



The Ipswich Society NEWSLETTER

www.ipswichsociety.org

July 2020 Issue 221

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*Special
Image Archive
feature*



The Ipswich Society
at

60

Editorial

Our cover image – showing the junction of King, Arcade, Elm and Lion Streets – was taken by the late Peter Underwood, past Chairman of the Society; it can be found on our Image Archive. Our special feature on this growing aspect of the Society's activities starts on page 4.

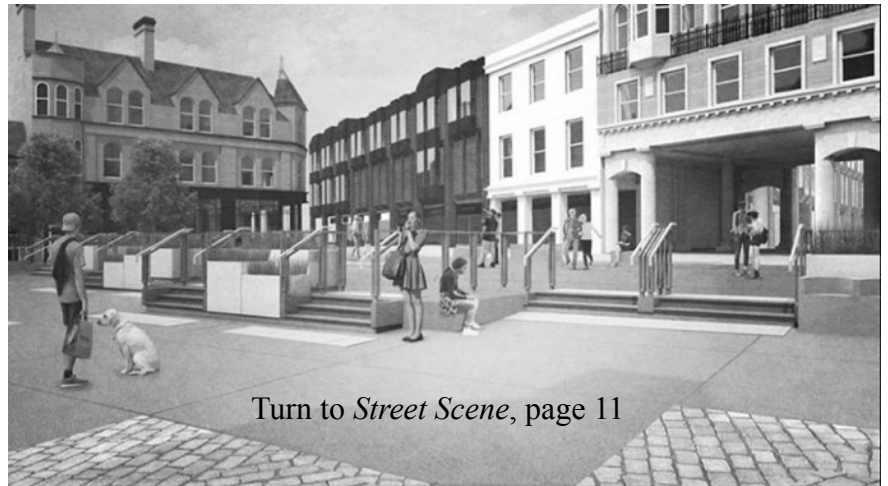
I should also draw your attention to a couple of linked articles relating to the Buttermarket Centre (opened in October 1992) and the disastrous fire in the shops fronting Butter Market which in August of the same year destroyed some fine timber-framed buildings. On page 17 John Norman's article goes into some detail about the events and this relates to a letter to the editor from a reader which follows shortly afterwards. One can only imagine the consternation of Borough staff, the developers and clients (not to mention Ipswich residents) when, with completion of the shopping centre only months away, this destruction occurred 'on their doorstep'. Your editor, as I'm sure other residents, can remember smelling the burning and finding stray bits of ash, which dispersed far and wide, in the back garden.

Many thanks to all the contributors to this issue, without whom...

Robin Gaylard



*The Hold sign, Fore Street
Visualisation of the Cornhill Mark II*



STOP PRESS from the BBC (16.6.2020):

'A £5m heritage and wellbeing centre in a medieval church will not reopen after lockdown restrictions are lifted.'

Suffolk Mind opened Quay Place in 2016 after an eight-year project with the Churches Conservation Trust to restore St Mary at the Quay Church in Ipswich. The project was funded mainly by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

But the mental health charity said the building has been costly to run and the coronavirus pandemic has set it back. Chief executive Jon Neal said: "Nobody is more disappointed than we are that we haven't been able to make it pay for itself."

He said most of the original lottery money was spent on saving the building from collapse.

Mr Neal said while the centre had increased income at more than 20% each year it was not enough to cover the building's high running costs and Suffolk Mind was about to start subsidising it.'

[The future of St Mary-at-the-Quay? QED – Editor]

New members

Chairman's remarks

I am pleased to report that the Executive Committee have met on two occasions since the lockdown began. The April meeting was conducted by email, over 3 days, the papers having been circulated beforehand. Members responded to the Chairman, emailing their comments and nods of approval.

The minute's secretary did a marvellous job collating replies and confirming approval, luckily nothing controversial, just confirmation that we were collectively happy to postpone the AGM, and publish an extra *Newsletter*. Not holding an AGM saved the Society over £1000 (venue hire, reproduction and distribution of the papers and refreshments for those attending), a sum which we immediately spent on the additional *Newsletter*.

We skipped the May Executive meeting but organised ourselves for a June meeting on Zoom. Such meetings are limited to 40 minutes and thus we enjoyed what was probably the shortest Ipswich Society meeting ever. Importantly, we ticked all the necessary boxes and heard what was going on with current planning applications and changes to the road layout to enhance road space for the expected increase in the number of cyclists as we return to work.

The June meeting of Ipswich Borough Council's Development Control (the Planning Committee) was also held on Zoom and the technical team are to be congratulated for making it work, not only could committee members see each other but members of the public could watch proceedings and applicants / objectors could have their say (having given the Chairman sufficient notice).

Mike Cook will report the outcomes in *Planning matters* but it was broadly speaking un-contentious, straightforward and well controlled. If I have one criticism it is that too many councillors indicate their wish to speak, when what they have to say is simply repetitive. However, without speaking, attendees can sit through these video conferencing meetings without being noticed.

One of the outcomes of the Society's Executive meeting at the beginning of June was to cancel the rest of the **Summer Outings**, the **Garden Party** (social distancing possible but the sharing of food, and the use of the indoor loo prohibited!). We also decided to do nothing further in respect of **Heritage Open Days**. The vast majority of organisations with whom we have been corresponding ready for September are furloughed, so are not responding and are unable to confirm or otherwise the likelihood of opening. Most venues, we guess, will find it difficult to organise social distancing in their historic buildings, which generally consist of considerably smaller spaces than their modern counterparts.

Just one other note and that is the number of people who, during lockdown, have asked the Society for historical information on a building they own, live close to or are familiar with but don't know the who, what or when. We are always happy to help; frequently we turn up some interesting side issues which lead to an *Icons* article in the EADT or an additional note on Borin Van Loon's website: www.ipswich-lettering.co.uk

John Norman



Planning matters

Since lockdown the Planning and Development Committee and the Ipswich Conservation and Design Panel have not held open meetings. Decisions have therefore been made by Planning Officers after virtual consultation with Councillors and the Panel. The number of new applications has fallen compared with the corresponding weeks last year: to the end of May 2019, 508 but this year it's fallen to 413.

The Development Control virtual meeting on Zoom is included in Chairman's remarks on the previous page.

1 Civic Drive. Change of use to convert the former Victoria/Queen's Head public house and drop-in centre into a winter night shelter and advice centre for up to 12 guests was granted.

Land north of railway and east of Henley Road. John Norman submitted a reasoned objection to Crest Nicolson's wretched proposals for the first sod of the so-called Ipswich Garden Suburb. I feel that everybody's hard work over many years to build a new suburb of Ipswich has been wasted. But, deep down, I knew the developers would win; unless you own the land they always do nowadays. The detailed design of the country park, drainage and road layout matters has been published and we will be commenting on this by June 22 2020.

