

An Extra
High Summer
Issue



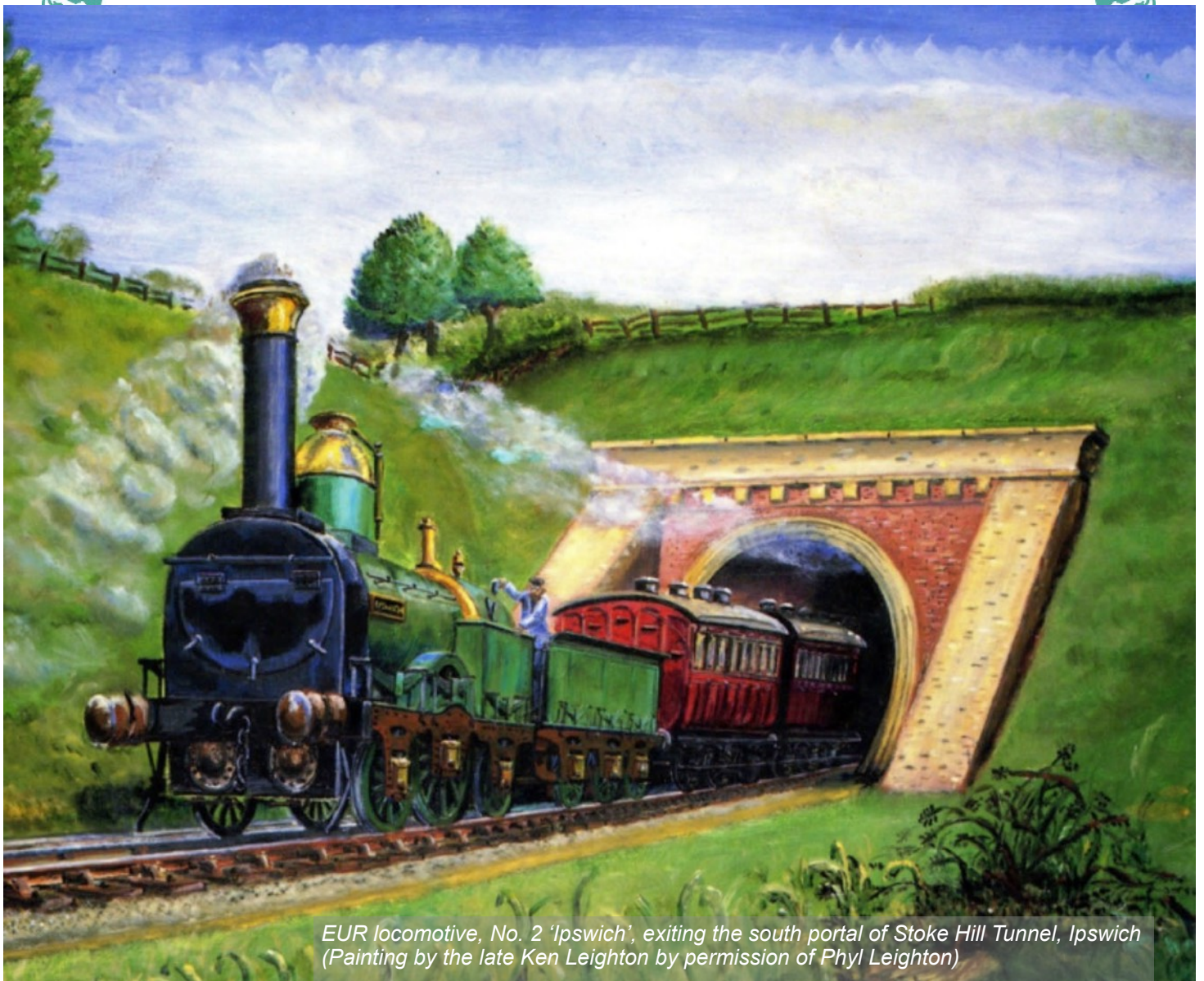
The Ipswich Society NEWSLETTER

www.ipswichsociety.org

August 2020 Issue 222

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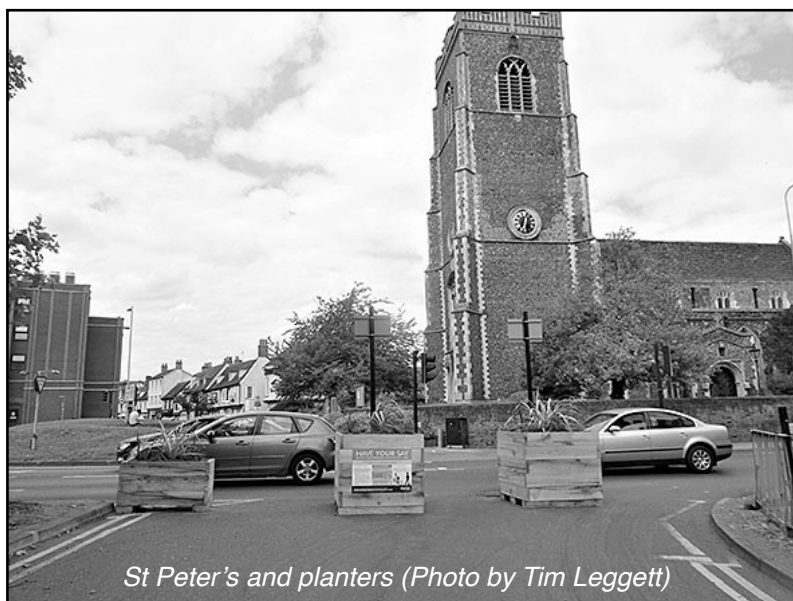
*EUR locomotive, No. 2 'Ipswich', exiting the south portal of Stoke Hill Tunnel, Ipswich
(Painting by the late Ken Leighton by permission of Phyl Leighton)*

