

Winter 2008-9



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Ipswich Museums  
**Friends**  
**Newsletter**



The **Friends of the Ipswich Museums Newsletter** is published quarterly and distributed free to all members. The FOIM was set up in 1934 to support the work and development of the Ipswich Museums: Ipswich Museum in the High Street (including Gallery 3 at the Town Hall) , Christchurch Mansion and the Wolsey Gallery in Christchurch Park. Since April 2007 the Ipswich Museums have been managed as part of the Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service.

Friends continue to provide financial support to the Ipswich Museums as well as acting as volunteers. The Friends run outings, lectures and other events for their members.

The Friends provide guided tours of both the Mansion and the Museum, including free taster tours of the Mansion on Wednesday afternoons during British Summer Time. Tours can be booked by contacting the Mansion.

FOIM is a member of the British Association of Friends of Museums and Ipswich Arts Association.

Contributions to the Spring 2009 Newsletter should be sent to the editor by 30 January (address on back cover).

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**Cover Illustration: Track in Winter (1963)** by Lawrence Self

Our WEB site is currently under construction. Please visit it at [www.foim.org.uk](http://www.foim.org.uk). Jerry Latham would welcome your comments.

## Editor's Notes

In this issue I am delighted that two new members of staff based in Ipswich introduce themselves. I have already met them both. I have been helping Tori Adams catalogue the Ipswich collection of books, and Ann Ainsworth identified an unusual caterpillar I found eating my cabbages.

Last week I enjoyed a visit to the Giles exhibition in the Town Hall Gallery. Many of Giles cartoons featuring Suffolk locations are on display together with a number of cartoons he drew for local organisations. The exhibition continues until 17 January and is well worth a visit. Giles' enthusiasts will be pleased to hear that Mary Hollis, our talks organiser has arranged for John Field to give us a talk on Giles on 22 January.

Mary has also organised a talk on Dumfries House by Paul Bruce, timed for those members who are joining the

Friends Holiday in April and a visit to the Ipswich Town Library at Ipswich School.

Paul Bruce has invited Emma Roodhouse to give us a lunch time talk at Little Bealings. She will be telling us about artworks on paper which have local interest.

This issue includes a letter from Bob Entwistle, our Conservator who is spending a few months helping at a new museum in Bristol.

Finally, if you would like to spend a Saturday morning learning more about the Mansion, why not book on one or more of the guided tours that have been arranged for the New Year. Over the last few months several new tours have been devised and this is an excellent opportunity to sample them.

**Mary Halliwell**

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## Ipswich Arts Association Discounts

FOIM is a subscribing member of the Ipswich Arts Association and this entitles its individual members to discounts on certain events promoted by Ipswich Borough Council.

Paid-up members of societies affiliated to Ipswich Arts Association may receive special offers on some events promoted by Ipswich Borough Council. These events

will include the Ipswich Civic Concerts, and certain ballet and opera events at the Ipswich Regent Theatre. The concessions do not extend to other promoted events

To obtain these concessions, please produce a current membership card confirming your affiliation to FOIM when booking.

## Chairman's Message

Mary Hollis has worked hard as our new talks organiser to arrange a set of six lectures which I thought would be of great appeal to the Friends. However, the attendance at the first two lectures has been very disappointing. Mary and I would welcome your ideas to improve the appeal of these events. Do you like the new venue? What changes would you like to see?

This year our Christmas Party will be held at the Mansion on 10 December. It has been agreed that Friends can park inside the Park on that evening, entering through the Bolton Lane Gate. The Mansion will open at 7.00 pm. Christine Wiffen will be playing sixteenth century music on her harpsichord from 7.30 pm. Booking forms were sent out with the Autumn Newsletter, please ring Barbara Cole if you want to make a late booking (01473 630584).

Recently I took Emma Roodhouse (our new Fine and Decorative Arts Curator) to visit Gilbert Fills. Gilbert is the custodian of a collection of works in various mediums by the late John Weston. Emma is planning to purchase some late works by John Weston for the Borough Collection.

I would like to congratulate Jerry Latham on the progress he has made with our website. It looks very smart and professional, including the new Friends Logo which he has designed. Please visit the website at [www.foim.org.uk](http://www.foim.org.uk) to see for yourself. Jerry would appreciate your

comments while he is still completing the site.

