

Spring 2011



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Ipswich Museums

Friends Newsletter



The Friends of the Ipswich Museums Newsletter is published three times a year 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 Ipswich Art School Gallery. 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 (see page12). 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 Summer 2011 Newsletter should be sent to the editor by 1 June.

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Cover Illustration: *Preparatory Drawing for Cityscape* by Brian Whelan. This is on display together with *Cityscape* in the "Class of .." Exhibition.

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

As you will see this issue is dominated by Friends news. Alan Swerdlow and Peter Stockdale introduce themselves. Alan is our Chairman designate and Peter took over the role of Treasurer from David Kergon in January. Mary Southwood, our current Chairman, says farewell and Kathleen Daniel would like to retire from her post as secretary soon. She explains the work required. Please get in touch with Kathleen or any other Council member if you feel you could help.

Peter Berridge tells us about how the financial cuts are affecting the Museum Service.

You will find several enclosures about our 2011 AGM and Friends Social Events

The main event at the Museum is

the "Class of..." exhibition at the Art School Gallery - see page 14. Richard Scott and Paul Bruce have written a book *High Street Heyday* about students and teachers who worked at the Art School. They are hoping to have it published in time for the Charity Auction on 15 April - see page 13.

Recently Joan Lyall, Museum Documentation Officer found some record books relating to the first group of friends - see page 21. When I became Newsletter Editor in late 2002 I inherited a box of old newsletters. I plan to report on some of our previous activities in future issues.

Mary Halliwell

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 Letter

Dear Friends

I can hardly believe it, but this will be my last Chairman's letter to you!

Over the past two years we have worked alongside the Museum Service and have seen improvements that we can all enjoy. The Egyptian Gallery has proved a great success and the on-going work on the Art School project will keep everyone busy.

The fundraising emphasis now is on the refurbishment and purchase of the Art School. 'High Street Heyday', the book by Richard Scott and Paul Bruce, will be available in March; this book has been produced with the help of the Friends and should prove a good fundraiser for the Art School project (see page 13).

The next Chairman will not be a stranger to you: Alan Swerdlow has agreed to take up the position, and I know you will be in safe hands.

We all had a good time at the Christmas party. We were entertained by one of our corporate members, the Linden School of Music, and by members of the Friends' Council, as well as by Amanda the daughter of Stuart Curtis, our Corporate Membership

Officer. Amanda read two poems with confidence and style!

We are looking forward to a busy year of trips. In May a group is off to Luxembourg which will be the most ambitious trip yet planned by Alan Swerdlow. Plans for trips later in the year are given in the leaflets with this newsletter.

Our next event will be the Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 5 April. Please read the proposed changes to the Constitution (in the AGM notes.) It would not be practical to have a discussion on the Constitution at the AGM, but feel free to make comments and suggestions beforehand. At the AGM we shall just take a vote on the new Constitution and if it is carried it will come into force at once. If it is not carried a special meeting will be arranged for discussion. After the business of the AGM we have a special treat; Dr Rosie Mills from the V&A in London will speak to us about the treasures of the V&A's Medieval and Renaissance Gallery.

I wish you all the very best and I am sure you will all continue to work to make our Museums successful.

Mary Southwood

Peter Berridge's Column

Everyone knows about the tough economic situation in the country and also particularly the issues facing Local Authorities. As I write this, Councils across the country are finalising their budgets for next year and in many instances this includes making swingeing cuts to museum and general cultural budgets. Inevitably in relation to the situation in Ipswich and Colchester the joint museum service was always going to figure in these cuts. In consequence this has been a particularly challenging time for museum staff and it has involved us in working up a range of savings options for consideration. However, the result is that while we have to absorb a significant budget reduction for the next financial year we have managed to do this in such a way that it has only a limited impact on the level of service (though with one significant reduction which I will describe below) and also, very importantly, has allowed us to retain a balanced and sustainable organisation. A very important point to make here is that both Ipswich Borough Council and Colchester Borough Council continue to see cultural activity and particularly museums as very important parts of the services that they provide to the people of both

towns. In consequence while they have expected the museum service to share in the pain of budget cuts they have not targeted it above others. The importance that Ipswich Borough Council places on museums is fully reflected in their new Cultural Strategy which has just been out for public consultation. This in particular highlights the museum development projects involving the Art School, Ipswich Museum and Christchurch Mansion. Consequently while in the midst of tough times we are still in a strong position not only to sustain museums in Ipswich but also to proceed with plans for further significant development.