Editorial

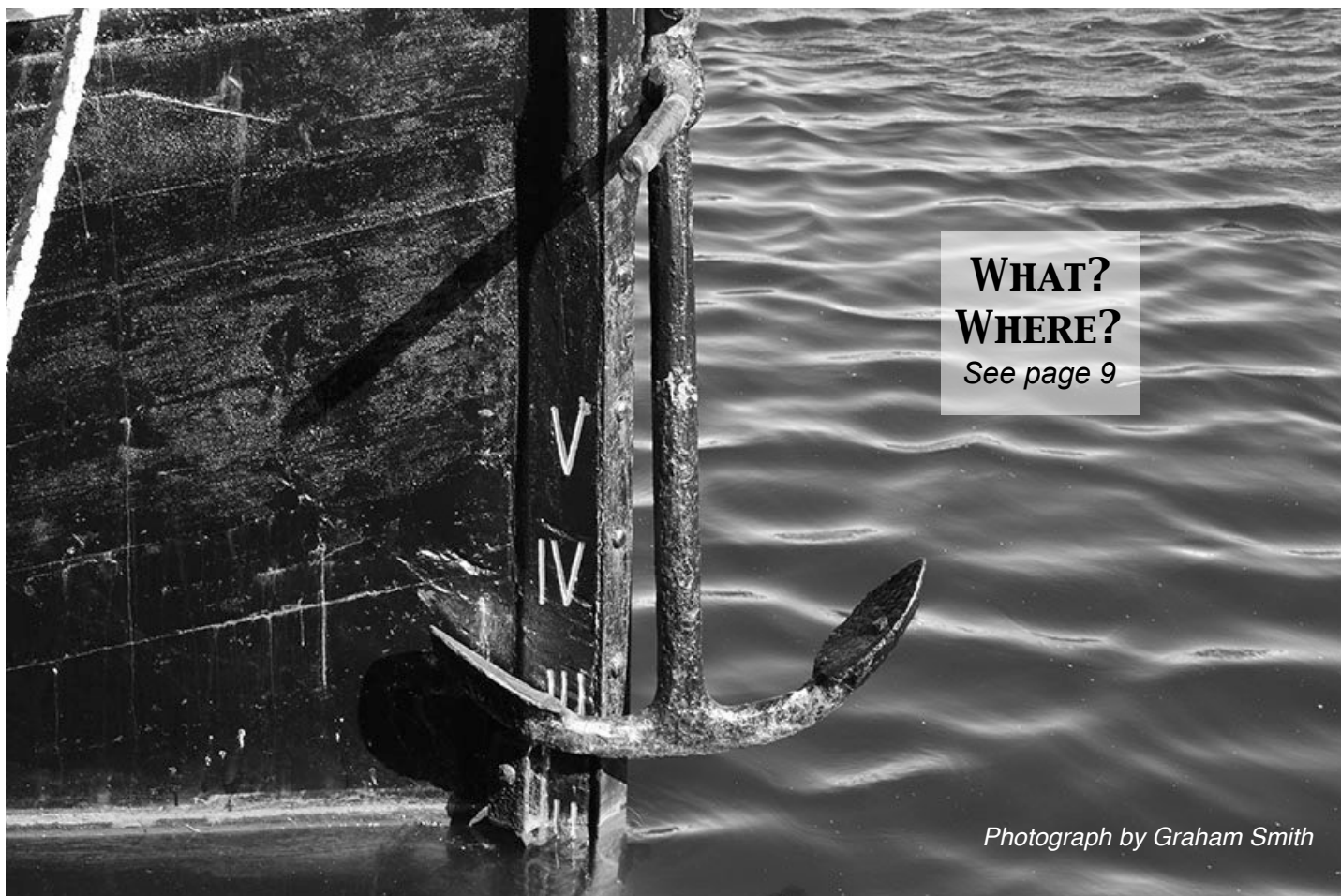
Another day, another *Newsletter*. I'm delighted to present a second extra issue for 2020. All civic societies are experiencing the same problems in fulfilling their functions, serving their members and keeping as active as possible during these strange times.

While the Society keeps as active as possible 'behind-the-scenes', its visible face tends to be the social media sites (Facebook and Instagram), its website and Image Archive and the *Newsletter*. Such has been the rather gratifying praise for the recent issues that it was decided to produce this August issue to cover some of the developments and challenges in our town and provide more space to some excellent articles. Talking of which, as ever, I am most grateful to contributors past, present and future.

I hope that you enjoy this veritable smorgassbord of varied articles and images. With best wishes to all our members and readers,
Robin Gaylard



St Peter's and planters (Photo by Tim Leggett)



**WHAT?
WHERE?**
See page 9

Photograph by Graham Smith

Chairman's remarks

Two items of recent news will cause the Society some concern this month. One is the awarding, by neighbouring councils, of planning permission for developments just outside the Borough boundary. Brightwell Lakes will be 2,000 houses adjacent to Adastral Park, Martlesham and Wolsey Grange is a development between Chantry Park and the A14, house building here having already started off Poplar Lane, Sproughton. This development is potentially part of Chantry Vale development which could total 1,000 homes. Both are effectively in Ipswich but will not contribute to our rateable value.

As well as speculative house building, planning permission has also been granted for commercial and industrial development on greenfield sites adjacent to the Borough boundary. For example, land alongside junction 56 (Wherstead) where there will be a new services area (fuel and fast food restaurants), a new campus-like business park and an extensive area of large sheds (distribution warehouses, trade counters or storage facilities).

Sitting on top of the Ski slope hill these combined developments will effectively move the boundary of the built-up area from Bourne Bridge to Jimmy's Farm. Ipswich is getting gradually larger by decisions taken elsewhere.

And it is the local authorities taking these decisions that is my second point. I refer to the reorganisation of local government, an old and much debated issue that is back on the agenda because of the expense of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Government have been providing additional cash to local authorities to ensure essential services continue throughout the crisis and that vulnerable members of society are cared for. It didn't take them long to realise that the more local authorities there are, the greater their total expenditure, and that local authorities which have combined key functions are marginally cheaper to run – and so require less Government support.

In Suffolk, Babergh has combined some services with Mid Suffolk and on the coast, Suffolk Coastal and Waveney are now East Suffolk. Both of these, together with Ipswich, and Forest Heath / St Edmundsbury are District Councils which still function under the all-embracing County Council.



These are, however, possibly only temporary measures. The latest thinking by the Government is for unitary councils serving perhaps 400,000 people. There are a number of Unitary Authorities already in existence elsewhere across the country and, according to the Government it seems to be working.

But wait, Suffolk has about 750,000 people, which could split into two administrative organisations. East and West Suffolk seems logical, except this ignores Ipswich as a possible self-governing county town. Prior to 1974 it was a County Borough in its own right, a three way split of the county.

By creating a Unitary Authority covering the greater Ipswich conurbation – say 200,000 people – leaves the possible East and West districts with only 250,000 each, none of which meet the Government target of 400,000 to be cost effective.

I won't speculate on the outcome but you are, perhaps, beginning to appreciate the difficulties and arguments to come.

John Norman

Planning matters

Multi-storey car park Portman Road. This important outline application for a 7 level, 750 space park with admin building, UK Power Networks ring main building, a new public square with hard and soft landscaping including tree planting is an expression of IBC's wish to make the Princes Street corridor the business and economic hub of the Town centre rather than on the periphery. Therefore it will be essential to provide adequate, modern, convenient parking for business. This would be the driver to the reignition of commercial life in the town centre. It is unfortunate that the Coronavirus may have changed the way office life is conducted in the future. This is an outline application so design details are not revealed and indeed the whole project may have to be rethought. The Design and Access Statement is worth reading for the proposals in full, the history of the site and the flood risks (now negligible).

6-10 Cox Lane & 36-46 Carr Street. Joe Fogel wishes to convert the original Coop shop, later Brighthouse (now in administration) into two retail units on the Carr Street frontage and insert two one bedroom flats at the rear. They just reach minimum size but have small windows at the rear onto the courtyard. The retail units on the corner and in Cox Lane will be retained as will the ex Coop opticians now sold to Armstrong and North. Good to see more living in the centre but what will be their quality? Whether the retail units will be used is questionable.

4 College Street. We are delighted IBC, the owners, have allocated funding to completely restore this listed grade 2, 16th and 17th century, timber-framed building in the medieval core of the town; Nick Jacob's practice has produced the scheme. Let us hope that the virus does not spend all of the Borough's money first. The eventual use of the building is not yet decided.

1 Thornley Drive (off Rushmere Road). The task of commenting on applications is made much more difficult by poor quality and a lack of information. In this instance there is no Design and Access Statement and the proposal merely has a computerised visual of the new main elevation without describing the actual materials or their texture. The proposal is to extend a very large existing bungalow into a six bedroom, three bathroom two storey house. A design which is, I feel, mundane for the 21st century. The layout of the rooms is curious in some ways but presumably is what the client wishes (users of both first floor front bedrooms will need to step into the open gallery/landing to access a bathroom; and the pantry is off the far end of the enormous living room!) but there is no reason why it shouldn't fit into the locale of Rushmere Road.

40 Tacket Street. The proposal is to add a fourth storey to form a House of Multiple Occupation (HMO) of seven bedrooms; the new floor would have a communal living area with dining and cooking facilities. The Society supports the concept of more in-town dwellings, though it is vital that the Borough Officers ensure that all the relevant standards are maintained. However, the online elevation drawing of new frontage to Tacket Street does not show the abutting building to the west, the four storey Suffolk brick building of the former Brand store by Cattermole and Eade (1875). Whilst the host is an undistinguished 1930s three storey infill, its proposed upward extension is without character and relates to neither building. The architects should be asked to do better. This elevational treatment is unacceptable.

