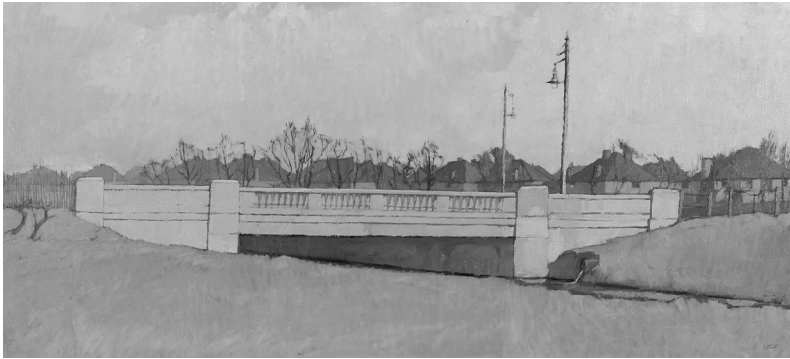


Winter 2010/2011



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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, Christchurch Mansion and the Wolsey Gallery in Christchurch Park and the Ipswich Art School. 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 taster tours of the Mansion (these are offered from Monday to Saturday at 11 am throughout the Winter.) 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 Spring 2011 Newsletter should be sent to the editor by 28 Jan 2011.

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Cover Illustration: Bridge, 1955 by Lawrence Self. This picture will be included in the next exhibition at the Ipswich Art School. Lawrence taught at the school. Maggi Hambling was one of his first students.

Please visit our website at 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

In this issue Peter Berridge reports how our budget problems are being tackled. It is likely that the Museum Service will operate through a charitable trust in the future. Meanwhile he has been able to demonstrate that combining the Ipswich and Colchester Museum Services has proved a great success.

A fundraising campaign to purchase and restore the Ipswich Art School building was launched in October and is already progressing well. In January there will be an exhibition of work by artists who worked at the Art School.

It has been decided change to three issues of the Newsletter per year. This will offset the increased postal costs. It is planned to publish around March, July and

October in future. The new timing could well prove more convenient for advertising our main events.

In this issue I am experimenting with incorporating the subscription form and a questionnaire within the main newsletter. This will reduce the time needed to stuff envelopes and could well save printing costs. The questionnaire concerns Friends' talks. Paul Bruce is keen to plan talks for the Spring and would like to know your views. He would welcome prompt replies as he needs to start booking speakers and venues soon.

Alan Swerdlow has planned a holiday in Luxembourg for us in May. The preliminary information is provided with this Newsletter.

Mary Halliwell

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

Chairman's Message

Dear Friends

Another year has almost gone and we are looking forward to our Christmas Party on 8 Dec. I do hope you have all bought your tickets as it will, I am sure, be a very good evening. I and others are now practising our readings and none of us knows what to expect.

Before the 'changing of the clocks', I managed to squeeze in a short visit to Brighton and Hove and enjoyed immensely visiting some of the local 'treasures' on offer, The Brighton Pavilion is a riot of colour and style, breathtaking though often not beautiful to modern taste, every room makes the visitor stop and look carefully at the décor and smile at the confidence shown by the designer. Hove Museum is a hidden gem and should certainly be seen by anyone interested in vintage film. A short ride away is Bexhill with its wonderful De La Warr Pavilion, built in 1935 and now entirely renovated, it is the centre for contemporary arts. I was particularly fortunate to be there on the last day of the Antony Gormley exhibition Critical Mass which was impressive and thought provoking.

A sub committee has been working hard to redraft the Friends' Constitution. They have thoughtfully clarified and modified the Constitution in some areas and you will have an opportunity to read the new version and comment on it before the AGM. We appreciate the time and effort put into this task by the sub committee, Kath Daniel, Jerry Latham and Alan

Swerdlow.

Since drawing attention to our need for more FOIM Council members, I am happy to say that we now have two more: Peter Stockdale who will take over from David Kergon as Treasurer and Tina Campbell as an ordinary member. This is very good news. We still need more people.

I shall be ending my time as Chairman at the AGM in April and I am looking for a replacement; do come forward if you are interested and encourage a friend if you think it would suit them to be Chairman. It is not too onerous and it is a great pleasure to work with enthusiastic people to do what we can for our local Museums.

I hope to meet you at the Christmas Party and I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy 2011.

Best Wishes,

Mary Southwood

P.S. We have thought of a solution to your Christmas gift problems: why not give a Gift Membership for the Friends? It is something that will last a whole year and it includes a free tour for two. What could be nicer?

