



The Ipswich Society NEWSLETTER

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The LV18 lightship moored on Orwell Quay outside the Cult Bar; the Merchant Seamen's memorial is in the foreground.

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Editorial

Early November, weekday lunchtime: whilst waiting in my car at the lights at the bottom of Argyle Street, I espied a young gent sticking full colour A2 posters advertising Circus Fantasia all over the area. The empty former funeral director's office on the corner had four posters stuck to it with large quantities of 'clear sticky tape' (to avoid any law suits from the stationery industry). As I pulled away he was busy fly-posting the door between the Emeny shop and the public house. Over the next week it became clear that there was a trail of these brightly coloured adverts (litter-to-be) right across the town. A form of street art we could do without.

Each issue, your Editor ponders on what image to place on this page. Then along comes a blockbuster exhibition in The Wolsey Gallery at Christchurch Mansion with the starring role taken by Rodin's *The Kiss* sculpture on loan from Tate Britain until 28 April 2019. Around eighty supporting pieces are on show, most from the Borough collections, many remarkable. Unmissable.

Robin Gaylard

New members



The opening event of the 'Kiss & Tell' exhibition on 23 November 2018 in the Wolsey Gallery

Chairman's remarks

I write this month's *Remarks* in the middle of November, just one week after the **Cornhill** was supposedly finished; it wasn't but hopefully will be by the time you read this. At the time of writing the 'arches' were being delivered and erected, the *real* Christmas tree was due and the 'Switch On' was planned for 22 November.

I have been on the Cornhill everyday since the barriers were removed and on each occasion bombarded with criticism and complaint, paraphrasing "it is underwhelming and has cost too much." It lacks colour despite the variety in the shades of grey concrete and stone, particularly concerning are the lack of visible nosings* on the steps.

[nosing: the edge of a step or stair tread that projects beyond the riser]*

Had it been a building rather than a public realm space the un-noticeable single step would not have been permitted. Already a number of people have fallen, having failed to see the drop. The Borough immediately brought in some pedestrian barriers and covered them with banners advertising the forthcoming panto at the Regent.

I was disappointed to see that someone had set fire to a pile of rubbish against one of the new concrete seats, hopefully no permanent damage but some ugly smoke and scorch marks. Was this a statement of opinion or just sheer devilment? And once the shoppers have gone, the skateboarders take ownership.

Pret A Manger is about to occupy the former Grimwade's building but collectively we need to find a use for the former Post Office, the Town Hall and the Golden Lion Hotel. My suggestion is to convert the Golden Lion into small independent shops similar to the Thoroughfare in the opposite corner of the Cornhill.

Steve Walker, Director of architects Allies & Morrison, presented their suggestions for transforming Ipswich to a group of 'stakeholders' assembled in Quay Place back in October 2018. Stop me if you've heard any of these ideas previously but they suggest closing College Street to through traffic and moving the cross town route onto a 'two-way' Star Lane. This would improve the setting of Wolsey's Gate and make crossing the gyratory on foot much easier thus increasing pedestrian movement between the town centre and the Waterfront.

They suggest that St Peter's Wharf should become the gateway to the Waterfront, the disused buildings (Paul's Silo and Burton's factory) should be demolished and replaced with a cultural and entertainment hub, exactly the reason the Borough Council have negotiated their purchase.

Steve Walker also suggested that we should make much more of a potentially valuable asset, the river between Stoke Bridge and Princes Street. A 20 to 40 metre-wide strip of the former railway sidings could become a riverside Public Park. The illustrations suggested a full river, no doubt with the water retained behind the new flood barrier, a great idea except that the drains wouldn't work – the waders feeding in the mud would go hungry and any excessive fluvial flow in the Gipping would flood the freshly refurbished St Peter's Wharf.

Allies and Morrison also suggested pedestrianising Lloyds Avenue, moving the taxis even further away from their potential customers. Now what was Newton's Third Law of Motion? 'For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction'.

John Norman

Planning matters

Sandyhill Lane. The site is one of the original Fison's fertilizer factories and thus is owned by Norsk Hydro. The site, clearly brownfield, has a lapsed planning permission for a mixed development including retail. Now the developers propose 85 new houses; this is to be welcomed and the outline proposal was granted, subject to legal agreement to no less than 44 conditions. Decontamination will cost £3.5m.

Harris Way. Permission was granted subject to consideration of a pedestrian and cycle bridge across the Gipping for the erection of a huge floor-covering warehouse on the Harris Bacon factory site. This replaces the proposals for a similar warehouse to the north-east of the Anglia Retail Park, on the edge of Ipswich affecting the countryside to the north.

49 Orford Street. Any proposal to alter the street appearance of a house in a Conservation Area subject to an article 4 direction has to be considered with concern. The applicant's architects, Modece of Bury St Edmunds, have applied to insert two roof lights on the Orford Street elevation; additionally they wish to replace the iron cover to the coal chute with glass. On the east elevation, a roof light and a full size dormer window is proposed. Clearly the owner wishes to utilise all the volume as habitable.

15 Warrington Road. A reapplication of a modification of the previously withdrawn application which claims to have answered the objections of the planners and local objectors. There is no Warrington Road elevation view available. Permission refused again on November 16 2018 because of back garden-snatching too near neighbours and loss of donor garden (Policy DM 13) and loss of trees.

Land to rear of 133 to 137 Valley Road. In 2016 permission was granted to build three houses on part of this site using the rear gardens of the three houses in Valley road but leaving the orchard unused. Now the proposal is for nine dwellings, eight being 2½ storey houses and one chalet bungalow. The orchard with some 25 fruit trees would be lost though the sycamores, oak and limes retained.

We object because this is over-development both in scale and in numbers of dwellings and hence traffic on to Valley Road. The spacious nature of the surrounding area will not be featured. To be building replicas of 1930s houses 90 years later seems to us to be a very retrograde step. These houses are expensive to build, have many unsustainable features and appear to be out of some Ideal Homes design book of yesteryear. The development at 151 Valley Road shows that a new development can be modern and yet fit in, the criterion by which neighbours always judge new builds. Better to be good, than to fit in.

57 Henley Road. Having lost two applications and an appeal to build a house in the back garden, the owners have put the house on the market and have applied for permission to convert to a single dwelling. Hopefully, a little victory.

Sorting Office. Retrospective application for change of use from a *Mechanised Letter Office* to a *Mail Processing Unit*. This change took place some time ago and Ipswich mail is sorted in Chelmsford. And it's transferred there in trucks. There is no change in class (B8 to B8) . The IBC property company own the site and that's why they had to apply.

Ormiston (formerly Thurleston) Academy. A new 3 storey building will be built to the north of the existing school. There should be no interruption of studies. It will provide for 900 students aged 11-16 (Key Stage 3-4) It includes soft and hard sports areas and all other facilities i.e. it is about the same size as Thurleston. It will retain the existing connections to the Thomas Wolsey School and the existing sports hall.