Now I need to tell you about the one significant service reduction which is that, as of the beginning of April 2011, Christchurch Mansion will no longer be open on Mondays. This is also being applied to two of the museums in Colchester, Hollytrees and the Natural History Museum. In Ipswich of course Ipswich Museum and the Town Hall Galleries are already closed on Mondays so this simply brings Christchurch Mansion in line with them. While this is regrettable it is better than some other options that were considered and then

discarded. Also, as I am sure many of you know from personal experience, a lot of museums around the country are closed on Mondays. It is also worth noting that when looking at visitor patterns to Christchurch Mansion, over the week, that Mondays, on average, have the lowest visitor numbers of any day and so closing on this day should have the least impact on visitor numbers.

Now turning to more positive news. The new Egyptian Gallery, which opened in July last year, in Ipswich Museum continues to be a great success particularly with schools and in consequence the number of school children visiting in organised groups has already risen by 33%. The gallery has also recently been visited by somebody on behalf of the Museum Association who is writing a review for the Museums Journal which is the leading professional journal for the museum sector in this country. We now await to see what they say about it and will report on this in a future newsletter.

In terms of visitors new audiences are being generated by the exhibitions in the Ipswich Art School and up to the end of December nearly 9,000 people had visited the Saatchi exhibition.

In Ipswich Town Hall the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition that has recently ended has proved

to be one of the most successful exhibitions so far mounted in the building and has helped to significantly boost visitor numbers.

In general terms, now that we are coming close to the end of the fourth year of the new joint museum service between Ipswich and Colchester it is worth briefly reviewing the success that has been achieved in Ipswich in terms of visitor numbers. In 2006/2007, the year prior to the creation of the new museum service, 91,860 people visited the two museums in Ipswich. There had been a high point in visitor numbers back in 1999/2000 when they reached 120,579 but following that there was a pattern of decline leading to the 2006/2007 figure. In the first year of the joint museum service (2007/2008) visitor numbers rose to 94,945, then to 96,988 (2008/2009) and finally 109,502 (2009/2010). While the financial year 2010/2011 is still to be completed visitor figures at Ipswich Museum continue to increase though there is a slightly worrying dip at Christchurch Mansion (though this is only compared to last year which saw a major rise in numbers). However, the reduction at Christchurch is more than offset by the new visitors going to the Art School so that it can already be firmly predicted that total visitors at the end of the year will see a further increase and so continue the upward trend.

On the subject of visitor figures to museum and galleries there is of course also the Town Hall to take into account and so it worth reviewing the situation here as well. In 2006/2007 when the Town Hall was not open for a full year there were 20,822 visitors which when combined with the museums figures gave a total of 112,682. In 2007/2008, the first full year of operation, the figure for the Town Hall was 27,383, then 26,036 (2008/2009) and 24,822 (2009/2010). In terms of combined figures these were 122,238, 123,024 and 134,324 which, while including a two year decline in Town Hall numbers overall shows a healthy increase. As I am sure that you know prior to 2010/2011 the museum service simply operated a gallery upstairs in the Town Hall with the major focus being on the ground floor gallery which continued to be directly operated by Ipswich Borough Council. Again as

you probably know this year the museum service was also asked to take on all the gallery spaces in the Town Hall, on behalf of the council, and, as already referred to in relation to the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition, we are now already increasing visitor figures there as well. At the end of December numbers were already up by around 4,500 visitors when compared to the previous year. In consequence we are on target to achieve overall record figures for people visiting museums and galleries in Ipswich which can only be good news for the museum service and everyone interested in promoting and developing cultural activity in Ipswich. In particular this gives us a firm foundation upon which to continue to build into the future.

Peter Berridge

Museum Service Manager

Membership as a Gift

Have any of your friends or relatives promised to consider joining the Friends but have not yet done so?

