

## Issue 176 Newsletter July 2009

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# Editorial: On Being Pro-Ipswich

## **This issue**

I hope you will find plenty to interest you in this Newsletter. There are comments on new development proposals - which have slowed down but certainly not stopped despite the recession. Brian Jepson's photographs should encourage you to look up and appreciate buildings in town. You can also read about unusual historical subjects and look forward to events we have organised. And Mike Brain brings together disparate subjects to show how people respond in ambiguous ways to conflicting demands in the modern world.

## **Decisions soon**

The new Secretary of State and his team will have to put their minds to the problem of what to do about boundary changes affecting Ipswich and Suffolk. Their decision will affect us all for many years to come. Of the two options on the table, the Society continues to support the North Haven + Rest of Suffolk proposal because we consider that is best for Ipswich, although we recognise that some members might prefer a Single Suffolk solution. But on balance and for reasons which are economic, historical and geographical, we think North Haven (comprising Ipswich, Felixstowe and adjacent villages) would constitute a more appropriate authority.

## **Partnerships?**

Whether or not boundaries are changed, partnerships within specific areas of local government could be developed, even if necessary crossing boundaries. The Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service is an example of a radical change to meet changing circumstances, especially issues of funding. And outside local government itself, the recent controversy about moving some heart attack treatments away from Ipswich Hospital led IBC's Chief Executive, James Hehir, to point out that the joint populations of Ipswich and Colchester and their hinterlands should justify the provision of such medical services in our populous area. Compartments are useful, but so are imagination and vision.

## **Finally**

Please use the enclosed sheet and feel free to nominate buildings or improvement schemes for our Annual Awards. And don't forget that 2010 is our 50th anniversary year with many special events to look forward to. It's not too late to pass on any more suggestions for next year to Tony Marsden or other committee members - contact details are on the back page.

*Neil Salmon*

# Chairman on Current Affairs

As I write this, we are awaiting the decision of the Boundary Committee on what it will recommend to the Secretary of State as the future Local Government of Suffolk. The outcome will affect Ipswich profoundly long into the future.

Our national parent, the Civic Trust, has entered into administration, a shock to all of us. It will not affect the Society seriously and all our work, including Heritage Open Days, will continue as

normal. Members should not be affected. But training events for committee members and national conferences organised by the Civic Trust will, of course, cease.

The economic slowdown is having an effect on the town, but not as yet catastrophically so. The Waterfront developments seem to be proceeding, albeit in some cases with some slippage of timescales. Phase II of the University will be established along Orwell Quay and the student accommodation nearby is being built. Dance East is now fitting out and ready to open on schedule. A food outlet has opened on the ground floor of the university building. Isaac Lord's, the most important complex of buildings in the town, was beautifully restored a few years ago, and since then the new owner has been spending a large sum on renovating and fitting out the interior. It is now finished and all parts are open to the public. The quality of the work is of the highest standard and the various bars and rooms offer a wide variety of eating and drinking experiences. Well done! It is a great addition to the Waterfront.

Talking of the Waterfront, we must not forget that the Orwell from here to Felixstowe is one of the finest and most unspoilt rivers in England, and the only way to appreciate it is by water. Fortunately for those who don't own a boat, the lovely Orwell Lady departs regularly from Orwell Quay on trips down the river; these are a great delight. Details from the Tourist Information Centre. In my view, not enough Ipswich people appreciate their delightful river. When I was a newcomer to Ipswich I even spoke to someone who had lived here all his life and didn't even know Ipswich had a river! Up river, too, improvements are taking place to the footpath and there is still hope that one day we may have boats to hire on the river.

A very important planning application is currently occupying a great deal of the time of your committee. This is the application by Tesco to develop the old B&Q site by the river on Grafton Way. Tesco are wealthy and determined and my guess is that it will happen, despite the foreseeable problems of traffic management and the effect on town centre businesses. The proposed store is large and would sell a whole range of goods, not just food. What effect this store would have on the Westgate (Civic Centre) site is worrying indeed.

Another matter taking up much of our time at present is the proposal by Ipswich School to build on its current playing pitches and move them further away. The sale of the present site for housing is needed to finance the new and improved sports facilities on the new site. There are many who fear that this development, if granted, would open up the development of the whole 'Northern Fringe'.

It is not my purpose here to lecture on the planning process, but I do want to point out that the councillors on the Planning Committee are told how many representations there have been in favour of or opposed to each application. This means that, although you can be sure the Society will respond in detail, it is only one response, even though it will be valued because it is from the Society. But if you as private citizens were to comment, this would swell the weight of opinion put to the councillors who, after all, seek votes and don't like going against 'public opinion'. So if you feel strongly about any planning issue do write to the Planning Department at IBC ~ don't just leave it to the Society. Incidentally, you might be surprised at how few responses are generally received, which means every one is very important.

The recent erection in Cromwell Square of the statue of Prince Obolensky has prompted many to ask. "What about Wolsey?" They (and you) will be pleased to know that this is now being

addressed. A site in front of the west end of St Peter's Church (near his Gate) is available and a group has been set up to achieve a suitable statue on it.

And finally, we are well advanced in plans to celebrate our 50th birthday next year with a programme of events and more permanent celebrations, possibly in Christchurch Park or outside the Town Hall.

*Jack Chapman*

## Heritage Open Days 2009

This year we are fortunate to have Ipswich Transport Museum participating in this event by supplying a 'heritage' vehicle to link between some of the properties involved in Heritage Open Days. New venues for this year are:

- Harwich Royal Yacht Club at Woolverstone. There will be guided tours to view an exhibition of the yachting archives, artefacts and pictures.
- Martlesham Heath Aviation Society Control Tower Museum will be pleased to welcome visitors for their Annual Open Day.
- Wherstead Park. The mansion was built for the Harland family in 1792-4. The property has changed hands many times, but it remains much the same as it did in the 1800s. The East of England Co-operative Society now owns it. I have recently visited the impressive mansion and grounds and would encourage members to have a look for themselves.
- Arlingtons Brasserie, Museum Street. This building stood empty for many years. It has now been completely refurbished. It was the home of the original Ipswich Museum.
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There are twenty-one other buildings participating in this year's event. They represent seven centuries in the history of Ipswich, providing a chance to see inside historical buildings, many of which are not normally accessible to the general public. There will be free guided walks on both the Saturday and the Sunday led by Ipswich Tourist Guides.

All information will be in the Society's leaflet available from mid-August at the Tourist Information Centre, museums and libraries.