Thurleston School was designed by Johns Slater Haward (job architect J.C. Butters later R.F. Westlake) in 1956-8 as Ipswich's first post-war secondary school. 'Composite *in situ* and pre-cast concrete frame with patterned pre-cast horizontal wall-panelling. A large rectangular domed sports hall 1974-5, a modified form with spherical section on square plan' (Pevsner). None of the buildings are listed. However it, is near the Church of St Mary & St Botolph, Whitton (Listed at Grade II). Clearly, the original was built to the most up-to-date ideas of the mid-fifties which were a period when new schools were being designed to the very highest standards of innovatory architecture with a huge amount of thought and money. Its replacement will be distinguished by its ordinariness.

104 London Road. The existing derelict, 3 bay, pleasant early C19 cottage will be demolished and replaced by four dwellings. This is not a good plan and we will ask for the cottage to be retained and the long plot used for dwellings in a different manner.

Mike Cook

Sutton Hoo longship to be recreated

The Anglo-Saxon Ship, buried in the 7th century and reborn in the 21st

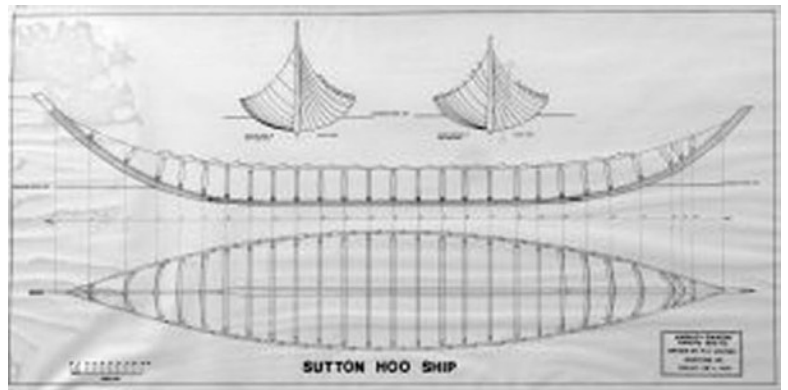
‘In the corner of England, now called Suffolk, an Anglo-Saxon King’s burial ship and treasure laid hidden underground. Dormant for over thirteen centuries in the mysterious Sutton Hoo royal burial grounds, all that remained of the ship was a mere shadow of its former awe-inspiring glory.

‘Developing the Sutton Hoo story the King’s ship will be resurrected to its full ninety foot length in The Longshed, [formerly Whisstock’s boatyard] Woodbridge, from where it will slip once more into the King’s River to grace the waters and tides once again, reconnecting our Anglo-Saxon maritime heritage with our modern day sense of discovery.

‘The ship was first discovered in 1939 but not much remained of the original ship, just the impressive imprint of a ghost in the sand. Sutton Hoo has welcomed visitors to the site for many years and attempts have been made to reconstruct the ship, including a half-size replica but now everything has come together so that a full-size replica will be built by The Ship’s Company.

‘Building a Saxon ship using authentic ship-building methods will have its challenges but where we don’t have the skills in house we will contract experts, such as marine archaeologists, ship architects, shipwrights and experts in green wood working. Together with strong academic support from the Universities of York and Southampton we will see that we record and learn from, every stage.’

Quotations from The Ship’s Company, <https://saxonship.org>



Drawing of the ship, rediscovered in Ipswich Museum



At a well-attended *Beginning the build* event on October 25 2018 at which Paul Constantine introduced some of the archive materials relating to Basil Brown’s original 1939 excavation at Sutton Hoo and the technical challenges ahead, visitors were able to inspect the earlier ‘half-length’ replica *Sae Wylfing*, other work-in-progress and the very beginnings of the physical build.

R.G.

Wet Dock visitors

In October 2018 a familiar red-painted vessel appeared in the Wet Dock (see the photograph on the front cover). At one time light vessels could be seen moored on the (pre-marina) Island quay and scattered around the river estuary at Shotley.

The Pharos Trust restored the former *Trinity House Manned Light Vessel No. 18* for use as a visitor attraction and heritage learning facility using volunteer help over ten years. *LV18* is a survivor from the heyday of British shipping and is unique because she still contains the original crew quarters, galley, mess room and six Gardner diesel generators to power the lantern, foghorns and ship's equipment. She does not have motive power owing to her original purpose of being towed to a mooring position and anchored to provide light warnings to shipping. This last manned light vessel was withdrawn from service in 1995 and has been open to visitors to take a tour below decks since 2011, moored at Ha'penny Pier in Old Harwich.

Two tugs manoeuvred the vessel from Harwich, up the Orwell, swinging her round to pass through the Wet Dock lock stern-first with about a metre-and-a-half clearance. It stayed on Orwell Quay for about six weeks, during which her Harwich berth was dredged. The ship was used in the film *The boat that rocked* about pirate radio. It has been a pirate radio museum recalling the days from 1964 to 1967 when Radio London, Radio Caroline and many more broadcast pop music just off the Essex coast starting the careers of DJs John Peel, Tony Blackburn, Kenny Everett, Simon Dee and Johnnie Walker.

To coincide with graduation ceremonies for the University of Suffolk being held nearby, the skies were lit by the *LV18* powerful rotating beam, which can be seen 25 miles away. The residency of the light vessel overlapped with the 11 days of an impressive sound installation as part of the 2018 SPILL Festival.

Clarion Call by Australian artist Byron J. Scullin & Supple Fox features the voices of Beth Gibbons (Portishead), Elizabeth Fraser (Cocteau Twins), Elaine Mitchener, Melanie Pappenheim, Cherise Phillips and guidance from English folk pioneer Shirley Collins.

Over the 11 days of SPILL Festival, this large-scale outdoor sonic artwork rang out from the Ipswich waterfront into the town's public spaces at dusk for eleven minutes each day. The voices of women and girls calling to the setting sun in daily incantations were broadcast with audio technology usually employed for emergency and control (banks of trumpet-shaped speakers mounted on top of a number of the dock's highest buildings), repurposed as a mechanism for 'public ritual'. Some residents didn't like it so well...



R.G.

St Peter's thanks you

It's that time of the year to thank all Ipswich Society members who took part in volunteering on Thursdays between 3 May and 27 September 2018. This took place at St Peter's by the Waterfront and involved meeting and greeting all visitors who came in to explore the venue, now home to the Ipswich Hospital Band. In all, a total of 2,343 visitors were noted – including those on Heritage Open Days. We now have a break until the first Thursday of May 2019 and I will be contacting all interested parties in March 2019 with a view to their signing up once more.

Jean Hill, 26 Christchurch Street, Ipswich IP4 2DJ. Tel.: 01473 413252.

Heritage Open Days 2018

Many years ago my father advised me never to volunteer. Two years ago, I ignored him and asked The Ipswich Society if I could help. I wasn't entirely sure what to expect but I was invited to a meeting where our esteemed Chairman, John Norman, introduced me to Heritage Open Days.

Having helped to organise the 2017 weekend, I was hooked. I now have two years under my belt and have learnt so much about the history and development of our town.



Cornhill, 1997.

2018 was as successful as ever, attracting hundreds of visitors to explore the town's rich history or just to look inside someone else's place! It was fantastic to see so many people clutching one of our HOD books or, on at least two occasions, to see them gathered around a copy trying to decide where to go next.

As the proud editor of their guide, I engaged some of these explorers in conversation. They were all very enthusiastic about their discoveries and plans. One very excited young man told me that some of the buildings in Silent Street were over five hundred years old! Who knew?