Finbars Walk. I am grateful to Suffolk Protection Society for drawing my attention to this interesting application to replace a 'forestry building' with a three-bed house. I had never realised there was a large wood there, clearly a remnant. I think this needs a much wider discussion.

26 The Avenue. An application to replace a garage with a three-bedroom chalet bungalow has been widely objected to, including by the Society.

8 Anglesea Road. Pleasant Victorian house on the north side of the road next to the Prep school. The returning owner wishes to enlarge the drive by 1.2 m so he can open the car door, refurbish the original white painted wood doors and windows on the road side and rebuild the rear extension to provide a modern, sustainable family house. The rear extension would be rebuilt with seamed zinc roofs and grey metal windows. It won't be seen by the passing public.

Anglia Parkway Retail Centre. IBC Assets own the Bury road site; they are going to squeeze another Burger King on to what was the former B&Q car park.

57-61 Prince of Wales Drive. Orwell Housing Association will build twelve 2 & 3-bedroom two storey houses and a three storey block of six flats on the site of three retail units which are no longer used. The site is opposite Halifax Primary School. The style will be in keeping with other nearby buildings. They will have disabled access and 22 car parking spaces.

Demolish commercial garage buildings to west of Princes Street and create 90-space temporary car park.

This is another step in IBC's grand economic plan to turn Princes Street into an office boulevard from the station to Giles statue. As there have been no offers to build the offices and hotel granted permission three years ago, it's seen as sensible to demolish the garages. Building more car parks is not only morally wrong, it fails to discourage a modal shift (to sustainable transport) and encourages more use of the polluting motor car; it is also against the Local Plan which clearly states that temporary car parks will be refused. However, if we are to have a successful business quarter, cars are unavoidably essential for the foreseeable future as rural transport is so poor.

Multi storey car park Portman Road. This important outline application for a 7-level 750 space car park with admin building, UK power Networks ring main building, a new public square, and hard and soft landscaping with 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. Then they would be the driver to the re-ignition of commercial life in the town centre. It's unfortunate that Covid-19 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).

Mike Cook

Delving into the Image Archive

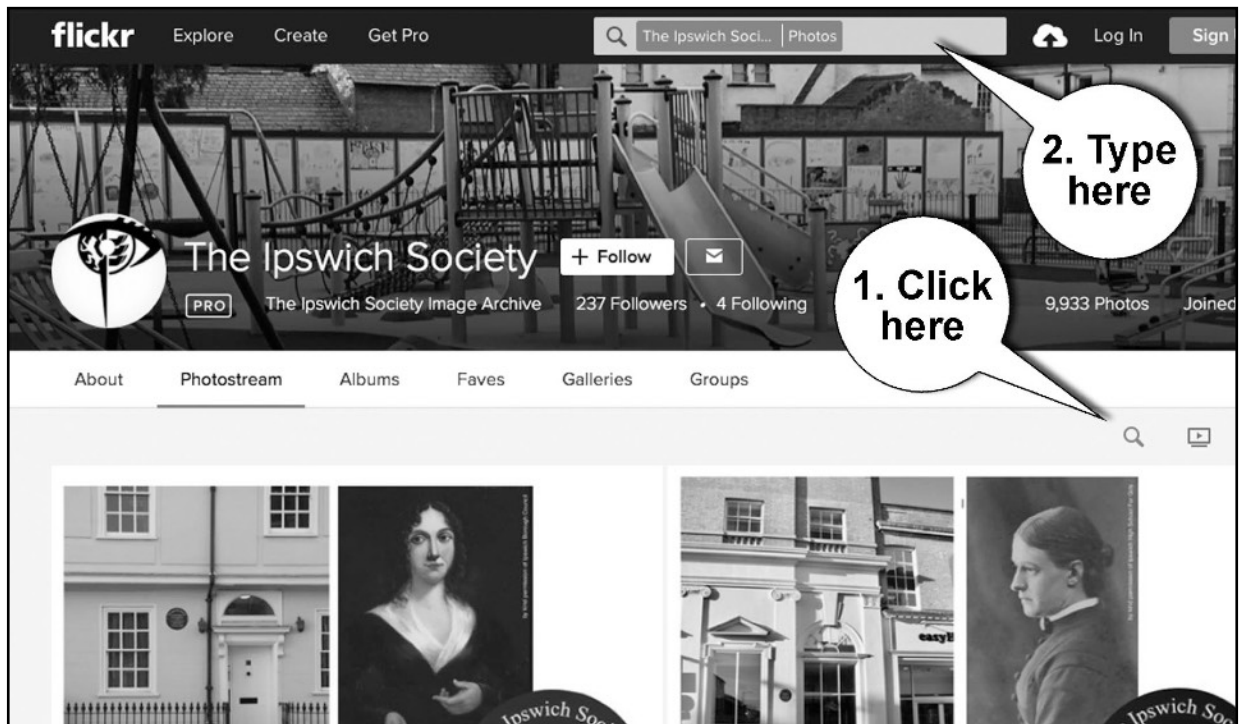


Photograph donated to the Image Archive by Nick Wiggin.

One of the huge benefits of the internet is that it facilitates access by those who have a computer, smart phone or tablet to a wealth of ‘content’ (the buzzword for stuff on the web: images, video, articles and all sorts of information) which might previously have been buried in paper archives or libraries (or a box under somebody’s bed). Take the above photograph as an example. Found in the *Wiggin – an Ipswich Society Album* on our online Image Archive, this carefully posed portrait of two women cyclists is by photographic pioneer and Ipswich chemist John Wiggin (1818-1879). One assumes that this view dates from the mid-late Victorian era: the ‘rational’ dress of, presumably, divided-skirt, jacket, high-necked blouse and straw boater speaks of the first time that women could be free enough in society to ride a bicycle. Shocking to the staid populous. But look closer. The near-identical velocipedes with the bell on the left handlebar, similarly the poses adopted by the women, even their profiles and expressions. The anonymous sunken lane in winter (somewhere just outside Ipswich?) seems to add to the overall mystique of this moment captured by Wiggin’s wet-plate camera – no doubt the exposure time would have been quite long in those days. Magical. **R.G.**

Our Image Archive

Whenever one opens the Flickr app containing the Image Archive (having clicked on the button at the bottom of the Society's website), one can always be surprised by new additions, comments from people who have looked at the site, or the new albums which have been compiled from existing photographs and become aware of how addictive the images can be. Activity in updating the site is sporadic, but there is certainly always something new to find – if one has a search... you enter at the 'Albums' page and can see the range of albums compiled by us and open each one for a quick look.