You may have read in the local press that Ipswich Museum will receive £50000 from the Wolfson Fund to create their new Egyptian Gallery starting next year. The Council were disappointed that the Friends contribution was not mentioned by the press. In fact, as with Lottery Money, Wolfson grants are only provided to organisations who already have some funds available. In this case the Friends had offered £16000 over two years and money from the Lady Dorothy Foot bequest will also be used. As the Egyptians are on the school curriculum, we expect the new gallery will bring many new young visitors.

In this newsletter two new members of staff introduce themselves. Their arrival means that Ipswich Museums are fully staffed for the first time for many years. We look forward to continuing improvements in all parts of the Museum Service.

On behalf of the Council I extend Seasons Greetings to all Friends.

I am always happy to receive your questions and comments.

**Paul Bruce**  
**Chairman**  
01473 738265  
[pauldbruce@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:pauldbruce@tiscali.co.uk)

## Peter Berridge's Column

I am currently writing this sitting on a train at Colchester. I am hoping to be able to make it to Ipswich to meet an artist who would like to do a collaborative project with the museum service. The train service is once again in meltdown with all services to London suspended though hopefully trains will eventually start moving the other way. Anyway, for various reasons I am currently spending a lot of time on trains and though there are frustrations, like today, I do find that the journeys give me valuable thinking and preparation time. Currently, collectively, the museum service is focussing on a number of major projects and issues, some of which I will discuss shortly, and so this time to think, away from the normal everyday distractions of office based work, is particularly valuable.

One of the critical things at the moment is the looming deadline to submit a business plan to the MLA (The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council: the government body responsible for museums), covering 2009-2011, for the money we receive as part of the East of England Regional Museum Hub (along with Norfolk, Fitzwilliam and Luton). The guidelines for the business plan were only released on Friday and the protracted train journey I am on today has given me the first chance to really go through them and begin to understand what is required. We now have about four weeks to put together a package of proposals, worth about £1.5 million to Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service, which is slightly daunting particularly as some of the guidelines are

slightly fuzzy at the edges. Though as you break down a task like this, especially when you are doing it as part of a broader partnership, it soon starts to get manageable.

Another proposal I am working on at the moment relates to 'Stories of the World'. This is one of the major national initiatives linking museums to the 2012 Olympics. The scheme is also being managed by the MLA and the deadline is also in about four weeks for the initial proposals to be submitted. What they are looking for are co-ordinated bids from consortia of five or six partners from each of the English regions and, for my sins, following a meeting in Cambridge of interested parties, I have taken on the role of producing an outline proposal. The working title of the proposal is 'East meets East' and will focus on China and the Indian sub-continent and will relate to a range of work taking place over the next four years including major exhibitions and community engagement work. The world collections at Ipswich lend themselves very well to this initiative. If successful, and it is a big if, then the overall project would receive the Olympic (LOCOG) symbol which would have the potential to draw in the major sponsors, such as BT, associated with the Games.

Another significant area of focus is the new government system for measuring Local Government, Local Area Agreements 2 (or LAA2). There was an LAA1 but that pretty much passed us by

with little effect but this revised system has a lot more significance and over the last few weeks I have been involved in meetings with both Essex County Council and Suffolk County Council as these are county wide measures. It is important that, as a museum service, we are seen to support and contribute to some of the targets set within the scheme, including obvious ones such as visits to museums or involvement in the arts but also others such as educational attainment as some of our young peoples' work has now got well established with a measurable, positive, impact in this area. All of this helps establish the relevance and importance of museums and heritage in the broader agendas of Local Authorities and this is particularly vital at a time of major budgetary pressure. This is no small thing and, incidentally, we have just had next year's budget provisionally approved, though still a couple of hurdles to go, and I will tell you more about this next time.

There are some other major initiatives underway or in the planning stages at the moment including hoping to buy another Gainsborough to display at Christchurch

Mansion but, again, more of that next time if we are successful. Coming back to earth one of the things it is very pleasing to report is the significant increase in schools visiting both Ipswich Museum and Christchurch Mansion which hopefully you will have noticed yourselves when visiting. While numbers did increase last year, to be frank, I was slightly disappointed and had hoped for more but I was constantly reassured and told that it takes time for confidence to build up and the improved marketing to have an impact. As it turns out the education and marketing team were quite right and from April to September 2008, compared to the same period last year, numbers of schoolchildren have now more than doubled. Next time I will give more specific information on improved performance in a whole range of areas but the current increase in school numbers seems a good, positive, note to end on. Oh, and by the way, after an hour a train has finally been found and I am on my way to Ipswich.