*Dianne Hosking*

## Winter Lectures

The dates are on the back page, so they can go into your diaries now. We are arranging another varied programme with some excellent speakers and a full description of the subjects will appear in the October Newsletter. The first lecture on Wednesday, 21 October, will be given by Dr John Blatchly who will be speaking about a few of the people commemorated by our Blue Plaques, together with others he thinks could/should be featured. Members hardly need to be told that Dr Blatchly is always stimulating and worth listening to on any topic.

# Our AGM in Brief

**29 April 2009 at University Campus Suffolk**

Our Chairman, Jack Chapman, welcomed the Deputy-Mayor, Councillor Inga Lockington, who chaired the meeting in the absence of the Mayor. Apologies for absence were read out and the Minutes of the 2008 AGM were approved. The Chairman's Report had referred to the Government's pending decision on possible administrative boundary changes in Suffolk. Professor Peter Odell asked what the Society's present position was. Jack Chapman explained that the Society had always wanted more realistic enlarged boundaries for Ipswich and of the two options available the Society was backing 'North Haven' as best for the town.

The Treasurer, Ken Wilson, explained some of the less obvious features of the Society's accounts. For example, the Newsletter costs in 2008 were much the same as in 2007 although they appeared greater because of when payments were made. He drew attention to the value of Gift Aid and to the Society's contribution to the River Action Group for refurbishing notice boards. He also explained in answer to a question that the General Fund capital was not excessive but average for such a charity as ours and some of this would be needed for our 50th anniversary events next year. He would welcome suggestions for such expenditure. He thanked Ray and J O Atkinson for auditing the accounts at short notice. The accounts were formally adopted.

The results of the election of Officers and Executive Committee members can be seen on the back page of this Newsletter. The meeting closed at 8 pm and was followed by Richard Lister's talk, reported below, about UCS.

## The Founding & Future of UCS

It seems something of a miracle that UCS is up and running already. Richard Lister, Director of Planning at UCS, was seconded from the University of Essex in 2006. In those early days, he looked out of his office window in Felaw Maltings right across the dock to an empty space. As we now know, the building is here - we sat in a lecture theatre listening to him - having opened in September last year. But more miraculous than the speed of building was what he called "the window of funding which we wriggled through." If UCS had been planned to start 6-9 months later it couldn't have happened; funding would not have been available.

He described many features of UCS which must be unfamiliar to those of us who only know about traditional universities. Put brutally, UCS is a 'start-up business'. It doesn't have room to gamble and it must fill its courses. It couldn't, for example, create a School of Engineering which would be prohibitively expensive. On the other hand its main science provision - and very successful - is related to health, which in turn links to sport and exercise.

One of the main aims at UCS is to "reduce the skills gap" in Suffolk where the take-up of Higher Education had been "not too bad" in Ipswich but worse in the wider county. The absence of a university in the county has made university education seem remote or unreal to many school leavers. So quite deliberately UCS is a county-wide institution - a structure not tried before in the

UK. Apart from the 'HQ' buildings in Ipswich, there are other centres in Bury, Lowestoft, Great Yarmouth (sic) and Otley, together with numerous smaller learning centres elsewhere.

At present there are ca.3,700 full-time equivalent students (part-time counts as half!) so as universities go it is quite small. Mr Lister would like it to grow to some 7,000 students within the next 6-7 years, when "Ipswich would be a real university town!" He thinks this would change Ipswich for the better, as has happened in Lincoln for instance. UCS's relationship with the Universities of East Anglia and Essex continues as before. Degrees are awarded by UEA and Essex although UCS owns the courses. Some courses could perhaps be developed jointly in future (Law, for example). He thinks that UCS will help to bring the other two universities together more and in the long run they could all grow so that East Anglia would be a powerful international player and able to compete at the highest level with the great American universities.

There is a considerable economic value to the town in many ways, despite the decentralised nature of UCS. It has been estimated that UCS is worth £35m to Ipswich, which could eventually rise to £100m. Phase II on Orwell Quay will be the next part to be built. That should be ready by September 2010 or January 2011. And student accommodation for 400 is being built nearby in Duke Street.

A striking remark was that 40% of UCS students say they want to run their own businesses, so UCS aims to teach some of the skills of entrepreneurship. But in any case, as Mr Lister pointed out, employees of the future will need to adapt to a more flexible labour market.

Mr Lister had begun with a reference to The Ipswich Society's keen support of the fully fledged creation of a university in the town. Perhaps that's one reason why the attendance at this AGM was the largest for some time. It may have also helped that people hoped for a tour of the new building, which did follow even though the numbers and limited access made it difficult. But other opportunities will surely crop up. Finally, I'm sure every listener must have been impressed with Richard Lister's talk. UCS is fortunate to have such a good communicator, one with such enthusiasm and vision.

Nibbles and drinks were enjoyed by the many members who stayed to chat in the expansive entrance area of this landmark building.

*Neil Salmon*

## Tesco's Proposals

We have now met the Tesco team. We put our case to them (as set out in the April Newsletter) which they went through line by line. The proposed Tesco Extra superstore would be nothing like as large as we stated but smaller than at Copdock. They are keen to emphasise our error! The figures we gave refer to the whole development including the "further retail/restaurant and cafe units". They reiterated the view that people would come to the free car park, walk the difficult walk to the town centre, walk back and do the big shop at Tesco's and drive home. We are not convinced.

The commonest complaint they receive is of overcrowding and too narrow aisles. They think they need extra space to improve their offer and they will not take much trade from other supermarkets. Currently, according to their figures, they have 31% of trade compared with Sainsbury's 38%. This is without their two latest outlets in Duke Street and at St Matthew's roundabout. We don't believe that Tesco is very concerned about improving its offer unless it leads to an increased share of trade and hence profits. It seems as if, when all is established, Tesco's would have over 40% of the trade. Is this a situation we are happy with?

Their analysis of the other potential shopping sites was thus: the Mint Quarter- it hasn't happened yet after 15 years and so it never will; Crown Street North - not worth mentioning; the Civic Centre site - too small as proposed and too little car parking.

After discussions with Ipswich Central they said that town centre traders were pleased to have the extra free car parking and felt that their specialised wares would not be affected. However a recent report in the Evening Star told an entirely different story. They were adamant that the functional passageway to Princes Street bridge was in fact a good piece of modern architecture and would stay. They were dismissive of the idea of a fine footbridge running from near the Railway Hotel diagonally across the river.

In view of the current financial situation they thought it likely that it would be built in stages - that is a bare store without the apartments or hotels and fitness centre. This would lead to a half finished building in a prime site. As regards the increased traffic generated they were relying on Suffolk County Council to produce a plan for the gyratory system to solve it! They would consider our suggestion for a secondary entrance from the riverside.

