



The Ipswich Society

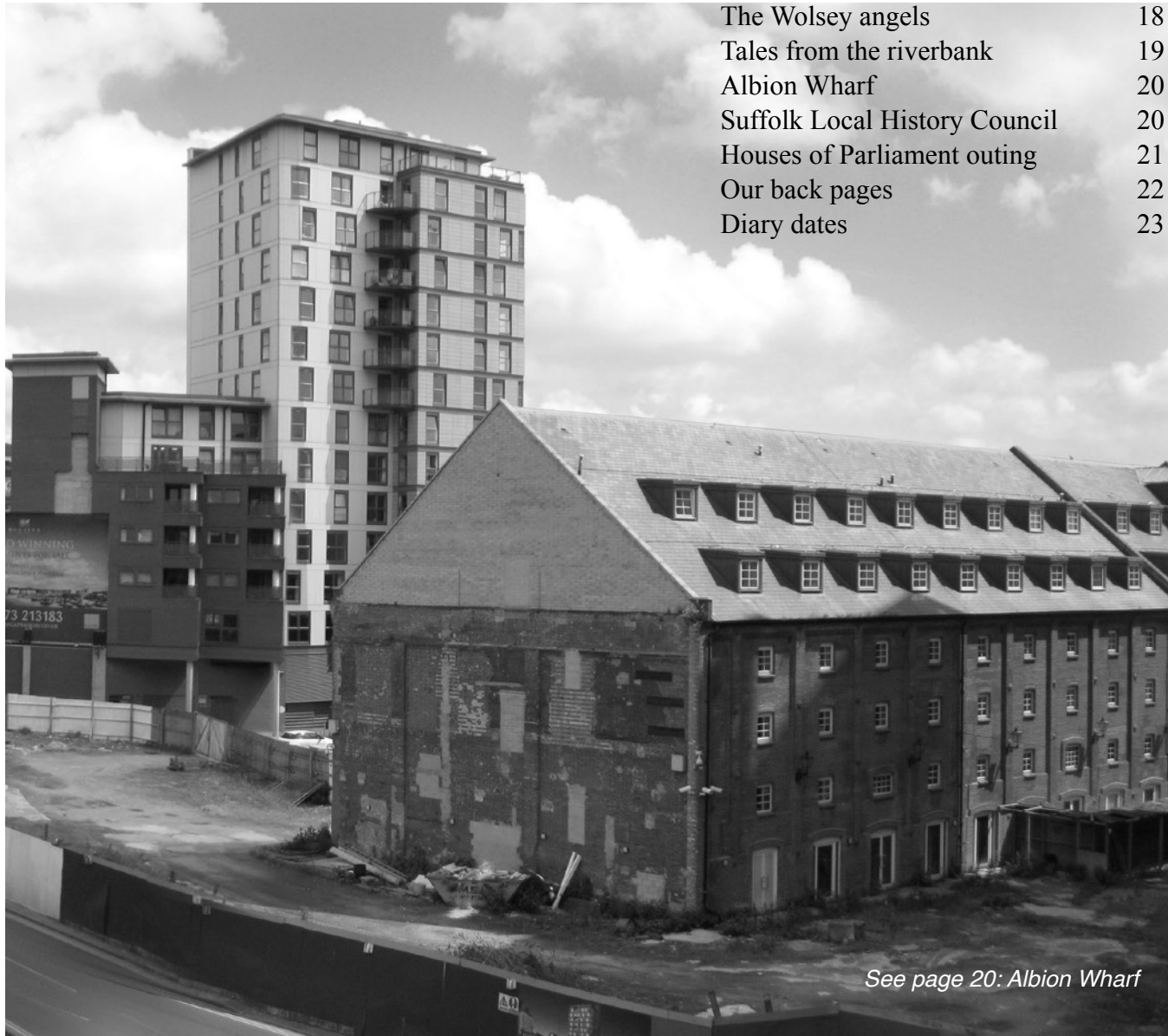
# NEWSLETTER

October 2014

Issue 197

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*See page 20: Albion Wharf*



The Courgettes play a storming set of food-based songs in the evening sunshine at Maritime Ipswich 2014: *God gave sausage rolls to you* and *I know it's only sausage roll (but I like it)* are just two of the highlights of their set.

well as those who sit for hours keeping buildings available to those keen to find out about Ipswich and its past. A highlight for me was The Wheatsheaf in Fore Street with its oriel windows and creative use of space to provide offices for businesses. So I mustn't forget to thank the owners of the buildings for making them available. Every year the Society's learns a bit more and, I feel, the weekend gets better as we learn.

A huge amount of work goes into coordinating the venues and events and the production of a booklet which advertises the weekend and acts as a guide to the opportunities presented. This is the first full year the weekend has been organised without the help and guidance of the late Dianne Hosking. It is clear to those responsible for this year's event just how much work and effort she put in, almost single-handedly, over so many years.

As ever, a big thankyou (this is beginning to sound like an Oscars acceptance speech) to all the contributors to this issue of the Newsletter.

**Robin Gaylard**

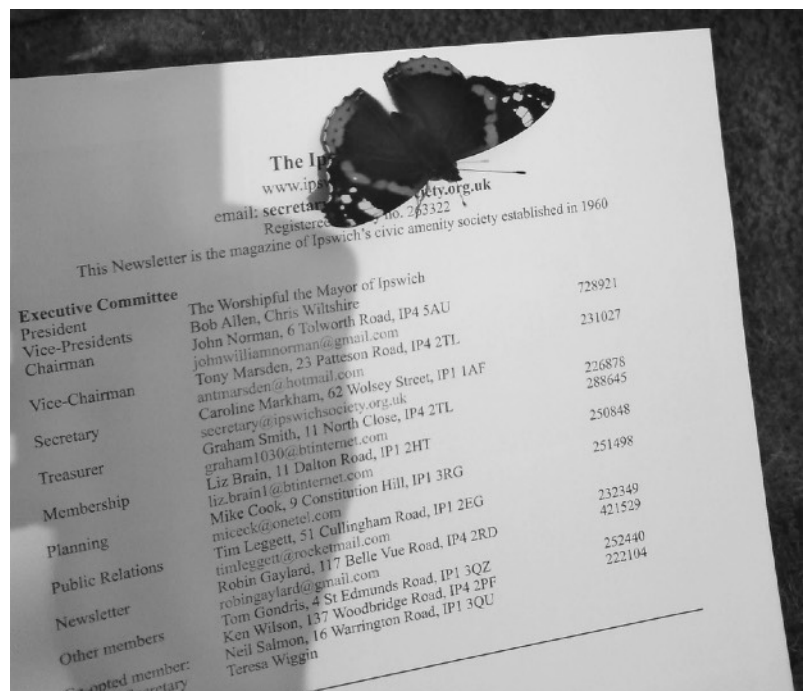
## Editorial

Firstly, and most importantly, on behalf of the Ipswich Society, a big thankyou to all the volunteers and voluntary organisations involved in making the Heritage Open weekend 2014 such a great success. Such are the vicissitudes of the calendar that this issue of the Newsletter appears each year a few weeks after the event, rather than before it. Having joined a fascinating guided tour of buildings at risk by the Ipswich Building Preservation Trust's Margaret Hancock (including the privilege of a look inside parts of Curson Lodge), I was struck by how much we rely on our volunteers – and that includes the work of the Executive Committee, folks – as

### **Natural History** from Dale Rumbold

*"Sitting outside reading the latest Ipswich Society Newsletter, I was joined by a Red Admiral butterfly : it took five landings before I was able to snap this quick pic."*

## New Members



## Chairman's remarks

I write this after a day's cycling around Ipswich town centre, an event promoted by Sky (the communications people), and Ipswich Borough Council. There is clearly considerable expenditure in the temporary infrastructure required for an event like this, with pedestrian barriers the full length of the Waterfront, and in Tavern Street and Star Lane. Stewards at every junction, some with 'Stop-Go' boards to prevent cars running into the multitude of cycling families, some ensuring cyclists keep to the designated route.