2-4 Norwich Road. This is a proposal to convert a two-storey storage annexe to the rear of 2-4 Norwich Road, into a one-bedroom house with a living room, kitchen; also a courtyard with space for one car, two cycles and the bins with a dropped kerb, entrance gates from Barrack Lane. A small extension to the west is needed. The building is hardly noticed and I'm sure this windfall house so close to the town centre is to be welcomed, designed as it is by Bury St Edmunds architects. No application form is included amongst the online documents.

57 Henley Road. The saga of the entrance continues beyond the applications (the first refused) and the second which has now been superseded by a delivery truck demolishing the wall!

Hopefully the Conservation Officers will be able to insist on its rebuilding with original materials albeit somewhat wider and with symmetry in the wall panels.

Former Pumping Station Thurleston Lane. Planning permission has previously been granted for conversion to three houses. This new application proposes to convert it into one four-bedroom house with a grand ground floor living space, a snug and a basement family room. The annexe would be converted into an orangery. A river terrace to the north and terraces to east and west will complete the main building. A new brick double garage will be built at the end of the new drive. The project architect is Chris Dyson, a well regarded London office for such projects. Though theoretically two habitations will be lost it is vital that Ipswich does have a supply of quality modern houses. We very much hope that it does get completed according to these proposals.

The Old Post Office, Cornhill. The building has always been owned by the Corporation/ Borough Council; they are now restoring it prior to letting. Originally, there were four stone vase finials. They have been missing since 1950; no trace of drawings or remnants can be found. New ones in bronze and Portland stone will be put in place. Additionally, some of the stone carvings which have weathered away will be restored. It is well worth reading Nick Jacob's Design and Access statement. The Council should be congratulated on this proposal.



The Maltings Princes Street. Permission has been granted to build a four storey office building in a very contemporary style on the car park in West End Road. This will be a fine addition to Ipswich Office space.

Bury Road Shopping area. It seems impossible not to grant permission to yet another fast food joint, this time a Burger King.

1 Ellenbrook Green. Environmental Officers found that a rear section of this small supermarket had been converted to living spaces for three residents! Appropriate enforcement action has been taken.

I have watched two Zoom meetings of the Planning and Development Committee; legal but dry. I regret to say that I missed the last one on July 29. At the meeting, permission was granted for the restoration of The Old Post Office and for the erection of 18 apartments in Upper Orwell Street. This had been refused previously as being too many in too small a building and of a poor design. It returned with a few minor improvements but was still not 'up to scratch'. However, it was granted despite three strenuous objectors.

The Ipswich Conservation and Urban Design Panel has met by email to comment on several applications.

Mike Cook

Ipswich railway stations, Part 1: Croft Street Station

The first station in Ipswich was not the one we know now. It was in the area where the old Ipswich Loco Works was eventually sited near Croft Street. It was designed by Ipswich architect, Frederick Barnes. The EUR mainline ran from Colchester to Ipswich and opened in June 1846. It was linked to Bishopsgate, the London terminus in those days, via the Eastern Counties Railways line. (Liverpool Street Station did not open until 1874.)

This was how a local journalist described the day of the grand opening of the EUR at Croft Street at the time:

'On 11th June 1846 the directors held their ceremony, when at half-past ten o'clock in the morning a train consisting of thirteen open and closed carriages, drawn by two single wheeled engines named "Ipswich" and "Colchester" and built by the well-known firm of Sharp Brothers of Manchester; left Ipswich for Colchester.

[The front cover shows a painting by Ken Leighton of locomotive No. 2. 'Ipswich' leaving Stoke Tunnel.]

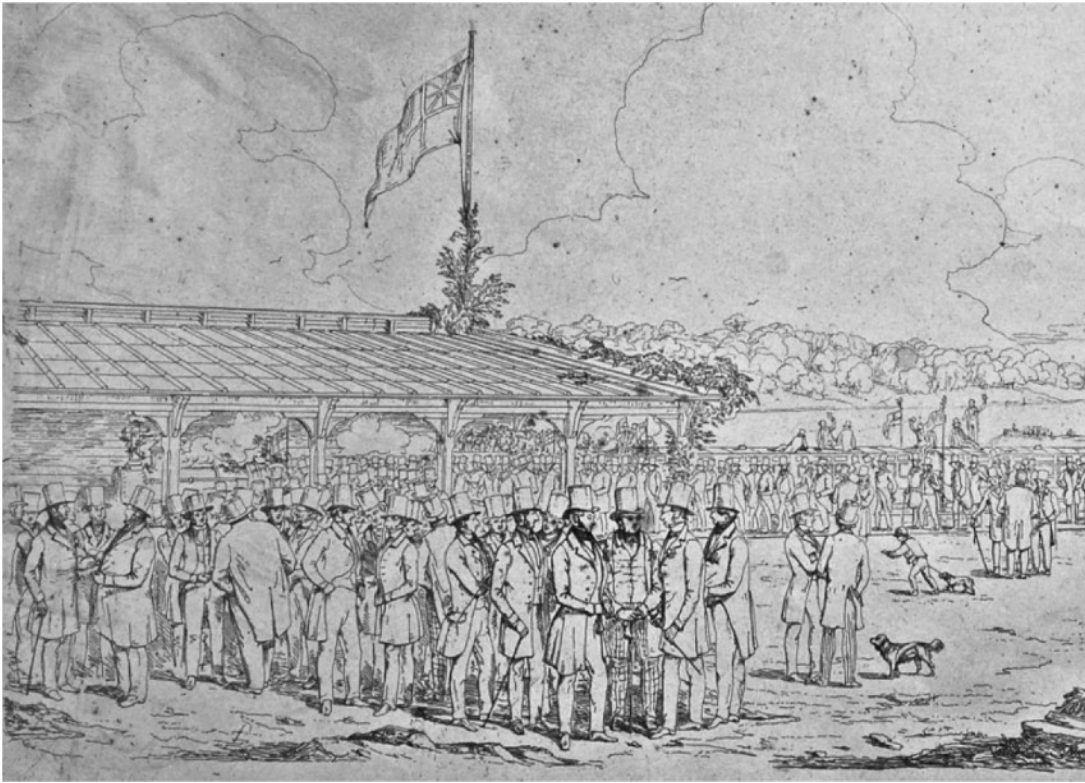


'The engines were in [the] charge of Mr Peter Bruff, Resident Engineer, with Mr Taylor, "Foreman of Engines" driving the leading one; Mr Martin, Superintendent of the Line, was on the second which was driven by a trusted driver.

'The passengers who accompanied the Chairman included the directors, the shareholders, a number of their friends and prominent townsmen, had a safe journey and arrived at their destination at 11.45. At Colchester they were met by a special train from London consisting of seven first-class carriages conveying Mr G Hudson MP, Mr J Locke, the Engineer, and a large number of friends and "supporters of the line." The trains were quickly joined together and, worked by the two engines, reached Ipswich at 1.30.

'En route they passed under triumphal arches decorated with flowers, evergreens and flags, to the cheers of the crowds, and at the terminus were received with "all sorts of joy." The travellers were welcomed by a host of elegantly dressed ladies with bouquets who were seated in a handsome stand specially built. Guns were fired, bells were rung and all was "rejoicing at the advent of good friends." The company then walked into the grounds of Mr C F Gower, bordering on the river, who most kindly lent them for the occasion.

'A most excellent lunch was provided by the directors. The little steamer River Queen was moored alongside the garden and the party, including the two Chairmen, made a trip to Harwich and back. On their return some 200 gentlemen dined at the Assembly Rooms (This is now the site of the Easy Hotel in Northgate Street). This banquet, prepared by the host of the nearby Great White Horse Tavern, was "spread upon large tables having various highly flavoured viands crowned by iced champagne in sparkling profusion." At the same time dinner was served to the junior officers of the railway at the Golden Lion, whilst the working men, numbering some 200, had theirs at the Railway Tavern, Stoke, and sub-contractors at the Coach and Horses [formerly situated at 41 Upper Brook Street – it opened in c.1732 and closed in 1975].'