Finally, there have been a mere nine letters of objection; could members please write.  
*Mike Cook and John Norman*

## Ipswich School's Applications

Ipswich School's applications for a new sports facility on Tuddenham Road and a development on Valley Road.

Ipswich School has made two large separate but financially inter-dependent applications. John Norman and I have met with the School development team over two long meetings. They have been unfailingly helpful in providing information.

At the outer end of Tuddenham Road beyond the Millennium Cemetery the School has applied to develop over 50 acres of farming land they own into a sports complex which would have many pitches for all sports, notably two hockey pitches on a thin layer of water; there would also be a two storey pavilion, a very large sports hall and a reservoir to store water. These large facilities are required because the school is increasing in numbers, particularly girls. It would be available for use to other schools, other educational establishments and other organisations. Though we are unhappy about moving the locus of sports activities further from the centre we accept that development here is inevitable and will make Tuddenham Road a sports centre of Ipswich. The facilities will be

superb, certainly regional and in the case of hockey national in standard. It would be a real asset for the whole of Ipswich.

We have two worries that need to be addressed: firstly the upward light emitted needs to be strictly designed, controlled and monitored so that there is minimal spill upwards and outwards to the countryside to the north. Secondly, transport arrangements need to be looked at more closely. Most will be by road transport because schools can comply with risk assessments most easily and cheaply by using buses. However walking and cycling need to be encouraged and therefore safe. It is essential that a pedestrian and cycle way is constructed from the existing one at Colchester Road, crossing the railway in a safe way and continuing on land "borrowed" from the cemetery and entering the site before the Pets' Cemetery.

The second application concerns the School's Notcutt playing fields to the north of Valley Road between Henley and Westerfield Roads. The School has made an outline application to build 220 houses, a care home and a community building. Access to the care home would be from Vere Gardens and to the remainder from Valley Road by demolishing number 161.

The Society is objecting strongly on the following grounds :-

1. As yet there is no need for Greenfield developments, though strictly speaking this is Brownfield as it is already developed for sports use.
2. In ten years time there will be a need to develop north of Valley Road. It should then be done with a master plan which would allow in due course 1500 - 2000 houses with transport systems, educational, medical, sports, and shopping facilities. A development of this size would support this infrastructure. What must not happen is relatively small developments such as this with no master plan drawn up by competent urban planners and architects. Already Mersea Homes has joined the bandwagon with an application for 1100 homes on an adjacent site. (They do plan a bus service)
3. There is no real effort to provide for sustainable transport such as walking and cycling. Any development north of Valley Road will have to provide a cycle and pedestrian way which is relatively road traffic free and safe at all times.
4. It cannot be right to demolish a very serviceable early twentieth century detached five bedroom dwelling to provide access when there is a vacant plot next door.
5. The access to the care home via Vere Gardens is undesirable as is any new access on to Valley Road.
6. 596 letters of representation have been registered. Some may be the same but none that I have read are anything but local residents' objections.

***Mike Cook***

## Birkin Haward's 'The Spinney'

Outline Planning Application to demolish 108 Westerfield Road (The Spinney) and erect a 3-storey 50-bed care home and 4 assisted living flats

The Ipswich Society discussed this application recently and is unanimously opposed to the demolition of this house. The Society has received many calls from its members supporting this view. Our reasons are as follows:



1. It is the only 'modern' domicile in the Borough.
2. It is a good example of a well designed house of that era and is attractive aesthetically both from the outside and the inside.
3. At the time it was built it attracted positive reports both in the English architectural press and in the German.
4. It functions well as a large house, currently lived in by at least six people. Whilst some renovation and updating are needed, it is not in a state of terminal decay.
5. It was designed by Birkin Haward for himself and his family to live in which they did until his death in 2002.
6. There was an attempt to List the house then which was supported by English Heritage and the Twentieth Century Society; unfortunately it was unsuccessful.
7. Birkin Haward, Ipswich born and bred, was Ipswich's most notable and prolific modern architect. His buildings are attractive and successful, some already Listed. Further, he wrote many books on architecture in Suffolk and was a fine artist; some of his output was on show very impressively at the Town Hall Gallery recently.
- 8.

We support strongly the efforts of the Twentieth Century Society and, hopefully, English Heritage to have it Spot Listed until a substantive decision is made.

Postscript: we are pleased to add that a Building Preservation Order has been placed on the house.

## Further Planning Issues

Further Planning Issues with Decisions made by the Borough Council

**Cranfield's garage and car park areas, Key Street:** approval has been given for 4-8 storey student accommodation in two blocks linked by a bridge.

**Regatta Quay, the (western) tower block A:** one extra storey approved.

**12-12A Arcade Street: demolition and replacement with 14 flats and offices -** application withdrawn.

**Corn Exchange, King Street, replacement external canopy:** refused, but decision referred to the Government Office of the East because this is a Council property.

**Handford Road, V A Marriott's:** outline planning permission granted for demolition and erection of 3 storey medical practice with ambulance station and 144 space car park.

**Rear of 56 Berners Street,** two storey dwelling on car parking area: application approved.

## Aspects of Maritime Ipswich

Double acts don't always work well. This one did, because for our last winter lecture on 11 March Stuart Grimwade and Des Pawson, both members of our Society and Ipswich Maritime Trust, had

planned it very well. Each concentrated on his own expertise to create a richly patterned presentation. No one leaving the lecture would have been in any doubt that the seaport of Ipswich has a long and fascinating history.

Des Pawson's main two subjects were rope making and sail making. Drawing upon his great knowledge of ropes- he has his own museum of ropes and rope making - he reminded us of the large number of rope makers who worked in Ipswich. Sadly, there are no extant photographs of rope making in the town, so he relied upon photos of a similar Dutch undertaking to show what a rope walk looked like. At the end of the lecture, members of the audience were able to practise rope making under Des's watchful eye. That red cap of his commanded even more attention than usual as his gang concentrated on getting it right!

The craft of sail making lasted much longer in Ipswich, only finishing with Whitmore's. Unlike most other activities at the docks, sail making employed a large number of women. Mrs Whitmore donated a lot of the firm's specialist tools to Ipswich Maritime Trust when the business closed.