<p>Mary can be contacted via our website: www.foim.org.uk or c/o Ipswich Museum, High Street, Ipswich IP1 3QH</p>
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Peter Berridge's Column

Budget Concerns

Nobody needs telling about the difficult financial position the country is in and, particularly, the tough decisions facing local government over the next few years. In this context it is not surprising that both Ipswich Borough Council and Colchester Borough Council want the museum service to deliver a significant saving for 2011/2012 and presumably even more in the following years. At the moment as it is configured, and it may change, we are currently looking at a 13% reduction in our direct budgets. This is on top of an £85,000 saving that we were required to deliver in this financial year and the £140,000 we had delivered in the previous two financial years. While we managed to achieve these first three years of savings largely through efficiencies created through the museum partnership this will no longer be the case with the new savings target. We are no longer talking about trimming fat and it is no longer a matter of doing more with less but it now has to be doing less with less. Consequently some significant service changes and reductions are inevitable. We are still working through a whole range of options and there are still some difficult decisions to take. While some of the proposals, which probably will not be fully agreed until early next year, will not be palatable to all, you will have to take on trust that they are the best in a range of even worse options. Our challenge is to come up with options for next year that meet the savings targets and are

acceptable for both Councils but yet leave a balanced and sustainable organisation.

Moving to Trust Status?

However this approach of constantly cutting is clearly not sustainable and at some point we will inevitably reach a tipping point where in effect the museum service, as currently constituted, is not viable. In consequence we must now push forward with developing proposals around different methods of delivering and running the service. In this context it is now quite clear that operating the museum service through a Charitable Trust is the way forward. There are not only potentially significant savings that can be gained from operating in this way, through specific tax breaks and eligibility for funding currently not available to local government, but that there are far greater freedoms over operations. Some initial discussions took place over moving to trust status last year but at the time the political climate was not right. Things are very different now and, while nothing is certain at present and formal decisions will need to be taken, we do currently seem to have broad support for this approach and if things go according to plan we would hope to be in a position that a new trust arrangement could be in place by 1 April 2012.

At the same time as the trust proposal and model is developed, discussions and negotiations over entering into a number of broader partnerships are under way. The most important is with Norfolk Museum and Archaeology Service and we are very

actively pursuing the idea of coming together in some form to create a broader East Anglian museum partnership. This and other partnerships really are opportunities that we need to vigorously pursue and not be frightened by. Coming together as Colchester and Ipswich, while naturally raising concerns at the time, has demonstrably been a huge success. In relation to this, currently in the House of Commons the Select Committee for Culture, Media and Sport is conducting an enquiry into the future funding of Arts and Heritage in this country. At their meeting on 26 October Roy Clare the chief executive of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, in his evidence to the Committee, specifically highlighted the success of the partnership between Colchester and Ipswich and also highlighted the discussion going on with Norfolk over the development of a larger partnership.

Achievements of the Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service

During our recent discussions with

Councillors over budgets one of the things that we have tried to do is to demonstrate what we have actually achieved over the last four years and also, critically, to show the value for money that we provide. In doing this we presented a document setting out some key facts and achievements and so I thought I would end by presenting you with an edited version of this information:

Awards

- Full Accreditation to Christchurch Mansion and Ipswich Museum, plus two commendations for governance and access services.
- VAQAS (Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme) awarded to all museum sites.
- Sandford Heritage Education Award

Learning and Events programme

Effective and relevant learning programme, developed at Ipswich in partnership with teachers, attracting dramatically improved numbers of school pupils.

Since the creation of the joint Museum Service on 1 April 2007:

- 1,084,035 people have visited the museums in Ipswich and Colchester
- 95,721 children visiting as part of organised school trips
- 25,910 people have been involved in outreach events
- 53,529 have accessed services in other direct ways
- 759,703 people have visited the museums' websites
- Generated over £4.6m of external grants
- Earned £2.156m of customer income
- The cost:income ratio has been transformed from 1:0.5 to 1:1.5

New galleries & Major exhibitions

- Ipswich Art School
- Egyptian Gallery: Ipswich Museum
- Thomas Clarkson Gallery: Ipswich Museum

- Dragons, Silks and Stories – the first major temporary exhibition in Ipswich following the merger.

Peter Berridge
Museum Service Manager

Friends Information

Summer Outings and a Holiday

A leaflet describing a four night holiday to **Luxembourg** on 15-19 May 2011 is being distributed with this Newsletter.