**Peter Berridge**  
**Museum Service Manager**

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## Friends Events and News

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### Evening Talks

The talks are organised for the Friends by Mary Hollis. She would be pleased to hear from anyone who has comments or suggestions for further talks. **She would also like to hear from anyone willing to help with the pre-talk refreshments for the talks at Museum Street Methodist**

**Church.** Mary can be contacted on 01473 251484 or by e-mail:

[maryhollis1@homecall.co.uk](mailto:maryhollis1@homecall.co.uk)

**Programme:**

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**Thurs 22 Jan 2009: "Giles - his Ipswich" by John Field**

**Thurs 19 Feb 2009: "A History of Dumfries House and its Furniture" by Paul Bruce, Chairman of FOIM**

These two talks will be held in Museum Street Methodist Church (Blackhorse Lane entrance). The February talk will be of particular interest to those who are going to visit Dumfries House as part of the trip to Cumbria in April 2009.

The talks will start at 7.30 pm with coffee and tea served from 7.00 pm. Pay at door: £3 Friends, £5 others.

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**Thurs 19 March 2009: "The Town Library" with John Blatchly**

In 1599 William Smarte, Portman bequeathed his personal collection of books in trust for the use of town preachers in Ipswich. This collection has survived a series of fortunes and locations but in January 1983 the Town Library was re-opened in its current location at Ipswich School, under the curatorial care of historian Dr John Blatchly, the then headmaster of Ipswich School. Dr Blatchly is inviting members to share with him the treasures in the Old Town Library, a rare collection.

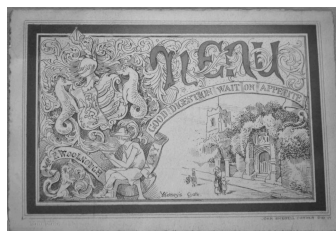
**This event is limited to FOIM members only and tickets are required.** It will be at Ipswich School, enter through Ivory Street Car Park. The talk will start at 7.30 pm. Applications to M.Hollis, 81, Berners Street, Ipswich, IPI 3LN. Tickets £5 each, please include stamped self addressed envelope.

**Lunch Time Talk with Emma Woodhouse**

A lunchtime talk by Emma Roodhouse will be held at the Admirals Head, Little Belings on Wednesday 28 January 2009. The talk will start at noon and be followed by a buffet lunch. A booking form is enclosed with this newsletter.

Emma Roodhouse has been the Art Curator for Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service since May 2008. She had previously worked in Scotland and at the Government Art Collection in London.

Her chosen topic is "Works on paper in the Ipswich collection". Emma will describe a project she has been involved in to document Ipswich's topographical prints and watercolours. In addition she will talk about the range of other works on paper from cartoons, children's book illustrations, landscapes and marine scenes all relating to this area.



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**Spring Holiday to Cumbria and Dumfries House, April 2009**

Information and booking details were distributed with the Autumn Newsletter. This holiday is now fully booked.

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**Friends Visits to Aldeburgh**

Our visit to the Britten-Pears Library and Red House in Aldeburgh on 28 October proved so popular that there had to be a second group, seen here on 4 November, to allow all applicants to attend. Each party enjoyed an introductory talk illustrated with photos, videos and musical clips from the comprehensive archives before looking at the current exhibition. This focussed on two Britten anniversaries: Noye's Fludde in its fiftieth year and Saint Nicholas in its sixtieth. The exhibition included many of the original animal masks for the Fludde as well as manuscripts and other source material.

Then on to the Red House, home for many years of Britten and Pears with an astonishing collection of works of art mainly collected by Peter Pears and all still very much as it was left after they died. Each visit ended with refreshments in the new dining room created from their old kitchen. We were blessed on both days with brilliant autumn sunshine to enjoy the extensive gardens.



The Second Group

## Thank you

The Friends have recently benefited from two substantial legacies, for which we are very grateful. This money will be used to enhance and conserve the collections in the Ipswich Museums in response to specific requests from the Museums Service and/or at the discretion of the FOIM Council. If you would like to donate to the friends of Ipswich Museums in your will, please speak to your solicitor, quoting our registered charity number: 275527.

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## Guided Tours at the Mansion in 2009

Siobhan Steel, Guides Co-ordinator writes:

As our Wednesday 'taster tours' have concluded until next spring, we are pleased to announce some Saturday tours for the winter. Why not join us to discover more about the Mansion, its inhabitants and wonderful collections? Don't miss the opportunity to experience these tours exploring a variety of topics.

Tours begin at 10.30 am. and last about one and a half hours. Booking is required. Please contact Christchurch Mansion ( 01473 433554).