How to search the Image Archive

To search, select 'Photostream' from the choices beneath the title banner, locate the lower magnifying glass icon, click it and then enter a search word or term in the box at the top of the page – as shown above. This method searches only the Ipswich Society images (rather than the whole of the Flickr website, which is enormous); it will lead you to many images from our collection which contain the search word – or none, if the term does not feature in any descriptions of the image.

The Image Archive which has been around on the web since 2012 comprises nearly 10,000 photographs. These have been brought together from generous contributors as well as those collections which have been put together for particular purposes; for example, the *Awards Albums*. We have many albums which have been donated by members who now require the space taken up by slide boxes or photo albums or some sent on after a house clearance when a member has died. These physical formats have to be converted to digital files.

As the curator of the Image Archive it often falls to me to compile albums like the ones just mentioned with a photographic expedition and search of existing images. A simple search is made of the stream of photographs for a keyword such as 'football' and all those images which result from that search term may then be compiled into a new album.

Sometimes albums are formed when requested by interested parties to celebrate events, such as the recent additions to the Society's *Blue Plaques*; or to demonstrate that we have a broad collection of a particular street, a particular building in the town or even of a particular era.

There are over sixty albums compiled from our collection of photographs. Over twenty albums deal solely with *Awards*, starting with the earliest in 1977. It's possible to see images of award winners from most years since then. Tony Hill, an early executive member and very keen photographer began to record the nominations for what were then called Conservation Awards. I believe that countless images in the original collection digitised in 2011 were his creation.

The digitisation was made possible by his work with our Vice-President Chris Wiltshire and utilising the superb index created by Ruth Serjeant. This trio is to be commended hugely for their assiduous attention and persistence.

Another whose meticulous photography has benefited the Archive is the late Peter Underwood, a past Chairman of the Society. His collection, taken during the 1960s and 1970s contains some exquisite images using very beautiful colour slides which startle the viewer and are almost works of art in themselves.

In contrast, another early acquisition of ours was a series of coruscating monochrome images from the late Brian Jepson. An accomplished artist and skilled draughtsman, Brian had a brilliant photographic eye capturing images from the 1950s to the 1990s.

We have a Collection of albums which relate to streets in the town. These celebrate places and people from the late nineteenth century to the present day. We are very fortunate in Ipswich to have a vast range of fascinating buildings both cultural, industrial or just simply beautiful which have been given the album treatment by collecting together all the images which relate to them.



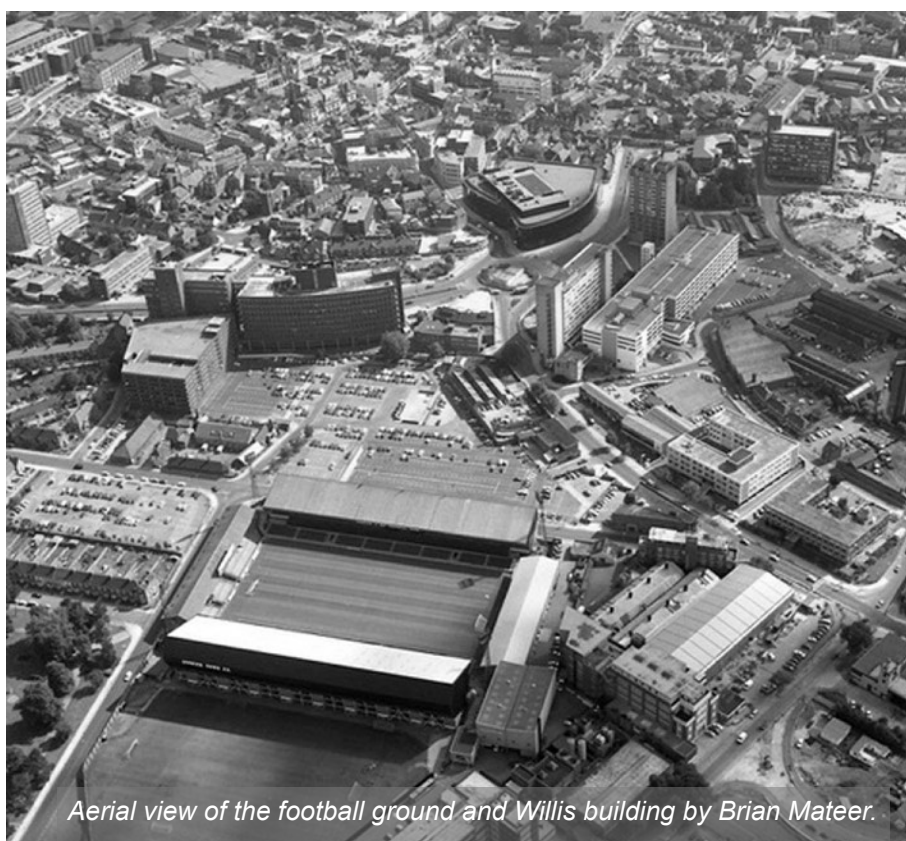
The Orwell Bridge starts to take shape; photo by Brian Mateer.

When we were about to have a Winter Illustrated Talk on the Orwell Bridge it was useful to gather together all the images relating to the Orwell Bridge: in its construction, completion and subsequent usage in one album it was useful for our speaker on the night as well as for anybody researching later.



Unquestionably the most successful album of all in the Image Archive is probably *Ipswich: Past & Present*. With over ten thousand views it certainly seems to be one that the people of the town wish to see. Tim Leggett, our PR man, spent a great deal of time combing the archive of historical photos; after finding some interesting and old subjects he then proceeded to take a modern image from the same angle and present the two together side-by-side for comparison. Tim's work featured on the 'Cornhill Cubes' display from March 10 to, unbelievably, May 18 (extended due to the lockdown, of course).

The next most popular with over two thousand views is *Mateer— An Ipswich Society Album*. After twelve years in the photographic trade in the RAF, the late Brian Mateer joined Fisons as part of their Farm Photo Plan. He then photographed the town, county and wider area over a period of years, *from the air*. A precarious method of photographing was employed in which Brian had to stand on the passenger seat and



photograph through the open window, pictures were taken at 500 feet and Brian donated over six hundred crisp and limpid images from the 1970s to the 1990s.

One very gratifying aspect of the Image Archive is the way followers commend the site for its content. We have had well over seven million views; individuals and groups obviously scan the interweb and, in searching some of our images, pick up images which appeal. They then go on to let us know this. There are many local interested groups from as far afield as Western Australia and Singapore; we have over two hundred followers. There are train enthusiasts, journalists, educationalists and even an appreciation group of the A60 Austin Cambridge!

