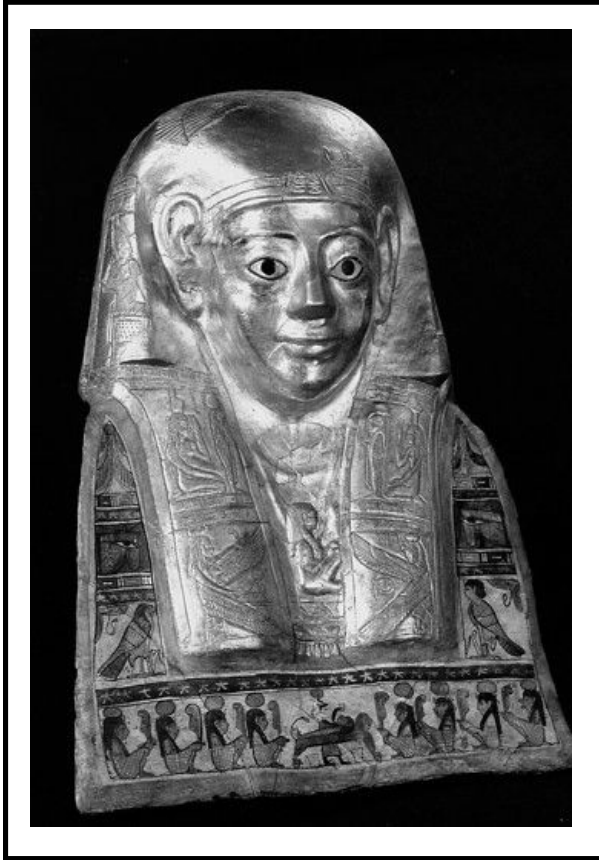


Autumn 2010



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 Wednesdays. Tours for groups can be booked by contacting the Mansion (01473 433554).

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

Contributions to the Winter 2010 Newsletter should be sent to the editor by 1 November.

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**Cover Illustration:** The Mask of Titos Flavius Demetrios, c110 AD, which can be seen in Ipswich's new Egyptian Gallery

Please visit our website at [www.foim.org.uk](http://www.foim.org.uk). Jerry Latham would welcome your comments. We have already started to use the website to advertise events which are notified too late to be printed in the Newsletter.

## Editor's Notes

There have been two major events in Ipswich since the last issue.

The Saatchi Exhibition in the Art School is now open and attracting a steady stream of visitors. Several Friends volunteered to help prepare for the exhibition and now Friends and art students are welcoming visitors. Volunteers are still welcome (see page 13). When I have been on duty, I was interested to meet a life model who had worked at the art school, as well as a number of old students.

The second event was the opening of the Egyptian Gallery just four weeks later. In this case the Friends provided £16,000 to help fund the project. Our collection is beautifully displayed and enhanced by the addition of the mummy from Colchester and other items on loan from the British

Museum. In this issue museum staff tell us about the exhibition (pages 9-12)

Four Friends events have been organized for the rest of this year. There are three lunch time talks at Priory Park, plus a Christmas Party at the Mansion. Booking forms for all are enclosed.

If you wish to keep up to date with museum events you might like to put yourself on the mailing list to receive the events leaflets published by the Museum Service (see page 8). These provide a summary of all events with times and booking information. All events are also advertised on the web.

Mary Halliwell

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## Ipswich Arts Association

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.

Discounts are also available at Music World in Ipswich.

The Arts Association website is:

[www.ipswich-arts.org.uk](http://www.ipswich-arts.org.uk)

## Chairman's Message

Dear Friends

Since the last Newsletter we have enjoyed three exciting events.

First came the opening of the Art School, which we had looked forward to for so long. It was a hot but very pleasant evening and it was exhilarating to see the Art School so full and listen to the buzz of voices. The opening speeches were from Ben Gummer, Member of Parliament for Ipswich, and Andrew Cann, Ipswich Councillor and Portfolio Holder for Culture, after which we saw a display of dance from Dance East. The exhibition from the Saatchi collection was certainly intriguing; all our senses were employed, including our sense of humour!

Then, on 16 July, we had the Strawberry Evening. Again the weather was kind and there was a very good attendance. The evening began with drinks and a very interesting talk on the history of chairmaking, Mendlesham chairs in particular, by Jeremy Lain from Treeincarnation. Afterwards we enjoyed strawberries and cream and many people took the opportunity to find out more by questioning Jeremy, who was glad to talk to them.