Price: £4 per person (£2 children)

For further information about tours please look at the Friends of Ipswich Museums website: [www.foim.org.uk](http://www.foim.org.uk) ,

### Sat 24 Jan - Furniture Tour

A fascinating look at the Mansion's furniture collection.

### Sat 7 Feb - The Families who lived at



## **Christchurch Mansion**

This tour involves a 'sitting down' session looking at individual members of the Withipoll, Devereux and Fonnereau families and a walk round the mansion looking at appropriate portraits.

### **Sat 21 Feb - Suffolk Artists**

This tour will look at the Ipswich collection of works by Gainsborough and Constable as well as selection of works by 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century artists who worked in Suffolk .

### **Sat 7 March - Who can find a virtuous woman?**

This tour looks at 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century depictions of women in the Mansion and gives an opportunity to consider changes in society's expectations and interpretations of virtue in women.

### **Sat 21 March - General Tour**

This ever popular introductory tour offers something of the history of this Tudor gentleman's residence and the collection of art and decorative arts from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## **Membership Secretary's Report**

We welcome Jayrest Interiors, our latest Corporate Member, and also the following new members:

Mrs P E Adams	Mr & Mrs J Chalmers
Mr & Mrs D Gilkes	Mr & Mrs J Overment
Mr & Mrs J Salmon	Mr & Mrs P Sutters
Mr & Mrs J Young	Miss M Thompson
Mr A Green	Mr & Mrs G Langton
Mrs M Talmer	Mr & Mrs C Wiltshire
Mrs S Northway	Mrs C Moss

We hope that you will find much to interest you.

Please note my e-mail address is:- [barbara38burtoncole@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:barbara38burtoncole@yahoo.co.uk), should you wish to contact me in that way.

I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

**Barbara Cole.**

**Membership Secretary**

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## **Museum Movements**

*Joan Lyall tells us about loans, accessions and expert opinions.*

Since September we have been happy to help with requests from two schools to borrow Natural History objects from our handling collection. Six animal skulls have gone out on loan to the Art Department of Ipswich School where the teachers have created several large still life groups.

As I was shown around the department I noticed that one still life includes a small dinghy which seemed very ambitious. At Claydon High School seven plant fossils from the handling collection were used to illustrate a talk.



The Flywhisk in Paris

In the Autumn newsletter I mentioned that the flywhisk handle (IPSMG: R.1938-1.52) had gone on display at Musée du Quai Branly, Paris. The exhibition closed on 14 September and the flywhisk is now safely back in storage in Ipswich.

Also mentioned in the same newsletter was the acquisition at auction of the eight medals awarded to Frederick Joseph Pratt and these are now on display in The Ipswich Story section (on the balcony) in the Museum.

There are five barometers in the reserve collection which have been recently examined by an Antique Barometer Specialist who was delighted to find we have a very rare early mahogany marine barometer dating from 1774-1800 and made by Nairn and Blunt. This specialist, who

along with his father repaired barometers, has only seen two others of this kind in 25 years, one of which is owned by a private American collector the other is in an American museum. He was telling my new colleague, Tori Adams and me that Captain Cook on his second voyage in 1775 to Australia had used a similar one and declared that it was very useful.



Inlay detail on one of the barometers

Have you noticed that the wonderful cartoon of Grandma by Carl Giles, which the Friends of Ipswich Museums purchased, has been given pride of place on the front cover of the new information guide to the exhibitions at The Town Hall Galleries during Autumn-Winter 08/09?

**Joan Lyall**

**Documentation Officer**

## Ann Ainsworth: Our New Assistant Curator of Natural History



Like all children my great enjoyment of the outdoors came from family holidays to the seaside. I was fascinated by the variety of colours and shapes and the mixture of materials; shells, seaweed, wood, pebbles and fossils to be found in one environment. There is great scope for imagination and creativity and this excitement has never left me. I still cannot resist the sparkling colours of a glacial erratic shining in the sea water. I enjoy finding out about how the world works and how to appreciate and interpret what we can see around us. This led me into taking a geology degree at the University of Bristol.

Similarly my love of museums began by being taken to draw the stuffed animals and mummies in the Victorian galleries at Manchester Museum. I have a mixed background in both science and art and have an interest in history, drawing,

painting, textile art and visiting museums and galleries. Museums are a great way to combine all of these interests and I began by working as a volunteer in the Geology Department at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery.