At Gippeswyke Hall I met an elderly gentleman who told me he had left home, in York, around 4am that morning (Saturday) and travelled to Ipswich especially to visit the Hall. He was immensely knowledgeable about its history and was, it turned out, a direct descendant of John Knapp who built the Hall around 1600.

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Packhorse Inn, Soane Street and the entrance to Christchurch Park, 2006.

I was especially pleased to see the success of our new participants in 2018. The Old Bell in Stoke Street, now a funeral directors, was only open for one day and had well over 500 visitors. Mr Gwinnell, the owner, told me it was a joy to welcome so many ‘animated’ visitors. A little funeral director’s humour there, I think.

Another new entry was the Oddfellows Hall in High Street just along from the museum. I dropped in on the Sunday to find thirty or so visitors of all ages either examining old Oddfellows documents or desperately trying to keep their colouring-in between the lines. All, staff and visitors, were having fun. And I was advised there had been a steady flow of people all weekend.

Heritage Open Days is an important high in the town’s calendar. The event attracts visitors from all corners of the country and even from the far side of the world. An old friend and Ipswich lad who now lives in Sydney, Australia, took the opportunity to show off his home town to his new ‘Sheila’. Although to be honest her name is Sandra.

As well as much enjoyment, Heritage Open Days provide our local economy with a welcome boost. The Ipswich Society is, as ever, pleased and proud to contribute to the growing success of the town and to help make so many people smile. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those whose hard work helped make the event so successful. Thank you to all the participants, building owners and volunteers whose enthusiasm and time make it all possible; also to the input and help of the Ipswich Borough Council, especially Su Heath who so professionally ensures the content I send her fits the HOD book. And a big thank you to my colleagues in The Ipswich Society for all their advice and help.

Well done, everyone, I hope you enjoyed HOD 2018 and are looking forward to 2019.

Neil Thompson

Line illustrations by Heather Ling.

Snippets 1

Christchurch Park ‘There but not there’ memorials

Graham Smith visited Christchurch Park on 11 October to view and photograph the three silhouettes as featured in the local press. ‘Unfortunately but, sadly, understandably they have not been left out and will not be on display outside until Armistice Day. A member of staff kindly placed one outside for me to photograph and here is my photograph.’

Five life-sized silhouettes of British ‘Tommies’ have been placed in the town – three in Christchurch Park and two in the cemeteries – to remind people of the deaths of the 888,246 British and Commonwealth men of the First World War.

‘There But Not There’ is the 2018 Armistice project for the charity Remembered. The inspiration was photographer Martin Barraud’s art installation of 51 clear perspex silhouettes to honour dead servicemen at the village church in Penshurst in 2016.



Banks

6,000 banks have closed since 2010. This has left some small towns, not only without a bank but without a rationale for existing; market towns that no longer have a market, postal towns without a Post Office and residential centres without a pub (in Ipswich 33 pubs have closed in the last decade).

That Needham Market is amongst them is surprising because one of the forerunners of Barclays Bank had its origins there. The Bank of Alexander & Co. was opened at Needham Market in 1744, an Ipswich Branch in 1767 (which became their head office in 1804). In 1878 the firm amalgamated with Gurney & Co. of Norwich who had founded a regular bank about 1770 as the Norwich & Norfolk Bank. In 1896 the joint Alexander and Gurney Banks joined Barclays to become the banking giant we know today.

Ipswich Transport Museum

Visitor numbers at the Ipswich Transport Museum were up again this year reaching almost 10,000 visitors. This is a tremendous effort by all of the ITM volunteers who collectively make the museum such a worthwhile destination in the portfolio of Ipswich visitor attractions.

‘The National Health Service has more vacancies than the Army has personnel.’
Major CJ (Chris) St John-Green RAMC speaking to the Ipswich Society about Emergency Planning in October 2018.

In 1641 the Great Court of Ipswich decided to bring water to a conduit on the Cornhill.
“I see it has finally arrived” (courtesy Mr John Norman).



Letters to the Editor

Rails and roads from Tim Ward

I have enjoyed the recent Society newsletters more than ever, so I am reluctant to criticise, but the *Unmanned Level Crossings* article [Issue 213] puzzled me and contained some inaccuracies.

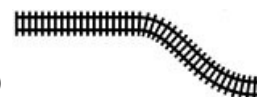
The author appears to be using the opportunity to climb aboard the anti-rail bandwagon by choosing an incident at Trimley that, he or she admits, only had “knock on” effects for the town. As a country, we do seem to tolerate thousands of deaths annually and daily disruption on our roads but are notably intolerant of railway failings.

The piece also refers to the railway between Haughley Junction and Diss and people being delayed at Peterborough station. I’m not sure that has much to do with Ipswich. But if you can persuade me it is at least of local interest, it is factually incorrect to state that the line speed to Norwich is “by default” 60mph. It is actually 100mph all the way from near Hadleigh Road bridge in Ipswich to the outskirts of Norwich with only a slight drop (to 80 and 90mph when going towards Norwich only) passing through Stowmarket. I travelled over the line in mid October the train I was on happily sped to Norwich at line speed for the bulk of the journey in 40 minutes. Try matching that in a car! I would be interested to learn where the “vast majority” of crossings with a 60mph limit are located. Furthermore the line to Norwich is certainly not the East Coast Main Line. That runs to the north east and Scotland from London.

I am not sure how the authorities legislate for a man who chooses to drive a car on to a level crossing and in the path of a train but it seems harsh to blame the railway for the resulting disruption.

I can suggest a much more relevant incident that directly caused massive problems for Ipswich. The Orwell Bridge was closed for over 8 (yes, eight) hours after the death of a motorist in October 2017. Of course it was a tragic event but the lengthy closure caused mayhem and misery to the people of Ipswich. The railway typically re-opens within two hours of a fatality.

Or better still, we should question the Highways Agency over their suddenly acquired enthusiasm to shut the Orwell Bridge every time we have a storm. It happily existed for nigh on thirty years without ever being shut yet now Ipswich is frequently brought to a complete and chaotic standstill at the whim of some unaccountable former civil servants.



Railway points from Graham Hardinge (Vice President, Ipswich Transport Society)

Congratulations on the production of the latest, very readable, Newsletter. The splash of colour makes a big difference.

That said, I really must take issue with parts of the item entitled ‘Unmanned Level Crossings’, or User Worked Crossings (UWCs) in railway parlance. As you may recall from a past article of mine (regarding never-ending engineering works), the subject of railways is one dear to my heart.

I must firstly point out that the ‘vast majority (of unmanned level crossings) do not have a maximum approach speed of 60mph with an instruction to whistle’. As for the ‘many’ between Haughley Junction and Diss (in fact there are only four UWCs along that stretch), after receiving confirmation from a Greater Anglia driver of InterCity trains I can confirm that the line speed is an unbroken 100mph and no whistling is necessary. ‘Norwich in 90’ would be even more difficult to attain if the restrictions mentioned were in place!