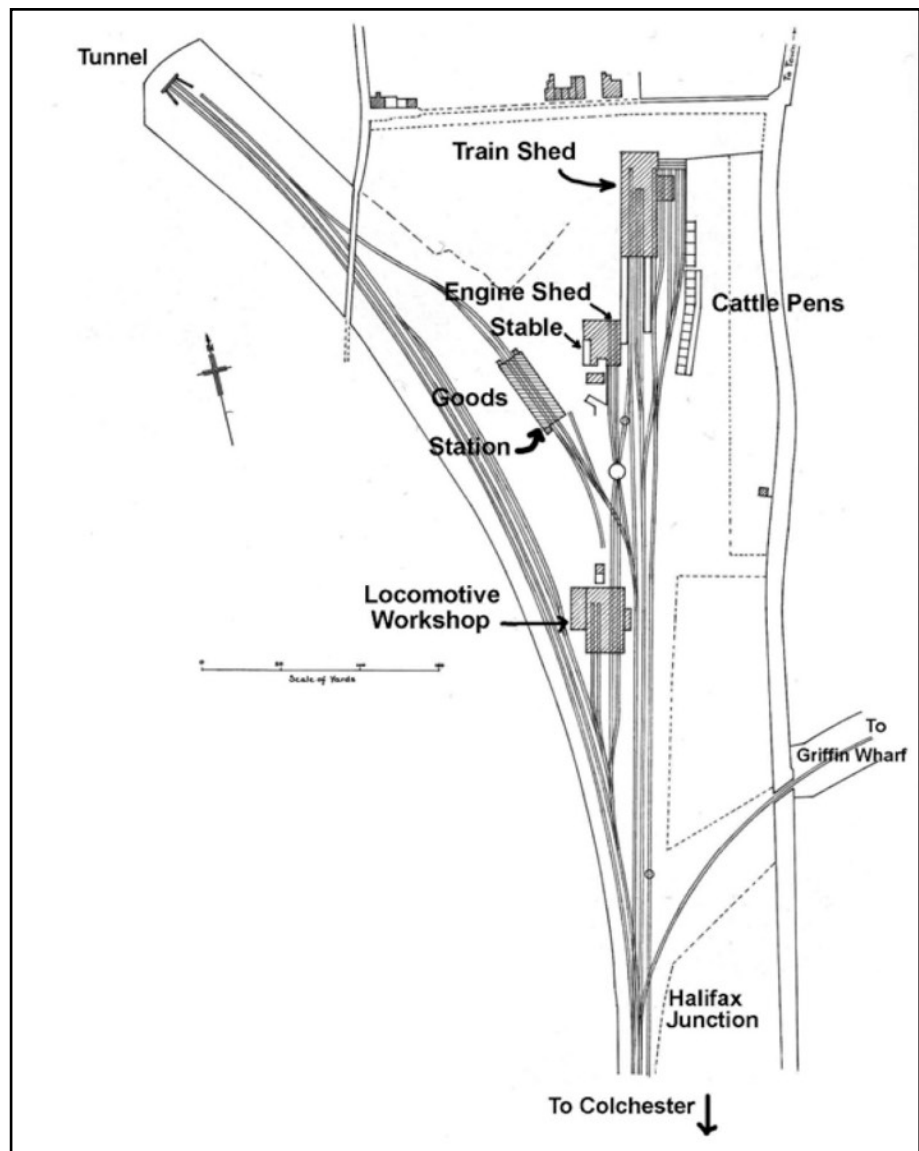
Drawing by Fred Russel of Croft Street Station on the day of the opening of the EUR with John Chevallier Cobbold (Chairman of the EUR) and Peter Bruff (the two figures facing each other in the foreground).

Picture courtesy of Dr Doug Harper.

At the right is a diagram taken from one found in Mr Bruff's office and shows the layout of the station when first built.

Croft Street Station, Ipswich Picture from the late Hugh Moffat (Modified by M R Russen)

To the south you can see the spur from Halifax Junction to Griffin Wharf to service the Orwell steamers. To the north-west of the diagram is the entrance to Stoke Hill tunnel (opened in November 1846) where the line continues to Bury St Edmunds.



It was planned as a temporary station until a more permanent structure, jointly owned by the EUR and the Ipswich and Bury Railway (I and BR), was built beyond the other end of Stoke Hill tunnel. In fact, nearly fifteen years passed before this happened.

Trains from London; came into the train shed, dropped off and picked up passengers, before backing out again to Halifax Junction. They then progressed forward, through the tunnel and on to their destination via the I and BR. This was how trains were worked from the end of 1846 until 1860 at which time Croft Street Station closed and the newly built station opened on the current site.

Croft Street Station train shed was used as a store by 1878 when it was damaged by fire. The building had disappeared by 1882, although the platforms were still visible until as late as 1950.

The old station has gone and the area where it was situated later became part of the locomotive shed and later still the carriage & wagon repair shops. All that too has now gone.

A fascinating part of the study of a townscape is how it changes. To that end, I include below two pictures taken from Luther Road/Belstead Avenue junction looking over the parapet above the southern portal of Stoke Hill Tunnel. The first picture was taken by Hugh Moffat, probably in the 1970s.



*Croft Street Station train shed in the 1850s
(Sketch by Mervyn Russen after Fred Russel)*



The line below curves away towards Halifax Junction. In the middle distance is the River Orwell and in the far distance lies the power station. The latter was commissioned in 1949, ceased work in 1985 and was demolished in 1994. On the left of the line are the carriage & wagon repair shops.



Everything has changed including the design of the lamp post!

The line still curves away towards Manningtree but the carriage & wagon repair shops have gone having been replaced by a housing estate. In the distance over the river can be seen the Orwell Bridge: opened in 1982.

Merv Russen

[The report of the opening day of the EUR was taken from "The Eastern Union Railway 1846 to 1862" By H F Hilton (1946).]

Part two of this article will appear in our October issue.



Sailing Barge Victor sails again

The photograph by Graham Smith on page 2 is of the bow and anchor of *Sailing Barge Victor* moored at Common Quay.

Victor, at 82 tons, was built by Horace Shrubsall at the Dock End Yard, Ipswich in 1895. After years in freight service, she underwent a major refit 2005 to 2006 at both Maldon and Mistley. David 'Wes' Westwood of Ipswich is the Skipper and a well-known figure in Ipswich and on the River Orwell.

Since 12 July, much to the relief of supporters, *S.B. Victor* was able to restart cruises. (<https://www.sbvictor.co.uk>)

Delia Thelma Hammerton

21 February 1942 – 8 May 2020

I first met Delia about 38 years ago when I was sent as a ‘temp’ to a now defunct government department, The Wages Inspectorate, and we became friends as well as colleagues.

Originally from Dorset, Delia settled in Ipswich and was an active participant in many local groups: Eastern Angles, Suffolk Bell Ringers, Friends of Christchurch Park, driving the Parkmobile on ‘Music in the Park’ days, as well as volunteering on the St Peter’s-on-the-Waterfront rota on behalf of The Ipswich Society. She also served as treasurer on many committees including the Civil Service Pensioners’ Alliance. Always sporty, she was a keen table tennis player and participated in over fifteen marathons, nine in London, over thirty half-marathons, including the Midnight Sun event in Tromso, Norway and numerous biathlons and triathlons. Delia was a very good cook and loved to entertain and, happily, was able to enjoy her birthday party in February before the final stage of her illness took over.