All you have to do is send the appropriate subscription (payable to FOIM) together with contact details of the recipient to:

Jerry Latham, FOIM, 5 Dalton Road, Ipswich IP1 2HT

(or if you prefer you can download an application form

from our website www.foim.org)

Friends News

Annual General Meeting 2011

The Annual General Meeting will take place in Christchurch Mansion at 7.30 pm on Tues 5 April. Tea and coffee will be served from 7.00 pm.

Please see separate information about the AGM business and the AGM talk distributed with this Newsletter

Our Chairman Designate

Alan Swerdlow has been on the Council of FOIM since 1993 and was Chairman from 1996 to 1999. He is a Vice-President of FOIM. From 1997 he has been involved in arranging over thirty of our visits and holidays, ably helped by our Membership, Secretary Barbara Cole. Alan has been a volunteer in the arts and museums since his days in his home town of Liverpool where he was Chairman of the Bluecoat Arts Centre and Gallery, and a Trustee of National Museums Liverpool. Since moving to Suffolk in 1991 he was on the board of Aldeburgh Music and DanceEast and was Chairman of the Association for Suffolk Museums. He is currently Deputy Chairman of Gainsborough's House in Sudbury. Alan was appointed a Member of the Order

of the British Empire (MBE) in the New Year Honours 2009 for services to the Arts and the community in Liverpool and Suffolk.

Introducing Peter Stockdale

Having been appointed FOIM Treasurer from 1 Jan it seemed appropriate to write a brief note introducing myself, particularly as I have really been a sleeping member until now: there in spirit, but not in body.

I have long been an admirer of the Museum, Park and Mansion, and the contents thereof. Many moons ago I worked as an antique restorer, and got a close up view of quite a few pieces of furniture. The items in the Mansion that really stand out to me are the set of dining chairs with the ball and claw feet. A close look reveals incredibly sharp carving. The claws really curve around and grip the ball, and unusually you can see daylight between the claws and the ball. Made in the 'wrong' material these are so good that I wonder if they are the work of the original creative genius who inspired the ball and claw fashion across Europe?

Away from conjecture and back to business - like the other Friends I saw the request in Summer 2010 for volunteers, in particular a

Treasurer, and let it go past, as you do. On the second ask I decided to risk putting my head above the parapet.

The first task that now falls to me is to produce the accounts for last year. As I am neither an accountant nor a bookkeeper that could prove an interesting challenge but I am sure it will all balance in the end! Anyway, it is pleasing to report that the paperwork and finances are all in good order, and I thank the former treasurer David Kergon for his work keeping everything in place, and assisting me through this transition period. I look forward to playing a small part in the continuation of all that has gone before.

Peter Stockdale
FOIM Treasurer

Lunch Time Talks

Paul Bruce was pleased to receive a good response to his survey on talks. As there were no complaints about Alnesbourne Priory, Paul has decided to arrange two more talks there. He is also arranging one talk at the Museum followed by a buffet lunch at the nearby Arboretum pub.

The first spring talk will be about the **Ogilvie Collection of Birds**. The talk will be given by Reg Snook, ornithologist and artist on 13 April at the Museum. Reg is a government wildlife inspector

specialising in birds of prey.

On 11 May Jeremy Greenwood will give a talk **John Nash: Artist plantsman**. Jeremy has studied a number of English artists who worked between the two World Wars. He set up the Wood Lea Press in 1987 to publish his book



Hellebores,
wood engraving
by John Nash

The wood-engravings of John Nash and has since produced books on the prints produced by, among others, Paul Nash, Edward Bawden and most recently, Eric Ravilious.

John Nash (1893-1977) served as a war artist in both World Wars. He later became a successful wood-engraver, producing lithographs and line drawings as illustrations for many books. and taught at the Royal College of Art. He moved to the Essex / Suffolk borders where his varied career flourished until shortly before his death.

On 8 June, Philip Wise, Heritage Manager from the Museum Service will give the talk which was cancelled in December due to heavy snow. Philip's title is **The Medieval Treasures of East Anglia**.

All talks must be booked in advance. A leaflet with full details is being distributed with this newsletter. For further information contact Paul on 01473 738265 or via our website.