This experience inspired me to learn more about working in museums and I took a Masters course in Museum Studies at the University of Leicester, specialising in natural sciences. During this time I volunteered at Charnwood Museum in Loughborough and took a two month work placement at the National Museum and Galleries of Wales. From this I began working for Norfolk Museum and Archaeology Service documenting Norwich Castle Museum's geology collections.

I then moved to Scarborough to work as Geology Conservator for the redevelopment project of the Rotunda Museum. I was responsible for cleaning and conserving over 400 specimens which are now on display. This was a fantastic opportunity to bring geology back into a very special museum which was purposely designed and built under the guidance of William Smith, the 'Father of English Geology'. I also worked as part of the Dinosaur Coast Project, leading fossil hunts, family fun activities and walks out on the spectacular NE Yorkshire coast.

Becoming Assistant Curator of Natural Science at Ipswich Museum is a wonderful

opportunity to broaden my experience and connect a love of the outdoors with my interest in life, past and present. It is a privilege to work with such an important

and varied collection, which brings the wider world to Ipswich through the collecting enthusiasm of the Victorians.

**Ann Ainsworth**

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## **Victoria Adams: Our New Curatorial Assistant**

I have recently joined Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service as a Curatorial Assistant, based at Ipswich, to mirror an equivalent role based in Colchester. As the name suggests, my role is to assist curators, but as part of the Collections Management Team I primarily focus on collections care, especially the compilation of inventories and documentation of artefacts.

My first degree is in English and Related Literatures with Art History, from the University of York. The 'Related Literatures' are smatterings of Anglo-Saxon, Medieval Latin, Medieval Italian, Medieval German, Middle English, and Hindi.

I stayed on at the University of York for an MA in Medieval Studies, as there can be few better places to study the subject whilst surrounded by surviving medieval walls, streets, shops, pubs, and the magnificent Minster. I stayed on in York for a couple of years working simultaneously in the City Library, the National Railway Museum, York Museums Trust, as a tour guide on open-topped buses, and as a volunteer at a restored medieval merchant's house called Barley Hall.

I was then fortunate to get funding to study



the MA in Museum Studies at Leicester, which is much respected in the museum and heritage profession. Following my placement I got my first museum job at Brighton Museum. I really enjoyed working with the ethnographic collections, and continued on afterwards as a volunteer, cataloguing lots of teapots!

On 1<sup>st</sup> September I started at Ipswich Museum. I am very much looking forward to working with and caring for the collections; to improving their accessibility, and the availability of associated information for visitors, researchers and colleagues both now and in the future.

**Victoria Adams**

## A Letter from Bristol

*Bob Entiwistle, Ipswich's Conservator, is spending six months in Bristol.*

### The Place

They do things differently here; they say things like “ark et ee” which means “listen to him”, but in a disparaging way.

They drink a lot of cider which has the same consistency as vegetable soup, and eat pasties which unfortunately also have the same consistency as vegetable soup. They have a very nice bridge built by Brunel (whom my wife refers to as Islamabad Kingdom Brunel), a very old steam ship, also built by Brunel, and a lot of balloons.

I am unsure as to the significance of the balloons but they float over the city most days, and the locals are very blasé about it. I, however run around shouting “Look, a balloon!”. They also have a cathedral.

For the first 2 weeks of my Bristol secondment, it never stopped raining, which coloured my attitude.

My first day in Bristol I attended a meeting in which staff were informed of the impending staff review to re-organise the staff structure whilst making some experienced curators redundant.

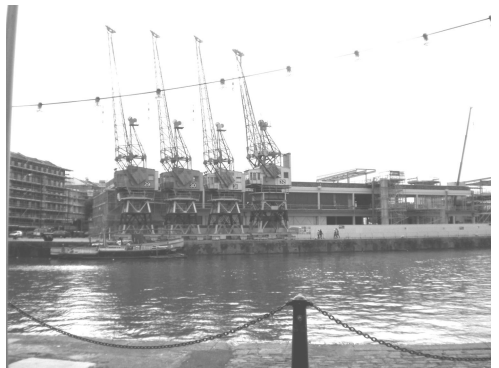
“Hurrah”, I thought, I have been here before!

Now however it is sunny, I have a very small leaky flat, I have discovered the delights of Wells, Bath, Weston Super mare out of season, and the Cheddar Gorge. I have also discovered the

wonderful architectural delights of Bristol, its pubs and ASDA. I think it has more Georgian buildings than Bath. Things are looking up, just like the balloons.