Full booking details for the following two trips will be included with our Spring 2011 Newsletter:

Two Suffolk Museums 21 July 2011

Morning visit to the ever-expanding Museum of East Anglian Life in Stowmarket with time for lunch in the popular cafe, bring a picnic or try a pub in the town. We then drive to Cotton for a private visit to the Museum of Mechanical Music and Bygones where we will have demonstrations of the Mighty Wurlitzer and many other old instruments. Tea and biscuits before the return to Ipswich and Woodbridge. Budget cost based on minimum of 35 passengers: £25.00 each.

Stratford-on-Avon and Compton Verney 6 and 7 September 2011

The two summer major exhibitions

at Compton Verney really merit a third visit by FOIM, but in view of the distance I have arranged this with an overnight stop in Stratford on Avon. On the way to Warwickshire we have a stop with time for lunch at **Wimpole Hall** Then on to the historic **Falcon Hotel** in the town centre of Stratford on Avon for dinner, bed and breakfast. Nearer the time we will offer those on the trip a chance to book seats for one of the plays in the newly remodelled Theatre. The first exhibition at Compton Verney is **Stanley Spencer and the English Garden** focussing on a crucial, but hitherto ignored, aspect of Spencer's work - his garden views and landscapes of the 1920s, 30s and 40s. The second exhibition is the first ever on the renowned landscape designer **Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and the landscape of middle England** concentrating on famous landscapes in the area including Croome and Compton Verney itself. Also a chance to see the growing permanent collections. We have coffee / tea with handmade biscuits on arrival and there will be time for

your own arrangements for lunch in the restaurant or cafe. Budget cost based on minimum of 30 passengers: £125.00 each. Single supplement £17.00. Members will require their own insurance. If you are not a National Trust member there will be an option to pay NT admission in advance to take advantage of the group rate.

Alan Swerdlow

I can provide further information on request 01394 380044,
alan@whr.demon.co.uk

Mansion Guides

The meeting on the 10 October, for people interested in becoming Mansion guides, proved to be very successful. Over twenty people attended and were very enthusiastic about becoming involved as volunteer guides. Over the winter, there will be weekly informal guide 'training' and hopefully, by March we shall be able to offer an increasingly comprehensive programme of tours in support of the Mansion and the museum service. In connection with this, if anyone has any thoughts about topics for additional general tours, please do let me know (joalm@btinternet.com) or leave a message at the Mansion. All your ideas would be very welcome. There are now taster tours at the Mansion at 11.00am every day except for Sundays. So, if you're

passing and would like to know more, please do pop in. These are free although any donation to FOIM is always welcomed! If you and your friends would like to have a longer general or specialist tour at £4 per head, please contact the mansion on 01473433554.

Joan Munns
Guides Coordinator

Forthcoming Book: The History of Ipswich Art School

Paul Bruce and Richard Scott are currently preparing a book "The History of Ipswich School of Art, 1859-1996". Paul was a student at the school and Richard was the person in charge when it closed.

The book will cover the Principals of the school and many of the teachers and students who worked there. It will include pictures, anecdotes and memories. It is intended to publish the book to coincide with the forthcoming exhibition at the art school (see page 12). It will be available at the Art School and the Mansion and will cost about £10.

Membership Secretary's Report

We extend a warm welcome to one new corporate member:

NFU Mutual

and six new ordinary members since the last newsletter:

Ms. L Messer & Family
Mr C Turland
Mr M Joiner
Mr & Mrs I Stollery
Miss C Thompson
Mr & Mrs A Hewing

Ordinary subscriptions are due in December, and you will find a reminder/remittance slip enclosed. I will look forward to hearing from you in due course.

May I take this opportunity to thank all who sent me get well cards and messages after my recent stay in hospital, they were very much appreciated, and I am happy to say that I feel much better now and wish you all a happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Barbara Cole
Membership Secretary

Fundraising Appeal for Ipswich School of Art

The Ipswich Art School building has been loaned to the Museum Service for use as a temporary gallery space until March 2012. In October an appeal was launched to raise £600,000 by March 2012 to purchase and restore the building.

The Friends of the Ipswich Museums are the charity partner in the fundraising and they have, from their own funds, generously

donated £10,000 to the Ipswich Art School appeal. Paul Bruce has also kindly offered to donate the proceeds of his new book about the History of Ipswich Art School.

