway maintenance went back to SCC and they contracted grass-cutting to a private provider, the incoming team would only mow council-owned grass (as per their

contract). Hence the lack of maintenance and overgrowth. The vegetation on this strip was left to run riot and hide the plaque which is now not in very good condition in 2022). **RG**

More Ransomes & Rapier



In March 2022, Des Pawson was at Chatham Historic Dockyard for the launch of their new gallery featuring exhibits from his renowned museum of knotting and sailor's ropework and he saw this: a winch to drive a cable to a crane fixed to the Fitted Rigging House. The cast inscription dates the equipment to 1918.

In January 2022, Des Pawson got hold of a trade catalogue (c.1896-1901) from Thos & Wm Smith: wire rope makers of Newcastle. It finished up in Australia – where Smith’s had a large wire rope business – when he bought it via e-bay at quite a high price. It has three Ransomes & Rapier cranes illustrated (for the Manchester Ship Canal, for the Madras Harbour Board and for Harwich) as well as a full written description of the Harwich one and a testimonial to the quality of the wire rope. Many thanks to Des for sending this image from, possibly, a unique artefact.



37 ton Crane built by Ransomes & Rapier, Ipswich, for the Great Eastern Railway Co.
Special Flexible Steel Wire Ropes supplied by THOS. & WM. SMITH.

Note the caps boaters, bowlers and top hats on the tiny figures; also the lettering on the stack: ‘Test load 37 tons at 35 ft radius’. This emphasises the enormous scale of some of the Ransomes & Rapier cranes built at the Waterside Works on Griffin Wharf, on the Stoke side of New Cut. The crane shown was built to deal with heavy goods of the continental traffic landing at Parkeston Quay, Harwich. See the full set of images, including the testimonial, on this web-page: <http://www.ipswich-lettering.co.uk/rapiercranecatalogue2.pdf>

See also the letter to the Editor on page 15.



Open Tower Day in Amsterdam

I visited Amsterdam earlier this year, staying with my son and his wife. At the time, they lived in the Nieuwe Pijp district, a vibrant area of the city.

Their apartment overlooked the Oranjekerk (Orange Church), originally a Dutch Reformed Church. Built around 1900, the building was restored between 1998 and 2000. It still holds church services, but also hosts concerts and exhibitions.

Described as a jewel of the neighbourhood, the façade of this beautiful building with its slender tower has a rather striking presence. The basic shape of the church, which is built entirely in brick, is a Greek cross with octagonal side arms. Particularly beautiful are the windows with the ornate arches, which are set with neat lead-encased windows made by company in Delft. In contrast to the majority of Dutch churches, which tend to have slate roofs, this one has glittering red and green roof tiles. And when the sun catches them, they really do glitter.

The interior is decorated in soft colours giving it a friendly atmosphere. There are no columns, so the pastor is clearly visible by the congregation. The church boasts three galleries, built into three of the cross arms. The fourth arm holds a lectern with space above for an organ, sadly not in place at the moment. Oddly, the pulpit is very low which means the preacher has

to speak upward across the seating which forms an amphitheatre.

Personally, I love looking around churches and, on this occasion, I had a treat in store. We set out for a day's exploration and discovered our first adventure on our doorstep.

The tenth Open Tower Day in Amsterdam took place on Saturday 26 March. This annual festival is a bit like our own Heritage Open Days event. But in this case, it specifically focuses on the city's towers. On the day, the 19 participating towers received a total of 13,000 visitors.

The Oranjekerk tower rises thirty meters up to a clock dial and the climb is not for the faint-hearted. The church spire towers another twenty meters above the clock but unfortunately, is beyond reach. Sadly, the views were a little limited due to louvres, and netting installed in an effort to keep pigeons out.

Still, a great start to the day.

Neil Thompson

Exterior and interior photographs of the Oranjekerk by Neil Thompson.



The Ipswich Society

Registered Charity no. 263322

www.ipswichsociety.org.uk | <https://www.facebook.com/ipswichsociety> | <https://www.instagram.com/theipswichsociety>

This *Newsletter* is the quarterly journal of Ipswich's civic amenity society established in 1960. Views expressed in the *Newsletter* are not necessarily those of the Society. We make every effort to comply with copyright and GDPR law in our publications; please contact the Hon. Secretary if you have concerns about any content.

Diary dates

Wednesday 20 July, 6-8pm: 'Indoor Garden Party' for members, St Clement Church.

Refreshments will be available.

Wednesday 10 August: Coach outing to Hampstead and Highgate Cemetery – see insert for booking.

Saturday 10 & Sunday 11 September: Heritage Open Days organised by The Ipswich Society.

(The *HOD 2022* booklet will be distributed to members and available for the public in August.)

Winter Illustrated Talks at Museum St Methodist Church (entrance in Black Horse Lane); all talks start at 7.30pm and free tea, coffee and biscuits are provided afterwards. All are welcome.

Wednesday 21 September: Oliver Paul (Suffolk Food Hall) on 'How to build a successful business'.

Wednesday 19 October: David Ellesmere, Leader of Ipswich Borough Council.

Wednesday 23 November, 7.30pm: Annual Awards Evening. (venue t.b.c.).

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| Newsletter deadlines & publication dates (the latter may vary by a few days) |
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| Deadline for material: 1 December; | Publication date: 22 January; |
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| 1 March; | 2 April; |
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| 1 June; | 17 July; |
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| 1 September; | 9 October. |
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The Sisters sculpture by Andrew Baldwin *in situ* in the Deben, Woodbridge Boat Yard (who commissioned the work). It was installed in November 2020 and celebrates Molly and Ethel Everson who, along with their brothers Cyril and Bert, managed the yard inherited from their father until 1969. These two tough, resilient women now watch over the Deben once again and their story is remembered.
Photograph 1 by kind permission of Woodbridge Boat Yard; photograph 2 at high tide, Jan. 2022 by Graham Smith.