As regards the incident at Trimley (half-barriered Thorpe Lane, not the full-barriered station crossing), so far as I can detect, the records indicate that there were 14 full and one part train

cancellations in consequence, all of which would have been of Felixstowe branch services. Unless the author of the article was unfortunately affected by other unrecorded cancellations that I can find no record of, then I am at a loss to understand the references made to the main line services, Peterborough and 'stranded commuters at Liverpool St had the incident occurred on a weekday'. Felixstowe would not have been served after the 17:58 ex Ipswich/18:28 return on the Saturday or all day on Sunday, anyway as the branch has been closed during these periods since April for the construction of the new loop at Trimley and will be for another year or so.

Finally, I would add that the East Coast Main Line actually runs between London Kings Cross and Edinburgh, not as stated. The author should have said 'Great Eastern Main Line'.

I hope this clarifies matters.



The Chairman responds

Tim Ward very usefully corrects a couple of details in my article published in the October *Newsletter*. Firstly my sincere apologies for failing to add my name to the bottom of the piece. I had no intention of publishing anonymously.

I wasn't trying to knock the railways, rather highlighting the difficulties experienced by numerous passengers when an incident occurs, similar to the delays caused by accidents and incidents on the roads.

The contents of the article came from a number of different sources, some of which are full of acronyms and I mixed the GEML with the ECML. The Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) did have some early notes and the national press (which are renowned for their inaccuracies in technical matters) made much of the human interest side of the story but skipped key details.

I fell into the simple trap of misinterpreting 100 mph for 100 kph and then converting the later into understandable units. Tim is absolutely right to suggest that similar incidents on the public highway also cause disruption, delays beyond what most motorists consider acceptable whilst accident investigation takes place.

Clearly there are readers who know much more about how our rail network operates and the editor would welcome short articles with key items of local news. If you need an idea to start, let us know the latest on a new (Westerfield) station for the Northern Fringe.

John Norman

Litter, leaves, level crossings, mowing and the market from Izzy Lane

Thank you for your editorial efforts with regard to the latest *Ipswich Society Newsletter* – it was both informative and interesting.



I have to agree with Keith Faull's comments in the 'Letters to the Editor'. I moved from Hackney, in East London, to Ipswich in 2005 and one of the things I really liked about Ipswich was that it was, generally, clean and tidy. Rubbish and leaf litter was quickly cleared away, the grass verges and hedges were kept neatly trimmed plus there were odd patches of flowers. Now the pavements are strewn with rubbish, the leaf litter is turning into a slippery mulch, the verges are left uncut until the grass is knee-high and are then cut haphazardly, leaving behind patches of long, uncut grass while the cut grass is sprayed across the pavement. The trees and hedges are uncut, to the point where the lights on some roads are now being shaded by them, and the rose under the Maidenhall Approach road sign seems to be the only sorry reminder of the flowerbeds. I've been in contact with both Suffolk County Council and Ipswich

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Borough Council about the footpath in the middle of Oak Hill Lane so many times it's silly, and the response has got worse and worse so, at the moment, I've given up; I'm just waiting for somebody to slip on the stairs, either because of the layer of leaf-mulch or because, in the dark, you can't see the steps.

With regard to the comments about unmanned level crossings, it's worth remembering that these are now a major cause of accidents and injuries on the railways. I think they are the main cause of accidental deaths too. Plus, a lot of the incidents involve misuse of the crossing by members of the public – e.g. drivers dodging round the barriers, people jumping the barriers, etc. Check out [<https://youtu.be/rcmiNqF6wnc>] or [<https://youtu.be/Sk0NW3l21PA>] for some examples and you'll understand why Network Rail want to get rid of as many level crossings as possible.

Finally, with regard to the Chairman's remarks about the market not moving back to the Cornhill, the bit that concerns me is what will happen to the market? The number of people who walk along Queen Street and upper Princes Street seems to me to be considerably less than the number who walk along Westgate Street or up Princes Street to Westgate Street. While dedicated market users will go to the market where ever it is located, I suspect the stall holders rely heavily on the 'passing trade' of people who spot something as they walk by, and will the lack of these passing people reduce their trade to the point where it is unsustainable for them to remain on the market at all?

John mentions a plan to use the Cornhill for special events. But that already happens along the waterfront, and what we see there is that the special event brings in hundreds of people but, once the event is over, visitor numbers fall back to the handful we usually see. So, while the special events do bring in trade, and make the waterfront 'come alive' they don't seem to have a long lasting impact on the number of people visiting the waterfront. Will holding events on the Cornhill be similar 'flashes in the pan' rather than increasing on-going business in the way that the market does now?

The market in Ipswich from Peter Robinson

I'm responding to John Norman's article on siting the above. We do seem to have a very small market for the size of the town, compared with others around the country.

For two reasons I believe we should do all that we can to ensure that the Council keeps it on Queen St. etc. Firstly, the facilities are much better, and the townscape of the area is more suited to the variety and colour of the market. Secondly, John is correct to say that the use of the Cornhill for a wide range of other activities would be a real improvement in the town centre 'offer'. It would also add important life and vitality to the Cornhill amidst the trials and tribulations that 'Shopping' is now suffering. Perhaps in offering a variety of activities that 'Advise, Educate and Entertain', we could emulate the BBC as well as pointing towards the future for town centres, after the demise of shopping!

Christchurch Park Butterflies in 2018 from Richard Stewart

Since the publication of *The butterflies in Christchurch Park* my wife and I have monitored species each year. In 2018 the only expected butterfly not recorded was the Essex skipper, which has only a few past records. Brown argus, another rare park species, wasn't seen in the normal area, the long grass below the tennis courts, but was thankfully recorded in the butterfly garden. Green hairstreak also was missing from the tennis court area but one was seen in the new planting of gorse and broom, the larval food plants, at the top north of the park. Purple hairstreaks are often overlooked as they live high in the park's oaks, mainly feeding on aphid honeydew. However several were seen in 2018, probably because the long hot and dry spell of weather produced many still evenings, when they are usually most active. The small copper butterfly again had a late brood flying in October and we counted a total of fifteen, our highest ever on one day. They are usually found nectaring on late flowering yarrow, which was abundant, particularly around the long planting of trees on the Westerfield Road side of the Park Road entrance.

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What was almost the highlight of the year occurred on 22 June when we found a pristine white admiral floundering on the pavement at Westerfield Road, close to the park entrance. It appeared to have been caught in a vehicle's slipstream. I carefully caught it in cupped hands, took it across the road and released it just the park side of the boundary railings.

This was one of the new species predicted to appear in the park in future years but regrettably it was just a few yards short of inclusion. The butterfly garden has been replanted, with a nettle bed established behind the seat. This necessitated removal of some bramble, the main summer nectar source for many insects. I was initially concerned about the replanting of the middle bed, since an early flowering buddleia was removed, but, once established, it now provides good sources for feeding bees, butterflies and other insects. In October there were still many flowers in bloom, including four attracting butterflies, namely sedum, verbena bonariensis, lavender and Michaelmas daisies.

Finally, strips to the top north of the park have been made into a wildflower meadow as part of the Urban Buzz project organised by David Dowding from Buglife. Already some flowers are in bloom and it will be interesting to see what happens next year.

River Gipping from Lewis J. Tyler, Secretary – The River Gipping Trust
We read with interest the letter from Mike Neale [Issue 213], particularly his point about the wasted amenity of the Gipping Valley. Whilst the ultimate aim of the River Gipping Trust is to restore the whole of the former Stowmarket Navigation to its former glory (a very, very long term project), we in the Trust have plans to improve, in the foreseeable future, at least part of the valley between Needham Market and Baylham, by making the long distance footpath suitable for disabled use.