Friends' President Gay Strutt and Vice President Paul Bruce have been key advisors on the Ipswich Art School Advisory Board since the beginning of the project and are playing an active role in a number of fundraising initiatives, including the Ipswich Art Auction, due to take place on 11 March 2011. Paul and Gay have encouraged renowned local artists including Ipswich Art School Patron Maggi Hambling, to contribute to the event. The proceeds of this event at the Ipswich Art School will go a long way to achieving our fundraising target of £600,000 by March 2012.

For further information about the Ipswich Art School and the Fundraising Appeal visit

www.ipswich.gov.uk/artschool or follow our Facebook and Twitter pages.

Alternatively contact the IAS fundraising Team on 01473 4335190 or email

ipswichArtSchool@ipswich.gov.uk

Gregory Cooper
Cultural Development Manager
Ipswich Borough Council

Friends Trip to Oxford—September 2010

Jerry Latham, the author of this report, has called himself A Dreaming Squire in Oxford.

Having left our sandwiches at home we arrived at Oxford with a debilitating hunger and thirst of body and mind. But what a place to address these shortcomings.

The Ashmolean Mauseum

We started with the Ashmolean Museum founded in 1683 and recently refurbished at a cost of £61m to its current sumptuous state. This very first encounter with Oxford illustrated that this visit is just a taster. The museum is spread over five floors and could easily consume the two days we are here. So much to see and where to start? Passing a bust of Lorenzo de' Medici one of the great art patrons, a dark austere painting by Titian, a bright raw painting by Paul Sérusier, the leader of the anti-naturalistic Nabis movement (no I hadn't heard of them) and a painting of a young man by Domenico Ghirlandaio eventually we ended up at the Orientation gallery. What a fine place this would have been to start had we read our gallery plan better. In summary, fabulous artefacts, quality displays and a wonderful building.

Walking Tour

Then we had a walking tour of the city centre. Roger our guide said

29,000 of the 130,000 population are students. Unfortunately they ride bikes and bikes are silent. We meandered through, past and via so many evocative place names.



Often in my youth these names were associated with Bow or Stroke or 'Your starter for ten'. But now for real – Brasenose, All Souls, Christ Church, Balliol and so the names go on. Then to the unfamiliar - Radcliffe Rotunda, Golden Cross Shopping Centre.

Finally – a good meal; much chatter; some wine; sleep and a chance for a squire to dream in Oxford.

The Bodleian Library

The next stage of enlightenment involved the Bodleian library. An exhibition about John Aubrey and the Development of Experimental Science. What a person! Described as an antiquary, mathematician, scientist, archaeologist, ethnologist, biographer, historian, astrologer, botanist, chemist, educationalist and collector. His extreme range of

interests was evidenced by a List of Mathematical Instruments and an instruction on Renaissance Napkin-folding. Then another of his interests in the first English artificial language intrigued me. Aubrey defended 'priority' which is a claim to have been the first to have made a scientific discovery, a form of copyright or patent. An early example being Blood transfusion, an idea conceived by Francis Potter 1594-1678. I left the room in awe.

Christ Church College

We visited the college Dining Room and then saw the Ipswich College Foundation Stone in the Chapter House. This is the foundation stone of the Ipswich that could have been but never became. It was well hidden at the back of the gift shop. The shop assistants must have been bemused as a stream of potential customers merely genuflected at the stone and left still holding their purses tightly. On the way out, in the well designed Picture Gallery, I stood in front of a painting of the Martyrdom of St Lawrence showing the saint being burned over a fire. Alan mentioned in passing that some say Australians venerate St Lawrence as the patron saint of Barbeques.

The Natural History Museum and the Pitt Rivers Museum

The Natural History Museum contains cases of live insects intermingled with many animal

skeletons. The Victorian design employs a glass covered ribbed roof. This is like being inside the rib cage of a giant animal and whether intended or not gives the feeling that one skeletal animal has



ingested the skeletons of many others. At the back of this ribbed carcass lies the Pitt Rivers Museum where the lighting is dim but how illuminatingly obscure it all is. Cabinet after cabinet and each with drawer after drawer. With each drawer (I estimated 250 drawers) containing numerous quaint items of undeclared source and purpose. So many questions, so few available answers.

And so a question to end the trip. If a Wayzgoose is an outing for printing employees should ours be a Swerdlow? It has a good ring to it carrying with it an appreciation of excellence. So having arrived in Oxford hungry in body and mind I left with my body satiated but my mind in turmoil. What a place and what a Swerdlow we had.