The Image Archive thrives, with the prospect of uploading many images from the Tolly Cobbold brewery and a possible six thousand of the Borough Council's historic slides kept in the Suffolk Record Office. Remember, you can access the whole lot from the Society's website (www.ipswichsociety.org.uk), but be careful: viewing can be very absorbing and time-consuming once you are in the Image Archive.

Tony Marsden



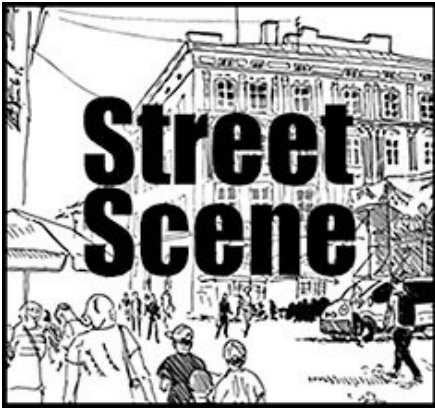
Suffolk New College: awarded a High Commendation in 2009 for the new building in Rope Walk. This very effective construction adds vivid colour and articulation of each storey, and includes an impressive atrium. Taken from the Awards 2009 Album from our Image Archive.

S. Wilson, cutler, 48-50 Upper Orwell Street



Two undated photographs of S. Wilson, cutler, tool merchant and, clearly, clock and watch seller have been donated to the Society by member, Paul Laughlin. We will, in time, donate the originals to the Suffolk Record Office. Wilson's hardware, do-it-yourself, tools business was still trading in the 1980s from the same site (by then five shop units). Martin & Newby and Smyth Bros had premises nearby and there was clearly enough trade for all of them, later swept away by the growth of out-of-town DIY warehouse shops. More photographs of the shop are on our Image Archive.





It has only been two months since the lockdown Ipswich Society Special *Newsletter* was published and things have been pretty much on hold since then, but there are signs of life picking up again and some of it is very positive.

Paul Geater wrote in the *Ipswich Star*:

‘Ipswich Central chairman Terry Baxter said the main aim of members was to create an atmosphere in the town centre where shoppers and visitors could feel secure.

‘He said: “Everyone knows we won’t immediately get back to how we were before the coronavirus came in. At the start we are expecting that people will be quite cautious about coming out to the town centre and we all understand that.”

“We may need to put in markings on the road or even make smaller streets one-way only for pedestrians to ensure it is possible to keep social distancing regulations.” ’

Hank’s Vegan Deli and Shop has opened in the former Maplin premises in Carr Street. They have had a Café and Deli in Lloyds Avenue and recently took over the former Grinning Rat pub on St Helen’s Street where they opened Hank’s Pub and Food.

Most of the building projects have recommenced but are now considerably delayed. The Hold on Fore Street is in progress again, now with its name adorning the façade. The Cornhill is a hive of activity as the old Post Office is restored and cleaned up; also the Cornhill remedial work, which includes extra handrails incorporating bespoke planters, progresses. Scaffolding has gone up on the former Burtons/Dorothy Perkins building as it is given a spruce up before Deichmann shoes move in later this year.

The future of theatres is a bit vague at the moment but work has started again on ‘Theatre Square’ as the construction of the Golden Pavilion beside the New Wolsey Theatre continues which includes refreshed surfacing to the whole area.

Work continues repairing Wherry Quay ahead of the moored floating restaurant, Mariners.

With £3.4 million coming from the Heritage Lottery Fund it is still hoped the Broomhill Lido restoration will continue.

Plans have been put forward for a new multi-storey car park near Portman Road on the former livestock market behind AXA. This is intended to help the continued development of the growing business corridor along Princes Street where IBC hopes to build another office block on the former Botwoods site, recently a car wash. Meanwhile, according to local media, Travelodge have shown an interest in the former Drum and Monkey site for a new hotel. AXA, Willis and SCC already have multi-storey car parks for their staff and customers.

Selig Suffolk, a local charity run by a group of churches in the town, has applied for permission to turn the former Victoria pub (once The Queen’s Head) by St. Matthews roundabout into a new night shelter and offices for the group.

The owners of the former Carr Street Argos building are hoping to convert the space into flats and a gym, if a planning application submitted to the Borough Council is approved.

Tim Leggett

The design of new housing

As we move out of the Covid-19 crisis both opposing factors in mass house-building press for their requirements to carry greater weight. The big house-builders are calling on the government to relax planning rules to get the construction industry moving. Requirements for decent design and for 'place making' get pushed aside to enable the housing developers to build, build, build. To build anything as long as it's a home.

Not quite anything however; it must, for the most part, sell, meet the basic requirements of the house buying public: detached, irrespective of the space between properties, it must have a front and back garden, a car parking space and an en-suite master bedroom.

Opposing this view, a group of organisations; Civic Voice, CPRE, the Architects and Built Environment Design Council and Place Alliance produced a leaflet congratulating the government on the broad thrust *Building Better, Building Beautiful* outlined in the White Paper. This was a Government promise to up the stakes in the requirement for a better quality of design and build standards. The leaflet said, simply, 'we agree, now get on with it'.

In April, Place Alliance published a report *A Housing Audit for England* which can be summed up using their introduction:

'Whilst some limited progress has been made in some regions, overwhelmingly the message is that the design of new housing environments in England is 'mediocre' or 'poor'. Collectively, we need to significantly raise our game if we are to create the sorts of places that future generations will feel proud to call home.'

In Ipswich we are very much aware of the differences between developer requirements to get things moving (to their standards) and the wider desire for a new suburb of quality, attractiveness and sense of place. I refer of course to **Henley Gate**, the proposed Crest Nicholson development of 1,100 homes north of the railway off Henley Road (part of what will eventually be the 3,500 homes – **Ipswich Garden Suburb**).

It appears that Crest have submitted an application based on a limited variety of their standard house types, laid out as typical twenty-first century estate streets. Nothing vernacular, nothing to suggest Suffolk, very little that could be regarded as sustainable, green or pleasant, just another major anywhere estate by a national house-builder.

Research has consistently shown that high quality design makes new residential development more acceptable to local communities and delivers value to all. The opinion of The Ipswich Society, and of the members of the Conservation and Design Panel is that these proposals fail to realise the tremendous opportunity that this green field site on the edge of an existing community could bring.