Visit to Two Museums 21 July 2011

We will visit the ***Museum of East Anglian Life*** in Stowmarket in the morning, with an introduction by a curator. After lunch we will travel on to Cotton for a private visit to the ***Museum of Mechanical Music and Bygones*** being opened specially for us. We will enjoy demonstrations of the Mighty Wurlitzer and many other old instruments. Tea and biscuits will be provided before the return to Ipswich and Woodbridge.



Fairground organ at Cotton

A booking form is being distributed with this Newsletter.

Alan Swerdlow

Overnight Visit to Stratford on Avon, 6-7 Sept 2011



The Falcon Hotel

Our trip to Stratford on Avon provides a chance to look at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre after a four year transformation (with the option of going to a performance of Macbeth) and a return visit to Compton Verney for two fascinating exhibitions. On the way to Warwickshire we have a few hours at Wimpole Hall and estate. We stay at the historic Falcon Hotel in Stratford on Avon.

On the way home we spend the morning at Compton Verney where we have an introductory talk and visit two exhibitions:

Stanley Spencer and the English Garden and ***Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and the landscape of middle England.***

A booking form is being distributed with this Newsletter.

Alan Swerdlow

Wanted—A Secretary

The Friends are currently looking for someone to fill the position of Secretary, a post which I have held for the last 9 years.

The main duties are the taking of minutes and circulation of papers for the quarterly meetings of the Council (which are held on Tuesday afternoons at the Museum) and the Annual General Meeting at Christchurch Mansion. Shorthand is definitely not necessary for the minute-taking but as all papers are circulated by email, access to a computer is essential. General enquiries about the Friends (by post, phone or email) are from time to time addressed to the Secretary, for action or for forwarding to the appropriate person.

The Secretary is the point of contact with the British Association of Friends of Museums, the national co-ordinating body of which our Ipswich group is a member. This simply involves acting as a postbox but there is the opportunity of attending BAFM's Annual Conferences, which take place in different parts of the UK, and its smaller regional meetings. There is no obligation on the Secretary to do so but these events can bring you

into contact with some interesting people and places.

The Council currently consists of fourteen members, each of whom is responsible for a particular aspect of the Friends' activities, thus ensuring that no one member is asked to shoulder too great a workload. I have found the work stimulating and rewarding and have enjoyed the company of my talented and supportive colleagues. I should be happy to meet anyone who is interested in taking up the post to discuss it further. My email address and telephone number are on the back of this Newsletter.

Kathleen Daniel

From the Membership Secretary

Membership figures remain stable, and we have had 5 new members since the last newsletter

Ms S Burrow
Mr & Mrs B West
Mr & Mrs D Smith & Family
Ms J Calver
Mr A Gross & Ms K Hurrell

We welcome back Mrs A Lorrimer-Thomas and extend a warm welcome to them all.

We extend our warmest thanks to Richard & Geraldine Taylor for their patience and continuing to pay their subscription for several years, and not receiving any communications

from us. This is the mysterious Mrs E Taylor whom I have been trying to trace for so long. She happened to visit the Mansion before Christmas and told a member of staff that she was receiving no newsletters. When the information was passed on to me, we were pleased to invite them to the Christmas party as our guests, and they have booked to go to Luxembourg, so all is well at last.

Many thanks to all who have renewed their subscriptions, but there are still several people who have not paid. We would be pleased to hear from you.

Barbara Cole
Membership Secretary

Mansion Guides

The new year promises to be an equally successful time for the guiding team. There are now ten new volunteers, who are currently well on the way to becoming taster tour guides. My thanks as always to all members of the guides team. **Free half hour taster tours** are available everyday except Sundays at 11.00am. They are an excellent introduction to the Mansion for family, friends and visitors to Suffolk. Please do join us. There are also tours, which need to be pre-booked and cost £4 a head. These can be more detailed general tours for larger groups or individuals about

the history and contents of the house, or tailor-made specialist visits. The Mansion is a treasure trove of wonderful objects, so if you're interested, please do contact us on 01473 433554. You will not be disappointed.