Jerry Latham

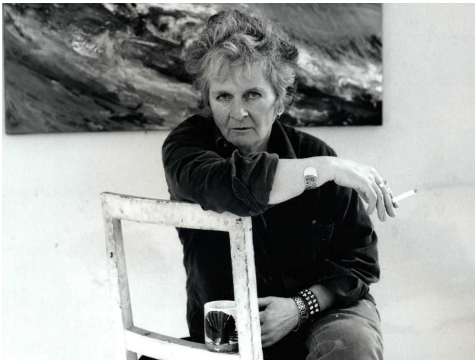
Ipswich Art School News

The Art School is open Tuesday – Sunday 10am to 5pm You can keep in touch and get regular updates on Facebook and Twitter @IpswichArtSch

Current exhibition

The Saatchi Gallery at Ipswich Art School exhibition will close on 9 January 2011. This six-month exhibition provides unique access to pieces of work from seven international artists. It comprises a mixture of multimedia pieces, from small to very large-scale, that challenge their audience and stimulate visitors to explore, enjoy and experience the varied work on display.

Next Exhibition: The Class of... at Ipswich Art School



Maggi Hambling

The next exhibition will open on 29 January 2011. Maggi Hambling headlines this exhibition of work from influential students and teachers from Ipswich Art School. The teachers Lawrence Self, Colin

Moss, Tom Phillips and Bernard Reynolds will all be represented.

Did you study at Ipswich Art School?

Did you study at Ipswich Art School before its closure in 1997? If yes, we'd like to hear from you!

As the Art School grows in strength we'd like to keep you up to date with developments through this exciting new phase, to hear your anecdotes and memories of the place and discover what you are up to now (practising as an artist or not).

Through identifying past students we are hoping to build a ul contact-base to contribute to extended social and programming ideas, and keep the network buoyant. As well as identifying the artistic community that are still practising, making work and perhaps even have gallery representation, and contact with a wider ecology, we also want to hear from those who are no longer involved in the arts.

If you can help us with this search, please contact me, Julia Devonshire, on

julia.devonshire@colchester.gov.uk
or call 01473 433548.

Learning in the Ipswich Art School

Where better to host a range of exciting, creative art-based activities than a purpose built art school? Following a successful teacher's launch in July the Ipswich Art School opened its doors to schools this September with an overwhelming response from



teachers, students and families.

The first artist-led school's workshops were held in October. Local artist Caroline Wright led three sessions throughout the day where the pupils explored perspective and three-dimensional artwork. The children made an

object inspired by their tour around the Saatchi Gallery and some fantastic creations were produced.

During the October half term a Giant in the Gallery was the first of a number of planned holiday activities to take place in the Ipswich Art School. Looking at Will Ryman's work, **The Bed** children made their own giant version of a small everyday object. Amongst the many mega objects made were pizza slices, mobile phones, glasses, picture books, and lollipops. One child even made a pair of flip-flops for when the giant goes on holiday.

In November teachers were invited along to primary and secondary teacher's advisory panels so they can have their say on what learning provision will accompany exhibition plans for the year ahead.

An adult *Out of the Box* event took place on 2 November where paintings produced from art school graduates came out of storage for the public to see. There will also be festive activities taking place on Saturday 4 December to support the Ipswich Museum Ice Age event. Let's hope the ongoing support from teachers, schools, adults and families will continue and grow into 2011 and beyond.

**Rachel Macfarlane,
Learning Officer**

Ipswich's Young People's Saturday Art Club

September saw the opening of Ipswich's Young People's Saturday Art Club at Ipswich Art School. These sessions are designed to inspire, engage and excite creative young minds in an exciting environment where creative imaginations can be let loose!

Sessions are run for 7/8 – 11 year olds and allow participants to engage with a different practising artist each session, a range of media and ideas (traditional and new), a variety of activities inspired by the work on show (and the



collections) and a chance to meet other young people with shared interests.

If you are interested in finding out more, please call 01473 433681 or e-mail

julia.devonshire@colchester.gov.uk

Recent Acquisitions

Joan Lyall tells us about additions to the collection.