On Friday 6 August came the long awaited opening of the new

Egyptian Gallery at High St Museum . This was a very exciting event as the Museum Service had worked long and hard and overcame a number of difficulties to achieve this end. The new Gallery is exciting and informative, with a real mummy. Children will be fascinated by the atmosphere and will learn while enjoying themselves. I am sure this will make a visit to the museum a special event.

We are now looking forward to the Christmas party, as we sit in the garden in our shorts! You will find the form to get your tickets with this newsletter. I am sure we shall have a lot of fun and some delicious food, while meeting up with Friends.

I am now looking forward to the September trip to Oxford and hope to see many of you then.

Best Wishes,  
Mary Southwood

Mary can be contacted  
via our website: [www.foim.org.uk](http://www.foim.org.uk)  
or  
c/o Ipswich Museum,  
High Street,  
Ipswich IP1 3QH

## Peter Berridge's Column

As some of you know I am typing this with one hand though perhaps nothing new there as I was basically a one handed, even one-fingered, typist before. The difference is that I am now having to do it with my left hand (or finger) as I have fractured my right arm – and I am right handed. I won't go into how this happened as I have had to explain this on numerous occasions over the last few days but all I will say is that it was 'in the line of duty'.

What I am really trying to say by mentioning my arm is that in consequence this report will be slightly shorter than normal. This does not mean that there is a shortage of things to write about as over the last few weeks we have in fact achieved some quite remarkable things, especially with three major exhibition openings. To have three major openings in such a short time is not a normal state of affairs but circumstances, opportunity, and necessity have combined to bring this about. It has involved some truly heroic efforts from individuals within the museum service and also a splendid team effort.

### **The Art School at Ipswich**

The first of these was the Saatchi exhibition in the newly re-opened

Ipswich Art School building, which was launched on 9 July. Hopefully most of you have already been to see it and are actively encouraging others to visit as well. Word of mouth is always one of the best ways to let people know about an exhibition. I know that some of you are already supporting the exhibition by acting as gallery volunteers and for those interested there are details elsewhere in the newsletter about how to get involved. To have such a loan exhibition in Ipswich from Charles Saatchi is a remarkable thing in itself but also to organise in such a short timescale was an incredible achievement (it took a few months when such exhibitions normally take years to organise).

### **Medieval Treasure at Colchester**

A week after the Saatchi launch it was the turn of Colchester Castle when on 16 July the Medieval Treasure exhibition opened. I know that this is in Colchester but I would urge you to travel over the county border to come and see it. There are some truly spectacular items including some objects from the Ipswich collections. There is also a cross loaned from the royal collection. This temporary exhibition is really worth seeing if you get a chance.

## The Egyptian Gallery

The last of the three is the new Egyptian Gallery in Ipswich Museum. In relation to the gallery opening there was a touch of “the Curse of the Mummie’s Tomb”, including my arm, but again it is reflection of the strength of individuals and the team that in the face of adversity everyone rose to the challenge and overcame a number of problems - and often came up with solutions that have in fact been better than the original. The result, in my estimation anyway, is a truly splendid gallery with some truly splendid items on display. Again hopefully you will, or will soon, have visited the gallery.

## The Future

Some of you will have already heard me compare the new Egyptian Gallery to a show house in a new Estate as it is a reflection of what we could achieve in the rest of the building and in the enlarged complex including the Art School. It gives us a great showpiece to engage with potential funders such as the Heritage Lottery Fund.

If I may be Churchillian for a moment this new gallery does not mark the beginning of the end – but it is the end of the beginning of the renaissance of this splendid museum. We are now about to embark on the second phase of the overall project, involving Ipswich

Museum and the Art School, to bring about a cultural quarter that the people of Ipswich can be proud of and one that will be the envy of others. In doing this the continuing support of the Friends will be essential but we know that it is there as has been so clearly shown by the support already given, including significant funding, for the projects to date especially the Egyptian Gallery and the Art School. So all I really want to end with is to say ‘thank you’.

**Peter Berridge**  
Museum Service Manager

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## Friends Information

### Lunchtime Talks

Paul Bruce has arranged three talks during the Autumn at Priory Park. The new venue has proved to be very suitable for these events, with a spacious area for the talks, easy parking and wonderful views over the River Orwell from the restaurant. All three talks will be given by Museum Staff.