Is it worth it? Sky obviously thinks so and they promote similar events across the country throughout the summer. They give away bright yellow tabards for cyclists to wear on the day, to keep and wear whenever they are out cycling, and it works. Thousands of cyclists are pedalling around wearing an endorsement for the sponsor the rest of the year.

This event was the culmination of a whole summer of events promoted and organised by Ipswich Borough Council, most of which were free to enter and lots of fun for the participants. My only gripe is that the Maritime Festival should be called a Waterfront Festival, that's not to criticise the event, which attracted magnificent crowds but to point out that there were lots of attractions on the quayside but very little activity on the water.

Friends of St Margaret's Church and others resident close to the junctions at Bolton Lane and Major's Corner are very concerned about air quality hereabouts. Rightly so; this is one of the most polluted traffic routes in Ipswich. But it is not only air quality that is an issue. Motor vehicles, particularly large diesels, throw out with their exhaust gasses lumps of pollutant of measurable size – dirt. Black dots that become a film that sticks to pavements, windows, buildings and pedestrians. Next time you pass check the state of the front of the Phillips and Piper building and suggest what we can do about it.

The first planning application for the Northern Fringe (sorry, Ipswich Garden Suburb) has arrived as expected – before the Supplementary Planning Document has been agreed by the Ipswich Borough Council Executive (there is still some work to do, notably on traffic). The planning application (by CBRE and Mersea Homes) is an 'Outline Application' for 735 homes, a primary school and a new district centre with shops and community facilities. There will be land set aside as public open space, some of which will be the green barrier between Westerfield Road and the new estate. The application is accompanied by a full application for the first 80 homes on the east side of the site (close to Westerfield Road).

I was interested to hear that an Ipswich Borough Councillor and a couple of officers attempted to cycle from the town centre to the site of the Northern Fringe to experience the problems and difficulties that will face resident cyclists when the first homes are completed. Out on your bike with the children on a Sunday you can probably tolerate deviations and delays as you cross the main roads, but an everyday commute requires a more direct route without the interruption of toucan crossings, traffic lights that prioritise motorists and roundabouts (which are particularly dangerous).

Needless to say, they had difficulties throughout their journey – they took different routes there and back – and established that it will take time and effort to increase the number of people cycling to work in Ipswich. It's a similar problem to the one along Main Road, Kesgrave: do commuters on their way to and from BT cycle on the road at the mercy of the traffic or cycle on the adjacent pavement stopping at every side road? The bicycle ride, with which I started this page, is a great idea but it was a Sunday, most town centre roads were closed to motorists and the route was chosen to be anything other than a regular commute.

***John Norman***

## St Mary-at-the-Quay: rescuing an old, infirm friend



St Mary-at-the-Quay has had a chequered recent history. One of the twelve medieval churches in Ipswich and the middle of the three dockland churches, it was perhaps a surprise when news was published that the building was to be saved, given the sorry state of the fabric and the fact that it was originally built on marshy ground – a problem faced by 2014’s archeologists there with trenches filling with water. It ceased to be used as a regular place of worship after World War II, although it remains consecrated. Many will recall the building used by the Ipswich Boys Brigade from the 1950s to the 1970s and, more recently, as home to the Key Arts group of visual and creative artists.



*Visualisation of the new interior  
courtesy Suffolk Mind*

In November 2012, The Churches Conservation Trust (which owns the building) and Suffolk Mind secured a £3.6 million Heritage Lottery Fund grant for St Mary-at-the-Quay after two years of work on the bid.

The church will be converted into a Wellbeing & Heritage Centre: ‘Quay Place’, that will provide a quiet and beautiful sanctuary in a busy, historic market town. It should have a flexible and welcoming community space which is open to all. It will offer wellbeing and heritage activities, a centre for local events, complementary therapy as well as a café.

The project obtained funding on the basis that it will: restore and rejuvenate an ancient building, create a sanctuary with a sensory medieval garden, reinstate significant heritage features making them accessible to all, link wellbeing and heritage in an innovative way, tell the diverse history of Ipswich waterfront in an engaging and interactive way and provide restored and modern facilities for community wellbeing and heritage activities. There will be a glazed extension and mezzanines within the church, as shown on the visualisation image.

The project is due to be completed by autumn 2015.

**R.G.**

For more information about Quay Place ring 0300 111 6000 or email [sue.gray@suffolkmind.org.uk](mailto:sue.gray@suffolkmind.org.uk)

## Planning matters

**Eastway Business Park** (off Sproughton Road). This application for 34 flats and 60 houses had problems with the Section 106 agreement for monies for education and affordable residences. All parties agreed that the original proposal was not viable. Ipswich councillors wished to reduce the educational precept and maintain the affordable housing content. Understandably Suffolk County Council were not pleased and asked for a Judicial Review. IBC's legal advice is that the original recommendations should be reconsidered at Committee where it was agreed. This highlights the current problems with Section 106 agreements.

**West Villa, Woodbridge Road East.** Two large GP practices, Woodbridge Road and Lattice Barn, currently have 25,000 patients and rising. Their premises were once houses and are no longer fit for the purpose and are looking for a new centre. The first Ipswich Workhouse was in Great Whip Street. In the 1880s it moved to the Woodbridge Road East site; gradually extended to become the Ipswich Borough General Hospital and during WWII was an emergency hospital with two ems wards with operating theatres (they lasted until 1986). In 1948 it became the Heath Road Wing of Ipswich Hospital. The West Villa remained in IBC ownership and became the Homeless Families Unit and latterly the Women's Refuge and is now vacant. The remaining buildings will be recorded and demolished. The proposal is well thought out for a modern, clean-lined two storey building for at least fifteen doctors, nurses, ancillary staff, a pharmacy and a treatment area and so on. More comment on the design next time but KLH (timber construction) have done a good job.

**Redecoration of the Town Hall interior.** The presence of leaks and the fact that no work has been done since 1970, together with IBC's intention to use the building more, means that redecoration is overdue. Paint research showed nineteen layers in places. It is thought the original 1868 scheme was inappropriate (brown walls) so a second layer of white walls with timber grained (oak) woodwork was applied.

**Neptune Marina:** Five more fingers proposed to be added on the western side of the last pontoon on the quay outside Isaac's. There is very little space for public water activities and the time has come to draw a halt. It was noticeable that during the recent Ipswich Maritime Festival there was absolutely nothing actually on the water for public engagement.

### **Tower Ramparts Centre:-**

- a) Tavern Street façade: a new entrance with a high “porch” and a roof protruding into the street. Universally disliked as out of scale and keeping.
- b) Bus station elevation: to be renovated with new signage and an encompassing scheme of rendering and painting. Too much white rendering.
- c) Renaming to The Sailmakers to make connection to the Waterfront. Far-fetched and unsatisfactory.

**Mike Cook**



## The Northern Fringe: a personal view

The cost of purchasing somewhere to live in Britain has so outstripped wages that it is the major driver of the country's economy. In a market economy the solution is to build more homes and this need is driving our planning system as well as our politicians as a general election looms into view. So Ipswich, like every other town in the UK, is bent on building dwellings. And understandably so.