Stuart's contribution centred on his wonderful range and number of photographs. Many of the older ones he has restored and several others were ones he's taken, even going back to the 1950s. (Two or three members asked me later whether it was possible for a baby boy to be taking photos so long ago; if he heard that, I hope he was pleased rather than embarrassed!) Very few people would have seen most of these photos so it was a revelation to appreciate that such mighty ships came into our Wet Dock, even up to Dock Head which is now so silted up. Ipswich Maritime Trust is trying to persuade the developers of The Mill (ex-Cranfields) and ABP to clean it out. In addition to 3-masted tall ships, even 5-masted vessels visited the dock. Then there were large steamers too, and paddle steamers in the New Cut, where the existing Steamboat Tavern was not idly named.

In addition to all the industry around the dock, we were reminded of the Promenade on the Island and how popular it was for townspeople's relaxation. For special events, like the launch of the first lifeboat, it seemed as if the whole town turned out. But boats and water can still be a big attraction; 35,000 people attended 'Sail Ipswich' in 1997.

Stuart's surprise packet for us was the Luftwaffe's map of the dock area (provided by John Blatchly) with Ransome and Rapier and Felaw Maltings amongst the targets, both of which had near misses, probably because of the bomb aimers' premature releases.

I'm sure members will look forward to the completion of Ipswich Maritime Trust's display cases which will be in the courtyard of The Mill. The first and biggest is already installed and may be in use when you read this. The changing displays in those cases should make a valuable start in showing us many more Aspects of Maritime Ipswich.

*Neil Salmon*

## Notes & Comments

### **Both road and rail**

Chris Mole, MP for (most of) Ipswich, is now Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Department of Transport with responsibility for National Networks. This must be one of the most

onerous jobs, with never enough money and British geography making French/German solutions impossible. At least he knows about the shortcomings of the A12 and A14 and the limitations of our rail links. We wish him well and hope his efforts will be productive.

### **The Town's fame, far and wide**

News that Ipswich Town had appointed Roy Keane as the new manager made headlines in this country. But a friend who was staying in Italy first picked up the startling news from al-Jazeera! Yet there are some who say that this Arabic station is only interested in violence!

### **An attractive trio**

The newly cleaned and restored exterior of the Corn Exchange (photo on page 1) reveals a pale stonework markedly different from the general effect of the (also cleaned) Town Hall. But equally pleasing is the way the Corn Exchange fabric relates to its other two neighbours - the cream stone of Barclay's Bank and the Chelsea Building Society.

### **From SWISS to Suffolk**

The catchy, perhaps gimmicky, name for the new sixth form college was to be the SWISS Centre because it will cater for students from South West Ipswich and South Suffolk. Instead it will be called Suffolk One, a name both dull and geographically misleading. However, the main achievement is that it is being built and will open in September next year. The Society will welcome it for its educational value but still regrets that its location will generate a great amount of traffic. The frequent comings and goings in a sixth form college can't be easily met by public transport.

### **There's a lot in a name**

Thank goodness J D Wetherspoon's haven't gone in for The Rat and Dunghill kind of name which some poor pubs have had to put up with. Calling the former Yates' Wine Bar at Tower Ramparts The Robert Ransome (photo on page 1) does relate it to Ipswich, and specifically recalls one of our great forebears - who is also commemorated by the Society's Blue Plaque in Old Foundry Road, the site of his first iron foundry in 1789.

### **The shape of transport to come?**

Good news that the shuttle bus (Route 38) from the two bus stations on a circular route to Russell Road, will keep its local authorities' subsidies and so continue to provide a free service and keep some cars out of the town centre. A second shuttle bus route has been proposed from UCS/Coprolite Street to the town centre. Let's hope there's money for it.

### **Working for the community**

The future of Broomhill Pool is still uncertain. The Broomhill Pool Trust is working with IBC and hopes to be able to submit another Lottery bid. Meanwhile, it seems a good idea that a small number of offenders on Community Service are being used to re-paint and clean up the pool. It's in nobody's interest to allow further neglect.

## **Look Up!**

Brian Jepson has taken for the Newsletter a series of photographs of the upper storeys of buildings in Ipswich. We shall include a couple from time to time. You may find one of these more easily

recognisable than the other-that's the idea! But the bigger idea, of course, is to encourage members to keep on taking an interest in the town's architecture and art. In shopping streets, for example, the shops at ground level may come and go as they have always done, but the buildings above usually stay much the same - for good or ill!

## Can you help?

The Ipswich Building Preservation Trust is one of the trinity of voluntary bodies in the town, which takes care of the built environment. We are appealing to the membership of The Ipswich Society for a volunteer to fill a new management post of Chief Executive. We need a lateral thinker with appropriate experience to act as gatekeeper for the organisation. You will concern yourself with the administration of the Trust's affairs, in all its variety as well as helping, under the guidance of the Chairman and the Board of Trustees, to forge an exciting future for the IBPT, to match our achievements of the last thirty years.

Are there any recently retired accountants amongst the membership of the Society? We would love to hear from you, as our Treasurer is retiring. This is a chance to keep your hand in and to work with a convivial bunch of people, who are endeavouring to bring about some worthwhile urban regeneration projects in Ipswich.

If you would like to discuss either of these positions, please contact Dr Charles Tracy.

## Waterfront Developments

### **Almost (but not yet) complete Waterfront Developments**

The race between City Living and Wharfside to be first to complete residential accommodation on the Waterfront has not only collapsed into the recession; it has also left a lasting legacy of un-refurbished Victorian buildings, an eye-sore that is likely to remain for some years.

There are two major developers of Northern Quay sites between Stoke Bridge and the Custom House. Wharfside are developing Cranfield's Mill including the 23 storey tower block (The Mill) and City Living are redeveloping what was Paul's malt and barley facilities. Both had Victorian buildings that, although not Listed, were considered worthy of restoration and the granted permission made it clear that any redevelopment should convert and adapt the former maltings to residential use. It was the inclusions of these older buildings that were to give the developments character and resilience.

City Living, redeveloping Regatta Quay, negotiated the detail of the restoration (and partial demolition) of the former Paul's maltings in the centre of their development. Predominantly a U - shaped building, the lower arm was along the Waterfront and the two wings ran back towards Key Street. Unfortunately the wings were too close together and could not meet the Building Regulation requirements (fire could have jumped the gap between the buildings). Furthermore the eastern wing

had been converted into a grain silo, a concrete wall cast inside the brick outer skin and it was impossible to remove the concrete without destroying the brick walls. Permission was granted to knock down the eastern maltings providing both the west and the front were restored and converted. This is exactly what City Living have done and there are now residents in the apartments.

Similar difficulties affected Victorian structures on Cranfield's but the story here is different. The building complex was purchased from Allied Mills by the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) who then ran a competition to find a development partner - a team who would comprehensively redevelop not only the Victorian maltings and silos but also the garage and lorry park in the middle of the gyratory road system, (using the money generated from the new build developments).