Taking the points in order:-

A proper cycleway/pathway would be a great asset but there are some major engineering problems that would be faced by anyone trying to create such a path. To attract likely funding sources any path MUST have enough room for all users; that means pedestrians, cyclists and wheelchairs. Such a path must have a minimum width of 2.5 metres for cyclists and another 1.5 metres for wheelchair users. The land take for such a path would be extremely difficult to achieve and very expensive. Having said that, we agree that such a path would be an enormous asset to everyone living in and around Ipswich.

We certainly do not agree with the idea that such a path should be fenced. Why should it be? To keep people out or keep them in? We are not advocating a towing path (although a passenger boat towed by a horse would seem like a pretty good attraction), but having to view the cleaned up river through a fence doesn't sound very attractive.

We agree entirely with the fact that the river should be cleaned up. That responsibility lies with the Environment Agency and if you ask them what they intend to do about it you will get the standard reply: we haven't got any money. There is a secondary problem with putting boats on the river. There are no navigation rights on any part of the river. That means nobody can use a craft of any sort on the river (including canoes) unless they have permission from all the riparian* owners on either side of the river.

That should not be an insurmountable problem but it needs to be addressed by getting all of them to put in writing their agreement to such a use.

We will leave the points about the town centre to others but referring to the parable of the Three Bridges and the latest news that there is a 'black hole' of £42 million and that the Council have already spent £9 million, just think what a very small part of that could have been used to create the cycle/pedestrian/wheelchair path and clean up the river?

(continues)



Litter-picking from Jonathan Williamson, Wines of Interest

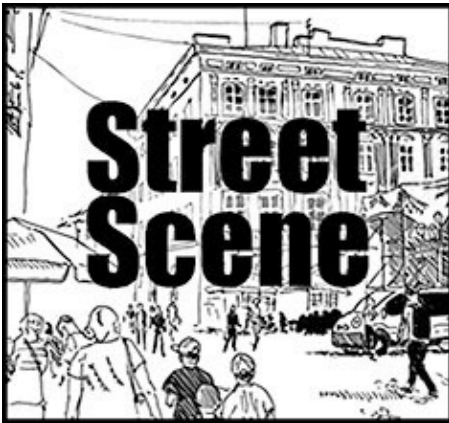
I agree completely with Keith Faull's letter [Issue 213, Oct 2018] about the problem of litter in our town. Some while ago I decided that enough was enough in the area immediately surrounding our shop and bought a litter picking stick. I conduct a daily check of the immediate area picking up as much litter as I am able. Initially, this was a daily task, but it's probably only every 2-3 days now. The small area I cover contains one council bin near the local bus stop so there is provision for the proper disposal of litter if only people could be bothered to use it. Some do, of course.

Completing this task regularly has given me a clearer understanding of where the litter comes from, and who must be dropping it. At least 50% of what I pick up is smoking or beer related. Clear cellophane wrappers and wet wipes are also predominant along with the occasional take-away coffee cup. I have picked up mobile phone parts, instruction leaflets, bottle tops, straws and even a shower cap.

There are simply too many cigarette butts to pick them all up; it is clear that car ash trays are emptied onto the street regularly so those are a little easier since it's possible to pick up several butts at once. On one occasion I did try to pick all the cigarette butts up but I found that the constant use of the picking stick made my hand ache so I had to stop. I didn't even attempt to tackle the various piles of sunflower seeds and have to leave those to the occasional passes of the council road sweepers.

I would certainly encourage others to take up this challenge in their own areas of our town. It's actually strangely satisfying and takes only a few minutes. I have received several compliments from local residents who can see what I'm doing and are grateful, which can be a nice start to the day.

[*riparian: relating to or situated on the banks of a river]



by Tim Leggett

In this second edition of *Street Scene* we concentrate on street changes and some of the activities in and around central Ipswich over the last three months. The biggest change during this period has undoubtedly been the opening up of the newly revamped Cornhill with its new paving and pavement fountains, its concrete sculpture with plaques which seems to have adopted the name 'Cornhenge', its new steps, lighting and seating, trees and more. It has been welcomed with a mixed response as expected with a project of this nature. Many love it and many hate it, others like some bits but not all of it. It's impossible to please everyone and no doubt by this time next year this will have all settled down and attention will have moved on to something else. Since opening, the space has been used for a number of short events including the Christmas Market, and with the giant, 50-foot Christmas tree from

Elveden Forest in Suffolk with its gold baubles and hundreds of lights dominating the hill, the space has become a lively part of the town.

Recent new shops / restaurants etc.

Three Wise Monkeys, Lloyds Avenue. After many months of building work the former Lloyds Tavern has been converted and reopened at the end of November and has been popular from day one. This is their second venture following their successful pub with the same name and run on the same lines in Colchester High Street. Offering huge choice this new pub/restaurant on three floors just off the new Cornhill is a place to be reckoned with.

The Falcon, Falcon Street/Queen Street. This former pub is now under new ownership and after a bit of a spruce up has re-opened under its original name, The Falcon.

(continues)

Toni & Guy, Butter Market. Reopened in November in a refitted unit, formerly used by Viyella and Austin Reed, which had been empty for some time.

Miss Quirky Kicks, Orwell Place. This new independent shop opened on the corner of Orwell Place and Upper Orwell Street on 1 November. Lawra Stubbs, an Ipswich girl, offers a range of unique edgy clothing, crystals and gifts. This has been described as 'a hippie gift shop' and is a welcome addition to the town.

Ohh Deer, The Walk. After damage was done to their doors this delightful little independent gift shop closed for a while, many thought for good. With just one sister shop in Loughborough, Ohh Deer re-opened again in November with temporary doors whilst its old doors are refurbished.

British Heart Foundation, Butter Market.

At the time of writing this new shop in the former Jones the Bootmaker unit in Butter Market is due to open in December. The unit, which has been empty for some time, has been completely renovated and smartened up and fills another empty space in this street.

Spoons World Buffet, St. Matthews Street. After many months of building work this new 300 seater restaurant, part of a national chain, has opened in the former Iceland store. It serves a multi-national menu, where you pay one price and eat as much as you like. It has been busy from day one, with a mixed response on TripAdvisor; but the majority are happy with this new venue.

Calendar Club, Westgate Street and Sailmakers.

As usual Calendar Club have opened two units over the Christmas and New Year period. This fills two empty shops and helps the town to "buzz" over the festive season. The ground floor of Sailmakers was full over the Christmas period.

ITFC pop-up shop, Butter Market. As usual ITFC has opened a Christmas shop, this year in Butter Market in the unit recently vacated by Toni & Guy.

Peaky Pancakes, Upper Orwell Street. This new pancake bar opened opposite The Spread Eagle pub in November. It specialises in savoury pancakes, with its chicken and mushroom and traditional Hungarian goulash as the most popular flavours. There are sweet options including Terry's chocolate orange and apple pie flavours.

Coming soon to the town centre.