Ten years ago the ill-fated East of England Regional Spatial Strategy was in the consultation stage; The Ipswich Society accepted that, in due course, the Borough would have to build on the green fields between the Henley and Westerfield Roads, north of Colchester Road. 3,500 new houses could be planned as a garden suburb with all the necessary infrastructure on the site.

Eight years ago, on behalf of the Ipswich Society, I spoke at the *Examination in Public* and suggested adopting a strategy whereby Ipswich should continue to use Brownfield sites and only then should we utilise Greenfield sites. At our then current rate of house building that would be about 2021. A recession, a complete change in our shopping habits and a fall in house completions has confirmed what we said then, only more so.

I now believe this proposed development is the wrong one in the wrong place at the wrong time. We need residential developments, yes, but not in a place that is distant from jobs, that causes unsustainable traffic problems and overwhelms other infrastructure. The change in the last decade in the way we live, work, shop and travel tells us that creating a new suburb will be seen as the height of folly in fifty years time. In Ipswich we have many acres of Brownfield sites, never going to be used for the employment or retail use they are now zoned for. It is thought that there are more than fifty extant planning permissions in the waterfront area upon which not a sod has been turned. They are close to, if not in the town centre with most of the required infrastructure in place.

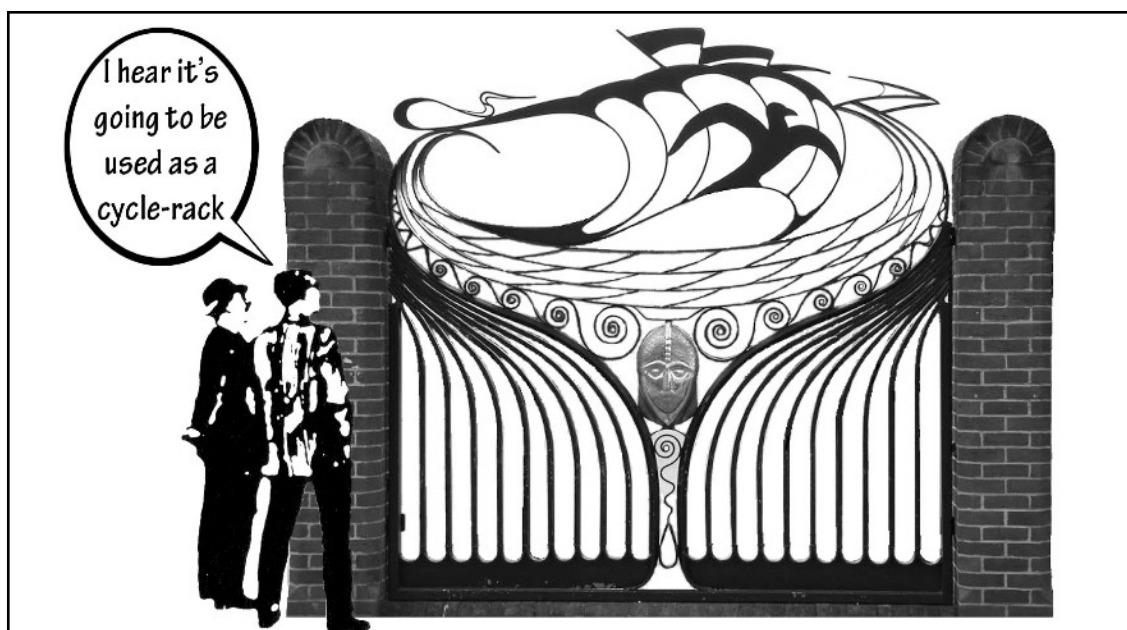
We should return to the concept of town centre living; daily shopping and schools close at hand so people walk and cycle thus solving at least four problems at one blow (less CO<sup>2</sup> emission, better air quality, more exercise, and more social interaction). The insoluble part of the solution is that 90% of the land is privately owned and its profitable development is essential for the owners' survival but also for our private pensions.

This personal view is utopian. In the real world, the 'Ipswich Garden Suburb', proclaimed by the Borough Council and supported by the Society, could never be a true garden suburb as in the early twentieth century model since their land was owned by autonomous development corporations and not private developers. Here, the Borough has behaved with courage, decency and injected some money into the concept. They employed a Senior Planner, Phil Sweet, to work solely on the scheme and hired David Lock Associates, an excellent and respected firm of large scale town planning. Public consultations were carried out and a Northern Fringe Community Steering Panel formed consisting of the landowners, the town planning consultants, the Borough Council Planning Department, Suffolk County Council, Ipswich Borough Councillors, the Ipswich Society, the Northern Fringe Protection Group, Save  
*(continues)*

our Suffolk Country Spaces, Westerfield Parish Council and others. The purpose of the Group was to hammer out a Special Planning Development (SPD) document containing a Design Guide. This document will largely have the agreement of all parties and will eventually be ratified by the full Ipswich Borough Council. It will contain the plan for the dwellings, their numbers, sizes, shapes, gardens and parking. It will describe the roads and the entrances and exits, the schools, the medical services, libraries and community halls. It will deal with water supplies and drainage of different types of waste. It will also lay down the principles of the architectural design of all the buildings.

Thus we will have in the near future a blueprint on how the inevitable Northern Fringe Development will work. But somebody will always jump the gun; Mersea Homes have hired CBRE, the largest global property developer to push forward; in turn they have used the very town planners that IBC have used to draw up the master plan, David Lock Associates. And this some months before the SPD and its design guide have been agreed. There is now no way that The Ipswich Garden Suburb development will not be built in some form and at some time.

**Mike Cook**



*The Longship Screens by Antony Robinson*

### **The Recession finally catches up with the Society.**

Your Executive Committee has searched the town for potential nominations for the 2014 Awards, but realises that there are insufficient to run a competition. The buildings which have been nominated will be considered in 2015. The evening will remain on the programme and our Vice-Presidents will present an alternative view of our town. See *Dates for your diary* on page 23.

Ipswich Building Preservation Trust brief AGM followed by a talk by Dr Geraint Coles,  
*Lecturer in Cultural Heritage at UCS Business School*

### **'HERITAGE AND REGENERATION IN IPSWICH'**

Isaacs, Wednesday 29 October 2014, 7pm

Please book your place by email [njacob@njarchitects.co.uk](mailto:njacob@njarchitects.co.uk) or phone 01473 221150



## Putting North West Ipswich on the map

The North West Ipswich Big Local Trust has been awarded one million pounds of lottery money to spend in the Whitton, Whitehouse and Castle Hill areas. A partnership of residents has already approved nearly forty grants and you can find details of our activities on our website:

<http://www.nwipswichblt.co.uk>

The one million pounds of lottery money will be spread over ten years and is being distributed against community bids which meet specific criteria. As the chairman of the North West Ipswich Big Local Trust I have said: 'I am very keen to put our area on the map and we have a number of initiatives to achieve our goals.'

I thought I would share some thoughts on the area.