Wharfside won the competition and appointed Laing O'Rourke to construct the new buildings, including the Dance House for Dance East, and the 8, 13, 17 and 23 storey apartment blocks. They did not include the restoration of the old buildings in the Laing O'Rourke contract. Result, as Laing O'Rourke complete their building contract, the derelict silos and maltings remain in a partially demolished state, ugly and unused. The first residents have moved into the eight storey building along the College Street frontage) and they look out on to dereliction, pigeon roosts and temporary netting.

And although the two triangular sites that served the Cranfield's lorry fleet for over a century have planning permission, for social housing, live-work units, hotel and/or student flats, nothing is likely to be built in the current economic climate.

There is a clear contract between EEDA and the developer, and a planning condition that insists the entire site is developed comprehensively and contemporaneously but it is unlikely to be achieved. The money has gone, the new buildings substantially finished (but the taller units not yet fitted out) and the banks reluctant to put more capital into expensive development with little return. I suspect the partially demolished Victorian buildings will remain for some years. Hopefully not as long as Fison House in Princes Street designed by the excellent Birkin Haward. Three of the four sides around the central courtyard were completed in the 1960's, a temporary corrugated metal cladding applied awaiting further development. We're still waiting!

*John Norman*

### **Almost (but not yet) complete Waterfront Developments 2**

A much happier story about the completion of Waterfront Developments is Isaac's (the Isaac Lords, Merchant's House complex). Redevelopment here has been going on for some time, initially by Stuart and Gina Cooper who won a couple of Ipswich Society awards for their hard work and investments. However the time came for Stuart to retire and he sought to sell the complex, but was very selective as to whom he would sell. A number of major commercial developers were interested (mainly in demolishing everything, Listed buildings and all) but Ipswich Society member Aidan Coughlan stepped in and negotiated with the Coopers to purchase, not only the Vodka Bar (previously Cobbold's on the Quay) but also the commercial units fronting Wherry Lane (the whole complex) and his stated intentions were much as the Coopers had started. Aidan was also able to purchase the former Lloyds Bank buildings on the corner of Fore Street and Salthouse Street (the 1960's box!).

Chapman & Pleasance, the contractor working for Aidan, have just completed converting the warehouse, the malt kiln and the space that was the Vodka Bar into an excellent bar and bistro under the collective name Isaac's. There is an extension, the Orangery, a private dining room over the refurbished toilets and the very popular patisserie on the Waterfront. The courtyard is now paved through to the Cross Way and the Sale Room licensed for Civil Weddings. Further work is under way (there are some eleven Listed buildings in the complex) and Aidan has promised a glass-fronted micro brewery in the former Lloyds Bank building.

Transforming Listed buildings into modern uses is always a compromise, but they cannot stand still. They must serve the needs of today and generate an income that will go some way to meet the overheads of their operation. Installing a major kitchen with extraction flue, beer cellar and waste bin storage discreetly into the middle of the complex has worked, none of the modern requirements being obvious to the drinkers and diners, or to the promenaders who now stroll in their droves along the Waterfront on sunny Sunday afternoons. I recommend a visit.

*John Norman*

## More Shorts

Olympic teams from some of the smaller countries have been investigating facilities in Ipswich for 2012. We hope that one will find Ipswich a good base camp.

The Society has agreed to support the renovation of the granite drinking fountain in Alexandra Park which was featured, with photographs, in our October Newsletter.

A survey of the world's big cities, showing which are the best to live and work in, is largely dominated by mainland European cities with Vienna top and Zurich second. London is 38th out of 215, just behind the top three American cities. (You get what you pay for!)

Over-used words - 'iconic', 'exciting', 'stunning'? It would be nice to add 'sustainable' but there seems to be no substitute for this crucial concept.

## Tesco, Ipswich and End of World

**(after the novel by Haruki Murakami)**

When I started this series of articles two-and-a-half years ago, my themes were the complexity of modern life, the difficulty in making sense of what is actually happening around us, and the confusion of messages with which we are constantly bombarded. This is compounded by our own personal predispositions, leading different individuals to perceive external reality in very different ways, and creating dilemmas which have both practical and moral dimensions. Currently-topical local questions in this vein are: how do we decide whether a giant Tesco store in Grafton Way will be good or bad for Ipswich, and which system of local government will be in the town's best interests? And in the background, of course, is the world really going to end in climate catastrophe, and do we really want to be bothered?

The fundamental question is, "How do we decide anything?" In seeking to resolve dilemmas, different individuals will reach different conclusions according to the unique combination of facets of those individuals' personalities, such as: do you welcome change and opportunity, or do you tend to resist it, valuing what we have and being risk-averse? Is your approach rational and systematic, or do you place more emphasis on human values and principles? Are you outgoing and gregarious, or do you prefer to mind your own business and value your privacy? The list is virtually endless, and there are no "right answers" when it comes to individual personality: we are who we are, a mix of all these influences in differing proportions which, by definition, means that each of us is individually incomplete. In a sense, we are all equally "wrong" in that, try as we may, our individual perceptions and judgements cannot encompass all the possibilities at once: the opportunity is therefore to cooperate with each other in building a better conclusion from a more complete understanding, arrived at through constructive discussion and debate; yet so often the approach taken is to put all the partial points of view in futile competition with each other. Indeed, the dichotomy between values and rationality perhaps explains why there currently seems to be disproportionately more perceived outrage about the millions of pounds' worth of MPs' expenses, than about the trillions that went "missing" in the banking crash. What is objectively the more massive reality gives way to what is subjectively the more outrageous reality, courtesy of our human perception and judgement.

Despite the objective reality of a given situation, therefore, the acts of perception and judgement by incomplete human personalities introduce a moral dimension which sets "what is" against "what could be", and logic against values, rather than using each constructively to test the validity of the other. Ideally rationality and morality would be complementary rather than adversarial: but how do we resolve issues when we disagree? And how, therefore, can the Ipswich Society properly represent its disparate membership?