Joan Munns
Guides Coordinator



Archive and Research group

Our museum service is already being helped with volunteers invigilating at the Art School. It has been good to see some younger people offering their time and enthusiasm. For some years it has been thought that some Friends of the Ipswich Museums might like to form a small group to help the Service with a range of documentary research work. This could involve looking into the

history of items in the collection, the buildings, tracing provenance and sifting through documents some of which go back to Victorian days. You might have a particular area of interest to research. There is also our own Friends archive to research - we go back to before the last war: do any records still exist?

If there is sufficient response to this notice an exploratory meeting will be set up at the Museum. Training would be provided and there will be regular meetings with museum staff.

If you are interested in this idea please give your name to Alan Swerdlow phone 01394 380044 or email alan@whr.demon.co.uk

A New Book about the Ipswich Art School

Richard Scott, who taught at Ipswich School of Art between 1971 & 1995 and Paul Bruce, the Friends vice-president, who was a student at the Art School in the early 1960's, have combined to write a book to celebrate the restoration of the much loved Art School building.

The book, **High Street Heyday** traces the history of the art school from its inception in 1859 to its closure in 1997.

The book will be published in March 2011 to coincide with the charity auction planned for 15 April.

The printing of the book is being financed by the Friends and profit from the sales will be donated to the appeal fund for the Art School Gallery.

The book is being offered at £12.50, available from the Ipswich Art School. The 'Friends' may purchase it for £12.50 (inclusive of postage & packing) from Mary Halliwell, 31, Queens Road, Felixstowe, IP11 7QU. Cheques should be made payable to 'FOIM'

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The Class Of... at Ipswich Art School

This exhibition opened at the Art School on 29 Jan and runs until 12 June. It shows the work of past and present students and lecturers. Additional exhibitions are being mounted at the Waterside Gallery at University Campus Suffolk.

The Exhibition

Ipswich Art School originally opened on 10 January 1859 at the Assembly Rooms in Northgate Street, Ipswich. As the School attracted more students, it required more space. It was later given a permanent home on the High Street when the new Museum was built in 1881. This move linked the Schools of Science and Art. In 1934 construction began on a new building with a distinctive glass-roofed, octagonal gallery. It was conceived as a place to inspire, transform and educate and was in use as an Art School until 1997.

Emma Roodhouse, curator, explained "The Class Of..." is a look at the legacy of the Ipswich Art School from 1859 until 1997, during which time many influential people went through its doors. The exhibition begins to tell the story of the Ipswich Art School through the Ipswich Art collection and a number of loans. Work by past tutors and students are being shown together for the first time. This will let us look back through the School's working lifetime to see how artists have developed.

Current students and tutors from Suffolk New College and University

Campus Suffolk will be taking over two of the galleries in the Art School. These displays will be periodically rotated during the exhibition, and in this way we will see how 'The Class of...' is ever-changing. For the first time the Waterfront Gallery and Colchester & Ipswich Museums combine to show an even bigger 'Class Of...' At the Waterfront there will be a selection of past students' and current tutors' work on show. The Waterfront exhibition will be running from 29 Jan– 27 Feb and then from 10 March – 2 April.



Conch Avian 3 by Bernard Reynolds This image is used with kind permission of the artist's family.



Brian Eno ©Tom Phillips

The Artists

Maggi Hambling headlines this exhibition of painting, drawing and sculpture by influential students and teachers from Ipswich Art School. Maggi who was born in Sudbury, Suffolk in 1945 was a student at Ipswich Art School from 1962-64. Her work is on display in the Atrium, including the heron model for the public sculpture in Brixton.

Maggi Hambling said, "My time at Ipswich Art School was crucial, the various disciplines of painting, drawing, sculpture and printmaking were strongly instilled in me. Each one continues to play its part in my work."

Among the many artists on display is Colin Moss who was born in Ipswich in 1914 and in 1947 became a senior lecturer at Ipswich Art School. Although he is now

established as a leading East Anglian artist, he was controversial when he first started. Tom Phillips's portrait of his ex-student Brian Eno is on display along with sculptures by Norwich born Bernard Reynolds who moved to Ipswich Art School and from 1948 to 1980 was the lecturer of sculpture.

Earlier artists represented include George Rushton (Principal of the Art School from 1906), Leonard Squirrel (studied under Rushton and later became a teacher) and Edward Thomas Johns (1862-1947 who studied at Ipswich Art School).