Talks will start at noon and be followed by a set lunch.

On Wednesday 13 October Emma Roodhouse, our Arts Curator will talk on "Bequests, Donations and Mystery Items"

On Wednesday 3 November Robert Entwistle, our Senior Conservation Officer will talk on "Bristol, Banksy and Brunel".

On Thursday 2 November Caroline McDonald, Archaeology Curator will talk on "Misadventures in Egyptology".

Booking is required. Booking Forms are being distributed with this newsletter.

### Friends' Christmas Party

This year the Christmas Party will be at Christchurch Mansion on Wednesday 8 December. The Mansion will open at 7.00 pm for a 7.30 pm start. There will be a short

entertainment of words and music, with contributions from FOIM Council Members. The cost will be £10 for Friends, £12.50 for others and £5 for children (under 14). A booking form is included with this Newsletter.

### Mansion Guides

It has been a successful year with the free taster tours and paid general tours doing well. It is always interesting to meet a wide variety of people and share with them all the fascinating aspects of the Mansion and invariably, everyone, including the guide, learns something new.

The cost of the tours is now £4 per head. This change not only simplifies the booking system for mansion staff but hopefully, will now enable us to also offer paid tours to individuals or small groups. Please do contact the Mansion if you would like to book a tour for yourself and/or friends.

For the winter (November onwards) we will be offering a short taster tour up to 40 minutes every morning except Sunday starting at 11 am. We are suggesting a donation of £2 for these tours.

Christchurch Mansion, the Museum

and now the Art School provide endless opportunities for research and learning and the guides are always eager to extend their knowledge. We are also always happy to increase our numbers. There will be a meeting on Saturday 9 October at 10.30am to welcome anyone who is interested in training to become a guide.

As always, many thanks to all the guides who give their time so generously.

**Joan Munns**  
Guides Coordinator

## Membership Secretary's Report

Many thanks to those people who responded to my reminder, but there are still several who have been deleted from our list, if you know anyone who has not renewed because they have forgotten please ask them to contact me. There have been 12 new members since the last newsletter, and we extend a warm welcome to them all, and hope that they will gain much pleasure in their membership.

Ms. J Byham  
Mr & Mrs Z Johnson  
Mr & Mrs T Babbs  
Miss D Newson  
Mrs C Campbell  
Mrs Z Gravener  
Mr B L Woods  
Mrs P Montague  
Mr P Kent

Mr P Fletcher  
Mr & Mrs J Royle  
Mr A Cadzow & Ms E Webb

Thank you to those Members who contacted me regarding Mrs E Taylor.

**Barbara Cole**  
Membership Secretary

## Museum Events Listings

A list of all events organised by the Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service can be found on the Friends website:

[www.foim.org.uk](http://www.foim.org.uk)

and on the two Borough Council websites:

[www.ipswich.gov.uk/museums](http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/museums)

[www.colchestermuseums.org.uk](http://www.colchestermuseums.org.uk)

Printed lists are also produced which can be collected from any of the Mansion or the Museum. In addition Friends can opt to go on a mailing list and have these leaflets posted to their home addresses. A form is enclosed to request this service.





## A Tomb with a View

*Caroline McDonald tells us about Ipswich Museum's wonderful new Egyptian Gallery.*



A general view of the new Gallery

I very much hope you have had a chance to visit the new Egypt gallery at the High Street Museum. On Friday 6 August, to much local acclaim, the doors opened on the first glimpse of the bright future for the High Street Museum.

The project took 16 months to complete from beginning to end – an incredibly swift timescale in museum terms and one that testifies to the energy and enthusiasm of the project team. To say we had a ball was an

understatement. The sheer joy of re-awakening Egypt at the High Street kept us going through all of the sticky patches and late nights!

The gallery was created in response to the education needs of key stage 2 pupils and was conceptualised to make the most of zoned working spaces for school groups. This also makes it ideal for family visitors who will discover something different about Egypt in each area.

Broadly speaking it is divided into

an introductory gallery, a Nile corridor, a space to explore daily life and finally the mummy's tomb. Many galleries and television documentaries emphasize that the Egyptians were obsessed with death, so you would be forgiven for thinking this is always the case. But we hope very much to portray the Egyptians as a living people who in their preparations for death were simply hoping to continue living in the afterlife.

