

The Ipswich Society  
**NEWSLETTER**

OCTOBER 2002

ISSUE 149

Contents		
Editorial	2	What is the Buscycle? 14
Chairman's Letter	3	The Cyclist and the E.C. 14
Ipswich Waterfront Update	4	Urban Regeneration 15
Planning Matters	6	Colonel Rushbrooke 16
Civic Trust Pathfinders	7	On-Street Parking 17
Snippets (1)	8	A Great Stamp Company 18
The Queen in Ipswich	9	Books: Gainsborough, etc 19
Letters to the Editor	10	Leeds Castle 20
East Bank Link Debate	11	Snippets (2) 21
Summer Evening Cruise	11	Coralline Crag 22
Out on the Town: Problems	12	Heritage Open Days 23
New Members	12	Life-like Sculptures in Town 23
Pictorial Letters Rediscovered 13		Committee and Many Events 24



Ipswich Waterfront was formally opened by The Queen on 17 July 2002

*Articles and letters which are not explicitly from the Society are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Ipswich Society itself.*

**Issue 149 Newsletter Oct 2002**

**Contents**

- Editorial
- Chairman's Letter
- Ipswich Waterfront Update
- Planning Matters
- Civic Trust Pathfinders
- Snippets (1)
- The Queen in Ipswich
- Letters to the Editor
- East Bank Link Debate
- Summer Evening Cruise
- Out on the Town: Problems
- New Members
- Pictorial Letters Rediscovered
- What is the Buscycle?
- The Cyclist and the E.C.
- Urban Regeneration
- Colonel Rushbrooke
- On-Street Parking
- A Great Stamp Company
- Books: Gainsborough, etc
- Leeds Castle
- Snippets (2)
- Coralline Crag
- Heritage Open Days
- Life-like Sculptures in Town
- Committee and Many Events

## **Editorial**

### **Seeking your information**

Jack Chapman's letter on the opposite page explains why we are enclosing questionnaires with this Newsletter. Those of you who joined years ago may have filled in an application form and indicated whether you wished to help, but that information could well be out of date now. People's situations can change so much with children growing up, or changes of occupation or retirement. Hence the need for up-to-date information. We appreciate that some members join the Society to support what we do without wishing to become more actively involved, but we do urge you all to return the completed Membership Profiles for the reasons which Jack outlines.

### **Re-thinking the Local Plan**

Arguments still rage over whether a dock relief road should use an East Bank or West Bank route. When the revised Local Plan was presented to the Council, the problem was "solved" by rejecting both routes and advocating only a new bridge across the dock and the changed traffic priorities on Star Lane and College Street/Key Street as already set out. Councillors promptly referred it back to the Borough's Officers. That these matters are extremely controversial was well illustrated by the Council's summary of comments on that aspect of the Local Plan. We received a copy of the summary which ran to 43 pages of A4 text on just this one issue!

The Society will be holding a debate-type meeting, to hear the arguments. See page 11 for details.

### **Inspection by the Queen**

The Queen's Jubilee procession through her realm must have been tiring and sometimes tedious for her. However such visits serve several purposes, one of which is mundane but important - cleaning up. Her Silver Jubilee visit to Ipswich helped to promote and complete the Fore Street renovation. There was no comparable specific scheme this time, but the Queen's official opening of the Waterfront symbolically heralds a bigger and more important rejuvenation of Ipswich. And perhaps this visit wasn't so tedious after all. Standing in Westgate Street. I thought the Queen and Duke looked to be smiling genuinely. I realised afterwards that they had just passed the Ann Summers shop, in the window of which was an exhortation to smile. The Newsletter is a "family publication" as they say, so I can't be more specific here, but adults can apply to me for further enlightenment!

### **Not many Meldrews in this Society?**

Opinion pollsters have detected a large body of the middle-aged electorate who have been dubbed "Victor Meldrews" because of their whinging and pessimism. Anything less than perfect becomes symbolic of national decline, and they grumble and sue. In consequence perhaps. the polls show that Britons trust one another less than people do in most other European countries. But Ipswich Society members aren't like that, are they? After all, the polls show that those who belong to clubs and societies tend to trust their fellow citizens more than do people who don't belong to anything. Now you know why you joined The Ipswich Society!

Please let me have all material for the January Newsletter by 20 November. The more the merrier.

**NEIL SALMON**, 16 Warrington Road, Ipswich, IPI 3QU

### **WANTED - A NEW MINUTES SECRETARY**

Shirley Sadler has done an excellent job as our Minutes Secretary for the past three years but now she wants to hand over to someone else. Please contact the Chairman or Secretary if you are interested in helping in this way. Whether or not the Minutes Secretary becomes an actual member of the Executive Committee can be left to the individual's choice.

## Chairman's Letter

You will be aware that for some time your Committee has been considering establishing a simple database of our membership. There are several reasons for this.

Firstly we know very little about our membership as a whole. We do not know its age profile or gender profile. We do not know the areas of the town which are well (or poorly) represented in our membership. Increasingly your Society and its national parent the Civic Trust are becoming eligible to make applications to the Lottery or to European funds to assist with our activities. We did, you may remember, receive a grant from the Lottery Fund to support our Millennium Symposium event in 2000 and will certainly be making more applications in the future. Such applications usually require detailed statistics about our Society, and at present we cannot supply this information. The second reason is more for our own use. For some time we have been made aware that perhaps we don't find enough ways to involve the individual members in the activities of the Society. There must be many skills and a vast wealth of accumulated experience amongst our 1000-plus members which would be a great resource to the Society if we only knew about it. There is scope for finding somebody who could help with applications for grants, or for encouraging younger members by working with schools, and many other possibilities.