The Private View and Charity Auction

The well attended private view was held on 28 January. Proceedings started with Peter Berridge talking about the progress of the fund raising effort and Lord Stevenson of Coddenham congratulating the museum service for the Art School project, which he felt was a most exciting project and very good value for money.

A Charity Auction has been arranged for the evening of 15 April at the Art School. Works by artists associated with Ipswich Art School will be auctioned including Maggi Hambling, Colin Moss, Laurence Self and John Chipperfield. Places are limited, those interested in attending should contact Emma Roodhouse (emma.roodhouse@colchester.gov.uk).

The Partridge Project

David Jones tells us the outcome of a collaborative project to review the information and artefacts collected by Charles Partridge in the early twentieth century in the Cross River district of Nigeria.



©The Trustees of The British Museum

Charles Partridge

The Partridge Project is the result of a ground-breaking co-operation between the British Museum and Ipswich Museum to bring together the collections, photographs and writings of Charles Partridge, the first researcher on the Cross River district and the Igala people in Eastern Nigeria. Partridge was born in Stowmarket and was educated at Ipswich School. After attending University he, like many others of his class at this time, took up a career as an administrator in the British Empire. Armed only with an undergraduate degree in theology, Partridge soon found himself in charge of hundreds of square miles

and thousands of people, without the ability to speak any local language and no understanding of their history or culture. He had little option but to try and understand this different world by which he was surrounded and which he was supposed to transform.

Returning to England to serve in the First World War he had an active career as a local historian and was deeply interested in the heritage of Suffolk too. On his death he left his collection to Ipswich Museum, his photographs and official papers to the British Museum and his unofficial papers to the Suffolk Record office and the Mary Slessor Institute at Dundee.

The project has sought to reunite



Mask of the type called mfuon ekpo from the Ibibio people. It represents the calm spirit of those who have live a good life and who will be reborn in due course into their families.

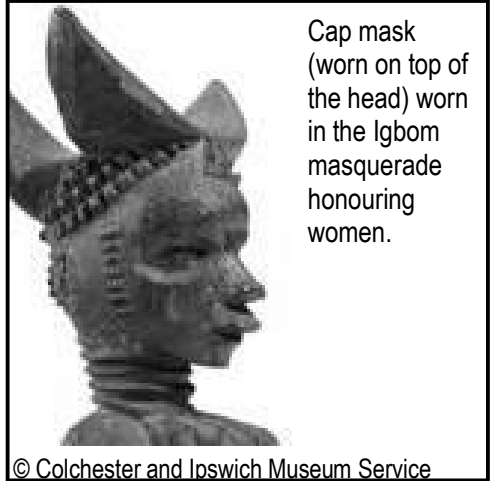
© Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service

these sources and has seen cooperation between the Museum Service, the British Museum, the leading researcher Jill Salmons, and two museums in Nigeria. It has led to the following results:

Firstly, the creation of a new display in the ethnography gallery at Ipswich Museum highlighting Partridge's collections and photographs, this includes exceptional field film footage of recent masquerades in the same area of Nigeria. It is perhaps the fullest coverage of art from this region anywhere in the world.

Secondly, a major catalogue entitled 'Masquerade Mosaic', appearing early this year. Information from a range of sources in different institutions is used to create an in-depth coverage of the transmission of art styles within the region at the beginning of the colonial period. Illustrated with images of over 200 specimens, most never previously published, and 76 field photographs taken by Partridge. This book is essential reading for anyone interested in the arts of Southern Nigeria. The specimens and the photographs are discussed in the context of the cultural and religious philosophy of the region, the career of a colonial officer and the interaction between the official and the private for the history of ethnographic photography.

Thirdly, Ipswich Museum has prepared a travelling exhibition based on Partridge's photographs which will tour Nigeria.



The Museum also hosted two guest curators from Nigeria, Pamela Otuka from the Lagos Museum and Maureen Alagoa from Port Harcourt as a part of the British Museum's programme of training African curators.

David Jones
Keeper of Human History

Note: The catalogue is available in the Museum Shop.