First World War Memorial Plaque

One of the most poignant recent acquisitions has been a Next of Kin Memorial Plaque in memory of Private Albert Edward Simpson Greenard, who was killed on 20 July, 1916 aged 26. His mother at the time lived in Prospect Road, Ipswich. The name of Private Greenard of the 2nd Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment was recorded on The Thiepval Memorial, the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme. The design by Edward Carter Preston of the Sandon Studios Society,

Liverpool of the Next of Kin Memorial Plaque also known as a

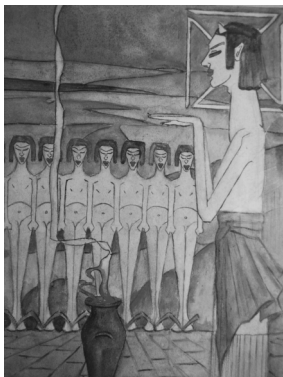


Dead Man's Penny, was won by competition, announced on 20 March 1918.

New Paintings

We have now acquired six paintings by Cedric Morris for the Ipswich collections. The titles of the works are: Denise Broadley, 1934; The Pound, 1933; Wartime Garden, 1944; Guttled School, 1939; Benton End, 1947; Still Life Before Sussex Fireback.

We have also acquired three oil paintings and three related preparatory drawings by Tory Lawrence. The oil paintings were created in early 2010 and are of local scenes in Suffolk including the River Deben and All Saints Church, Ramsholt.



Emma

Book jacket by Arthur Lett-Haines

Roodhouse was successful at a recent auction to purchase a watercolour by Arthur Lett-Haines which was a design for a book

jacket 'Orisons of Sunnara', a volume of poems. The museum staff feel the image has echoes of Egypt as the figures remind us of the figures on the painted linen mummy cloth on display at Ipswich Museum.

A Medieval Seal Matrix

Sixty years ago whilst digging in the family garden a local resident found an object which has only recently been brought into the museum for identification. Caroline McDonald has identified it as being a medieval seal matrix which would have been used to make an impression in wax to seal official documents. The circular seal has a central design of a boar with a loop for suspension from a cord it is dated as being 13th - 14th century.

It is also a welcome addition to the collections of Ipswich Borough Council.

**Joan Lyall,
Documentation Officer**



Conservation Corner

Bob Entwistle keeps us up to date with conservation throughout the region and within the Ipswich Museums.

Regional Conservation Officer Activities

I have been whizzing around Suffolk Essex and Cambridgeshire helping other Regional Conservation Officer's assisting museums and training staff.

I recently attended **Chatteris Museum** in Cambridgeshire to assist with a packing and handling course. We made the trainees pack glasses in boxes, and then asked them if they were satisfied with their packing. I then asked them to throw them out of the window and view

the "consequences". This was a rather drastic exercise but it proved the point. If that point is do not throw your objects out of the window! However all participants were suitably chastened and repacked their glasses more soundly the second time.

Amongst my calls for help were the **Royal Naval Patrol Service Association Museum** in Lowestoft, the **Mid Suffolk Light Railway** and **Manningtree Museum**. All the museums had issues with environmental control and light levels, and all museums were run by a dedicated group of volunteers.

Manningtree is a small one room museum in the library with a marvellous collection of plastic objects. Plastic isn't one of the materials I usually come across but these were examples of the once large plastics industry in Manningtree that went under the



Plastic jewellery box

trade name Xylonite. These plastic objects came in all sorts of shapes and colours, even faux ivory. Have a look if you live near Manningtree.

The **Mid Suffolk Light Railway** was a much larger site with big "stuff". It was a beautiful day, and a student conservator and I were welcomed by the volunteers, even more welcomed when I was able to pass on some UV window screening to them.

Next museum reports will be about Lavenham Little Hall, Dunwich, and Grays Fire Service Museums.

A fair portion of my time has been taken up with meeting local authorities, and other museum professionals in the SHARE scheme (Support & Help Renaissance East), to see how the same support will or can be delivered in the present economic climate.

Conservation at Ipswich Museum

In my last Newsletter article I said it was hard to relinquish my museum duties. However it seems I haven't. Sitting down below in the lab it's easy for staff to come and ask me for help and assistance. Which I am always happy to give.

Lately I have had two young ladies from front of house who want to know more about conservation. They have been volunteering on

their days off to help in the lab and with jobs about the museum. They took on the task of cleaning the open displays in the museum. So far they have cleaned the Anglo-Saxon displays, the natural history displays in the front gallery and the mammoth. The latter presented many problems such as how to clean the top and walk over the fragile ground work safely.



Needless to say all was done carefully and completed successfully. Boards were placed across the ground work to spread the weight and with a back pack vacuum cleaner set on low, they were able to carefully vacuum all the hair and clean the groundwork. During the coming half term they are coming in to clean the mounted specimens above the Victorian Natural History cases.

Conservation at Christchurch Mansion

If you have been in the Mansion kitchen of late you may be wondering what is happening to the kitchen floor.