### **Tesco and the Ipswich Society**

Starting with the last question, I don't believe the Society does try to represent every individual member. How could it? What it does seek to represent is the best interests of the town as a living entity. For instance, the Society would not seek to be the arbiter of good taste when it comes to comparing one supermarket's offering with another's, but it can usefully and constructively offer objective views on how a given major development will affect the life of the town. With Tesco at Grafton Way, the issue is not specifically with Tesco, but whether such a large single store in such a large complex in that prime location will benefit the town as a whole: whether it will serve as a stepping-stone to link the waterfront with the town centre, or as a barrier which cuts the two of from each other; whether it will be a proper town-centre store, or a "drive-to" destination which happens to be centrally-located; hence whether it will enhance the life of the town centre, or undermine it. And if the result is to create a "Tescopolis" as some have suggested, is it prudent to put so many of the town's eggs into one retail basket? Supermarkets are indeed crucial to modern life and are by no means minimised in the Society's deliberations: indeed we should all appreciate how dependent we are on 'just-in-time' provisioning, which carries the corollary that in the event of a major infrastructure failure, we are just nine meals from starvation. But equally, we should value a healthy degree of diversity, lest the modern supermarket business model, currently very healthy, should one day be rendered non-viable, for instance by fuel shortages.

It may take considerable effort to defend this long-term imperative in the face of short-term market forces. Individual members of the Society may favour Tesco or a different store, or they may simply want to put food on the table, and such preferences are for them to express. But merely leaving the

site derelict is neither preferable nor the only alternative! The Society's aim is surely to promote a healthy balance so that everyone's legitimate interests and aspirations are met to some equitable degree. The risk is that low-cost convenience will be bought at the expense of town-centre vitality and diversity, unless an appropriate balance is achieved between the scale of the new development and that which is essential elsewhere.

### **Unitary Local Government**

The same principle of equity has guided the Society's submissions to the Boundary Committee on Unitary Local Government for Suffolk. It is a matter of personal perception as to whether you believe we live in one Suffolk, or whether there are two distinct Suffolks, or three, or more. Arguably, the fact that there can be such disagreement undermines the argument that there is only one! And there is a different consideration again as to whether your own personal interests would be better served by one model or another. But the choice is restricted by the Boundary Committee to those models which are deemed financially viable, hence we have to choose between a single authority or two distinct ones. I seem to recall a correspondent to the Evening Star urging the view that a simple majority vote across the county is the appropriate mechanism for sustaining Suffolk's agricultural heritage through a single unitary authority. On the contrary, this logic seems to me to argue very strongly for two separate authorities, and the Society's view remains that there are at least two communities with disparate but complementary interests which would be best served by having their proper voices at regional and national level, through distinct but cooperative unitary authorities. The arguments are made more completely elsewhere, but the principle is worth re-iterating, that everyone's legitimate interests and aspirations should be supported and promoted to some equitable degree. The risk is that one-Suffolk may buy lower-cost unitary local government at the expense of the distinct aspirations of a viable North Haven, unless an appropriate balance is achieved by creating two unitary authorities.

### **Greenhouse gas emissions and climate catastrophe**

This brings us to the end of the world. Returning to the issue of food retail, the modern business model is predicated on cheap energy and low-cost food-miles. Customers might argue, "It's all very well for the Ipswich Society to argue against a new Tesco in the centre of town, but I just want to put food on the table without having to drive miles for it: why should they be allowed to stop that?" Never mind that it may already have travelled around the world before reaching the table: I recall one firm shipping seafood from the UK to the Far East for processing and packaging before shipping it back to the UK, because it was the best way to deliver a quality product. And why not? But now shift the setting to somewhere such as Darfur, whose residents might say, "It's all very well for the developed countries to defend their food-miles, but their carbon emissions have brought prolonged drought to this country, and I just want to put food on the table: why should they be allowed to stop that?" I choose Darfur because of the all-too-present impact of sustained drought, but the same may soon be true of California, Southern Europe, and Australia, where there has been sustained drought for the past decade. Just look at the falling water level behind the Hoover Dam.

The point is this: cheap energy has brought us great freedoms and independence, but the price is now becoming apparent in impending climate catastrophe, yet there remain differences as yet unreconciled on what actions will be effective, and how we should pursue them. It is said that our rate of carbon emissions properly requires three planet Earths to re-absorb them: how simple it would be if we had three such planets, one for the sceptics who prefer to squander energy, one for those who would safeguard future generations, and one for those who don't know who to believe or what to do. But sadly, there is only one. There may still be options for the moment but, with only



one planet, it must eventually come down to just one outcome for all of us. How do we decide what to do, in such a way that everyone's legitimate interests and aspirations are met to some equitable degree on one planet?

### **"Spin"**

As if all that wasn't enough, our perceptions can, of course, be manipulated. Consider the following statements:

1. The Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change has said that if the effective concentration of carbon dioxide in the air is doubled, the average global temperature will be expected to rise by between 2°C and 4.5°C this century.
2. The IPCC and the EU each recommend working to limit the average global temperature rise to no more than 2°C: this is not a "safe" limit, but merely the very lowest that may be achievable in practice and therefore least likely to incur runaway global warming and climate catastrophe.
3. The Government has committed to targets for emissions with the stated aim of restricting the average global temperature rise to no more than 2°C, but based on a doubling of the effective carbon dioxide concentration.

These three statements can be reconciled ("spun") in several ways. Politically, we might conclude that the Government prudently recognises the immense cost of measures to address climate change, and is taking the most optimistic view while it sees how the climate develops in practice, in order to minimise the risk to the world economic order. Scientifically, it is self-evident that on this course, the Government will fail to meet its objective, since 2°C is the lower limit for the temperature rise, which means in practice that the actual outturn will inevitably be higher. And sceptically, not to say cynically, we might infer that the Government is incompetently committing to the greatest level of measures that will definitely fail! Which of these interpretations is objective, and which ones are loaded with values and implied motivations which may or may not be relevant, and which may clearly influence your view of what action is appropriate?

We have a few short years in which to tackle emissions across the globe, and still no credible plan. The risk is that the continued emission of greenhouse gases will buy low-cost energy at the expense of the viability of the planet for future generations, unless we find an appropriate balance between energy demands and a sustainable aggregation of energy supplies, and ultimately between exponential population growth and finite resources. Whatever the outcome, it will very likely be a natural consequence of human activity: objective reality and human nature have to be reconciled if the species is to survive. As physicist Richard Feynman said, "For a successful technology, reality must take precedence over public relations, for nature cannot be fooled".

On all of these issues, is it within human nature to pursue mutual benefit for all through equitable cooperative agreement, or will we simply squander the opportunity in pursuit of individual advantage through futile adversarial difference? The Society aspires to a better Ipswich for all, but does society yet aspire to a better world for all? Don't both depend on your own democratic involvement?