She could be ‘prickly’ at times, can’t we all, but she will be remembered by her family as a loving partner, mother and grandmother and by me as a steadfast friend. Whenever I see someone careering round the town on a rickety old bike I will think of Delia and I will smile.

Linda Erith

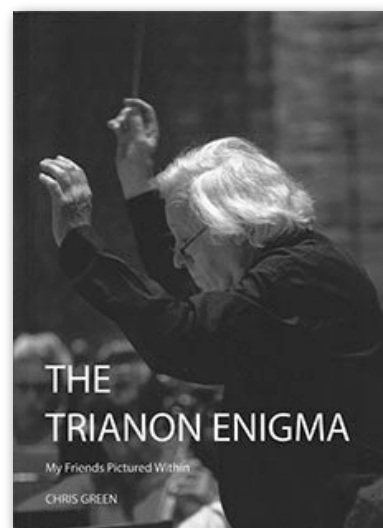


Thanks to Delia's daughter for the image.

Book review

The Trianon enigma, my friends pictured within, Chris Green OBE.
Diatom, 2019.

Trianon are a group of amateur musicians who occasionally get together to play for the public, except they are much, much more than that simple description. Their various members have been making music since 1959 and throughout that time one of the founder members has been driving the group forward, conducting its orchestra and encouraging the choir.



That exceptional individual is Professor Christopher Green and the book *The Trianon Enigma* is both the history of ensemble and a potted biography of its principal conductor. What makes this book different however are the multiple interjections of memories and recollections by those who have, in a variety of different ways, contributed to the ongoing success of the group, in many cases told by people who have gone on to become renowned in their own musical field.

What becomes clear, whilst reading the book, is the infectious enthusiasm that engulfs the members of Trianon, particularly when they are rehearsing together for a forthcoming public performance.

The trials and tribulations, the ups and downs, their repeated successes and the occasional snowstorm are all included, the Trianon story is one of community involvement at all levels.

The book is full of local people, local places and local interest, together with the ever-present difficulties of trying to find a suitable rehearsal space. One would think that after sixty years that quest would be solved, but because every concert is different the requirements of the space vary according to the number of performers – whether or not the choir is to be involved – and the genre of music to be played.

The world changes and organisations that, mid-twentieth century, were only too willing to make the school hall, the village hall and the town hall available, now see these spaces as cost centres, where commercial hirers get priority use and the local community (who paid for the facility in the first place) don't get a look in.

What I found interesting is that I, with no musical ability whatsoever, found this book very readable. Perhaps one or two of the contributors were bordering on the condescending but they were outweighed by those with an interesting anecdote, a story to retell or a footnote to add.

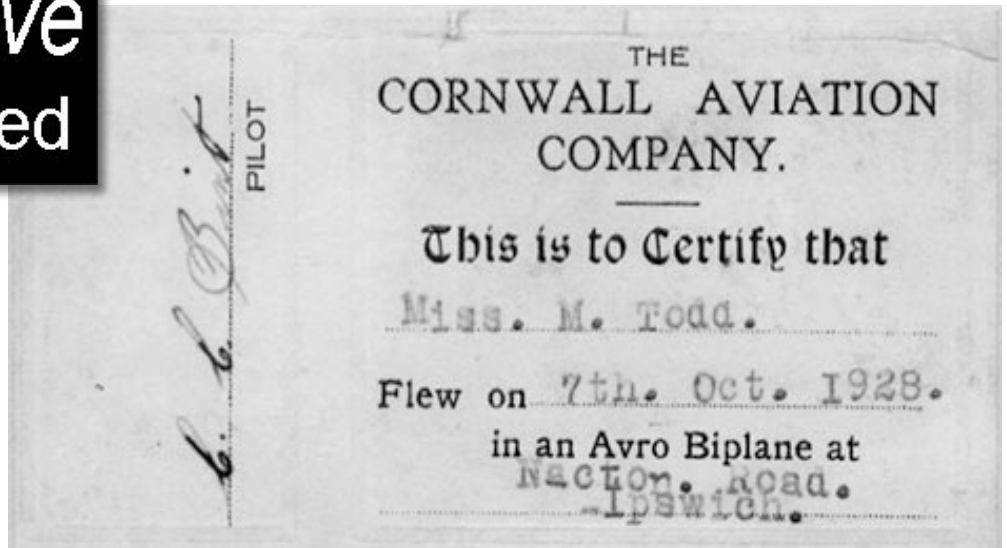
This book will be of interest to all who have been involved in Trianon since the beginning, but there is much within to read for anyone who has enjoyed a Trianon concert, has an interest in local arts and culture and, particularly, for the parents and grandparents of anyone who has ever performed under the direction of Chris Green.

John Norman

The book is available from the Ipswich Institute (£10.00) or by post (add £2.50 p&p) from:
01394 286928 or email: dominique.nightingale@btinternet.com

Ipswich Society Image Archive Recently added

Marion Jordan, a member of the Society with her husband Barry, recently told us of the adventurous nature of the women in her family. After regaling us with the story of their trip on an airship in the nineties she found out that her mother was an intrepid aviatrix in the 1920s.



Marion reported: 'In 1928 my late mother Marjorie Smith (née Todd), who was aged seventeen, took a joy ride in an Avro biplane from a field in Nacton Road, Ipswich. I understand this was before the airport was there. Her boyfriend (later her husband and my dad) would not go up as he didn't like heights. It cost around five shillings. She said it was very windy up there.' She attached a copy of the certificate Marjorie was given after the trip.

Marion went on to describe the aerial adventure she and Barry had back in the nineties. They had unearthed images of the trip they took in a Mazda 'blimp' as an acknowledgement of their continuing loyalty to a local car dealer. The garage from which they purchased their cars regarded them as being worthy customers. As a reward for their custom they were selected to board the airship when it came to Ipswich on a leg of its trip round the country advertising the brand.

The journey which took forty-five minutes, found them soaring gently to about five hundred feet over Nacton Road, cruising towards the town passing over Marion's mother's house in Clapgate Lane. Barry and Marian were able to continue filming and snapping away at the views before turning to fly over the town centre and the Cornhill. Although it's not possible to see photographs of the whole trip, they flew over the north of the town towards Whitton over Whitehouse then turning towards the river following it down towards the Wet Dock. They flew over what was to become the Waterfront where it was possible to see the beginnings of the development there. Further down the river, Ostrich Creek was visible before sight of the glorious new Orwell Bridge came into sight. Finally, turning left they flew unhurriedly back to Ipswich Airport.

On their descent they were greeted by a gang of lads, the thirteen-strong support team employed to grab the guy-ropes and bring the craft to a halt. Marian and Barry celebrated their trip on the May afternoon with a glass of bubbly. The Jordans tell us it was a smooth, exciting and pleasant journey with no hairy moments, in a space about the size of the interior of a large

car, it was very noisy so they had to wear headphones but the view was splendid.

The ABC Lightship A60 N2022B *Mazda* was chartered for nine months in 1995, in which time it is toured numerous dealers being used to entertain clients and impress locals. It was considered ‘a superb means of outgunning our rivals’.

There were some drawbacks, however, most notably the weather. At one point, one airship was grounded for three weeks because of low cloud and there was also the matter of its stately pace. ‘When you move on to the next location it can take a long time to get there. You might spend two or three days flying over cows and sheep,’ reported a spokesman at the time.

Tony Marsden



Marion and Barry Jordan (right) celebrating their return.

Christchurch Mansion North Porch

This early postcard shows the passage leading from Main Hall to the former North Porch which gave access to Christchurch Park. Unfortunately, access could also be the other way and, on occasions of excessive rainfall, the Main Hall was sometimes flooded by a rush of water through the North Porch. In 1924 a small timber-framed house (which was under demolition at Major’s Corner) was re-erected on the north side of the Mansion, to provide two extra rooms. The lower room, now a popular wedding venue, and on the site of the North Porch, is accessed by this passage (which was slightly narrowed). The bicycles have been displayed at Ipswich Transport Museum.