The stone flags were spalling and cracking and I was asked if I could do something about it. Not wanting to put a modern resin or consolidant on the floor I looked for an older remedy. A colleague in Scotland advised me to try linseed oil. Raw and then boiled linseed oil is used in some National Trust properties to conserve stone floors, however there is little instruction as to how it should be applied.

The Kitchen at present is our experiment which hopefully will be concluded soon. It has worked and

the oil has bonded the stone flags, which are much more stable.

The process is taking a while as the oil needs to be absorbed by the stone and to dry.

Bear with us!

**Bob Entwistle,
Senior Conservator**



Ground work

Human Endeavour

Caroline McDonald tells us about Ipswich Museums collection of human remains.

Changing Attitudes

The long and illustrious history of Ipswich Museum means that we are often living in the shadows of our Victorian colleagues who saw the world differently than we do today. Even the early and mid twentieth century can be a world away in terms of museum practice and ethics so that we now find ourselves addressing problems that

past colleagues may not have considered a problem at all!

One of the issues close to my heart is that of human remains held in our collection. In recent decades the museum sector has become more aware of its responsibility in caring for those 'archaeological artefacts' that were once living, breathing people. Ethical guidance for the care of human remains now

informs our collections management and the world becomes a smaller place as we liaise with colleagues across the globe about indigenous remains held in UK museums.

Human Remains at Ipswich Museum

It is a responsibility I feel keenly and I hope very much in the coming months to make real progress in terms of refining the human remains policy for Ipswich Museum. We are currently receiving around 900 boxes of human remains from excavations in Ipswich from across the last 40 years and it is imperative that we revisit our older collections so that we can stand up and answer to how much of this material we hold and how we care for it.

In one unsatisfactory case we have the remains of 43 individuals for which we have limited or no information. In this case the archaeological interest in these remains is negligible and we have been working through ideas as to how we might effectively and ethically remove these remains from our collections.

A Forensic Anthropology Solution

We were recently visited by a student studying forensic anthropology who was seeking to use our collection of human remains to get practical experience of identifying skeletal material. She

used our unidentified remains (which are mostly partial) and found them an incredibly useful resource. The fact they were not complete skeletons made for a more challenging use of her study skills. At her suggestion we approached Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge to enquire whether their Forensic Anthropology course would like the material for comparative study. The University were incredibly positive and incredibly grateful for the offer.

Once we have carried out due diligence checks and formally de-accessioned the material (hopefully within the next 12 months) we will seek to pass it to Anglia Ruskin. The course tutor there worked on the dreadful results of the genocide at Srebrenica and is on the first response team for major world disasters to help identify victims. Our material could help her train the next generation of forensic anthropologists when the world once again inevitably calls upon their skills.

The debate about human remains in museums continues but I hope our work in the coming months reflects a positive and responsible attitude here at Ipswich which we hope will support others in their endeavour to literally make the world a better place.

**Caroline McDonald,
Curator of Archaeology**

Ipswich News

Future Jobs Fund placements at Ipswich

Four more Future Jobs Fund placements have started at Ipswich: Jamie, Louise, Gina and Alex. As with the last Future Jobs Fund placements, all are experiencing an insight into the workings of the Museum Service.

Our new staff team members have begun to understand that the work of the museums service has far more to it than meets the eye! All are building necessary skills and abilities of being a member of the Front of House team. These skills include: welcoming our customers, security of the building, health and safety care for our visitors, interacting with customers, engaging people in the stories and collections in our service and so much more! This is a unique opportunity to develop their skills and confidence, providing vital work experience to enhance their job applications and prospects in the future.

Volunteering Opportunities in the Art Sector

Colchester and Ipswich Museums are offering volunteering opportunities within the Arts and Museum Sector.

We are seeking enthusiastic volunteers to help our team and join us in welcoming visitors to the galleries at Ipswich Art School and Town Hall Galleries, Ipswich, and helping out at events across the galleries, Ipswich Museum and Christchurch Mansion.

Volunteers will gain valuable skills, experience and knowledge during their volunteer post. It is an effective way of both helping the community and potentially increasing employment opportunities. For many people volunteering increases confidence, and enables them to meet new people.

If you are enthusiastic about museums or art galleries, interested in helping visitors, willing to give a small amount of time each week, looking for an opportunity to develop your people skills or seeking to improve your CV or to gain a current work reference then you can apply to become a volunteer!

You don't 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.