### The Work

My working holiday took a while to start. Bristol City's IT and their software bear no relation to anything I have ever seen before. Nothing seemed to work and most staff work around their IT not with it. This I found very frustrating when trying to photograph objects and do the same kind of detailed condition reporting I do in Ipswich. After a while I grudgingly realised that I couldn't beat it, and I now do the same as all the other staff and work around the problem by using my own laptop.



The Museum Stores in Bristol

I came here principally to work on objects for the new Museum of Bristol, which is to open in 2011. The building is in the course

of construction and objects are being chosen to fill it. It is intended to be a museum celebrating the city of Bristol and there is an eclectic mix of objects. There are motorbikes, bicycles, cars, lorries, aero engines, archaeology, natural history, uniforms, clothes, ceramics, paintings etc. Most of this is down to me at present. I have just finished a Penny Farthing and I am now conserving a Sedan Chair.

Most of these objects are, however, stored in a large unheated building by the docks. It is full of the above and ex British Aerospace volunteers, who love getting as dirty as possible beneath large pieces of machinery and engines. They often ask my opinion on gearboxes.

When I arrived I had to order materials (there were none), and set up a work area (there was none)! This took time. Whilst waiting for equipment and materials to arrive I conserved a group of Egyptology

objects, advised on Bristol's purchase of a large walk-in freezer, like the one in Ipswich, assisted my fellow conservator in fumigating the museum, and hassled curators for lists of objects. I also re-designed a conservation assessment form and set about photographing, condition reporting and estimating conservation time for objects in the new museum. Now all that I need is the time to conserve them all.

My fellow conservators are a friendly crowd, and it is very strange to be working with a group of like-minded professionals after many years on my own. However it is also disconcerting after so many years of doing things my own way, to be given advice.

One is never too old to learn.

**Bob Entwistle**  
**Senior Conservator**



Penny Farthing



Motor Bikes

## Great News for Archaeology

*We learn about changes planned for the Egyptology and Anglo-Saxon displays.*

### The New Egyptian Gallery

The benefits of the joint museum service continue as the Museum receives a grant of £50,000 from The Wolfson Fund (a body that provides money to hub status museums with designated collections) for the improvement of public exhibition spaces. This award, together with a significant contribution from the Friends, will start the transformation of the Museum into a space fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The focus of the grant is the creation of a new Egyptology Gallery which will act as a showcase for future achievements in Ipswich.

I am delighted this process is beginning with the archaeology collections and in particular with our significant Egyptian objects. Though we may now have a different view on the colonial collecting habits of our forefathers, there is no doubting the romanticism and excitement of our connections to William Flinders Petrie and the legacy of Howard Carter. Work will begin in April 2009 and I look forward to providing regular updates.

### Anglo-Saxon Displays



I am now working on the new temporary exhibition that will open in Gallery 3, Ipswich Town Hall Galleries next March. **'Art in the Round'** will showcase an outstanding collection of Anglo-Saxon coins on loan from the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge.

Focusing on the art historical aspects of the coin designs, the exhibition will also be supported by an array of gold jewellery, including our own famous Boss Hall brooch, to explore the ancient and exquisite artistic achievements of the people who settled in our county over 1500 years ago.

We will shortly be collecting the Boss Hall brooch from Sutton Hoo, where it has been on display for the past year. The quality of our archaeology continues to attract outside organisations and Sutton Hoo have already put in their request for even more artefacts for their 2009 temporary exhibition.

The Suffolk Archaeological Unit will be providing 'never before displayed' items from the Buttermarket excavations to fill up the spaces left when our own items are displayed elsewhere. This will provide an opportunity to highlight the strength of our region in telling the story of this period in British history.

**Caroline McDonald**

**Curator of Archaeology**

## Anglo-Saxon Treasure

*Philip Wise tells us of a new treasure.*



The museum service has been able to acquire through the Treasure process an Anglo-Saxon mount from a sword scabbard. This was found in north Suffolk near Diss by a metal detectorist in August 2007.

The mount is made of gilded silver and is shaped like a pyramid. Each side of the pyramid was originally decorated with a large triangular garnet set in a wire frame; one of the garnets is now missing. The square

cell at the apex of the pyramid is also framed by a narrow gold wire and filled with earth. The mount is 13 mm high and weighs 3.2 grams. It was made in late 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century.

Sword pyramid mounts are small fittings used to attach a strap holding a sword scabbard to a belt. They are now relatively common finds, some 14 having been published in Treasure Annual Reports between 1998 and 2006, as they were apparently very easy to lose. This is the first example to be acquired by the Museum in recent years. Such mounts are also wide-spread on the Continent, usually made from silver or copper alloy.