For example, in terms of the 'Landscape': *'This is an absolutely critical element of the design and the one which will at least hopefully add a bit of weight behind the 'garden suburb' dream. With this in mind it is such a shame that the drawings are contradictory and lightweight in this regard. The 'dreamy' images within the Design and Access statement bear no resemblance to the submitted layout plan(s) which in turn do not match the landscape drawing. The level of tree planting looks light and the hedges fronting gardens arbitrary.'*

The **Place Alliance** report was based on a survey of 142 housing developments across England, and was compared with a similar audit carried out between 2004 and 2007. They note that although there has been improvement it was from a very low base. The majority of developments are still overwhelmingly 'mediocre' or 'poor' (75% of the audited projects).

Notable findings include:

Character/Sense of place: Developments often had little distinguishing personality or sense of belonging. The opportunity to create a distinguishing ‘personality’ to the new development, particularly when it was detached from the existing urban sprawl had not been realised (true of the proposals for Henley Gate).

Walkability/Car dependence

Many developments are failing to provide an environment which puts walking and cycling first, failing to deliver the obvious health benefits such a layout could promote. The report also notes the poor integration of storage space for bins, garden requisites and bicycles but notes the overwhelming number of parked cars, particularly the need to park on grass verges, pavements and on cycle lanes.

These issues lead to unattractive and unfriendly environments dominated by large areas of hard surfacing. Walking routes should follow desire lines, the direct route across soft landscaped areas and the whole estate should be permeable, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

The best and worse places

Less affluent communities get the worse designs but wealthier communities, where the development generates higher returns, do not necessarily see anything better! And the report notes that ‘good design’ doesn’t necessarily mean higher costs, but does lead to better value in post build surveys.

Density

Place Alliance also found that when building at lower densities, on greenfield sites the outcomes scored progressively more poorly as the projects moved away from the urban core. For developments closer to the urban centre the ‘sense of place’ was already there with the existing community facilities.

Planning Appeals

The most disturbing outcome of the report is the fact that a substantial number of these substandard developments were approved on appeal, the inspector granting planning permission based on the failure of the local authority to grant sufficient permissions to meet their own housing numbers.

Recommendations:

The largest house-builders should set a better ethical standard for the industry at large. They are building developments which will have a profound impact for many decades on the places and communities they are helping to shape, on the social well being and health outcomes of their customers and future occupants, and on the environment at large. The negative impacts of poor design are well known and understood.

[placealliance.org.uk – ‘A Housing Design Audit for England’]

John Norman



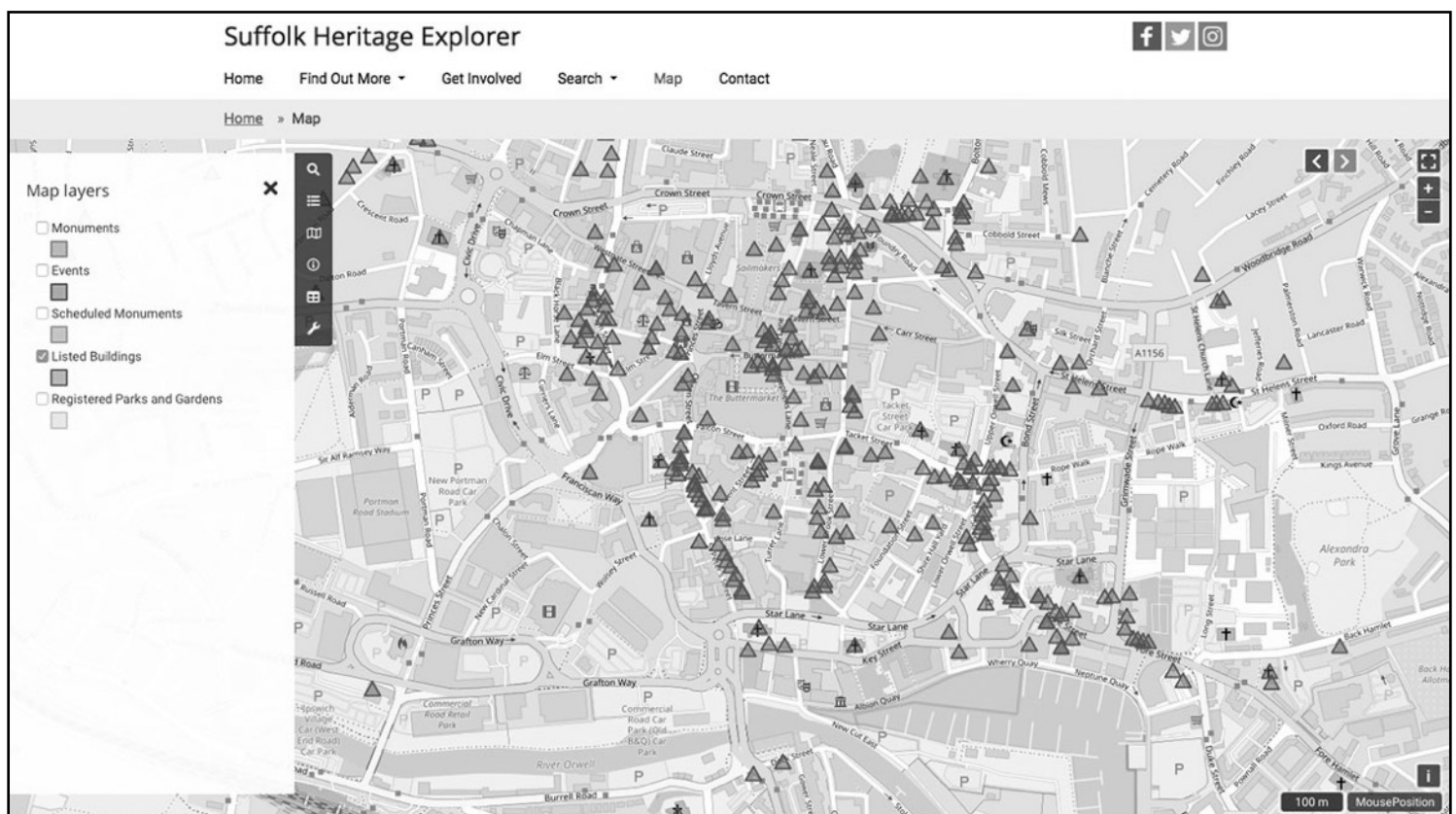
Suffolk Heritage Explorer website

In the midst of the horrors of lockdown, testing, PPE and so on, Suffolk County Council launched its new Suffolk Heritage Explorer website (<https://heritage.suffolk.gov.uk>), offering professionals and members of the public a free resource of interesting up-to-date information on the archaeology and history of Suffolk.