On opening night more than one person asked where the collections

had come from, unaware most of what they were looking at were the same objects that had been on display downstairs for 15 years. The difference in giving new space to these objects is immense – it has literally made people

view them with new eyes and made them look again at the many treasures we had underplayed in the collection.

Highlights of course include the mask of Titos Flavios Demetrios, the Mummy of Lady Tahathor, newly arrived from Colchester, and the mummified cats plus items on loan from the British Museum and Manchester Museum.

People are now connecting with previously ignored objects such as the early pre-dynastic material that has been displayed to excellent effect in the under floor burial pit. In addition the dedicated space to Egypt has enabled us to retrieve items from stores such as the wonderful hunting bow and two walking staffs that are amazing examples of organic material surviving for thousands of years.

I could go on but rather than give the game away hope you will come and see for yourselves. Peter Berridge remarked that this gallery acts as an example of what we can achieve with the larger museum redisplay. It is a testament to Peter's clear vision that the project team were able to plug in so quickly to what was required from the gallery. It was a great adventure for us and I hope will be a great adventure for our visitors.

**Caroline McDonald**  
Curator of Archaeology



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## Lady Tahatour, the Mummy gets ready to go on Show

*Lady Tahatour has been in Colchester since 1871 following a donation from George H. Errington. In August she was installed in a new home at Ipswich Museum where she will be a permanent exhibit in the new Egyptian Gallery.*

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### Conservation at Colchester Castle

Visitors who came along to Colchester Castle between 24-26 May were able to watch our expert conservation team Emma Hogarth and Stefanie White at work. They were preparing the 2,500 years old Egyptian sarcophagus (mummy case) from the Colchester collection for display in the new Egyptian Gallery at Ipswich.



Overall the sarcophagus is in very good condition but as part of the

conservation process, it was thoroughly assessed and conserved. It was given a thorough surface clean and it needed some repairing and strengthening of the small areas of damage that an object this old inevitably has.

**Emma Hogarth  
Conservator**

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### CT Scan at the Oaks Hospital

On 23 June, the Oaks Hospital in Colchester conducted a CT Scan on a most unusual patient. What makes Lady Tahathor unusual is that she is estimated to be some 2,500 years old.

She was taken by specialist couriers to the Oaks Hospital where she was scanned in a Siemens 64 Slice CT Scanner. The mummy had been x-rayed previously to show the skeleton. The state of the art technology available at the Oaks was the first opportunity to have a clear picture of the degree of mummification her body had received, whether she still had any internal organs, and maybe even establish how she died.

The full results of the scan will not be revealed until experts at

Manchester have been able to assess the images. However we could see things that we were expecting to see given what we know about the mummification process. For instance the brain has clearly been removed and it appears as if the skull cavity has been packed with linen. There are some strange bone fragments in the skull that we can't currently account for and we hope experts will be able to reveal this particular secret.



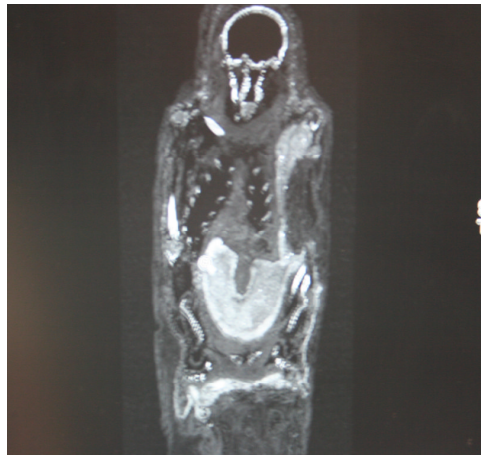
Lady Tahathor's organs were removed and the heart put back. This was found to be lower than where the heart naturally sits. It was really interesting to see the heart as all mummies needed this to get in to the afterlife. The heart would be weighed against the feather of truth to see if the person had done good or bad deeds during their life and this would either allow

them to enter the afterlife or if not, lead to being eaten by a goddess known as the devourer of the dead.

There does appear to be a bundle of some description between her thighs which may be a parcel containing her other organs such as the lungs and intestines. In early Egyptian history these were placed in separate containers known as canopic jars but later they were simply wrapped and placed back in the body. Again, analysis will confirm this for us.