**Philip Wise**

**Heritage Manager**

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## Museum Service Exhibitions and Events

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### 'Guardians to the King' – at Colchester Castle

The exhibition closed on Sunday 2 November after three and a half months. Around 11 000 visitors came to enjoy the exhibition of 43 miniature terracotta figures from China that were over 2,000 years old. Just like the arrival of the figures, their journey back to Jiangsu province in China was under the watchful eye of a team of staff from both the museum service and

Xuzhou Museum. The staff from the museum service accompanying the figures back to China were Lynette Burgess, Jayne Austin and Emma Hogarth.

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### 161 East Anglian Field Ambulance

A showcase of silverware and photographs has been set up in the Council Chamber at Ipswich Town Hall.

*Tom Hodgson writes:* 161 East Anglian Field Ambulance was formed in Ipswich on



6 May 1908 as a unit in the newly created Territorial Army. It was attached to the Royal Army Medical Corps.

The headquarters were in Ipswich and there were companies nearby in Woodbridge, Needham Market and Trimley. Its members were volunteers who gave their own time to learn vital medical skills. They were a familiar sight marching to and from the Drill Hall in Woodbridge Road.

The unit served in both World Wars and was notably under siege in Malta during World War II for three years. From Malta they went to the ill-fated campaign in Greece, where because so many members were taken prisoner, the unit ceased to exist. It was re-formed in 1947, but closed down 20 years later. In June 1992, 161 Field Ambulance was granted the Freedom of Ipswich in recognition of its service to the town and country.

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### Stitching Time

*Ruth Gillan writes:* The needles are out for "Stitching Time", a project which links a range of community outreach activities to our costume collections.

Led by artists Jenny Nutbeem and Margaret Wylie, and with the support of costume curator, Danielle Sprecher, the idea is to help people to gain inspiration from the past to create a contemporary textile work, using mainly recycled materials. The project is open to people of all abilities, ages and cultural backgrounds who enjoy getting together to share skills and needlecraft knowledge. A gratifying number came to the first session in the

Wolsey Art Gallery in Christchurch Mansion. The remaining sessions are on Fri 12 Dec 2008 and Fri 23 Jan 2009, 2pm- 4pm.

The project is a joint one, run with Suffolk Artlink's Culture Club, which encourages older people to access and participate in the arts. We have already taken the project out to two sheltered housing schemes and a group that meets at a branch library. Once the Ipswich part of the project is completed, the plan is to repeat the exercise at two activity centres in Colchester in the early next year. The project will culminate in a "Stitching Time" exhibition in Hollytrees Museum next March. We hope to also be able to display elements of the project at the Mansion.

As a footnote, this is the perfect opportunity to tell you that I shall be leaving to take up a new job with Suffolk Museums in early December. I plan to keep in contact with the local hub museum – and with its Friends!

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### CHRISTMAS IN IPSWICH

**Sat 6 Dec: China at Christmas @ Gallery 3, Town Hall Galleries** Drop-in activities, 10am -4pm

**Sat 13 Dec: The 12 Days of Christmas @ Ipswich Museum** Free drop-in activities 10am-4pm. Storytelling sessions at 11am, 12pm, 1pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm

**Sun 14 Dec: A Tudor Christmas @ Christchurch Mansion** Free drop-in activities 10am-4pm. Father Christmas, £2 per child. Make your own pomander, £1.

For information about other Children's activities please ask at the Museum or Mansion.
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## Ipswich Charter Hangings have a Permanent Home

*Ferial Evans (IAA representative, Friends Council) reports on the Charter Hangings*

The hangings now have a permanent home in St Peter's Church, Ipswich. From their inception until now, and with no fixed home, they have taken a grand tour. They have been viewed in a variety of interesting settings, including Arras (Ipswich's twin town in France) and Jamestown, Virginia, USA to be part of the celebrations of the 400<sup>th</sup> year of the first English settlement.