Pret A Manger, Cornhill. Progress continues on this new coffee shop/restaurant with work on the building both inside and outside to prepare the former Grimwade's outfitters store for its new life on the Cornhill. Popular in other large, local towns and cities and in London, this is a new restaurant for Ipswich. The fascia board has already been painted in 'Pret' red and we are expecting to see this open very soon, adding a vibrancy to the new Cornhill.

easyHotel, Northgate Street. The sign is up and, as I write, we expect this new 94 bedroom budget hotel from the easyJet group to open around the December/January period.

Age UK, Carr Street. Since the Co-op Department store has been purchased with a view to turning it into a school, Age UK are moving to a new shop in the huge former JJB basement store underneath the former Woolworth's, also in Carr Street.

Current building projects: *Cardinal Park - modernisation of restaurants complex. *Premier Inn, Key Street - cladding replacement. *St. Francis Tower - cladding removal. *Orwell Quay - landscaping of car park boundaries. *Upper Brook Street - revamp of disused shop next to Cancan. *The Hold (Suffolk Record Office) Fore Street - construction continues, expected completion early 2020. *The Winerack residential tower 150 flats - construction continues, expected completion early 2020. *Paul's maltings - Princes Street - restoration and conversion into offices - expected completion 2019. *Bar Fontaine - St. Margaret's Street - restoration and conversion to apartments. - expected completion 2019. *Halberd Inn Northgate Street - restoration, expected completion 2019. *St. Vincent House - refurbishment continues. *Butter Market - repair and redecoration of shop fronts: Waterstones, Fat Face, Valeries Patisserie, work recently completed. *Former Beet Sugar Factory site (Sproughton) - Phase 1 redevelopment: £40million warehouse for food distribution for La Doria Ltd. (LDH); work started.

Valerie Irwin: 'Change in charcoal'



Cranfield Brothers flour mills dominated the Ipswich Docks since 1884. At the beginning of the twentieth century they imported wheat from all over the world.

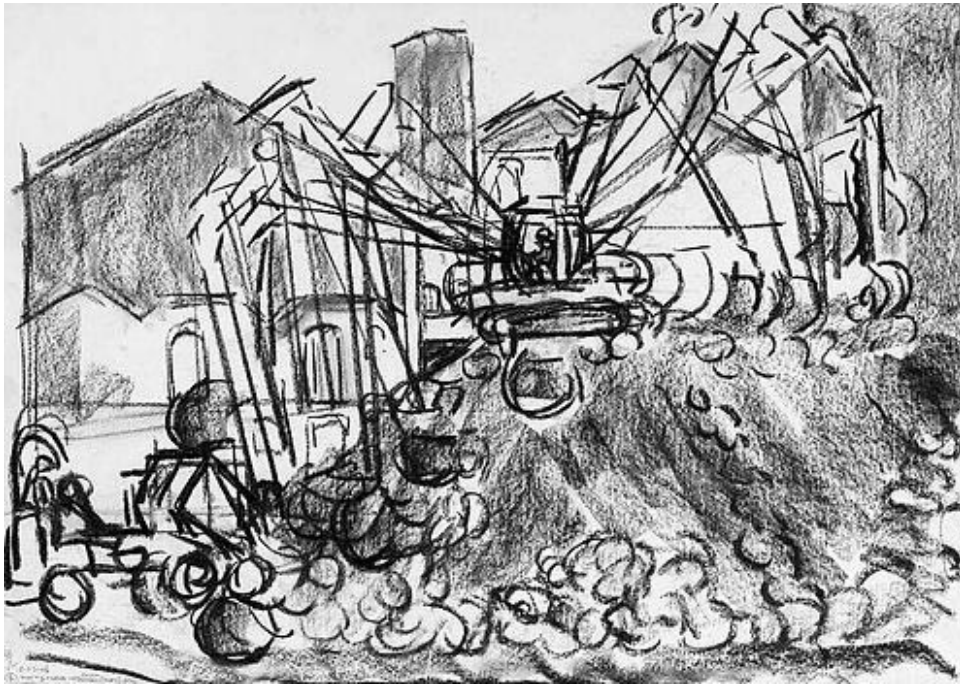


2009 view from The Ipswich Society Image Archive

However, modernisation after 1926 led to the increased use of native wheat. In the 1960s Cranfield's expanded to include the large-scale Betabake bakeries in the region. The company came to enjoy a reputation for a high standard of quality. By 1971 they employed thousands of people in the town and operated a fleet of 950 vehicles. However, the continuing need for capital investment and limited space on the docks for future expansion led to the decision to close Cranfields in the late 1990s.

Many people driving or walking towards Wherstead Road or the railway station during the major upheavals around the Wet Dock, Key and College Streets in particular between 2005 and 2009, will have noticed Valerie Irwin, standing in all weathers drawing the changing scenes of demolition, materials reclamation and eventual rebuilding, focusing particularly on Cranfield's complex. Attending the site nearly every day with unprecedented access, Valerie compiled a vast selection of observational drawings in charcoal, reflecting the nature of the work.

Charcoal illustrations by Valerie Irwin



This 'Change in Charcoal' collection comprises over 4,750 charcoal drawings, sketchbooks, digital images, diaries and oral history. As a visual record of a changing industrial landscape it is unusual in that it is as much an artistic endeavour as a documentary one. Accordingly, the Suffolk Record Office has identified this unique collection as a valuable addition to the existing Cranfield's Mill archive.

A public appeal was launched in Quay Place on 25 September 2018 which will fund the preservation, cataloguing, digitisation, oral history and ultimately the deposit of this collection into the Suffolk Records Office archives.

Interest will come from historians, people who worked at the docks but also builders, architects, artists and students wishing to study this fascinating record of the colossal change in the town's history.

The artist, drawing in charcoal on white A3 cartridge paper, captured moving vehicles and men at work, concentrating on shapes and spaces created by the activity. All her work was completed on site and she never touched the drawings after returning to her studio. Valerie had no idea that this was the start of a process that would last for many months and eventually she was invited on to the site by the contractors to continue her work. Her observational drawings record all aspects of Cranfield's Flour Mill. Valerie is sentimental about the loss of industry and employment expressed through her work. She conveys a communal sense of loss as the demolition stage drew to a completion.

R.G.

[<https://www.valerieirwinarchiveproject.com> to contribute to the appeal]



Whatever happened to the Urbo bikes?

Between January and June 2018 one hundred new bikes were scattered across Ipswich town centre as part of a dock-less bike sharing scheme. The basic idea was that Urbo, an Irish company, following limited negotiation with the local authority left these bikes, distributed across Ipswich for anyone to use.

Anyone with a smart phone and the wherewithal to log on to an ‘app’ could become a user. This enabled the individual’s phone to locate the nearest bike, and when found to unlock it. GPS (Global Positioning Satellite) tracked the bike until the user had completed their journey and locked the cycle to a convenient lamp-post. Thus the bike became available for the next user.

There was a charge of a few pence to use the bike for a short journey (which was the idea behind the provision: many users, many short journeys, a viable alternative to the polluting internal combustion engine).

The company initially left the bikes in the town centre but you will not be surprised to learn that users rode them home and left them in the suburbs where there were considerably fewer users; thus they didn’t get returned into the centre.