Her bone density was good which confirmed our belief she was a woman in her mid-twenties in good health. Her spine was immaculate and she had no other skeletal deformities. It would be fair to assume she died of natural causes given that average life expectancy was only 30.

**Caroline McDonald**  
Curator of Archaeology



## The Ipswich Art School

*The Old Art School is now open with its first exhibition of art from the Saatchi Collection.*

### The Opening

The Art School was opened by Ben Gummer, Ipswich MP on 9<sup>th</sup> July.

Visitors can now enjoy items from the Saatchi collection (their first major loan to the Eastern region) from Tues – Sun, 10am – 5pm. All the items are sculptural using unexpected materials from liquorice to scraps of wool. The artists play with the idea of size so everyday objects become larger than life.



Andy Yoder: **Liquorice Shoes** (2008)

A giant sleeps in the gallery alongside a giant pair of shoes made of black liquorice, a mini-mummy and a stuffed sloth. You will find all these things, and more, in this first contemporary art exhibition at the Ipswich Art School!

**Emma Roodhouse**  
Art Curator

### Volunteering Opportunities in the Art Sector

As Ipswich Art School rejoins Ipswich Museum this summer, enthusiastic volunteers are needed to help welcome visitors to the galleries.

Volunteers can be of any age and do not need any previous experience of work in a museum as full support and training is given. The role requires volunteers to be on the galleries and serve as hosts, greeting and assisting visitors in assigned areas. There may also be occasional opportunities to assist with activities and events.

Younger volunteers are particularly encouraged. The museum offers them a chance to gain valuable skills, experience and knowledge. It is an effective way of both helping the community and potentially increasing employment opportunities. By giving a small amount of time each week, there are opportunities for them to develop people skills, improve their CVs or gain a current work reference.

For more information or to offer your time, please contact Marlene Moyes on 01473 433690 or email [marlene.moyes@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:marlene.moyes@colchester.gov.uk)

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## Suffolk Artists on the other side of the World

*Emma Roodhouse tells us about a recent visit to Australia and New Zealand*

On a recent visit to New Zealand and Australia I did happen to wander into a few galleries. (Well once an Art Curator always an Art Curator). And as a testament to the excellence of Suffolk art, it was hard to escape its influence. If you happen to ever end up in that part of the world here are three different venues that are worth visiting to see some familiar faces.

Te Papa Tongarewa is the Museum of New Zealand based in Wellington. It has a worldwide reputation for being innovative in its community involvement and the collections span five areas: Art, History, Pacific, Māori, and Natural Environment. The art gallery space is on the top floor of the Museum and shows a large number of paintings from the permanent collections. In amongst them are art works by Suffolk artists. A small oil of Spring Flowers by Cedric Morris (1889-1982) can be found. Morris set up the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing in 1937, along with Arthur Lett-Haines (1894-1978) and they were both influential in teaching many artists including Lucien Freud and Maggi Hambling. There is a portrait of Arthur Lett-Haines painted by the New Zealand artist Frances Hodgkins (1869-1947) when Arthur

was just 26 and had only just met Morris. And Wellington also has a mezzotint of Notre Dame by the well known Ipswich artist Leonard Squirrell (1893-1979)

In the South Island of New Zealand they do not lack for Suffolk art. The Dunedin Public Art Gallery has a more historic collection which includes an excellent selection of British and European paintings. Thomas Gainsborough's and John Hoppner's **Countess Talbot** c.1784. Is a full length portrait of a beautiful young girl, the Lady Charlotte Hill who had married the Earl Talbot in 1776. It is interesting as a collaboration between two artists, Gainsborough who painted the face and upper torso whilst Hoppner produced the background landscape.



Constable: **Brighton Beach** (1824-1826)

And of course in a collection which aims to represent the excellence of British and European art you couldn't be without a John Constable. There is wonderful oil sketch of **Brighton Beach** c.1824-1826, which was used as preparation for his final painting of the Chain Pier at Brighton. It was a place the Constables visited frequently to take the air and improve their health.



Gainsborough: **Samuel Kilderbee**

The final venue I had a chance to visit had a very interesting connection to the Ipswich collection. Sydney's Art Gallery of New South Wales is a very impressive nineteenth century classically inspired building. Inside you can be overwhelmed with the art on show but it is worth tracking

down a particular painting by Thomas Gainsborough of **Samuel Kilderbee** (1725-1813). Kilderbee was a great friend of Gainsborough's whom he first met in Ipswich, and Christchurch Mansion has a portrait of the attorney and his wife on show in the Wolsey Art Gallery. The Ipswich portrait is in a more formal style than the Sydney one, which shows a still boyish Kilderbee.