- 1 Early historical finds include the Roman Villa at Castle Hill (also featured in a Time Team programme) and the Saxon cemetery at Boss Hall, as well as other minor finds. Lots of information on these in the Ipswich Museum.
- 2 For a long time much of the area up to Whitton Village was open farmland with a range of grand houses – the White House, which is still standing, Lovetofts Hall, Boss Hall, Springfield House, Brooks Hall, Holly Lodge and the Rosary, as well as the house at Castle Hill which is now the Community Centre. It has been suggested that the actual castle stood somewhere beyond Brooks Hall. I am still seeking pictures of Springfield House and Holly Lodge.
- 3 The late nineteenth century saw the building of the rows of houses in the Bramford Lane and Bramford Road area partly, it is thought, to house people coming off the farms. Many of these houses carry plaques naming them after persons and events of the time such as the battles of Omdurman and Tel-el-Kebir. Look out for the effigy of Baden Powell in Bramford Lane. Heigham Villas in Bramford Road are opposite the site of the Rosary where Major Heigham, one time Chief Constable of Suffolk, used to live.
- 4 I have been pleased to see that North West Ipswich has produced some illustrious people. These include Trevor Nunn, who among other things has been Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, Gary Avis and Liam Scarlett, both leaping high in the ballet world, Kieron Dyer, and several other sportspersons and artists.
- 5 I am particularly interested in the churches and schools in the area. Westbourne Academy's early log books are fascinating reading as they start in 1939 with trench drills and gas mask inspections and pupils being sent home after visits from the 'nit' nurse. The first name in the punishment book is one John Watkins who received 'one stroke on the hand' for bringing a dead rat into school. Later in life he served as Chair of Governors for many years!

In putting the North West forward these are only brief glimpses. I would be glad to hear from anyone with information or pictures relating to the area. Likewise, please contact me if you are interested in the work of the Big Local Trust.

***Ron Impey***

**ronimpey@hotmail.com**

## Deserts on the Cornhill

‘To encourage walking in the town and an interest in the built environment’ - a splendid way was on the Ipswich Society walk on 19 June, 2014.

Starting at Northgate Street Library we saw red bricks made from London Clay at Dales Road brickworks and Ancaster Limestone from Lincolnshire. In Tavern Street beautiful St John’s Travertine from Italy was lost when McDonalds went ‘green’. However, Tower Ramparts Centre provided us with two Italian rocks, green Verde Issorie from the Val d’Aosta, and Botticino Limestone which we tested for its loading and wear characteristics as a floorstone.

The Town Hall and Corn Exchange were viewed in Princes Street, with their fine Portland and Bath Stones. The red sandstone pillars on the Town Hall are of Mansfield Stone, an ancient desert sandstone for our Cornhill! A stop in Queen Street enabled us to see the splendid white feldspar crystals in the granite kerbstones.

At St Peter’s Church we said hello to the Ipswich Society members on duty and then admired the Tournai Limestone fonts. Outside we saw a wall made of septaria, the ‘Harwich Cliff Stone’ that Cardinal Wolsey wanted for his Ipswich College, but failed to get.

In Stoke Bridge Pocket Park we viewed the Ipswich Society promoted artwork – the three local sarsenstones (a sandstone) arranged by Bernard Reynolds in the 1970s. This impressive feature has since had an interesting history – it has been painted (graffiti/‘street art’), mechanically distressed, and urinated on (by humans). But that seat should surely be moved – it is not an original feature and adds nothing to the artwork.



*The Little Gipping River continues to run, in a culvert to the right of the wheelie bins, between Jewsons and Liquid night club at Cardinal Park.*

Had we started this walk (at the Library site) 20 centuries earlier we would have been standing on the bank of the Ipswich Brook. But having reached the River Orwell in 2014 we saw the modern outfall of the Ipswich Brook near Stoke Bridge, having already passed over its (man-made) course under Star Lane. We also saw the outfall of the Little Gipping River, which we then traced by its underground course behind the Cardinal Park restaurants to the ‘bump’ in Wolsey Street.

Our last stop of the walk was at St Nicholas Church with its show of septaria and where Caroline showed us a ‘cone of percussion’ in one of the flints. We concluded by considering the recycling processes within the graves giving rise to ‘corpse candles’, pale flitting glows as gases rose from the grave and perhaps providing ghostly sightings to the living inhabitants of our town.

**Bob Markham**

## Flickr update

The Ipswich Society website on Flickr is developing slowly but very well. The most recent additions have been images from the awards ceremonies of recent years. The best way to access it is through the Society website [shown at the top of page 23]. Look for the Links button: there’s a connection straight through.

There are 6,335 images from various slide collections donated to the Society, as well as albums relating to special events. We really are particularly indebted to Tony Hill, Chris Wiltshire and Ruth Serjeant for their early work on the slide collection and the digitisation; these ‘Masterminds’ have a neat shot to themselves. More recently another member, Pete Cooper, spent a swift month or two adding descriptions to a vast number of the images; Richard and Jean Attenborrow have assisted in this process, too.



8 Princes Street, May 1966  
Demolition, removal of  
doorway sculpture

A recent diversion for use of the images on the website has been by one of the members of the Executive Committee: Tim Leggett who has trawled the collection and matched ancient and not so ancient slides with modern ones which he has taken during the course of the summer. He calls this collection Ipswich Society Comparison Photos. You are able to view the two images at once and to make real comparisons between how things used to be and how things are today. Tim has taken a very clever idea and developed it and one can only hope that other members might care to come up with new approaches to the use of the archive and bring them to our notice. Tim’s Flickr site can be found at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/46225552@N03/>

A final thing that makes the archive so special is the reaction of people finding the images. One only has to go onto the website and read the comments to see how well appreciated we are by lots of people in the town, and beyond:

*Awesome archive, congratulations! I'm working professionally with individuals from Ipswich in profound disassociative states and this archive is bringing back both the joys and pain of controlled remembering for them. These photos are very powerful tools; keep up the good work, thanks for the memories.*

**Tony Marsden**

## Subscriptions & standing orders



The first increase in subscriptions for many years was agreed at the AGM last April. It applies immediately to new members joining the society and to existing members when subscriptions are next due on January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015. The new rates are as follows:

**Individual membership £10**  
**Family membership £15**  
**Corporate membership £50**  
**Corporate membership**  
**(not for profit**  
**organisations) £25**

Many members pay by standing order and, as I'm sure you will appreciate, we need to ask those members to change the instruction to their bank. Please do so before 2 January 2015, so that the correct amount is transferred on the due date.

We would be grateful if as many members as possible made payment by standing order, as it makes administration much simpler but, of course, you may still pay by cheque if you prefer. If at any time you decide to move from paying by cheque to payment by standing order, please contact me either by telephone or email (the details are on the inside back cover).

Alternatively you can pay or set up your own standing orders by using the following Ipswich Society Bank Account details:

Barclays Bank Princes Street Ipswich Branch

Sort Code: 20 44 51

Account Number: 80489018

**Liz Brain**

The Ipswich Society summer excursion to east London, 'Crossing the Thames' where we looked at possible new bridge and tunnel sites, proved to be extremely popular (a fourth should have taken place by the time you read this). Our Chairman is open to suggestions as to a suitable visit for next year: a place that is not normally open to the public or is perhaps the site of future development that will, in some way, affect us here in Suffolk. For example, Sizewell C together with the construction workers' Park & Ride sites, a possible bypass for the four villages and the access arrangements from the A12 is one possibility.