Bob Markham

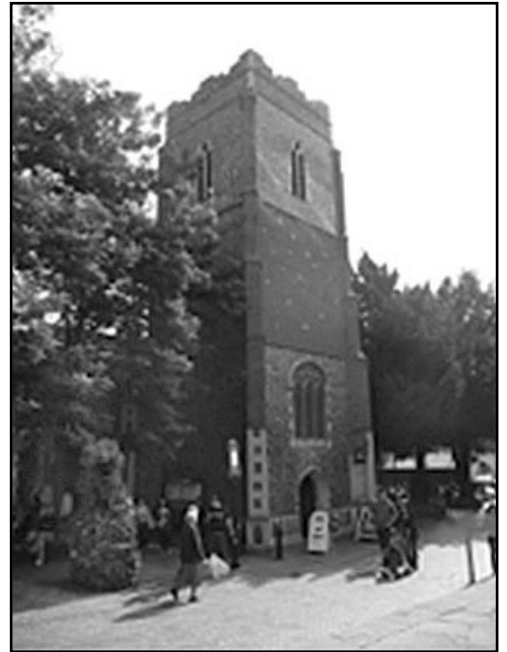


The Ipswich T i C

The future of the Tourist Information Centre (**TiC**) in St Stephen's Church has been in the news recently.

The Borough Council's executive met in mid-July to discuss the planned emergency budget aimed at alleviating the impact of the cost of the coronavirus pandemic. The plans to save funds would mean, if approved, that among other measures to be taken, the TIC would be permanently closed but conversely more money for the Arras Square renovation might become available.

There are echoes, in this matter of a past **TiC** question which The Society had to answer, back in early 2011. At the time the Borough Council were keen to move it back into the Town Hall when the Suffolk Craft Society moved out. The Ipswich Society was then given a hint of an offer to explore taking on St Stephen's Church on as our base. We were warm to the idea subject to certain caveats.



Our Chairman at the time, the late Jack Chapman, handed the examination of the feasibility over to John Norman who led a working group on the matter.

Chief Executive Russell Williams envisaged the move of the **TiC**, but only if a good use could be found for St Stephen's. The reasons for the move were that the potential for a hi-tech future was poor and that it was 'off the beaten track'.

There was a certain preference by the Borough Council for it to be used by a trusted local group and Councillors were in broad agreement.

It could become a 'home' for the Ipswich Society, but not to be kept to ourselves. St Stephen's would become a conference centre, for displays of art, as a lecture hall for use by Ipswich community groups – the venue would be very useful and convenient.

Our working group spent a considerable amount of time examining the possibilities St Stephen's might provide, preparing a detailed feasibility study. This included the financial and business planning over a three-year period, a request for 'start-up' measures such as grants from the Council, the installation of toilets and the acquisition of furniture for the place. After some time studying the matter – a serious reflection of the nature of our commitment to the project, the diversity of tasks involved and the financial considerations – we concluded that our Society revenue, reserves and human resources could not support a move to accept responsibility for the building.

The Council soon afterwards changed its plans and the Tourist Information Centre remained unchanged until the latest regrettable news about its future.

Tony Marsden

Aviation heritage on our doorstep

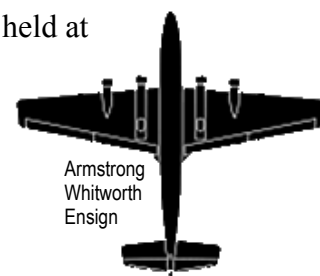
The whole of East Anglia, particularly during World War II had a large number of airbases from which the allied offensive was taken to Nazi Germany. Aviation had come on tremendously in a short period of time from the days of the early pioneers, notably Wilbur and Orville Wright (1903), and Alcock and Brown, who completed the first transatlantic flight from Newfoundland to Ireland in 1919.

During World War I, the aeroplane developed from a 'spotter' plane looking for artillery on the ground to a more defensive and offensive weapon of war. During the Zeppelin offensive, locally-based aircraft – some from Orfordness – were in the front line of defence against the terrifying German weapon. Memorably, Zeppelin L48 crashed at Theberton. The church still has in its porch some of the metal frame of the downed airship.

The development of new weapons and their testing was first carried out at a research station at Orfordness. This was subsequently transferred to a new aerodrome built at Martlesham Heath near Ipswich.

I was therefore pleased by a presentation given before the lockdown by the Martlesham Heath Aviation Society. As an experimental station, Martlesham had been at the forefront and the cutting edge of aviation innovation. As well as armaments, there was a section to design and test parachutes. In the days before health and safety those brave souls who donned the first parachutes literally took their lives in their hands!

The development of new aircraft between the wars was an almost continuous process as aviation developed apace. Variations of the Vickers Vimy (the machine used in Alcock and Brown's transatlantic flight from Newfoundland to Clifden in Ireland in 1919, crash landing in a bog) were tested, along with new generations of fighters and bombers. The largest plane ever to fly into Martlesham was the Beardmore Inflexible in 1928 – it had a length of 75 feet and a wingspan of 158 feet: a giant of a plane. The last ever Empire Air Day was held at Martlesham in 1939. The star attraction for the spectators was the largest airliner of the time: the Armstrong Whitworth Ensign and the first ever public viewing of the new Spitfire and Hurricane Fighters. It became a front-line airfield during the Battle of Britain; probably its most famous pilot was Group Captain Douglas Bader.



After the RAF, American squadrons were based at Martlesham and, as a result, a standardised control tower was built after the war. In its early formative years, the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (now at RAF Coningsby in Lincolnshire) was located at Martlesham.

Eventually, in the early 1960s activities at Martlesham gradually reduced and finally ceased. I can recall a lot of discussion about Ipswich Airport (the first ever municipal airport in the UK) being moved from the airfield in Nacton Road to Martlesham, as even then activities at the Airport's Nacton Road site were severely restricted. Nothing however came of it, and eventually the airfield site was developed for business uses and a new housing village, receiving a tremendous boost when the former Post Office Research Establishment (now BT's Adastral Park) moved from London to Martlesham.

Despite all this, the heritage on the heath has not been forgotten. The dedicated members of the Aviation Society have, over many years, restored the control tower as a Museum and ensured that there are also memorials that are so important at remembrance time. The centenary of the airfield was celebrated in 2017 as 'Martlesham 100', to which I was one of the owners who took their classic cars to support the event. The Aviation Society was very much involved in providing the opportunity to visit the control tower and take a coach trip to other sites. However, the highlight for me was being able to scramble into the cockpit of a Hawker Hurricane. Of such things are memories made.

Despite the financial difficulties caused by the coronavirus pandemic, it is gratifying that the memories and legacy of aviation heritage on our doorstep are in safe hands indeed. Once the crisis is overcome, hopefully they will be able to carry on with their good work.

Graham Day

Private access to natural retreats

Our April 2017 *Newsletter* (Issue 207), introduced many readers to the project called Brickmakers Wood which includes the WWII Romney buildings (large Nissen-hut structures), and clay scarp woodland between the rear of Suffolk New College and Alexandra Park.

Brickmakers Wood manager Jo Brooks is trying to find out if local people would benefit from spending some private time in the Eden Rose Coppice Trust woodlands in Sudbury and Ipswich, if they are feeling anxious about returning to the 'new normal'. To this end, an online survey will take three minutes to complete. Brickmakers Wood, near the foot of Back Hamlet, could offer private indoor parking, as well as vigorous cleaning methods undertaken in between booked slots at all their sites:-

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/B3N9CKY>

This access would be particularly beneficial to those people who have been shielding during the Covid-19 lockdown and those people who are anxious about leaving their homes as society, businesses and facilities are gradually opening up once again (with appropriate distancing and hygiene measures).