***Mike Brain***

# Writing on the Wall

Do take a careful look at the east end of St Lawrence Church in St Lawrence Street. The flushwork frieze has been restored, a worthy accompaniment to the work done on the whole church and its valuable new use as a cafe. The frieze dating from a will of 1488 is a fascinating and touching piece of medieval history right in the middle of town, because the chancel was built largely at the expense of John Baldwyn, a draper, who left a wife, Joan, but no children. Alongside symbolic panels, including the shears of his trade, the inscription reads:

Pray for John Baldwyn and Jone hys wyf and for all christen sowles

## Letters to the Editor

### **THE FATE OF JOHN HUTTON'S ARTWORK**

**From John Harding**

I was very interested to read the article by Merv Russen about the work of John Hutton in the last issue of The Ipswich Society Newsletter. Some year or two ago I tried (unsuccessfully) to find out what had happened to the three glass panels which were in the Fisons building in Princes Street (which was awarded an RIBA Bronze Medal in 1958-1961). I was concerned that these fine works appeared to have been damaged - or worse. However it is good to know that two still exist and are hopefully to be restored and displayed at some time in the future. Unfortunately it appears that this will not be in Ipswich.

As you may know, my interest in the work is because I was the 'Job Architect' working with Birkin Haward on Harvest House (as it was originally known, I think) and therefore much involved with the installation of the panels. Likewise I was also the 'Job Architect' for Fisons' Levington Research Station and was very disappointed to know that the sgraffito panel in the main building had been destroyed in the 1980s - I can't imagine why.

It is sad that so much work in this area by this quite prolific and noted 20th century artist has been so badly treated. However we should be very grateful to Merv Russen for his work in researching and pursuing these works by John Hutton and achieving as much success as is possible in the circumstances.

### **IPSWICH AIRPORT TERMINAL BUILDING**

**From Angelika Voss**

I would like to comment on Bob Kindred's article in the January Newsletter where he claims that no Listed buildings were demolished between 1995 and 2008. I believe that this claim is factually incorrect. .... what did they do to the Ipswich Airport Terminal Building if not demolish it? Or does that not count because they replaced it by a new building that looks similar and has retained one wall of the original?

**A reply from Bob Kindred, Conservation & Urban Design Manager, IBC**

The building was severely altered and the substantial reconstruction retained more the spirit of the original building than the 1938 structure. 'Demolition' is complete loss - which is what our figures are about. The basis of its original protection, its 15 foot modular construction (claimed by English

Heritage to be a very rare and early example) was found not to exist and had probably been removed long before it was Listed in November 1997. It remains Listed Grade II.

## Ipswich Building Identified

The Society of Antiquaries' e-mail newsletter appealed to members to help the RIBA to identify the subject of a watercolour by John Sell Cotman simply called 'Interior of a great hall'. Very quickly a reply came from Dr John Blatchly who commented: "This marvellous image shows the dormitory of the Ipswich Blackfriars which was the home of the ancient town library of Ipswich from 1614 to 1767, when the Grammar School used it for the main schoolroom until 1842." The site of the Blackfriars is a conserved area off Foundation Street.

## Tall Tower Block

These extracts from an e-mail correspondence will probably ring a bell with many members who have had some of these thoughts, whether for or against tower blocks in Ipswich. An interested member of the public wrote to the Society expressing dismay that the 23 storey tower at The Mill (ex-Cranfields) was allowed to be built.

The Society's reply included:

"The simple answer is we did not approve of the 23 storey tower block: we vigorously opposed it, both in writing and by sending the Society's Planning Monitor to the meeting of the Planning Committee where he spoke for the allocated five minutes. We also know others supported the Society in our opposition. In our opinion the 23 storey tower breaks the skyline of the tree lined basin in which the town centre of Ipswich lies (as is now obvious from Wherstead Hill and from the top of Christchurch Park) and by doing so is eight storeys too tall. However, planning is a democratic process, decisions are taken by our elected representatives (local councillors) on the advice of officers, who recommended approval ... "

The response to this was lengthy but included:

"What really distresses me is that the whole mayoral/councillor body appears to have neither pride, foresight nor style as regards the overall development of Ipswich, the county town of Suffolk .... The deserted and redundant docks presented a golden opportunity to do something really imaginative and stylish covering the whole area on both sides of the marina - esplanades, cycle ways, tree-lined green spaces with stylish, harmonious low-rise housing and apartments, built in variations on a basic architectural design in essentially the same building material. A consistent all-of-a-piece regeneration plan drawn up by the town planners, offered out to the developers to bid for in keeping with the laid down rules to give the citizens both a pride in their town and a pleasing environment."

The most important points in the Society's reply were these:

"I think what you are alluding to is a desire for a single body to develop the whole of the Waterfront to a simple master plan, buildings that are co-ordinated and complementary. Unfortunately this is not the real world in the 21st century. Individual sites are owned by different people, each having the right to develop their site as they wish. All planners can do is refuse the idea submitted, suggest tweaks or accept with conditions .... The Ipswich Society was formed in 1960 .... Current members have been successful in persuading the Planning Committee to refuse numerous unsuitable, uninspiring applications. Perhaps we are at fault by not letting the public know what might have been built had we not been so active."

We concluded with the example of the proposed development of Shed 8 site, on Orwell Quay. One of our criticisms was its massiveness, mass being one of the considerations of the planning process. Ipswich Borough planners agreed with our critique and the proposal was refused. The developer came back with an alternative scheme - substantially, tower blocks - and again we objected and again the planners refused. The developer is further considering alternative proposals. The example was given to show that not all proposals are allowed and that the Planning Committee does listen to objections and does care about the town, although they may have different pressures and different values from the Society.

## An Evening on the Waterfront

May 20th was a beautiful evening when about forty Ipswich Society members met in front of the Old Custom House, with new and old buildings, ongoing construction and a full marina, anticipating an informative and pleasant evening. We were not to be disappointed. Our leaders were Lois and Chris Terry. We were split into two groups - one to look at 'Today and Tomorrow' west of the Custom House with Chris and the other to look at 'Today and Yesterday' with Lois to the east. The groups changed at 'halftime'.

With 'Today and Tomorrow' we were shown the new development replacing and also incorporating the old dockside buildings. The remaining cast iron columns and Victorian brickwork were familiar friends to older Ipswichians amongst us; some still referred to 'the dock' rather than 'the Waterfront'. Two new throughways between the Waterfront and College Street! Key Street allowed us to see the open-air area next to Cranfield's flour mill (sorry, Dance East) and also the new display window and case for the Maritime Trust. Dance East studios have concrete floors sitting on springs to give 'acoustic insulation', but it was the 'car stacker' parking system that Chris described which sounded the most futuristic.