This is an important step forward in providing public access to invaluable resources, particularly in relation to the story of Ipswich, which resulted from notable archeological digs in the town from the 1970s onwards.

The new website includes an upgraded interactive map which is user-friendly; controls can be clicked to reveal, for example, Scheduled Monuments or the hundreds of Listed buildings. The bonus here is that a click on a particular Listed building triangle gives access to the full Listing text relating to that building. There is also a database of known archaeological sites, which can be used to discover more about Suffolk's history. Alongside downloadable publications and resources, there is updated guidance and best practice advice on finds recording and access to the county's archaeological archives.

A dedicated section on Ipswich also summarises the town's development through the ages, featuring the recently completed *Urban Archaeological Database* with useful archive and planning guidance. Additional features on the site include Suffolk's World War II heritage and the internationally significant Anglo-Saxon site at Rendlesham (its twelve years of ongoing archaeological research and results, with podcasts and archaeological reports). There are also lots of downloadable activities for families and children. **R.G.**



Above: the interactive map showing listed buildings in central Ipswich; the visitor can zoom in to view details.

Picture Gallery at Christchurch Mansion, 1920



The picture galleries were opened on the 18th April 1896. The main room used, shown here, was the former State Drawing Room. Through the doorway is the landing at the top of the main staircase.

Initially, pictures were loaned by the South Kensington Museum (the V&A) and the National Gallery. Ipswich Museum's collection in the picture galleries consisted of Works of Art and virtu (curios) given by former Museum President Sir Richard Wallace. The art collection at Christchurch was gradually added to, including the two oil paintings first and third from the right on the upper part of the right hand wall. They are *Bedruthen Steps, Cornwall* and *Fairy Glen, North Wales* by William T. Griffiths, headmaster of the School of Art at High Street. They were presented by his daughter, Mrs. A P Ridley, in 1918. The large painting below them is *The Lizard* by Duff Tollemache.

After its use as an Art Gallery this became the Late Seventeenth Century Room, the Mid-Eighteenth Century State Drawing Room, the Gainsborough Landscape Gallery, and more recently the Rococo Drawing Room.

Bob Markham

Coronavirus

There is every likelihood that we will emerge from the Covid-19 crisis as a less selfish, more caring, more thoughtful nation. Businesses will rethink their working model, one which has existed for centuries but is, in reality, based on manufacturing; one in which the only way to operate is to have employees congregate at the same place every working day.

Even some forward thinking manufacturers realised that employees working from home could be productive. The Ipswich firm of Footman's had a methodology for making undergarments, which in Victorian times were complex assemblies of fabric, elastic and whale bones. Components were dispatched to the homes of individuals who carried out a series of tasks. Rather than making the complete garment each home worker would repetitively stitch the same seam passing the partially completed item, usually to a neighbour for their contribution.

Payment by results, or piecework ensured production costs were under control. Today we don't manufacture many corsets in Ipswich, nor sluice gates, cigarettes or lawn mowers but we do insure them, and the computer screen required can be as equally productive in the spare bedroom as it can be in Civic Drive.

So the homeworkers can be closer to loved ones – and they don't contribute to rush-hour congestion, nor to the peak demand for public transport. Working from home goes some way to solving both childcare, and the care of elderly relatives, and you might be surprised to learn that working at home involves less down-time than colleagues at the office (typically 6.7 hours spent working compared with 6.2 hours in the office).

Who, for example, will want to send Mum to a care home where the risk of infection is many times higher than simply staying at home? The decision of venturing out into the exposure zone goes much further; for example, are you willing to sit in a cinema or theatre alongside a sneezing, coughing carrier of something, possibly deadly?

There will be winners, of course, the weekly shop will be delivered to your door, paid for electronically (none of that nasty virus infected cash), newspapers will all but disappear and, I suspect, very few of us will willingly sit on an aeroplane. As well as avoiding Benidorm we'll probably avoid Blackpool choosing instead to find somewhere with the space to avoid close contact with strangers.

The downside? If you thought the town centre was dying you were probably right, if you thought the pub had had its day you'll understand why it has now closed and if you thought Netflix was about to replace Cineworld as the go-to choice for the latest film release simply stay home. It is much safer than venturing out into the cruel virus-ridden world.

Not quite; the children still have to go to school, and their teachers still have to go to work. Some of us will still get ill, even if it's not the virus, and we'd like a nurse at our bedside and the other emergency services will still be called on to attend at a moment's notice. Bricklayers cannot work from home, nor can bus drivers, nor the pizza delivery boy. It might be a brave new world but it won't be unrecognisably different.

The care we have shown to each other must continue. If older people needed help with their shopping last week, they will probably welcome a neighbourly knock on the door next. If Gran is bed-ridden, perhaps she should be upstairs rather than bed-blocking in the distant hospital. If you can spend Saturday afternoon doing something useful around the home rather than watch Town lose yet another game you'll win; win the game of life. *J.N.*

The Butter Market fire, 1992

The Ipswich Society has recently been given a set of photographs taken during the building of the Buttermarket Centre (started in 1988; opened in October 1992).

The location of most of the pictures is easily established but one (upper right on the back page) caused head-scratching and debate. This particular photograph shows the gable wall of a partially demolished timber framed building, but which one?

We need to remember that when it was originally built the shopping centre was two separate entities. The large western section which today contains the cinema, bowling alley, restaurants and shops. The eastern section (or annex) which, soon after completion was converted to house British Home Stores was on the other side of St Stephen's Lane. This eastern section was built as a series of small shops either side of a pedestrian mall stretching from the Butter Market (street) through to Arras Square.

You probably didn't notice this whilst shopping, but the Butter Market facing units which became British Home Stores were actually historic timber framed buildings, a couple of which are listed. Each had had the rear wall removed and the whole group extended through to St Stephen's churchyard (the BHS café).

Thus, the building in the colour photograph is number 40 Butter Market, Grade II listed by Heritage England as being sixteenth century, the western half of a very large timber framed house with central chimney. I should point out that the demolition that has taken place this side of the gable wall is the remains of the ABC Cinema which was squeezed into the gap between the Ancient House and number 40.

The ABC replaced the Wagon and Horses public house which had been next to the Ancient House since about 1550. The cinema was opened on 1 January 1937 by Dame Anna Neagle who was the star of the very first film shown. When it opened, the cinema was known as The



Rex; it became the Regal, then the Ritz before finally becoming the ABC (1962-86). Number 40 had been a carpet shop – you may remember Cyril Lord (‘This is luxury you can afford by Cyril Lord’) which became Eastern Carpets and older readers will remember Swears & Wells, Furriers (they sold fur coats; not many of those in the high street these days).