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

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£2 per child for Father Christmas drop-in between 10am-12pm and 1pm-4pm

Suitable for all ages

Tudor Christmas @ Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich

Sat 12 Dec, 10am – 4pm

Meet costumed characters and enjoy the dulcet tones of the Tudor minstrels, make your own fruity pomander and join in other craft activities, all inspired by our 16th Century ancestors. Father Christmas will also be in the house for one day only!

Costumed characters, music, craft activities (£1.50) and Father Christmas (£2 – includes gift)

British Sign Language Interpreter available from 10.30am – 3.30pm

Christmas Events in Ipswich

Ice Age@ Ipswich Museum

Sat 4 Dec, 10am – 4pm

Christmassy activities, inspired by the Ice Age! You'll be in good company with the woolly mammoth and our cavewoman storyteller, and though not quite prehistoric, Santa will also be in the museum for one day only!

£2 per stamp card (covers craft activities and storytelling)

Fabulous Fascinators @ Ipswich Museum

This workshop will be held on Saturday 29 January 2011 at Ipswich Museum from 10am – 4pm

The workshops will be led by costume curator Danielle Sprecher and textile artist Alison Stockmarr and focus on pieces from the costume collection as inspiration to design and create new work.

Participants will be able to make their own fascinator or headpiece after discovering more about the hats from the collection.

Workshops will cost: £20.00 (£16.00 students when student ID shown). Tea and coffee is included but lunch is not provided.

Booking is essential as places are limited, please call 01473 433691, or drop into Christchurch Mansion to book your place today!

Danielle Sprecher
Costume Curator

Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition at Town Hall Galleries

This exhibition from the Natural History Museum in London showcases stunning images captured from the natural world around us from their Wildlife

Photographer of the Year competition.

The exhibition is on until 25 February 2011. Ipswich Town Hall Galleries are open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 5pm

Colchester News

Colchester Castle Redevelopment Project

The plan to redevelop Colchester Castle continues apace, with the main focus being audience development. This work is being led by Anne Millman and the initial results and findings are informing both the design of the galleries, interactives and learning elements as well as activity planning, all of which are critical to the success of the second stage Heritage Lottery Fund submission.

User Advocate Forums have been established to help inform the project and will meet on a regular basis. The over sixties' forum met for the first time in September and the young people's forum met in October.

The design work is progressing, taking account of the audience development findings, and Redman Design, appointed designers, are working closely with staff teams and Anne Millman to create stunning and innovative designs that will showcase the collections and stories of Colchester, its history and its



archaeology.

The Castle itself will be opened up with bigger spaces and longer vistas – visitors have told us they want to see more of the Castle fabric and features. In addition, the redevelopment will mean improved visitor facilities including improved access, heating, lighting and toilets.

Oxford Archaeology has been appointed to produce a detailed conservation management plan, which is due for completion in early November.

For more information please contact Tom Hodgson

tom.hodgson@colchester.gov.uk

European Union Grant

The Museum Service has been successful in obtaining a European Union grant of €423,000 (£264,000) through the INTERREG IVB Programme for an Anglo-French project entitled 'Norman Connections'. This has been developed in partnership with Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, Medway and Hastings Councils in England, and Bayeux, Caen and Falaise in Normandy.

For Colchester this will pay for the Norman elements in the Castle redisplay and also, critically, contribute to the match funding that must be secured for the far larger project of £3.2m. This success will strengthen the bid for HLF funding, currently around 75% of the total cost.

**Philip Wise,
Heritage Manager**

Exhibitions and Events

The **Medieval Treasures Exhibition at Colchester Castle** described in our Autumn Newsletter continues until 30 January 2011.

The **Straw: Bonnets to Boaters Exhibition** opened in September and continues until 27 February at Hollytrees Museum.



It features a number of objects from the Ipswich costume collection. Some of the highlights are an unusual straw peaked cap dating from the early 1900s, a 1930s straw boater from Everett & Sons, Ipswich with original hat box and receipt, a large straw hat worn by Mrs Allen from Wickham Market in 1903 and an 1880s Italian straw plait bonnet.

Also on show are three paintings from Ipswich's art collection, including *Woman reading on a couch* by Philip Wilson Steer.

**Danielle Sprecher,
Costume Curator**

Christmas Events

There will be a Christmas Market at Colchester Castle from 3.00 to 8.30 pm on Wed 15 December (free entry). There will be Christmas activities at Hollytrees Museum from 12.30 to 4.00 pm on Sun 12 December.

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