With 'Today and Yesterday' we started at the great favourite, the Custom House, with its bricks imitating stone. Then we had a detailed look at the wonderful Isaac lord complex, also learning about wherries in Wherry Lane. The backs of the buildings and the Old Neptune Inn in Fore Street are surely one of the tourist sights of Ipswich, but oh, the traffic! At least we stopped the two lanes of traffic when we crossed the road! (How about a car-free day once a month?) Passing by University Campus Suffolk we stopped in Coprolite Street, learning of the old artificial fertiliser factory and the part the Rev John Stevens Henslow (tutor of Charles Darwin) played in discovering the raw phosphate material. We were also told about the first railway in China, between

Woosung and Shanghai - the train had been made at Ransomes and Rapier on the other side of the dock here in Ipswich!

The evening was still not over. We then had tea/coffee, cake and biscuits at Isaac Lord's, together with an exploration of the building. Excellent evening. Thank you, Lois and Chris.

**Bob Markham**

## The Public Warehouse

During the presentation last March on 'Aspects of Maritime Ipswich' by Stuart Grimwade and Des Pawson, reviewed elsewhere in this Newsletter, brief mention was made of the above named building, situated on the Island site, adjacent to what we now refer to as the old lock entrance in the New Cut. As some members may not have known about this building, now almost 180 years old and quite distinctive with its barrel shaped roof, I thought a few notes on its history may be of interest.

The opening of the Wet Dock in the 1840s brought increasing trade and shipping to Ipswich. Many businesses involved in the import and export trade built their own warehouses around the dock area, and while the Common Quay provided landing facilities for public use, there was little warehousing facility for the same public use - temporary storage for smaller amounts of goods in transit. This lack, and the ever-growing need to re-position the lock entrance to accommodate the larger ships that found difficulty in manoeuvring into the New Cut lock entrance, was finally recognised by the passing in 1877 of the Ipswich Dock Act. This gave the Ipswich Dock Commission the power to undertake these two improvements to the port as well as other associated works. In 1878 Thomas Miller, engineer to the Commission, presented 'A Plan of Ipswich Dock and Port, showing proposed new work'.

Included in this plan is the site of a proposed wharf and warehouse where the Public Warehouse stands today.

A report to the General Committee of Management of the Commission was presented in November 1879 by the Warehouse Committee. This stated that though a temporary wooden shed had been originally proposed as a way of measuring the use of a warehouse, "it would now be highly desirable if a permanent iron building could be erected." This suggestion was accepted by the Commissioners and by March 1880 plans had been prepared by Thomas Miller for a substantial corrugated iron shed 120 x 60 ft with necessary provision to receive a second floor. Early in April 1880 the General Management Committee minuted that William Whitford & Co, Royal Ironworks, Commercial Road, London "had entered into contract ... at the cost of £1106". The contract was sealed by the Commission on 9 April 1880.

On the grand opening of the new lock on 27 July 1881 - the day that the new Post Office on Cornhill and the new Museum in High Street were also opened - the Ipswich Journal reported that "the Commissioners have erected a public wharf and warehouse for general trade, and approved plans for an extension ..... to be carried out as trade develops ... "

So began the working life of this new building. Some details of how it operated can be drawn from the Commissioners' minute books. In September 1881 an advertisement asked for tenders to be submitted for the three year tenancy, rental payable yearly. If the tenant in that period applied to increase the storage capacity by putting in the second floor with any consequent alteration to the ground floor and office accommodation, the Commissioners if agreeable would provide the capital outlay and charge the tenant 7 per cent upon the sum required, to be paid at the same time as the yearly rental. Three tenders were received - the highest one of £ 121 p.a. from Charles Henry Cowell, was accepted - it was stated that the other offers, both lower, had sought to effect changes in the conditions relating to interest to be paid on any capital outlay for extension works. The tenant, it must be assumed, would have responsibility to allocate storage space, charging users on the basis of a scale of rates laid down by the Commissioners. At the turn of the century we find that R W Paul Ltd were tenants. In 1900, as the only applicants to tender, they paid £175 p.a. rental, and in 1902, again as the only applicants, offered £125 which was agreed to.

There is no doubt that more could be found out about the use of the Public Warehouse from the sources I have looked at and perhaps from the recollections of any members who had any working association with it. I hope someone can add more to this short history.

Sources:

- Ipswich Dock Commission Records Ref EL1 Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich
- Ipswich Dock Commission (IDC) Minute Book 1875-1893, EL1/1/3/6
- IDC General Committee of Management Minute Book 1870-1881 EL1/1/4/5
- IDC Warehouse Committee Papers 1878-1911 EL1/1/9/5/142-189
- Plan of Ipswich Docks, Thomas Miller, 1878 EL1/7/5/7
- Iron Warehouse Contract Drawings, Thomas Miller, 1880 EL1/7/6/7 Ipswich Journal 30 January 1881

*Ruth Serjeant*

## Trip to Eton and Windsor

Saturday, 18 April saw over fifty Ipswich Society members on the first outing of 2009. We visited Eton College on a lovely sunny day. Eton is one of the oldest schools in the country, founded in 1440 by King Henry VI to educate seventy scholars and supply his other foundation, Kings College, Cambridge. We were taken on a tour by three excellent guides, all mothers of boys at the College. The boys were back and walking to and from lessons, their frock coats trailing behind them and their books under their arms - they don't have school bags! Henry's statue took pride of place in the centre of the school yard. We looked around the oldest classroom in England with names of past pupils cut into wood everywhere, on desks and walls and tables. It was the custom to sign one's name when at the school.

We looked around the chapel which should have been twice as big, as what we see today was the choir area. That is why the seats all face the central aisle, side on to the altar. The Museum of Eton Life had been updated from last year and was very interesting. We visited the dining room that is still used today, little changed since it was built.

In the afternoon after a look around Windsor we took a boat to Boveney Lock on the River Thames.  
A fitting end to an enjoyable day.

***Barbara Barker***

## Your Committee & Events

MEMBERS' OUTINGS (which can be booked on the accompanying blue sheet)

- 19 Aug Bury St Edmunds at the invitation of the Bury Civic Society
- 16 Sep The Red House, Bexleyheath, home of William Morris, and Danson House
- 

EVENING EVENTS (lectures at Museum Street Methodist Church)

- 21 Oct John Blatchly on people commemorated by Blue Plaques
- 11 Nov The Ipswich Society's Annual Awards Evening (venue to be confirmed)
- 9 Dec To be announced
- 13 Jan Nick Rowlinson, Environment Agency, on Flood Protection in Ipswich
- 10 Feb David Ireland, Chief Executive of the Empty Homes Agency, London
- 10 Mar To be announced