'Mammoth adventures' for 'mini explorers' at Ipswich Museum

'Mini mammoths' is an exciting activity session we have developed at Ipswich Museum, for children aged 2-5 years and their parents, grandparents or carers. Each month we explore different themes and collections in the museum, using objects, stories, games, trails and some really creative art and craft activities to provide a very 'hands-on' experience and encouraging imagination, creativity and rich conversations.

In February our 'Mini mammoth' session involved a 'museum expedition' to the Anglo Saxon Gallery which was to find out how these peoples' lives were like ours and how they were different. The children really enjoyed dressing up and using torches and magnifying glasses to find shiny treasures in the displays and look really closely to find different patterns on the jewellery. Drawing hard on to gold



card children made beautiful raised patterns, cut and decorated them with sequins to make their own Anglo Saxon



badges! Handling the objects is always popular, though all found it hard trying to spin wool with the drop spindle. A large bag of ribbons and cardboard box loom was very successful, encouraging co-operative work and lots of talking and decision making.

Mini Mammoths meets on the first Tuesday morning every month. To provide resources to support families visiting the museum on their own between sessions we have introduced some new Activity Sacks for 'mini explorers'. The sacks are filled with a wide variety of activities, games and story books, that encourage talking, active looking and having fun together.

Caroline Hammer
Senior Learning Officer

Outreach Team Update

During October, the Museum Service Outreach Team worked with Suffolk Social Services on two projects. The first was a traditional games workshop day for looked-after children and carers' own children. The participants made traditional games from recycled materials, inspired by the collections at Christchurch Mansion.



The second was a photography project entitled 'Click!' for asylum seekers aged 16 to 18 from Afghanistan and North Africa. The project captured Ipswich and the surrounding area through their eyes and an exhibition of their work will take place early in 2011.

Over the past year, the outreach team has supported the Ipswich Bangladeshi Support Centre in

writing an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund 'Your Heritage' scheme. The application proposed a three-year oral history project focusing on the contribution of Bangladeshi immigrants to the culture and economy of Ipswich since the 1950s. The application has been successful and the Bangladeshi Support Centre has been awarded £49,900. The outreach team will continue to support the Bangladeshi Support Centre throughout this project.



The outreach team continue to develop the Reminiscence offer and have run training for care staff based around the Reminiscence collection. Work has also taken place with Ipswich Hospital to help them develop a reminiscence box scheme for use on the wards with patients.

Amy Cotterill
Community Outreach Officer

New Acquisitions

Eight drypoint prints by Andrew Vass: made in 2009 during the artist's visits to *The Cold Press*, an intaglio print-making studio based in North Norfolk which seeks to provide artists with time and space to make new work. The prints are a response to the environment and the ever-changing role of the artist. Andrew Vass studied at Cambridge College of Art and Technology, and has lived and worked in Ipswich for a number of years. He currently teaches at Suffolk New College and University Campus Suffolk art departments and has had exhibitions in East Anglia, London and Shanghai.

Natural History specimens: include two specimens of the weevil *Otiorhynchus armadillo* which is a relatively new arrival in the UK (1990s) and as a result previously unrepresented in the Museum collection. In addition a specimen of a very small beetle called *Adistemia watsoni* has been collected. This species is new to Suffolk and has caused some interest amongst local researchers.

Fish ear bones: some scientifically very important specimens of fish ear bones from the Coralline Crag deposits of Sutton and Gedgrave near Orford have been donated. These

specimens were collected 20 years ago, with the support of Ipswich Museum, and have been used to assist the development of a new review of fossil fish-otoliths from the Miocene of the North Sea Basin, written by Dr Werner Schwarzhans of Hamburg, Germany.

Philip Wise
Heritage Manager

Pound Farm by Cedric Morris

In our Winter newsletter Joan Lyall told us about six Cedric Morris oil paintings which had been purchased for the collection. At the time of printing no images were available. Images are now available. This one is the most effective in black and white.



© Estate of Cedric Morris

Christchurch Choristers



The newly formed Christchurch Choristers have enjoyed a successful Christmas Season, appearing at a variety of events and fund raisers. We have now had four public engagements, presenting a range of traditional carols.

The choir is made up of Front of House staff from within the Ipswich branch of the service. The choir

was conceived as a result of the amazing voices which can be heard resounding throughout the Mansion during the morning cleaning periods.