## Ipswich Maritime Trust



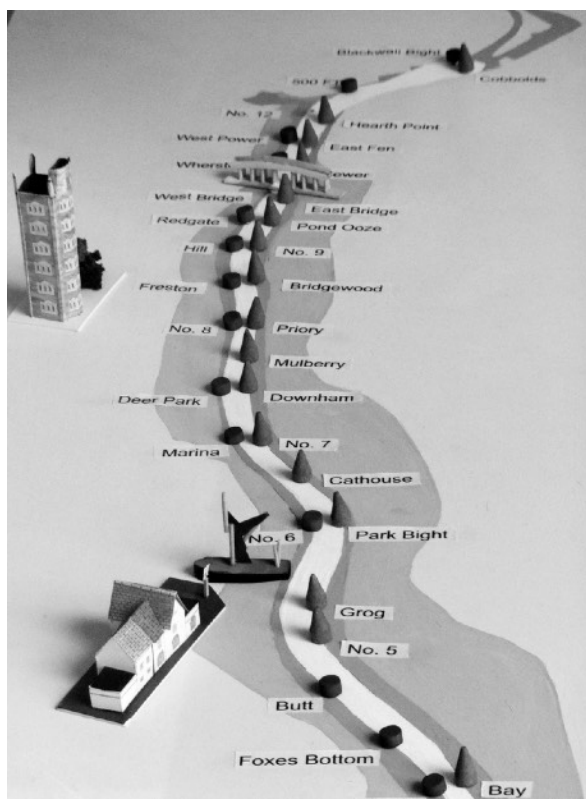
*Ipswich Star journalist David Vincent photographing the "Window Wizards" of IMT during their last window set up.*

Time flies by.... it will soon be time to change the IMT Window Museum display yet again. During the summer there has been an exhibition on "Navigation of the River Orwell" with photographs and old charts explaining how the river's course has changed over the years, a display of navigation equipment of years gone by, some of those years not so long ago but beyond the memory of younger inhabitants and visitors to Ipswich who may never have heard of a Walkers Log (\*p.14). The centre of the display was a model of the River Orwell by Peter "Ben" Bendall complete with the Orwell Bridge, Freston Tower and the Ganges Mast.

Bob Pawsey has made a successful bid to purchase a remarkable bound inventory of the Ipswich Dock Commission's Specification, Conditions, Bill of Quantities, and Tender documents for the construction of new quays in Ipswich Dock 1902-5. This big volume has been purchased for Leonard Woolf's collection and is fully illustrated with high quality photographs showing the work in progress. Stuart Grimwade has started scanning these fascinating images for the IMT Archive.

As usual the Trust had a stand at the Ipswich Maritime Festival with a display of old photographs of the docks from the Leonard Woolf collection and a selection of nautical books on sale by local authors. The stand helped to raise an awareness of the Trust and was visited by many well known names in Ipswich as well as making many useful new contacts.

*(continues)*



*The Window Museum model of the River Orwell by Ben Bendall*

The IMT once again occupied the Old Customs House during the Heritage Open Weekend on 13th and 14th of September which included a display of photographs and artefacts from the IMT reserve collection and photographs of historic lettering from around the port, taken by Borin Van Loon.

On 21 August 21 there was a day trip down the River Orwell in the Thames Sailing Barge 'Victor' which included morning coffee and biscuits, a two course lunch with wine and an afternoon cream tea. These events are open to friends of the IMT as well as members.

The monthly 2014 Autumn Talks start on 1 October about the Ipswich-based Fred Olsen Cruise Line's largest ship: 'Balmoral' and the BBC, by speaker Cathy Shelbourne, in a ground floor lecture theatre at the UCS Waterfront Building. Further details of all the IMT lectures and events can be found on the IMT website and Facebook page by searching for 'Ipswich Maritime Trust'.

**Tim Leggett**

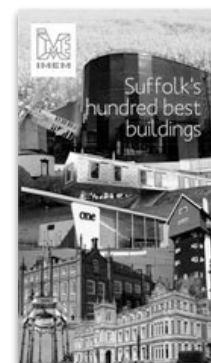
[\*A WALKERS LOG was a propeller streamed behind a vessel on a long chord. As the ship moved through the water the propeller turned, spinning the chord attached to the back of a gauge fixed to the stern of the ship, and by the number of turns the gauge would read how far the ship had moved through the water. Allowing for current, the navigator could then estimate the distance over the bottom run and the average speed of the vessel. With modern GPS this is no longer needed.]

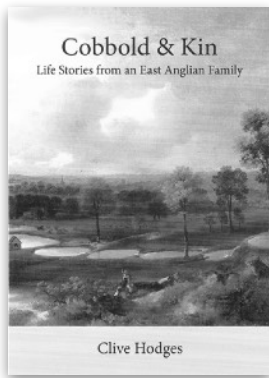


### Mini review

The successful Suffolk-based architect, Tim Buxbaum's fascinating and richly illustrated book *Suffolk's hundred best buildings* will be the subject for his Winter Illustrated Talk on Wednesday 15 October. With Ipswich clocking in at eleven notable buildings, perhaps the talk will give members the opportunity to review those outside our town and challenge Tim about their favourite Ipswich buildings which he hasn't included. The book is just big enough to fit in the pocket; the fine colour photographs by Ignacio Glez.-Riancho balance and illuminate the textual entries. [<http://www.imemlifts.co.uk>]

**R.G.**





**Cobbold & kin: life stories from an East Anglian family** by Clive Hodges  
Boydell, 2014, £25

With an introduction by John Blatchly, this volume – intended to be the first of several on different aspects of the Cobbold dynasty – has chapters on industry & agriculture, faith, the arts, empire, public service, science and academia, sport and military service. This gives us a flavour of the huge range of personalities to be found attached to the Cobbold family tree. The family so intimately associated with Ipswich and its history is deserving of study both penetrating and sympathetic and we find both here.

Going back to Thomas Cobbold (1680-1752), the founder of the once-famous brewery, the Cobbolds are definitely ‘trade’, that is, ‘new money’. Growing in commercial success, wealth and power over the decades these Cobbolds had the knack of diversifying into politics, religion, banking and many other activities and marrying into all strata of society. Thus it is that we find Lady Evelyn Cobbold (1867-1963), daughter of a Scottish Earl and the first British-born Moslem woman to make the Hajj, rubbing metaphorical shoulders with the actress Lillie Langtry, who was – by the by – also mistress of Bertie, Prince of Wales.

Cobbold family members spread to parts of the Empire and distinguished themselves (or otherwise). Horace William Cain (1831-1914) became a builder, benefactor and Mayor of Melbourne. Charles Cobbold Farr (1851-1914) was, after many misfortunes, a pioneering venturer and founder of Haileybury, Ontario. Which one of us hasn’t wished we could say the same? His statue – and his dog’s – was belatedly erected in Haileybury in 2004 to celebrate the town’s centenary.

This is a book rich with anecdote and arcana. Harry Smith Parkes (1828-1885) was a diplomat in Japan when that country was leaving the era of the Shogunate and only beginning to open up to the outside world. It isn’t so much Harry’s meteoric rise through the consular service which impresses, but the fact that his three daughters and their governess (their photograph is in the book) climbed to the summit of Mount Fujiyama in 1880, following in the footsteps of their mother Lady Parkes, who was the first woman to achieve the same feat in 1867.

It was not always crystal clear to this reviewer just how every character is related to the Cobbolds, but this turned out to be a flaw in my concentration (and eyesight). Referring back to Anthony Cobbold, I learnt that: “Lillie Langtry (Emilie Charlotte Le Breton) is my first cousin, three times removed (1C3R). The three removes is, of course, just three generations. If you have the tree in the book you need Big John’s second wife and the sequence in the Hammond / Le Breton table, bottom right is: my mother, Mary Selby Parkin to Laura Annie Hammond to Lawrence Nicholas Dijre Hammond to Jane Penrose Le Breton to William Le Breton and then down to William Corbet Le Breton and hence Emilie Charlotte Le Breton. My mother had Lillie’s bright violet eyes!” So, remember to consult the family trees on pages x-xi, O Best Beloved... and this book becomes even more splendid.

Anthony Cobbold, Keeper of the Cobbold Family History Trust, will no doubt be touching on some of these and other Cobbold-related characters in his Winter Illustrated Talk to the Society on Wednesday 17 December 2014 at the Museum Street Methodist Church, Ipswich. **R.G.**

## **The Suffolk College Nuclear Sciences Department: a national training success**

In 1967 the UK began to develop a civil nuclear power programme based on the Magnox design of nuclear reactors. The senior health & safety manager at Sizewell A power station, Bernard Willcox, approached the Ipswich Civic College, later to become the Suffolk College, to develop and teach two City and Guilds Radiation Safety Practice Courses: Stages I & II.