As you turn the corner into another gallery Thomas Woolner's (1825-1892) bronze medallion portrait of **W.C. Wentworth Esq** is also on display. We have a version of this medallion in the Ipswich collection and a number of Woolner's other sculptures donated by his family. Woolner was born in Hadleigh and became a member of the **Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood** after becoming friends with Dante Gabriel Rossetti. He originally went to Australia to seek his fortune in gold but found that his real talent was in sculpting.

I am sure if there had been more time I would have kept discovering little bits of Suffolk throughout my travels. But it was interesting to see the international impact that Suffolk art has had in continuing to inspire artists.

**Emma Roodhouse**  
Curator of Art

## From the Regional Conservation Officer

*Bob Entwistle has taken on a new role since returning from a period of secondment in Bristol*

In July 2009 I returned from Bristol Museum, having spent 10 months kick-starting the conservation process for the new Museum of Bristol on the Harbourside.

I began my new job of Regional Conservator in November 2009. I wasn't sure what this actually was but it sounded rather grand. It meant I would be travelling round Essex and Suffolk advising all the accredited museums and those working towards accreditation in the region on how to look after their objects, display them, store them, and apply for grant aid. It also entailed me organising and giving training to museums in the Suffolk and Essex area and working closely with the museum development officers. It also meant actually being paid to visit museums!

This RCO job is another secondment, but this time based in Ipswich. It wasn't easy to relinquish my duties in Ipswich Museum as I have been looking after the collections in the Museum and Mansion since 1988 and they are very important to me. However, Renaissance asked for a Professionally Accredited Conservator, and I was the only one in Suffolk and Essex.

When I started as Regional Conservator I didn't even have a list of all the museums in the area, and the exact numbers were unknown. So, with the help of the museum development officers and the Museums Yearbook, I cold called, e-mailed, and promoted myself at meetings. Then slowly I was contacted by the weird and wonderful, the good the bad and the ugly! I still have difficulty in persuading smaller museums that my time and input is free.

Invariably I have been welcomed and sometimes plied with tea/coffee and biscuits. Tea, coffee and biscuits always make for a favourable report. If the museum is near the seaside I sometimes even



Providing Training



treat myself to fish and chips. I now weigh 25 stone.

I have been to some of the most out of the way museums, thank goodness for my Sat Nav, and seen some marvellous collections. Some of these places are relatively unknown yet contain objects and material of national importance. I thought I knew most of the museums in East Anglia, I didn't.

However I have been gratified to see the care and attention that is lavished on these collections by volunteers of all ages.

One that especially sticks in my mind is the Combined Services Museum in Heybridge, near Maldon. An anonymous industrial unit on a somewhat rundown industrial estate contained a marvellous collection of arms, armour, guns, uniforms and spying paraphernalia. All beautifully displayed and interpreted.



Part of the MOD Gun Collection

When I first went to the museum they had just received a collection

of 1000 guns from the MOD. I spent a few hours tiptoeing over STEN guns, Martini Henry's, Winchester Rifles, etc. (Sorry ladies, it's a bloke's thing!)



Costume at Felixstowe

At the other end of the scale are small museums such as Laxfield, Little Baddow, Felixstowe, Ganges and Clare. All full of the most interesting and quirky little items all lovingly shown and protected. If there is anyone reading this whose museum has not been mentioned, I am sorry.

In the next few months I am giving training to museums in environmental control, house-keeping and collections care, storage, and I have organised a training day on the conservation of armour bladed weapons and firearms in November at the Combined Services Museum near Maldon.

**Bob Entwistle**  
**Senior Conservation Officer**

## Museums Projects with Local Schools

### **Students at Farlingaye High School Design Road Traffic Island for Woodbridge**

Concerned by the speed of traffic on a road near their school, a group of students aged 11-13 years from Farlingaye High School has been campaigning for traffic lights on the road outside the Seal Pub in Woodbridge. Following a radio broadcast put together by a group of students, the council have asked them to design a new road traffic island and signs at this crossing. Students had a meeting with designers at Farlingaye High School in Woodbridge on Wednesday 23 June, to discuss the plans.