We have sung at the Orwell Care Home for the residents and staff, The Friends Christmas party, The Tudor Christmas event at the Mansion and we captivated the crowd at the Harwich and Dovercourt Rugby Club Christmas Charity event where we appeared alongside five other acts.

We are back to rehearsals now and intend developing a range of songs. We are already pencilled in for a Festival of Art on Dovercourt sea front this coming summer.

Tony Francis
Duty Officer

The First Friends

The present Friends organisation was started in 1978. However we were not the first friends to be associated with Ipswich Museum. When I took over the job of newsletter editor a pile of old newsletters was passed on to me. In the first of these I read that the Friends were reborn in 1978, the first regular newsletter having been started by Paddy Drake in 1983. Recently I was contacted by Joan

Lyall, the documentation officer at Ipswich Museum who had found some Friends Accounts in a safe which had been locked for many years. There were two well kept record books relating to an early group of Friends known as the **Friends of the Ipswich Museum Fund**. Joan showed these to me in early February. One was a record of members' names and the second was a very detailed set of accounts

for 1934 to 1956. These early Friends were apparently organised by the Museum staff. The subscriptions and donations from members were listed on the left hand pages of the account book while the facing right hand page showed money spent on services, books, equipment and new acquisitions. At the end of the year a small printed report was produced sometimes showing pictures of the new acquisitions together with a financial summary.

In addition a lot of correspondence has been preserved together with

bank statements and the final cheque book. The last cheque was written on 4 July 1962 - subsequent cheque stubs were marked "returned to bank".

Joan Lyall tells me that she was delighted to have found these early records. She anticipates that it will provide useful additional information about items in the collection - particularly the original purchase price and acquisition dates.

Mary Halliwell
Newsletter Editor

Future Exhibitions

Worn to be Wild

at Town Hall Galleries, Ipswich

26th March – 26th April

A collection of 17 costumes with accessories, each outfit is inspired by a British bird or mammal and a specific period of fashion.

Open Tues—Sat 10am—5pm

Frederick Ashton: The Ballet and Suffolk

at Town Hall Galleries and Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich

19th May – 9th October

Discover the story of Sir Frederick Ashton, a gifted dancer and choreographer involved with the Royal Ballet. He created more

than 100 ballets over a 60-year career.

Town Hall Galleries Open: as above. Christchurch Mansion Open: Tues – Sun 10am – 5pm

A Few of my Favourite Things at Colchester Castle

From 19th February 2011

A range of objects will be on display from all areas of the museum: archaeology, community history, fine art, costume and natural history, including recent acquisitions.

Open: Mon-Sat 10am to 5pm, Sun 11am to 5pm

Telephone: 01206 282939 or visit www.colchestermuseums.org.uk

Colchester Castle Update

Tom Hodgson keeps us up to date with progress in submitting a Heritage Lottery Fund bid for Colchester Castle.

The Audience Development team are working on the draft Activity Plan. This is a key document for the Round 2 HLF bid as it lists all the activities we will do during the project to the benefit of our users, including museum staff. There have been a series of meetings and activities throughout October and November, involving members of museums staff, the public, Portal (the museum access advisory group), the Teachers Advisory Panel and the user forums, to inform the Activity Plan.

The young people's user forum met on 28 October and provided some very useful feedback for the consultant and project team on their views on the redevelopment plans. This group also met for the second time on 6 December as did the over 60s user forum on 25 November. Both groups had the opportunity to look at the more detailed proposals and visuals proposed for the redisplay by Redman Design. The project team has been working very closely with Redman Design throughout November to produce the Design Report which is another major bid document.

One piece of very welcome news is that the HLF has relaxed the

match funding requirements so that we now have to find a minimum of 10% rather than 25% of total project costs. This has closed the funding gap, even with rising project costs which are now in the region of £4.5m (the result of all elements being costed in detail with an additional contingency sum to ensure no financial headaches at the delivery stage).

We are now working to finalise all of the detailed information and required documents to submit our round two application to the HLF by 11 April 2011.

Tom Hodgson
Community History Manager

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☎ 01473 287716 e-mail: barbara38burtoncole@yahoo.co.uk

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Any correspondence, except where indicated, should be sent to:

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