It is now widely recognised that all sorts of people can benefit from spending some time in, and engaging with, natural surroundings and green spaces: the textures, colours, sounds and smells of plants, ponds, creatures and woodland. Whether relaxing, strolling or doing light gardening jobs in complete privacy, visitors gain strength and confidence from a visit to the woods.



Cycling after Covid

I am at a loss to explain the rationale behind the arrival of the posts separating the cycle lane in Valley Road from the traffic other than it was a quick and simple way of spending Government money (assigned to facilities for improving cycling after Covid-19).

I am told by nervous cyclists, for whom these posts were installed to improve their confidence, that by using the cycle lane they now feel trapped, wobble a little to the left and touch the kerb, wobble a little to the right and clip the post with your pedal.

The psychological effect of reducing the width of the cycle lane makes it somewhat more difficult to avoid potholes, broken glass and other detritus. The posts really do create the perception of a narrower cycle lane.

It is interesting to note that wherever vehicles and cyclists come together because of a lack of road space the new posts are nowhere to be seen, a pedestrian refuge in the middle of the road causes motorists to move towards the kerb (and the cycle lane to disappear).

Where there is plenty of road space at roundabouts the new posts are prolific (Westerfield Road), where road space is less abundant (Rushmere Road roundabout) the cycle lane, and the new posts are notable by their absence. In my opinion this has been an inappropriate expenditure when there is so much that could, and should have been done to improve cycling facilities in Ipswich.

Finally, and this has nothing directly to do with Ipswich, but it will equally apply here as elsewhere, a new Highway Code is in preparation and the major change is the very rationale behind the new edition:-

‘Those who can cause the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger or threat they pose to others’. This creates a hierarchy of road users where motorists have a responsibility for the safety of cyclists, and cyclists have a responsibility for the safety of pedestrians.

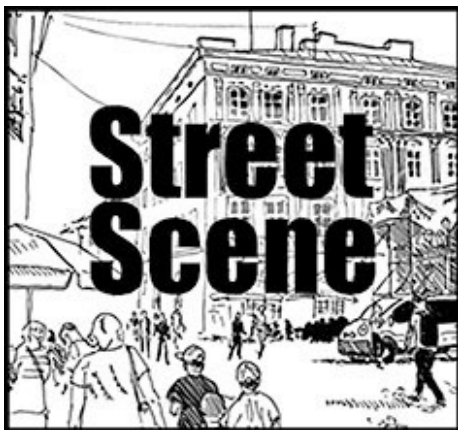
This last 'rule' is particularly pertinent when cyclists are sharing space with pedestrians (on shared pavements, footpaths and shared cycle paths) and suggests cyclists should slow to walking speed to pass pedestrians. (Rule 63).

A further piece of advice to be included is the 'Dutch Reach', a technique which causes car drivers to turn, look over their shoulder (or at the very least, look in their door mirror) and spot cyclists before opening their car door.

Very simply the driver should open the driver's door using their left hand, reaching across the steering wheel naturally turns the body towards the offside of the vehicle. An action that makes glancing backwards logical and brings cyclists, particularly those in the blind spot, into view.

As a regular cyclist I welcome the changes that improve road safety for vulnerable road users but I also welcome the responsibility placed on cyclists to respect those who feel threatened by their presence, by their speed or by the invasion of their space.

John Norman



Since the last *Street Scene*, lockdown has been eased and much of the town is now operating on the 'new normal'. Most of the shops are open again and people are gradually returning to town. A few shops have queues, mainly Primark and the banks, but most don't.

As expected a few shops have closed never to reopen again. Sadly we have lost Jack Wills and Kiko Milano as well as Coast to Coast in the Buttermarket centre. We have also lost the Tourist Information Centre in St. Stephen's Church. Other councils have been closing their TICs. More closures may follow.

On the plus side shops are still opening. A new patisserie and bakery shop called Bonbon has opened in Butter Market in the former MET-Rx on the corner of the The Walk and is proving very popular. The Tooth Club cosmetic dentistry has opened in the former Riley and Riley jewellers in Butter Market. Burger Priest has opened on the upper floor of the Buttermarket centre next to Cosy Club in a unit which has been empty ever since the Buttermarket reshaping. Diechmann fashion footwear is soon to open in the former Burtons Art Deco shop on Cornhill.



Bonbon opens in Butter Market

Work fitting out The Hold (Suffolk Record Office) to be ready for opening is in progress. The building has been handed over by the contractor to Suffolk County Council.



Work on the Cornhill has resumed at full pace after a three week pause, awaiting the delivery of the bespoke planters and railings which will include additional lighting. The contractors Brooks and Wood have said they are still aiming for a mid-August finish. Work continues restoring and cleaning the old Post Office, which is surrounded by scaffolding and white plastic sheeting, preparing it for potential future tenants.

The work on the crumbling Wherry Quay on the Waterfront has been completed and the wire

fencing which stood for about two years has all gone. The Waterfront has been closed to traffic to ease social distancing, so cars can no longer park along the quays. Most of the bars and restaurants are open again as is the Salthouse Harbour Hotel. The Noah's Ark on Orwell Quay,

which originally arrived here for three months in November 2019, is now expected to stay until March 2021.

Other roads have been closed to traffic to help social distancing including Upper Brook Street, which is much easier to use as a shopping street now that pedestrians can walk in the road. As one of the busiest shopping streets in Ipswich, it has often been suggested that this road should be pedestrianised. It is just possible some of these closures could become permanent.

Work continues on the 'Golden Pavilion' and refurbishment of the New Wolsey Theatre concourse. The golden roof is now on and surfacing work is in progress. Some of the scaffolding has already gone.



Work has continued updating the children's playground in Christchurch Park, which has been fitted out with completely new play equipment with a castle replacing the Pirate Ship.

City Fibre and their contractors VolkerSmart have been digging up streets and pavements around Ipswich to lay fibre optic cable for superfast broadband. Their work has been

shoddy in places and Ipswich Society Chairman, John Norman, went on the BBC Radio Suffolk breakfast show with Mark Murphy to discuss this with Charlie Kitchen, the boss of City Fibre. A recording of the talk is on The Ipswich Society's Facebook page.

IBC have proposed a multi-storey car park on the old livestock market site by Portman Road to serve the growing office corridor on Princes Street. Recent circumstances will almost certainly delay this. There has been an application to build an office block on Chancery Road on the land adjoining the new office block in the former Paul's Maltings/Hollywoods car park. Office blocks are a risky business now, with more and more people working from home. IBC have been planning another office block on the former Botwoods site on Princes Street. Time will tell as to how widespread – and how permanent – home working will become.

Lidl have bought land on Futura Park near John Lewis with plans to relocate their Ravenswood store on this retail park.

IBC are reported to have purchased the former Toys R Us site at Copdock Mill.

The former TGWU office, Transport House, on Grimwade Street has been demolished. This had been empty for many years and was an eyesore which will not be missed. IBC owns the former shops along Grimwade Street, to include the former Peter's Ice Cream site, and have announced their intention to build affordable homes here.

Tim Leggett



Tooth Club, Butter Market

Performance, culture and The Virus

Along with so many other fascinating items in the July *Newsletter*, I very much appreciated John Norman's vision of a more caring society evolving in the wake of Coronavirus [Issue 221, page 16]. Many of our habitual activities are undergoing a beneficial transformation under lockdown, for unexpected reasons, and lateral thinking is suddenly promoted from an eccentricity to a necessity. We need to understand that the virus is a gift from Gaia – the last chance, humans, to get your act together by being less selfish and more respectful.