The eastern half of the timber framed structure (beyond the central chimney) is the double jettied building clearly dated 1994 AD above the first floor oriel window (the date is from the rebuilding after the Butter Market fire of August 1992). The photograph of the timber framed gable end was taken about 1990, before the fire and before the shopping mall was built.

The fire, which started in number 42, the double jettied eastern half of the building in the photograph, at the time occupied by an electrical retailer, completely destroyed the building, spread to the shoe shop next door and beyond that into Booksale (today The Works remainders shop). Not only did the fire destroy the front of these buildings which, of course, had been altered to accommodate their retail function, it also destroyed the rear wings which, until that day remained remarkably unaltered.

The shoe shop, number 44 had been Alderton’s and more recently 'Jones the Bootmaker', (that was the trading name of the retailer, not a description of the activity taking place inside). Number 44 was a quaint, two-storey, double-fronted cottage today occupied by the British Heart Foundation (listed Grade II).



Smiths Suitall window: behind this window Jack Haste had his studio.

There is an interesting history behind numbers 46 & 48 (The Works) in that after the Second World War they were occupied by Smiths Suitall, primarily a stationer which printed small items, notably postcards that have become very collectable. The company also occupied numbers 50 and 52 which has the very large, decorative (Art Nouveau) window letting light (but not direct sunlight) into the second floor studio.

It had been built as a photographic studio but after the Second World War it was occupied by Jack Haste who, in 1953 opened his own artist materials shop and gallery in Great Colman Street. Jack was, at one stage, a director of Smiths Suitall.

*Butter Market -
Brook Street
corner.
From the right:
No. 44 former
shoe shop,
No.46/48 The
Works,
No. 50 Toni &
Guy
hairdressers,
No. 52 HOAX,
No. 54 Cafe
Nero.*



Numbers 50, 52 and 54 Butter Market wrap around the corner into Upper Brook Street, a building designed by Eade & Johns for John White, a photographer with his studio on the upper floor. The date, 1900, is on a plaque on the Upper Brook Street elevation together with the intertwined initials JW. Can we assume that there is a direct link between John White and William Smith who gave his name to Smiths Suitall?

T.E. and J. Conder had a leather business in Ipswich for many years and used number 50 Butter Market as a retail shop from 1836 until 1900 (when the premises were rebuilt). Conder's moved to 84 Princes Street and, when the new shops were ready for occupation, Smith Suitall offered a similar range of leather goods from the same address.

Smith Suitall had an entirely different product range in the shop next door (46 -48), according to a contemporary advertisement they were a noted retailer of 'Harbutt's Plasticine'. We can probably assume from this that they were also selling other stationery items before the First World War.

By the early 1970s both 46 and 48 Butter Market had become restaurants, neither outstanding, and they were quickly converted into 'The Band Box', a late night drinking haunt which closed in 1978.

Sometimes I amaze myself how just one photograph (of an otherwise unimpressive building) can keep your Chairman and Newsletter Editor entertained for a week!

John Norman

(continues



Footnote

The Editorial of the October 2016 *Newsletter* (Issue 205) carried two photographs to commemorate the sad demise of British Home Stores. The first floor of the Ipswich branch featured a lively carved bracket showing a lion (now painted white). It was not so when it was in the care of John Field who saved it and offered it for reinstatement in the timber-framed part to the builders of the new store, itself part of the Buttermarket development which opened in 1992. It is still there, awaiting a new occupant of the building. *-Editor*



Letters to the Editor

In praise of The Ipswich Society

from Anthony Cobbold

I write in my capacity as Keeper of The Cobbold Family History Trust. The excellence, as always, of the 60th anniversary bumper issue of the *Newsletter* bids me put pen to paper. Your Editor recalled that the tenets of the Society are the same today as they were 60 years ago:

“...to treasure our history, protect and enhance what is valuable and monitor new developments and proposals.” Not surprisingly these are very close to the objectives of my own Trust though I must confess to being very cautious about monitoring proposals – particularly those of the romantic variety!

For unrelated reasons I live in Devon so have had many six or seven-hour journeys to what quickly became my beloved Suffolk. Throughout the 15 years since I settled the Trust it has benefited immeasurably from the Ipswich Society both at a personal and institutional level. Little wonder then that I have heard it said “If you only join one institution it has to be The Ipswich Society.” The *Newsletter*'s is one of the very few envelopes which gets torn open with enthusiasm.

Given that my task in treasuring the history of my family is not that different to the task of the Society, I acknowledge unreservedly my extraordinary good fortune in being born into such an interesting and participative family. Likewise, the Society has a richly endowed palette dating back some 800 years in the Borough of Ipswich. Accordingly, I claim a particular understanding of the Society's work together with the benefit of the objective view of the relative outsider. In as far as I speak for my family, these thoughts bid us congratulate the Society on its diamond anniversary and express our gratitude for all that it has achieved over the years to the great benefit of the place and people of Ipswich.

This letter is our ‘Thursday 8.0pm front door clap’ to say thank you to the President, the Vice-Presidents, the Trustees and the Executive Committee of the Society for a job of considerable difficulty done quite extraordinarily well. Thank you.

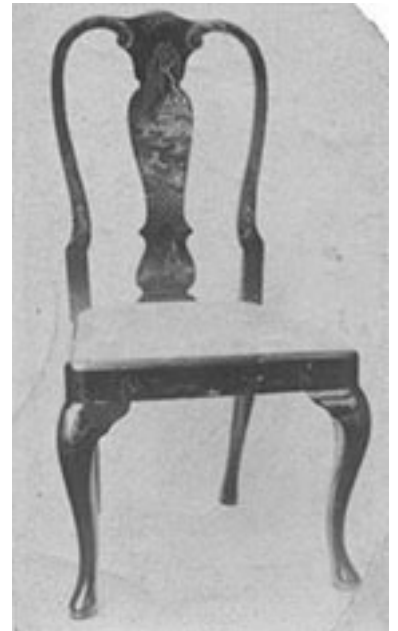
[Many thanks to Anthony and to a large number of members and readers who got in touch and were so positive about the Ipswich Society and the recent Newsletters. -Ed.]

Tibbenhams and Saunders from Merv Russen

I was fascinated to read the article in the latest edition of the *Newsletter* [Issue 220] about Tibbenhams and Titchmarsh & Goodwin written by Heather Ling.

My grandfather joined Tibbenhams when they started in 1904 as a chairmaker. He brought his family from Norwich to join the company.

Here is a picture of a chair he made whilst employed there. It was a family rumour that it was part of a batch Tibbenhams made for the *RMS Queen Mary* launched in 1936.