We don’t know, and can only speculate, why the company removed the cycles from Ipswich (or at least those they could find) leaving the following message on Social Media:

Urbo@myurbo

From 30/6/2018 Urbo will be taking a short break from providing our dock-less bike service in Ipswich, to renew our fleet and make some upgrades to our service. New fleet available from September 2018.

Needless to say, September came and went and to date the cycles haven’t been returned into Ipswich. Similar schemes by different companies have been withdrawn from Norwich, Newcastle and Nottingham where, similarly there is no sign of a return of the bikes.

At least those schemes with docking stations, such as the ‘Boris Bikes’ in London gave users sufficient confidence to leave home and head for a bike rack with perhaps 20 cycles first thing in the morning.

Dock-less schemes meant that the bikes could be anywhere including inside the lobby of private flats; the GPS locator would indicate the presence of a cycle but it was effectively reserved for the person that left it in the lobby.

In town the lack of docking stations meant that the bikes were left (locked) wherever, inconveniencing shoppers and passers-by. And as with all equipment that is hired rather than owned there was a flippant attitude to the care of the bike; someone else will repair it!

John Norman



The built environment



Wimborne Road area: 'garden city'-style

I'm not sure if the building in this area would meet the criteria of a 'garden city', but the roads I saw in Ipswich on a sunny summer's day which seemed quite ideal and paradisaical, were those around Wimborne Avenue [off Foxhall Road]. Most of the front gardens of the properties aren't fenced-off and don't have well-defined boundaries; the trees and environment seemed well cared-for. What was most noticeable was the generous provision of space in pavement walkways, borders, and front gardens.

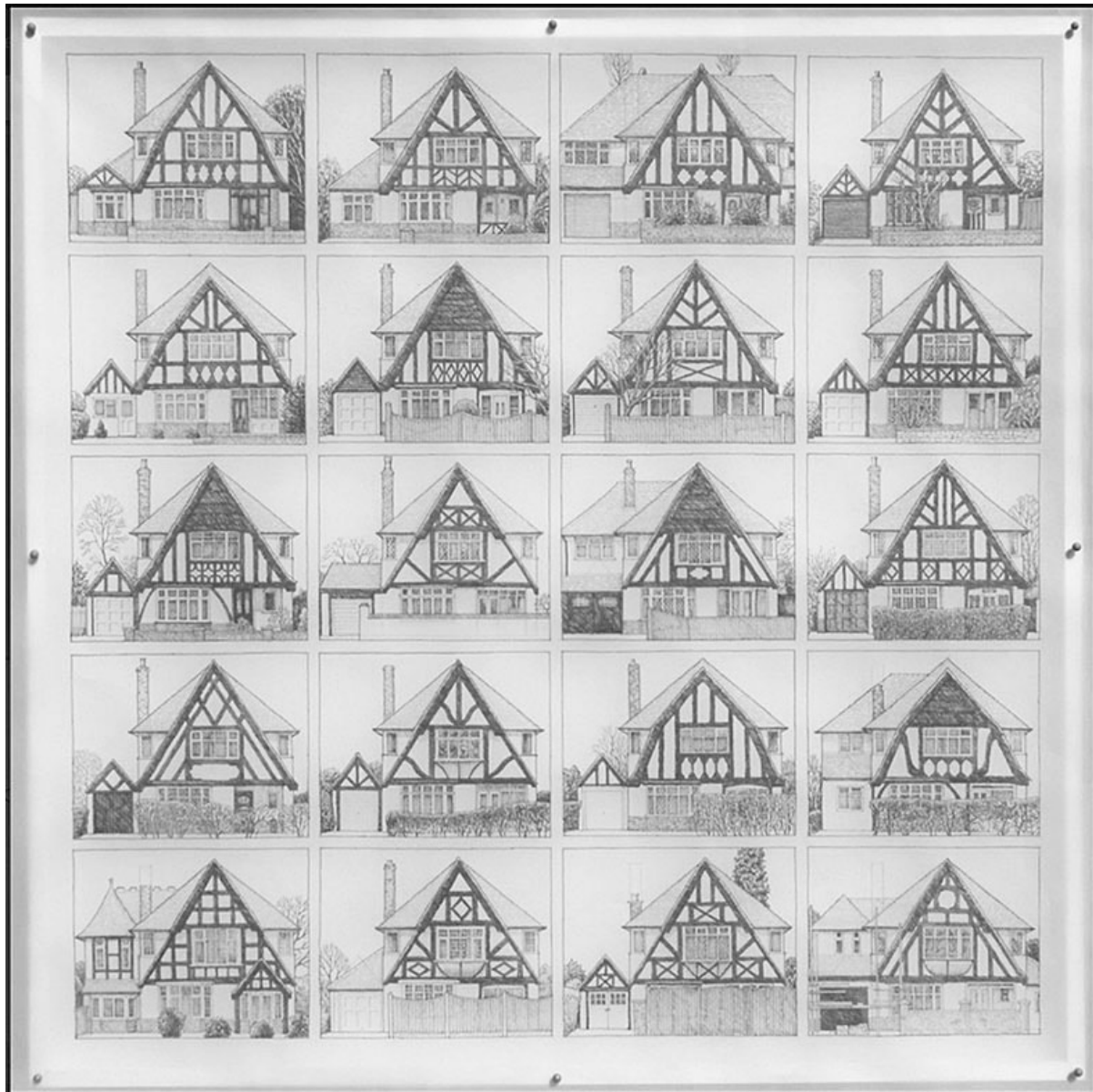


External cladding simulating brick [thermal insulation]

These properties are a notable development that readers might be interested in. One of the residents I spoke with, when looking at the ones on Alderman Road, mentioned the other properties on Bramford Road (beyond the Tesco Local, on the right side going out of town, with a few also on properties behind those, on Henniker Road).

Dominic Wall

The Hugh Casson Drawing Prize



The Hugh Casson Drawing Prize, as part of the Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition 2018, for an original work on paper in any medium, where the emphasis is clearly on drawing, was awarded to local artist, Society member and occasional contributor to the *Newsletter*, Mark Beesley. *Mock Tudor* shows twenty elevations of Arts & Crafts-style houses rendered in pen and crayon on tracing paper.

Mark says: "The work is based on a row of 1930s houses in a suburb of Nottingham, near where I used to live. They sum up to me the spirit of suburbia: a mixture of conformity – no-one has a better house than anyone else; they are of identical plan – and individuality: each has a different design for the pretend timber framing. The proud owner gets the best of both worlds: a mass-produced and therefore affordable house, close to the city, and an 'olde worlde' cottage, close to the countryside. There is the added dimension that all the houses have become more individual as they have been altered by their owners over the years."

[markbeesleyart.com]

Snippets 2

How much did the Ipswich tidal barrier cost UK tax-payers?

It appears that the cost has grown like topsy over the past five or so years of the construction phase. A Press Release in June 2014 suggested it was going to cost £38 million; the Environment Agency's Project Manager had a different figure by October 2015 of £58 million. This summer the *Ipswich Star* was reporting the cost approaching £70 million but the latest figure available is £71 million.



Lower Thames Crossing

Some of you may recall an Ipswich Society outing in 2014 called 'Crossing the Thames' which visited the site of potential crossing-places east of Tower Bridge. The sites visited included Tilbury (Mucking Marshes), Gallions Reach (Woolwich) and Silvertown (where participants flew across the Thames on the Emirates Cable Car).