With theatres and concert venues all closed, the cancellation Suffolk's own internationally respected Aldeburgh Festival, the summer rock festivals, the Proms, bands, choirs, school concerts and so much else cancelled, inventive and collective uses of internet media have found a significant role in morale-boosting. But speaking for my profession as a composer, I'm less than happy at the prospect of losing the collective audience, harnessing as it does the intuitive power of the crowd to encourage the very best from the concerto soloist, the actor, the school choir, in fact all performers. Live performances reawaken the creative in us, and we applaud them in gratitude for the enrichment and refreshment we receive.

Architecture has been described as 'frozen music', and Goethe's aphorism has sometimes been inverted to describe music as 'architecture in flux' – for, in both disciplines and indeed in other fields of design, the principles of sturdy structure, lightness and ornament, functionality and economy, appropriateness to social setting etc. are key. Where I, as a composer, perhaps diverge slightly from John Norman's narrative (and I am grateful for his kind encouragement to present this issue here) may be illustrated by a recent experience of mine.

The organisation Sound World invited a dozen composers to each contribute *gratis* a new work designed to raise money (through crowdfunding) for instrumental performers who have been hard hit by the cancellation of their concerts, and therefore their income. But as composers we couldn't work with the performers as we'd normally do, nor could they rehearse together as an ensemble, as they'd normally do. So my score was represented by a click-track, to which the performers recorded their own parts, then the three parts (trumpet, horn, and bass clarinet) were expertly combined *et Voila!* Here's my new piece!

Or not, because without the context of the other players, without the human subtlety of *replying to each other* in musical conversations that may be confirming, or re-shaping, or contradicting, the individual players in a new piece are like actors who don't know how their remarks fit into a dialogue, or into the overall plot, mood, and structure. And that's only the first hurdle because, without an audience, the ensemble doesn't receive the attentive audience response that normally nourishes it. Add to that the



issue that, in times of profound social change (and I don't think we can assume we are anywhere other than at the mercy of such times now), artistic language is transformed. It has to be, whenever human experience itself is profoundly transformed. Think 1911: Elgar and Kipling and bustles. Then think 1921: female suffrage, the charleston and Le Corbusier.



The *zeitgeist* will be transformed radically in the coming years, and the present structures and precepts will fade away. We can already hear the collapse of radio humour, we witness the narrowing of news coverage, we swallow the threat to our prosperity and health, and accept the loneliness of a non-social life, we pass our time in a hazy dream of resigned alienation And yet, probably, this is only the beginning!

So, while I delight at John Norman's vision of a post-industrial, family-centred world, I'm suggesting that the performing arts (and I wouldn't exclude sports) identify an imperative at the core of humanity for which the concept of social isolation is an anathema. We have yet to digest the unpalatable truth that Gaia's gift includes the exemption of those under 35 from harm. They could gather in pubs, clubs, parties, town's stadiums and concerts to their hearts' content – together with their partners and children and contemporaries – were it not for consideration for oldies. One wonders how long their patience will endure and whether oldies (I certainly include myself) are entitled to prevail over the Thunberg-generation ecological realism.

Geoff Poole *D.Mus*

Letters to the editor

The Image Archive from Ruth Serjeant.
Many thanks for another superb edition of the *Newsletter*, and in particular for the mention of my work on the original photographic collections. If there was one way in which a newcomer to Ipswich could learn her way around the town and appreciate all the visual treasures it was made up of, this turned out to be the way to do it! It certainly confirmed my belief in the archival necessity of putting dates and other identification details on the image – even on the small slide holders of the 35mm image! I am sure that, still lurking at the back of some cupboard, there are slides that need the digitisation process, if I can ever date and identify the locality! Once again, many thanks in brightening these uncertain days and showing that The Ipswich Society continues to show that Ipswich matters!

Right: the ABC Ritz Cinema, Butter Market in the 1970s (a detail from the Society's Image Archive), as remembered by Shirley Talbot in the next letter.



Newsletter appreciation from Shirley Talbot

I so appreciate receiving my regular *Ipswich Society Newsletter* for which I say thank you to you, the Committee and all other helpers. The various items and photos really keep me up to date with all that's happening in our county town.

In this July issue I found particularly interesting the changing face of the Butter Market. I well remember enjoying lunches and queueing for films at the Ritz Cinema. A popular remark at the time of continuous performances was exiting the cinema with the words 'this is where we came in'! Such enjoyable films.

Again, with thanks to all responsible for the production of the *Newsletter*.

Public sculptures and art in Ipswich from Graham Day

Ipswich is well endowed with a large amount of public art, but it appears there is very little by way of explanation as to why some pieces exist, what they are meant to be, and who the sculptor is. One piece which I often find very strange when I see it is that of the fly swatting major, on Majors Corner. It perplexes me greatly.

This then leads me on to say that I have a very good friend who wants to come and visit Suffolk. He is into art and would be interested to see the variety of static and kinetic sculptures/public art in Ipswich. With the Tourist Information Centre closing, I am at a loss as to where to go for information.

The first piece of public art that I can recall was the sculpture on the side of the shops at St Matthews Street/ Berners Street junction, dubbed I believe as a 'load of junk', and installed as part of the modernisation programme in the 1960s. Over the years there has been a continuous procession of public art across the town, including the statue of the Russian Prince Obolensky, on Cromwell Square. Based at Martlesham Heath aerodrome as a pilot in the second world war, he played rugby internationally for England. I believe this was the result of an initiative by the late James Hehir, Chief Executive of Ipswich Borough Council. There was also an animal statute, paid for I think by a doctor, which was installed on the New Wolsey Theatre roundabout, but which somehow has mysteriously disappeared. There are also some kinetic sculptures on Ravenswood, which I have passed whilst completing the annual Orwell Walk and, in the same area, a stone lifting giant near the retail park which houses B&Q.

However, nowhere can I find any readily accessible details of the location and description of these works of art, which are distributed widely across the town. Surely the Borough Council would like the public to appreciate and understand them? The only exception is the football related statues in Portman Road which thankfully require no explanation.

Elmer the Elephant generated tremendous interest in 2019, as did the pigs a few years previously. There can be effort expended to produce an Ed Sheeran trail, to capitalise on the tourism potential at the time of his Chantry Park Concerts, but nothing whatsoever about the public art works which are always *in situ* in the town. Other towns can produce art trails with less exhibits, but the Borough Council does not seem to be capable of doing this, or even promoting the public art, not even as an afterthought.

I know that all art should help to stimulate an enquiring mind, but some assistance for location and interpretation would make things much more interesting and avoiding the 'I don't know; it's another load of old junk!' remark.

Heaven forbid, however, that some sculptures are considered to be embarrassing, and not worthy of further information! (See the response on the next page – Ed.)

Public sculpture in Ipswich

Graham Day's *Letter to the Editor* on the previous page prompts two good sources for information. Unfortunately, having originally been printed items, they are now available only on the internet, so you'll need a computer, mobile, tablet.

Richard Cocke (once a Society Winter Talk speaker) runs the excellent *Public Sculpture in Norfolk and Suffolk* website: <http://www.racns.co.uk>. Details of all Ipswich sculptures. *The Ipswich Artathon* was published by the Borough in 2012 to show descriptions, locations and photographs of forty-seven public works of art in the town. It includes most of the interesting works but we could do with an updated version:
<https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/sites/www.ipswich.gov.uk/files/Artathon.pdf>

The October 2020 *Newsletter* will carry a full article giving proper coverage of this important subject – we have a lot to be proud of in Ipswich.

The Ipswich Society

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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.



*Views of Ipswich
not widely seen.*

*Above: the wildlife
pond.*

*Left: the setting
sun lights up the
trees at the top of
the scarp.*

*Brickmakers Wood
photographs by
Joanna Brooks.*

*See the article on
page 16.*