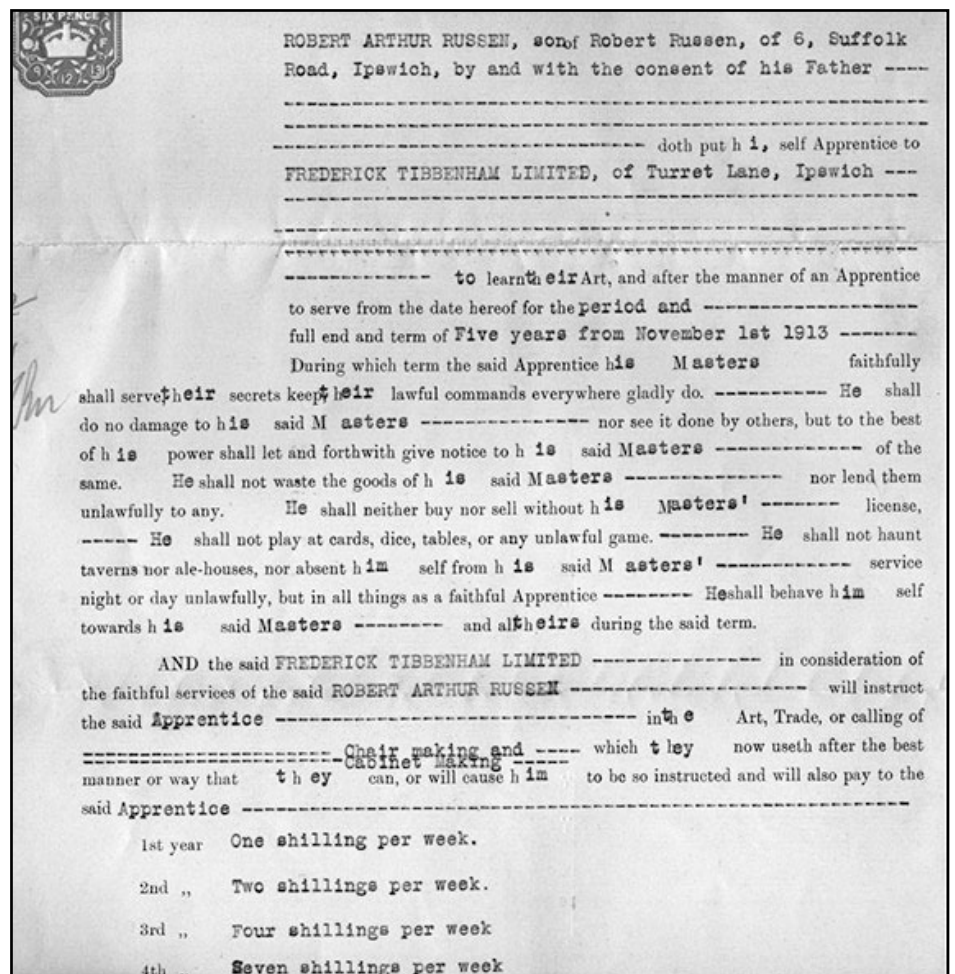


My grandfather was foreman of the Chair Shop and in 1913 took on my uncle Bob (his son) as an apprentice. The family still has a copy of Bob's apprenticeship indentures (see second picture). The language used in this document is quite quaint and of its time. Unfortunately my uncle, Robert Arthur Russen, was killed in France in May 1918 in World War I at the age of eighteen. He did not quite complete his apprenticeship.

I also have a menu (very English food) and programme, I think from the 30s, for a Chair Shop dinner held in the Picture House Cafe (now where Boots shop is). My grandfather chaired this and it appears everyone had to do a 'turn' during the evening.

My father was also a craftsman. He worked all his life as a stonemason for Saunders. They had one of their works in Hadleigh Road (where Sainsbury's is now). One of my Dad's first jobs after he completed his apprenticeship was to work on St Augustine's Church and he was still alive when it had its diamond jubilee in 1988. As a result of this, we were given the honour of burying his ashes in the grounds of the church as he died in that same year. He also worked on Lloyds Avenue arch when it was built.

Thank you for an interesting *Newsletter* for us to enjoy during lockdown.





John Palmer photographs of the Buttermarket site from Rose Green

I have found, whilst de-cluttering, a number of photo albums about the building of the Buttermarket Shopping Centre and wondered if the Society would like them. They belonged to my dear friend John Palmer, who sadly passed away three years ago; he worked on the site from the beginning. It seems a shame to throw them away, if someone would like to see them.

See our back page for a photograph of John and two views of the site works. Also the related article on page 17.

Some notes from John Norman

The timber-framed building (shown here and in colour on the back page) survived as a part of the mall which

eventually became British Home Stores. It was refronted as the double jettied building (part of BHS) opposite Robert Gatward Jewellers (formerly Johnson Cleaners), the red brick building with the mitred corner, visible to the left in the colour picture.

The vacant site in the foreground is the former Rex/ABC cinema which replaced the Wagon & Horses public house. The Ancient House is just off the picture to the left.

The view of the Buttermarket site: the chalk cliff with the piling rig on higher ground means that the main part of the picture is the basement car park. The two truncated pyramid roofs just above the arm of the concrete pump are atop the Britannia Building Society offices on Queen Street (now the Co-op Bank with apartments above). I think the other brick building on the right is the Halifax in the Butter Market. So the photograph was taken from the top of St Stephen's Church tower, which Fairclough's were using as their site offices.



The double jettied frontage (BHS store), 42 Butter Market, 1994 (JN)



The fireplace on the ground floor. (JN)

The Ipswich Society

Registered Charity no. 263322

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Diary dates announcement

Members will know, or will have guessed, that most of The Ipswich Society's 60th birthday activities have had to be cancelled or postponed. This includes the exhibition celebrating 500 years since The Field of The Cloth of Gold and our Garden Party in July. All of the summer outings have been cancelled with the exception of the Ipswich Society / Ipswich Maritime Trust trip on the *Sailing Barge Victor* which is in abeyance.

Heritage Open Days

Sadly, the Ipswich Society will not be participating in Heritage Open Days in September, although some individual venues may open independently. Our decision is in line with most other civic societies. We still hope to stage our Annual Awards Evening in November.

Photographic Competition

However, we have continued to receive entries in our photographic competition (now closed). Judging will take place in the near future and the foyer of the university is booked for October where we still hope to be able to stage the exhibition.

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.



Above: John Palmer, on-site.

Right: the timber-framed building which was to become part of British Home Stores.

Below: work underway on the Buttermarket Shopping Centre site, which finally opened on October 1, 1992.

(See page 22 for explanation.)