Not everybody is interested in joining the Executive Committee and helping to shape the policies of the Society. But many members would perhaps be interested in helping in some particular way, perhaps not on an ongoing basis, but happy to help with a particular project as a one-off. It therefore seemed sensible to find people who might be interested in helping the Society in such a focused way. This we have tried to do in the Membership Profile form you will find with this Newsletter. We have tried to ask only clearly relevant questions and I decided that it must be contained on one side of paper. The questionnaire is the result of very careful thought and planning and I hope you will agree that the information you provide will be of very great benefit to your Society.

Each copy of the Newsletter contains two copies of the form and Family Memberships should fill in one for each adult member. At this stage we are not extending the scheme to children of the family. I hope you will appreciate that the value of this exercise depends upon a good response from you - we need to know about all our members.

Finally let me assure you that if you indicate that you might be willing to help in some way you will not be making a commitment - merely allowing yourself to be contacted. When we have a need for somebody we shall sift through the database and pick three or four people to telephone to give further details. Only at that stage will you agree to an involvement.

The Data Protection Act has been observed in this exercise and I can assure you that any information you provide will be confidential to The Ipswich Society and will be used only by the Society to further its aims and objectives. I do urge you most strongly to find the few minutes needed to fill in the form and please return it in the envelope provided to Philippa Isaac, our new Membership Secretary. Thank you.

***Jack Chapman***

One of our sister organisations, the Ipswich Building Preservation Trust, usually hosts an annual fund-raising entertainment before Christmas at the Unitarian Meeting House. The next one has been postponed until Sunday 2 February. Details to follow in our January Newsletter.

## **Ipswich Waterfront Update**

The previously headlined house-building boom around the Wet Dock is happening now. By the spring of 2002 a multitude of flats and apartments will be available. As John Norman reports below, there are currently 500 units under construction with a similar number under consideration with restaurants, bars and the possibility of a new college at the planning stage.

### **Stoke Quay (formerly New Cut West)**

Close to Felaw Maltings, Bellway are building a seven-storey block of 29 apartments which they are marketing as Quay West. It is a brave venture for Bellway who are once again showing their faith in the developing Waterfront by building alongside the tidal New Cut. Members with an interest in construction techniques will like to know that the structure is reinforced concrete, rather than steel frame, and may wish to speculate on reasons for this choice. (photo below)

### **Cranfields (Allied Mills)**

The East of England Development Agency purchased this vast complex of buildings last year, spent a considerable sum of money removing asbestos and the detritus of industrial decline and held a competition to help select a development partner. Negotiations are continuing but it appears likely that the new uses for the site will include a hotel, residential units, leisure facilities on the dockside frontage and the omnipresent car parking. There have been rumours of an arts cinema complex being included, Dance East having practice and performance space within the building and the possibility of the retention of some of the previous offices.

### **Salthouse Harbour Hotel**

Work has started on the former John Good & Sons warehouse on Wherry Quay. The proposal is for a 40-bedroom high quality hotel and restaurant, set to become one of the best in Suffolk. The building is immediately adjacent to Isaac Lord's complex, which makes the project environmentally sensitive. It is situated between the former Neptune Inn (Fore Street) and the Waterfront.

### **Suffolk College site, Coprolite Street**

The last remnants of the Eastern Counties Farmers have been removed, new fences erected and the temporary car park extended. Plans to sell the main college site continue and if the dreams come to fruition a new college could be built on the Waterfront. Development here would be linked with further new buildings on the existing college car park north of Fore Street, which, if the Local Plan proposals are implemented, will be downgraded into a bus and cycle green route.

### **Mortimer's Restaurant**

Following a major conversion project, the former electricity sub-station on the corner of Duke Street and Fore Hamlet has become the new home of Mortimer's Fish Restaurant (previously on the Northern Quays close to Contship). The building has become a landmark on this very busy junction and the restaurant is, by all accounts, better than its previous incarnation. It is certainly clean, bright and what has been lost in terms of harbour views has been replaced with an interior in a maritime theme. (And the clock is working: thank you, Ken and Elizabeth Ambler.)

### **Redrow, Coprolite Street**

Immediately south of Coprolite Street on land previously used for boat storage, Redrow Homes are about to start work on an apartment block of 113 units. Innovative in design, impressive in external appearance (at least in the photomontages) and set to become one of the tallest buildings east of the

Historic Waterfront, the project will incorporate restaurant, boat storage and workshop, and new offices for Neptune Marina.

### **Persimmon, Patteson Road**

The largest scheme, and probably the one with the greatest financial risk, currently under way is the Persimmon development of the old gas works site in Patteson Road. The project has started with Knight's Environmental removing and decontaminating polluted concrete, soil and other below ground nasties. More than £3million is being spent on removing lead, cadmium, arsenic and other toxic substances, which leached into the ground when the gasworks were operational.

At one stage the hole they had opened up alongside Gasworks Quay suggested they might be reopening the old gas dock which was filled in to enable the gas works to expand in the mid 1800s. Some of the decontaminated material is being treated on site and reused as fill. There is a piling-rig drilling for chalk, which previous exploration indicated was in places as deep as 40m below the surface. At this depth and with the very poor bearing capacity of the chalk encountered, the previous scheme for a sixteen-storey tower block has been replaced with one of eleven storeys. Alongside the quay, but set back from it to create a public space, will be a number of five-storey blocks on a raised (above the occasional flood) podium with car parking hidden underneath. Behind this, a mix of two- and three-storey houses set around a green square, with the renovated Gas Board offices providing the interest on the Duke Street frontage.

**JOHN NORMAN**, Vice-Chairman