The students were inspired to start their own campaign through a project run by the Museum Service 'Campaign! Make a difference', looking at the work of local slave abolitionist, Thomas Clarkson.

Inspired by this local hero, students took strategies he used to run their own campaign to make a difference in their local community.

The students worked with the local police, learning how to use hand held speed cameras to check the speed of cars on this stretch of road, recorded interviews with local people, and with help from BBC Suffolk Community Radio Journalist

Jon Wright, put together their own radio broadcast to raise public awareness and support for their campaign. They also made presentations in school assemblies and used petitions to gain support from other students. Councillor Caroline Page, County Councillor for Woodbridge, has been working for road safety in Woodbridge over the last 2 years and when she heard the students' radio broadcast she added her support to their campaign and invited them to work with the designers on designs for a traffic island for the crossing.

The project 'Campaign! Make a difference' is part of an innovative new museum based approach to teaching active citizenship, initiated by the British Library. The project is designed to empower young people, giving them the skills and abilities to make a difference and make their own voices heard.

**Caroline Hammer**  
Senior Learning Officer

### **Museum project with Chantry High School in Ipswich**

Chantry High School worked with the Museum Service to borrow a number of handling objects relating to the Second World War. Pupils spent several history lessons studying and researching the

objects and then acted as curators, producing object labels, a promotional leaflet and an interactive information screen where visitors can find out more information about each of the objects.

are now on display in the reception area of Chantry High School to engage visitors to the school.

**Cat Newley**  
**Assistant Curator of**  
**Community History**

The objects and information screen



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## Objects received into the Collections

*Joan tells us about the latest acquisitions.*

We have been given an Anglo-Saxon iron spearhead with a leaf-shaped blade found in 1940 by a workman on a building site on Rushmere Heath, near Ipswich. The donor had inherited it from her grandfather. She remembers it on his mantelpiece, where visitors used to admire the unusual object.

David Jones, Curator of Human History, was pleased to view an electrical timer from the British Xylonite Plastics Factory at Brantham; it would have been one of four that controlled the factory site 24 hours a day. David spoke about its significance on **BBC Look**

**East** which was covering the event *A History of the World Day* here at Ipswich Museum on 16 February.

Following an **Out of the Box** session that Danielle Sprecher, Curator of Costume, organised we had a pair of black Hi-Tec trainers donated. They are size 5, with purple and pink detailing and were bought in Felixstowe Market around 1995 for a young boy but later the donor wore them herself. Hi-Tec is a British brand which originally set up the business at Shoeburyness but are now in Southend.

A one penny coin dating from the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond

Jubilee, 1897, has been donated by a nine year old boy from his own coin collection which was a generous gift from such a young visitor.

Also recently received is a beautifully made miniature, white linen, replica rural worker's smock with white smocking and white thread embroidery, made during Creative Embroidery classes run by Isabel Clover, and a small multi-coloured smocked panel mounted on board with a feather stitch embroidery border. The panel was made as part of the Stitching Time project run by Colchester and

Ipswich Museum Service and Suffolk Art Link in 2007-2008 and was exhibited both in the Town Hall, Ipswich and Hollytrees Museum, Colchester.

We are very grateful that people, of all ages, offer objects to the museum and we wish we were able to accept everything but we are guided by our Acquisition and Disposal Policy when reaching decisions during Collections Working Group meetings, held every other month.

**Joan Lyall**  
**Documentation Officer**

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## Making Memories Day

*Amy Cottrell tells us about a visit to the Mansion by a group of people suffering memory loss and their carers.*

Colchester and Ipswich Museums are hosting a 'Making Memories Day' for families and carers of people who are experiencing memory loss. The event was held at Christchurch Mansion on 25 July 2010.

Reminiscence is the act or process of recalling and sharing memories, and is a normal part of everyday life for most people of all ages. In their later years, however, people often lose those with whom they have most in common, whether through bereavement or separation, leaving them feeling very alone with their

memories. Objects can stimulate people's memories and museums are increasingly incorporating sessions in the work they do.

The session consisted of an introduction to Colchester and Ipswich Museums reminiscence box loans, art activity and musical entertainment with 'Reminisce'. There was free tea and cake on offer and a chance to talk to other people who will be experiencing similar situations with memory loss as well as the chance to explore the beautiful historic house and its parkland setting.