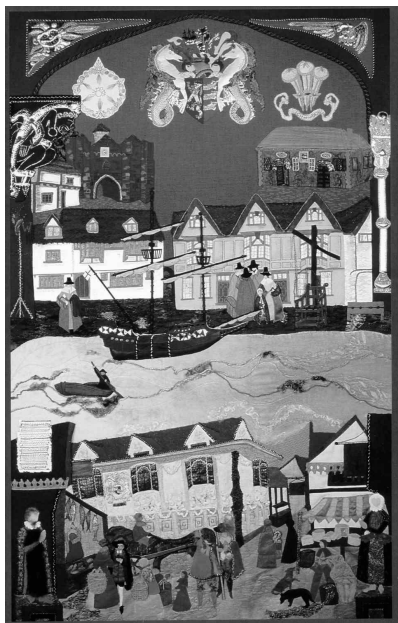
It was with some relief that the stoic team in charge of the Charter Hangings' travels brought them to their new home in St Peter's Church. This medieval church, retired in the 1970s, was put into the care of Ipswich Historic Churches Trust. It has recently been refurbished by The Ipswich Hospital Band as a 200-seat concert venue, with the help of a major award from the Heritage Lottery, and grants from the Borough Council and Ipswich Historic Churches Trust. The church is open to the public every Wednesday between 10am and 3.30pm in winter

In addition to the hangings, St Peter's contains an exhibition of its history, spanning the last 1000 years, prepared by local historians and supported by the Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service. Roy Tricker has written a splendid booklet about the history of the church - covering a similar period to that depicted in the eight hangings.

Roy Tricker's book is on sale at the Church together with a book about

the Charter Hangings, plus sets of postcards and an A3 Map locating the buildings seen in the Hangings. In her book Isabel Clover gives a fascinating overview of the whole working process plus lots of historical information. She commissioned a local artist to paint an illustrative map for the centre page spread. This map has been reproduced in A3 and is eminently suitable for framing. The vignettes all depict buildings and scenes featured in the Hangings.

The Hangings book, map and postcards are all for sale at St Peter's or Ipswich Tourist Information Centre St Stephen's Church, St Stephen's Lane, Ipswich IP1 1DP. For further information phone 01473 836448 .



## Visual Arts Ipswich

### GALLERY 1, TOWN HALL

Open: Tue-Sat 10 am- 5 pm

#### **Giles: Drawn to Suffolk**

Until 17 January 2009

A comprehensive exhibition of Giles cartoons and related objects, focusing on Ipswich and the locality. This exhibition coincides with a major show of his work at the Cartoon Museum in London.

Giles was a national institution. He chronicled this country's history and society through fifty years of change from the late '30's until the mid 90's. His greatest creation was The Family, an instantly recognisable cast of characters, beset by a horde of mischievous children but always under the stern control of the immortal Grandma. Works will be on loan from the Carl Giles Collection, at The British Cartoon Archive University of Kent, and private collections.

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### Ipswich Open Exhibition

#### **Here's Looking at You: the fine art of people watching**

24 Jan - 8 March, Preview: Fri 23 Jan 6-8pm

This year's Open invites artworks that consider people. The depiction of people by people has been eternal throughout all cultures. From the ancient primitive representations used in ritual and decoration through to recent western traditions of conversational and portrait painting, to contemporary documentary work.

The brief for this year's exhibition encourages people to submit representations of people of Ipswich be they friends, family, or the famous. Applications will be accepted from artists and non-artists, young and old, insiders and outsiders. All media accepted.

Submission by application only, details below.

Application forms available from Gallery or contact, e. [visualarts@ipswich.gov.uk](mailto:visualarts@ipswich.gov.uk)

☎ 01473 432863

Artworks must be received between 13 and 17 January. There is no age/status limitations for submission. £5 fee per submission (max. 2 non-refundable)

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## Art Lectures with Hugh Belsey

For the last three years the art historian Hugh Belsey has offered a series of lectures at the Ipswich Institute. During Autumn 2008/ Spring 2009 he is offering eleven talks about painting in The Netherlands during the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Banishing Spain from the Northern Provinces, the Dutch people became successful merchants and traders. They developed a fearsome naval force and began to look at their surroundings with increasing intensity, wit and passion. Artists specialised in landscape, in still-life, in domestic scenes and portraiture, townscapes and church interiors. The content of some pictures was religious, in others the subject had moral overtones. There were perhaps more artists working in Holland between 1620 and 1680 than anywhere else before or since and the variety was only united by the unequalled skill of offering *A Mirror to Nature*. Many will know the geniuses of the period — Rembrandt, Vermeer and Hals — but there is much else to be enjoyed and understood in work by ter Borch, Metsu, Jacob van Ruisdael, Pieter de Hooch and Jan Steen.

For further information about *A Mirror to Nature I* (17, 24 Nov and 1, 8, 15 Dec) and *A Mirror to Nature II* (2, 9, 16 Feb and 2, 9, 16 March) pick up a leaflet from the Tourist Information Office or the Ipswich Institute.

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