The syllabus was written and examinations set and marked by industry radiation safety professionals including Bob Gardiner at CEGB Berkeley, John Clifton at AEA Winfrith and Bernard James at the MOD. The courses were eight weeks long comprising two four-week blocks culminating in a three-hour written examination and a 40 minute oral practical examination. Over thirty practical exercises were developed. The courses became the industry standard for those working as health physics monitors, surveyors and supervisors in nuclear power plants (including the later generation of AGR reactors), nuclear research establishments like Harwell, Windscale and Dounreay, and nuclear submarine dockyards like Rosyth, Devonport and Chatham. Students attended from all over the UK. Ipswich's hotels and pubs benefited too! Technicians from other areas of industry, the inspectors, and medical fields also attended the courses in order to take a formal, internationally recognised course in radiation protection. After the accident at Chernobyl the British Council placed the Deputy Director of Nuclear Safety for the Republic of Byelorussia on a City and Guilds Radiation Safety Practice Course course.

The facilities at the Suffolk College, named the Nuclear Sciences Department, occupied the whole of one side on the third floor of the main building on the former Rope Walk site. Specialist contamination suite laboratories with industry standard instruments and sources, including two medical X-ray sets were installed. Glove boxes, fume cupboards and specialist detectors were purchased and over the thirty-three years until the department closed in 2000, industry-trained graduate lecturers were employed – and then went back to industry after their time in Ipswich.

With the cutbacks in the nuclear industry, Suffolk College stopped running the course. However, other UK centres still offer the course to approximately 100 students a year. This is but one example of Ipswich providing training to a national standard to a cohort of students from all over the UK.

I am sure there are other examples.

*Monty Guest*

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### **Letter to the Editor**

**The Regent refurbishment and St Peter's Wharf** from Margaret Woolard

I read in our Newsletter and the *Ipswich Star* that the Regent [Theatre] is being refurbished. I wrote to the newspaper thus:

“I enjoy going to the theatre and although the Regent has a system for getting disabled people up to the circle, it is humiliating and takes time as it holds up others getting up the stairs. I often go to the New Wolsey Theatre and am very grateful that they have a proper modern lift. I am sure that this is one of the more important items for improvement of the Regent.”

Since writing this I discovered that the Corn Exchange, which is a building run by the Council, has a lift so why not a lift for the Regent which holds so many shows now but doesn't care enough for the members of the public who cannot climb the several flights of stairs? And despite the large amount it costs to see a show they expect us to travel on the contraption to get to the circle.

My next comment is about the Waterfront article in the *Star*, 14 August. It seems that the Council are planning to develop the old Paul's burnt-out property. I noticed that John Norman [Chair of the Ipswich Society] has welcomed the development proposals. I do hope that somewhere in these will be a car park for the public, as this area – now used as a car park – is almost always full. It will be great for this area to look good, but we need people to be able to park their cars; and Ipswich is lacking in parking spaces.



# Snippets

## **Suffolk Record Office**

Storage space in the present Gatacre Road buildings will soon be insufficient. For the county's main record office to be in the county town would be very appropriate. Two very different new locations have been mooted. One is a linkage with UCS on the Waterfront; the other in County Hall, St Helen's Street, which would clearly need a great deal of re-construction internally. We await with great interest a possible decision in December.

## **Memorial**

The impressive granite memorial featured on last issue's cover commemorates the Merchant Navy's achievements and losses of life. It is the result of a long campaign and fund-raising effort and erected on Orwell Quay by the Ipswich branch of the Merchant Navy Association; it continues to draw visitors and residents to read the inscriptions and ponder.

## **Seats**

The re-modelling of Barrack Corner to create a cycle route and to aid pedestrians has led to a nice open paved area but at the expense of the seats. So in the west end of the town centre, seats have been removed here, and at the Berners Street/St Matthew's Street junction and at St Matthew's/Westgate Street. Food for thought.

## **Birketts to move**

It is understandable that this big law firm should want to move into purpose-built premises, on the site of Riley's Pool Hall in Princes Street. The numerous buildings they occupy at present in Museum Street may not be easy to fill but we hope they will find good uses in this attractive street.

## **Croydon's**

Tesco's intention to create a new 'Express' store in part of the formers jewellers' premises in Tavern Street has produced mixed reactions. It might seem an odd newcomer in this prominent 'period' building, but predictable regular use is arguably better than another empty shop, especially in this location. More food for thought!

## **Languages**

One may well be astonished that apparently 130 different languages, some of which most of us have never heard of, are spoken by pupils in Suffolk schools. Even though some are probably variants of better known languages and some may only involve a handful of children, it must be a headache for teachers!

## **Waterfront**

Publicity for Ipswich has lately been for 'East Anglia's Waterfront Town' because that is indeed our unique feature compared with Norwich, Cambridge, Colchester et al. So it is encouraging to hear of possible progress in dealing with some of the remaining eyesores. The new local owner of the 'Wine Rack' is planning its real future (see page 20). And IBC seems determined to push for progress for the even worse west end of the Waterfront – the site of the burnt out St Peter's malting and the Paul's concrete silo. (A pity it's not likely to include the derelict Burton's building next to DanceEast.) We wish them well.

### **Brett's furniture store**

One of the last locally owned shops in the town centre is set to close. The business will be concentrated on their modern shop in Bramford Road. The higher business rates in 'the high street' are partly to blame. There is surely a case for a national re-assessment of town centre costs if politicians are serious about towns retaining their character.

### **Tower Ramparts shopping centre**

The specific historical associations of the name will be lost if it is to be called 'Sailmakers'. But it is encouraging that the new owners intend to invest substantially in our town centre. The Tavern Street frontage needs to be appropriate for the street scene and the crucial importance of the main lift should be recognised for a centre with, unusually, two equally well-used levels.



## **The Wolsey Angels**

Cardinal Wolsey's fall from favour meant that the tomb he had planned for himself was never completed. Four bronze angels, three or four feet tall, were to stand at the corners of the tomb. They were commissioned from and made by the Florentine sculptor Benedetto da Rovezzano; their elegant athleticism reminds us that he was a contemporary of Michelangelo. Then Henry VIII wanted the angels to be used for his own tomb but his successors failed to honour his wishes. Elizabeth I moved the incomplete tomb to St George's Chapel in Windsor and then during the Civil War parts of it were sold off and the angels went to a country house in Northamptonshire. They were later separated as pairs and went 'missing'.

Now that their provenance has been established, the Victoria and Albert Museum is appealing for financial contributions from the public to supplement various grant applications†. The Ipswich Society Executive has decided to make a donation because of the Wolsey connection. Although the tomb was never completed, something of such historical and artistic importance associated with Ipswich's most famous son seemed an appropriate cause for the Society to be involved.

At present the angels are mounted on pedestals and I think look rather lost in the V&A's big Medieval and Renaissance Sculpture Gallery. But spaciouly displayed with a mock-up of the impressive original stone chest (which now, minus angels, houses Nelson's body in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral) they could be a spectacular sight and a visitor attraction. I would hope that they could be seen in Ipswich, even if only for a brief visit.