Tactile experience is hugely powerful; it rarely diminishes with age, is inherently pleasurable and people's interaction with objects from the past is a sure way of getting emotive responses from them. For those remembering, objects provide a focus and stimulant for deeply embedded memories, while what is remembered can give museum workers new or deeper understanding of their collections.

Over the last twenty-five years, there has been a considerable growth in reminiscence activity with

older people. Its benefits in terms of health and social well-being have become more and more valued.

This project has involved partnership working with the Alzheimer's Society, Association for Suffolk Museums and Suffolk County Council. The partnership gained funding from Grass Roots grants.

**Amy Cotterill**  
**Community Outreach Officer**

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## Mental Health Project

*John Pollard tells us about and Art Project based at the Mansion.*

The Inside Out art group have finished their 12 week 'Re-Presenting Self' project which involved engaging with Christchurch Mansion's stories and objects to inspire their art work relating to their sense of self. There will be an exhibition of their work throughout the Mansion from 4 October to 7 November.

We have received some very positive feedback from participants.

"It's been great for my art work, I've really moved on with it".

"I feel more comfortable coming to the Mansion than before."

"Christchurch Mansion has

definitely had an impact on the work produced."

We will also be involved in a Suffolk Libraries coordinated project – Art on the Move – which takes place on Saturday 28 August, during Christchurch Mansion's 'Crafts from the Past' weekend event. This will involve the mobile library visiting the park with information about mental health, and a mental health 'service users' art exhibition at the Reg Driver Centre where artists will be talking about their work.

We are now working on a funding proposal to carry on the project beyond February when the current funding runs out. This project would

involve creating new projects around service users engaging with our objects and stories; through creative expression, reminiscence and story telling. We would expect that this project would involve a formal mental health research element.

The mental health project officer will be talking about the therapeutic nature of museums at the Museum Association's annual conference in October, as part of the 'Prevention or Cure' session.

**John Pollard**  
**Mental Health Project Officer**

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## Suffolk Coastal Deckchairs



Visitors were able to enjoy the Suffolk Coastal Deckchair exhibition at Christchurch Mansion from 23 June – 25 July. The exhibition included celebrity designed art in the form of painted deckchairs by Actress Maureen Lipman, TV's Black Beauty composer Denis King, Anthony Horowitz, Sean Bean and Polly Dunbar.

Colchester and Ipswich Museums teamed up with St Elizabeth Hospice for this quirky exhibition where the contemporary deckchair art displayed alongside Victorian

and Tudor artefacts at Christchurch Mansion.

There were around 50 deckchairs by big names such as Holby City Star Robert Powell, Esther Freud and Lord of the Rings star Bernard Hill, as well as Turner Prize winner Jeremy Deller and many talented artists and illustrators from Suffolk and Norfolk.

It was a fabulous opportunity to

show unique contemporary art alongside our historic interiors. For visitors to the Mansion it will be a surprise and a joy to go hunting for deckchairs.”

It is planned to auction the chairs on 1 October to raise money for the St Elizabeth Hospice in Ipswich.

**Emma Roodhouse**  
**Art Curator**

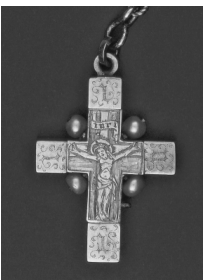
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## The Medieval Mind at Colchester Castle

*This Exhibition, Medieval Mind Part 2, runs until 30 January 2011*

The Medieval Treasures exhibition was opened by Dr Helen Geake of Channel 4's 'Time Team' and the Portable Antiquities Scheme on 17 July and is on display until 30 January 2011.

This is a rare chance to see local stunning art treasures from the medieval period drawn from museum collections across East Anglia, the British Museum and the Royal Collection by permission of Her Majesty the Queen. Many of these artefacts have not been on public display in Colchester before!



Two items are of particular interest. The first is the **Clare Reliquary Cross** from the Royal Collection. This small cross is hollow and it once

contained a minute fragment of wood which was believed to be a relic of the True Cross on which Christ was crucified and is believed to have been owned by a relative of King Edward IV. The second is 'the **Wenlock Jug** from Luton Museum Service which is a rare example of metalwork that can be



associated with royalty from the 1400s and is decorated with coats of arms, badges and inscribed with the words "My Lord Wenlock".

Images courtesy of Royal Collection and the Museums Luton.

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