It was ably demonstrated on the site that a bridge could not be built at Gallions Reach by the arrival of an aircraft coming into land at London City Airport. The bridge would require 50 metres of clearance for passing ships bound for the Port of London whilst being less than 50 metres high to remain under the flight path.

However, the design work on the 'Lower Thames Crossing' – a tunnel between Tilbury and Gravesend – is well underway including recent changes to make the road a three-lane dual carriageway. The new 'motorway' will run from junction 29 of the M25 to the M2 and thus on to the Channel Tunnel. Exploration work has also started on the line of the Silvertown Tunnel which, more or less, follows the route of the Cable Car. The new road will run between the A12/ A13 in Canning Town and the A102 in Greenwich and is scheduled to open in 2024.

Debenhams

The *East Anglian Daily Times* reports that Debenhams in Ipswich employs some 500 people, 300 in direct (but mainly part-time) employment with a further 200 working within the concessions. Nationally, Debenhams has 27,000 employees (in 127 stores) and unfortunately 4,000 are likely to go as their programme of fifty store closures takes effect.

Debenhams effectively started in 1778 when William Clark opened a drapers store in the west end of London in Wigmore Street. Thirty five years later William Debenham invested in the business and it became known as Clark & Debenham. Debenhams is the largest UK department store company and over the years has taken ownership of some 84 different businesses including Marshall & Snellgrove and in 1920 Harvey Nichols. The company currently has 241 stores in 22 countries. Debenhams Ipswich Store was built on the site of Footman & Pretty's Waterloo House in 1979. The origins of the store can be traced back to June 21 1815, three days after the Battle of Waterloo.

Future High Streets Fund from central government

A new £675 million Future High Streets Fund will be set up in 2019 to help local areas to respond to and adapt to changes. It will support local areas to prepare long-term strategies for their high streets and town centres, including funding a new High Streets Taskforce to provide expertise and hands-on support to local areas and it will also then co-fund with local areas projects. Later this year MHCLG will launch the full prospectus for the Fund, detailing the objectives of the Fund, further detail on the nature of projects that are eligible for funding, and assessment criteria. One can only comment that this fund will be spread very thinly if it has to stretch across all of our high streets.



[<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-high-streets-fund>]

Review

Shining while the lamps were out: the life of Grace Vulliamy CBE, 1878-1957 by Katherine Storr (ISBN 978-1986435352) £15.30.

Given the long, rich history of Ipswich it should not surprise us that there are still interesting people to be rediscovered and their lives reinstated by researchers. Grace Vulliamy is a case in point. The surname (from French Huguenot protestant ancestry) will be known by some Ipswich folk as the family contributed to the social fabric of the Victorian town. Grace's father, Arthur, was a solicitor, County Coroner, Liberal politician, churchgoer at St John's and had some responsibility for the Ipswich Poor Law Union workhouse for pauper children (which became St John's Children's Home) in California. Her mother, Anna, was from Irish/Belgian parentage and she attended St Lawrence Church and was busy with all sorts of organisations and campaigns including the Mothers' Union and Girls' Friendly Society. Both appear to have championed women's suffrage and care for refugees and the socially deprived.

At the age of four Grace was living at The Oakstead, a large house in Spring Road, the site of today's Oakstead Close flats, off Nelson Road. Described by one of her sisters as 'ahead of her time', a rebel, a born leader and full of energy, she was not understood by her parents, nor by the schools to which she was sent, rejecting the restrictive double standards imposed on young Victorian women and was expelled twice. Being considered a somewhat unruly child – and needing to earn her own living – she was sent to Germany and to France for a year each as preparation for becoming a governess: a most unsuitable occupation for one of her temperament. However, on the suggestion of a friend, Grace trained at Holloway Sanatorium as a mental nurse, passing the Medico Psychological Association nursing examination and gaining her certificate and medal. In this career she earned the high opinion of others of standing in the field.

Grace's ability with languages and mental nursing experience were vital during the First World War. She was set to work with Belgian refugees coming to Britain through Great Yarmouth & Folkestone; after a short time she was poached by the Local Government Board and sent to Holland to work still with Belgian Refugees. This led to her helping in the exchange of Prisoners Of War. It was for her work during the war that she received her CBE. After the war Grace carried on helping refugees and became a life Vice-President of the Save the Children Fund, first in Poland after the Russian Revolution where she was dealing with Russian refugees, then in 1937 she moved to South Africa and helped with the setting up of Cape Flats Development Association (CAFDA) along with Mary Attlee, reflecting the international nature of Grace's work.

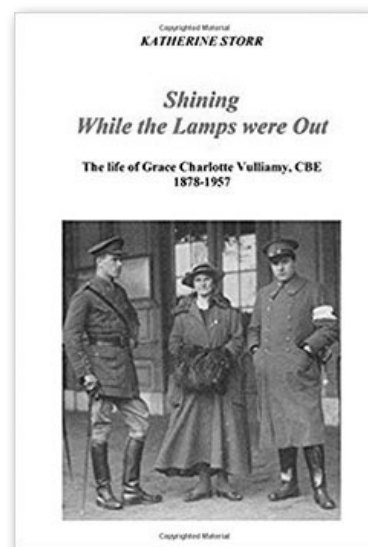
She was a forerunner in some of the tasks that it was considered impossible for women to do. She was a woman who pushed at boundaries, did not suffer fools gladly, could be caustic and reduce inefficient workers to a 'quivering jelly'. However, she was greatly loved because she expressed love for others, not in a sentimental manner, but in one which restored their self-respect. In this book Katherine Storr has pulled a remarkable life back into the daylight.

Notes

'I am immensely proud that my great-aunt Grace Vulliamy was involved with the initial arrangements for the Basque children's arrival and that my aunts Chloe and Poppy ran some of the homes, particularly in Suffolk.' *Daniel Vulliamy*. [See also Newsletter October 2017 for the unveiling of the Basque refugee blue plaque at Wherstead Park.]

There is a Grace Vulliamy Street in Cafda Village, south of Cape Town.

R.G.



The Ipswich Society

Registered Charity no. 263322

www.ipswichsociety.org.uk | <https://www.facebook.com/ipswichsociety> | email: secretary@ipswichsociety.org.uk

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).

Dates for your diary

Society Outings

April 12 2019: Medway Mosaic and Rochester.

May 8: Evening visit to Martlesham Police Museum.

June 13: Tiptree and Maldon.

July 16: Metroland.

August 28: Euston Hall and Dad's Army Museum, Thetford.

September 26: Buckingham Palace.

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 16 January 2019: 'How do we improve design quality?' by David Tittle, Head of Design Advice, Design South-East, Chair of the Design Network, Trustee of Civic Voice.

Wednesday 20 February: 'Ipswich cinemas and theatres' by Eric Thorndyke.

Wednesday 20 March: 'The rescue of Norwegian gold from the Nazis in April 1940' by Bob Pearson, author.

Wednesday 17 April, 7.30pm: Society AGM and speaker, University Waterfront Building.

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.



*'Even on an overcast day Christchurch Park and its Mansion can offer up colour and beauty!'
Stone head photographed by Graham Smith, autumn 2018*