*Neil Salmon*

[†Website – <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/w/wolsey-angels-appeal/>]

## Tales from the river bank: a success story and a mystery

As part of Suffolk Walking Festival in May, Ipswich Tourist Guides contributed eight guided walks to encourage visitors to Ipswich. Themes included *The French Connection* and *History & Art in Ravenswood* as well as my personal contribution *Tales from the River Bank*. During preparation for the walk I was reminded of two things that I would like to share with Society members.

Back in 1999 the River Action Group (RAG) published its vision and strategy of a 'River for All' stating that "by 2010 there will be a wide, green, lively well-used river corridor at the heart of Ipswich". RAG was chaired by Tom Gondris, a stalwart of so many local organisations including the Ipswich Society, and supported by volunteers from other interested groups – Ipswich Wildlife Group and the Greenways project to name but two. My walk in mid-May included the section of river from Yarmouth Road to Stoke Bridge and it was with immense pride that I was able to demonstrate to our visitors (and some locals) that this vision has been very successfully achieved. The river bank looks beautiful: wild flowers, butterflies and birds abound and we met very many people walking and cycling along the well maintained paths. This truly is a 'River for All' and we can now enjoy the benefits of hours of work put in by volunteers over the last fifteen years.

My walk also included a look at Alderman Canal, again managed by volunteers, and close by I discovered a mystery which perhaps a Society member might be able to answer. In the 1990s Ipswich was one of seven towns to receive EU funding to develop a 'shared space' scheme on Handford Road. The idea, pioneered in Holland, was that roads should be *shared* with no particular hierarchy of users i.e. pedestrians should have similar priorities to car drivers. With hindsight, perhaps Handford Road was not a good choice for this sort of scheme. More recent schemes are now working well, for example Oxford Circus in London and, locally, parts of Ravenswood estate.

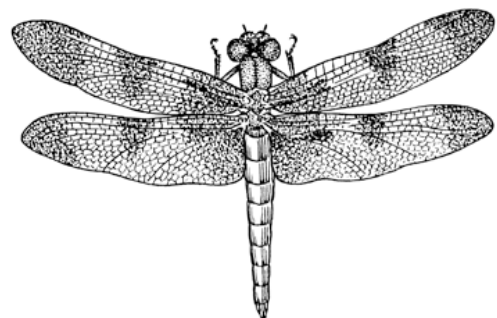
At the Handford Road entrance to Alderman Road recreation ground is an information board explaining the scheme. It also describes the adjacent artwork, funded as part of the work as follows:-

*"The local and natural history of the area have inspired the design and artwork of this project. Within the triangular meadow the orchard trees ripple above a carpet of ground lights outlining the delicate shape of a dragonfly's wing. The lighting spells out a poetic message relating to the dragonfly in dot dash components of Morse Code."*

Unfortunately, the lighting component has suffered much over the intervening years and my attempt to decipher the words was not entirely successful. The first two lines are reasonably complete – I have 'Dancing' (alongside path) followed by 'Rainbow', the fourth line may be 'Aged'. Can anyone help, please? Answers on a postcard via the editor would be much appreciated.

**Margaret Hancock**

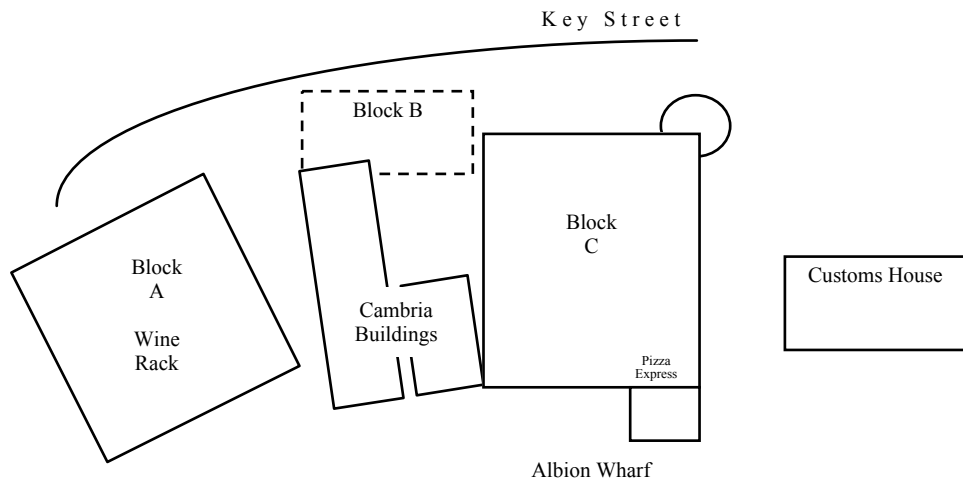
*[Margaret recently spotted a kingfisher over the river between Stoke and Princes Street bridges. -Ed.]*



## Albion Wharf

There has been a planning application to tidy up the Key Street frontage of the Regatta Quay development (the Wine Rack). Block B should have filled the empty space that remains on the site and was likely to be a hotel. Rumour suggested even a Premier Inn. This building will not now happen for the foreseeable future and so the exposed gable end of the former maltings (Cambria) is to be clad in weather boards and the exposed reinforcing steel on the corner of Block C – under the banner – removed and the rough concrete made good.

Block B shown dotted on the plan gives an indication of where the ‘making good’ will take place. (See our wraparound photograph on pages 1 and 24.)



## The Suffolk Local History Recorder's Scheme



In the July 2014 edition of The Ipswich Society newsletter, I introduced readers to the purpose and requirements of this project culminating in a plea for volunteers in many of the Ipswich wards. I am delighted to inform you that David Nunn contacted me and is now the Local History Recorder for Westgate Ward.

There are several long serving recorders in the Ipswich area but overall the town hasn't been covered sufficiently and I would like to appeal again for volunteers in the following wards: *Alexandra, Bixley, Gainsborough, Gipping, Holywells, Priory Heath, Rushmere, St. Margaret, Sprites and Whitehouse.*

So, if you are considering it, please contact me on [janette1407@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:janette1407@hotmail.co.uk) to find out more or look on the website ([www.slhc.org.uk](http://www.slhc.org.uk), click on 'Recorders', then click on 'Recorders Pack' within the text on the left hand side) to read the guidelines on what is involved in the role. It is not an onerous task; you are not required to do research for other people or to do historical research of your area, just to observe and record what is happening today as *that* will become tomorrow's history.

**Janette Robinson**

## Houses of Parliament: an Ipswich Society trip, 4 August 2014

By coach to Westminster, arriving before 11; luckily there wasn't the gridlock that had affected our Mayfair trip in March. With time to spare, I looked at the two Battle of Britain memorials on the Embankment, with their dramatic sculptures. Then to St Margaret's Church, the MPs' church, to view the numerous memorials to parliamentarians over the centuries and round Dean's Yard, home to Westminster School and the Abbey Choir School.

I passed the long façade of the Church House, opened by the king and queen in 1940; the United Nations held its early meetings there in '45-'46. Over the busy road to the Supreme Court, Listed Grade II\*, neo-Gothic style, built in 1913 and internally renovated in 2009. This is the highest court in the U.K. hearing civil and criminal cases of the greatest public importance. Lunch in the café was a welcome refuge from the hustle and bustle of the tourist-thronged streets.

We meet outside the Palace of Westminster, so-called because in medieval times a royal palace stood here until a major fire in 1512, after which Henry VIII moved up the road to what became Whitehall Palace. Our knowledgeable guide met us in Westminster Hall part of which, built by William Rufus, dates from 1099. It is the largest surviving medieval hall in northern Europe: the roof spans 67 feet and 80% of the splendid hammer-beam roof is original.

Our guide led us through the entire building to start our tour at the Royal Staircase. After another major fire in 1834 Charles Barry, with Pugin as interior designer, rebuilt the palace as a more purpose-built structure. We stood at the head of the staircase, which the queen ascends on her way to the Robing Room and the State Opening of Parliament.

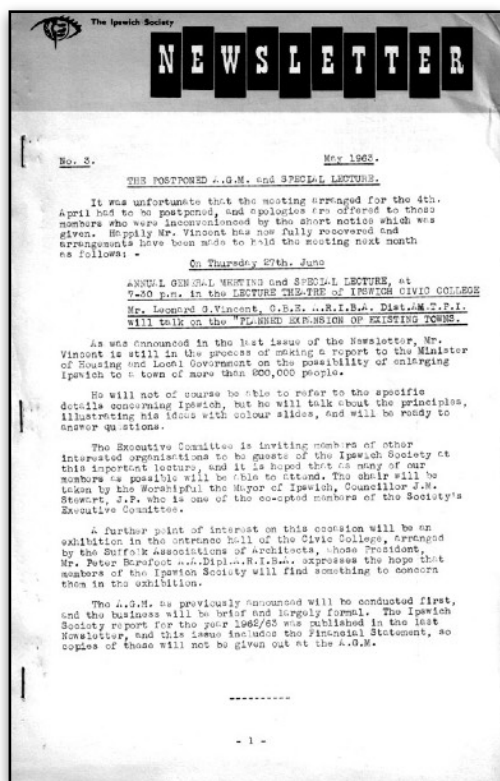
The House of Lords half of the Palace is Pugin at his most opulent and Prince Albert also had a say in the decorative scheme. The Royal Gallery leads through to the House of Lords Chamber (red leather seats), where the eye is drawn to the gilded throne and surrounds: 23 carat gold! Fit for a queen (or king) indeed! The chamber, like that of the Commons, is smaller than one imagines and Lords must sometimes be at very close quarters.

Through the Peers' Lobby and corridor to Central Lobby where many people meet and lobby their MPs; this is the hub of the two houses, architecturally and personally. Through the Commons Corridor and Members' Lobby to the House of Commons Chamber. In contrast to the Lords, this chamber is restrained in its decoration (bombed in WWII and rebuilt). It has green leather seats and a public gallery with a glass security screen. As before, this chamber is smaller than expected and crowded debates must be literally 'heated'. The word 'Commons' is derived from 'communities'; originally MPs came here to represent their own communities, as distinct from the Lords being summoned here by their king.

Returning via St Stephen's Hall, formerly a chapel, it was the site of great parliamentary events from around 1550 until 1834 (the year of the fire). The wall frescoes depict The Building of Britain; one panel shows our own Cardinal Wolsey in action. Back to the Hall to thank our guide and get a welcome tea and cake after an engrossing and educational tour. A coachful of members owe their thanks to Caroline Markham for organising such a fabulous outing and to our Soames driver.

**Richard Worman**

*[Apologies for typographical inexactitudes which crept into Richard's last two contributions. -Ed.]*



## Our back pages

With the Society in only its third year of existence and the achievement of *Newsletter* No. 2 (reviewed in our last issue), we move on to the next one. There is a leap in size from quarto to foolscap for No. 3, May 1963, and for the next six issues, too. Apologies are offered for the AGM and talk on 'Planned expansion of existing towns' by Mr Leonard G. Vincent which is postponed until June, for the Ipswich Society Exhibition delayed until October and for the Thetford visit which will now take place in July.

A report follows of a Special General Meeting on 22 March featuring "A short film of the Cornhill in 1930 ... shown by Mr Don Chipperfield [which] caused some amused comments on the changed traffic conditions which have come to Ipswich in 33 years."

"The subject of 'The Sailors Rest' provoked the most lively discussion of the evening. There was a strong feeling among some that a campaign for the preservation of this unique Ipswich building should be a major event for the Society. This was not agreed as such, but the Hon. Secretary was asked to write to the Corporation and to the local press, making clear that the Ipswich Society was firmly in favour of the retention of 'The Sailor's Rest' as a civic amenity of architectural worth.

"Subsequent to the publication of the letter from the Hon. Secretary, the 'Evening Star' carried a very good article on the topic and, although the future of 'The Sailor's Rest' is still in the balance, the arguments have been quite clearly stated and it is to be hoped that the Corporation will be successful in its attempts to find a solution to the problems surrounding the preservation of the building.

"One of the most significant points about this whole matter is that 'The Sailor's Rest' was included in a list of those buildings in Ipswich considered as important enough to preserve: a list compiled by the Museums Committee of the Town Council about the time that Mr Chipperfield's film was made!"

Under the heading 'Activities of the Groups', we read that while the Rivers Group was gratified that one of their suggestions (a weir to be built near Stoke Bridge) formed part of the Gipping Orwell Improvement Scheme approved in April by the East Suffolk and Norfolk Rivers Board for submission to the Ministry of Agriculture, "The Streets Improvement Group has not found that its suggestions for the Cornhill are immediately and completely acceptable to the Corporation..."

Once again, thanks to Tony Hill for the use of his archive. Perhaps unsurprisingly, no reader has come forward with *Newsletter* No. 1; it is missing from the Suffolk Record Office file, too.  
**R.G.**

## The Ipswich Society

www.ipswichsociety.org.uk

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Registered Charity no. 263322

This Newsletter is the magazine of Ipswich's civic amenity society established in 1960

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### Dates for your diary

Wednesday 22 April 2015: Eltham Palace, London

Wednesday 20 May 2015: Colourful characters and fascinating facts, Ipswich evening walk

Thursday 25 June 2015: William Morris and the Olympic Park, London.

**2014/15 Winter illustrated talks** at the Museum Street Methodist Church – entrance in Black Horse Lane – 7.30pm (followed by tea and biscuits):

*Wednesday 15 October* Tim Buxbaum, author of *100 best buildings in Suffolk* (see p.13)

*Wednesday 19 November* 7.30pm **Winter Lecture Extra** (replaces our Awards Evening): Bob Allen and Chris Wiltshire on 'Planning and architecture – its impact upon Ipswich' (an illustrated talk). Venue for this talk only: St Peter's on the Waterfront.

*Wednesday 17 December* Anthony Cobbold on the Cobbold Family History Trust (see p.14)

*Wednesday 21 January 2015* Tony Marsden shows the latest incarnation of our Slide Collection – the remarkable historical resource created by the Society's Flickr website (see p.11)

*Wednesday 18 February* Joy Bounds on the Ipswich suffragettes.

*[You may also be interested in the IBPT illustrated talk on Wed. 29 October mentioned on page 8]*

<b>Newsletter deadlines &amp; publication dates</b> (the latter may vary by a few days)
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Deadline for material: 1 December;	Publication date: 22 January;
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1 March;	2 April;
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1 June;	17 July;
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1 September;	9 October.
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## **Additional Winter Presentation**

You will see elsewhere in this Newsletter a note to the effect that the Planning and architecture – its impact upon Ipswich Awards evening has not received sufficient nominations to make a worthwhile show. In its place we have arranged for our two Vice-Presidents, Bob Allen and Chris Wiltshire to give us their thoughts on the good and bad buildings of Ipswich, illustrated by slides from the Ipswich Society collection and recent photographs by way of comparison.

The date, time and venue remain the same:  
**7.30pm, Wednesday 19 November 2014**  
**at St Peter's by the Waterfront**

*A panorama of Star Lane, Key Street, the bus depot, the Premier Inn and other Wet Dock developments (some completed, some static) and the clock tower of the Custom House just visible behind the hoarding. The view is from the scaffolding surrounding the east wall of St Mary-At-The-Quay with the camera poked through a slit in the plastic sheeting.*

