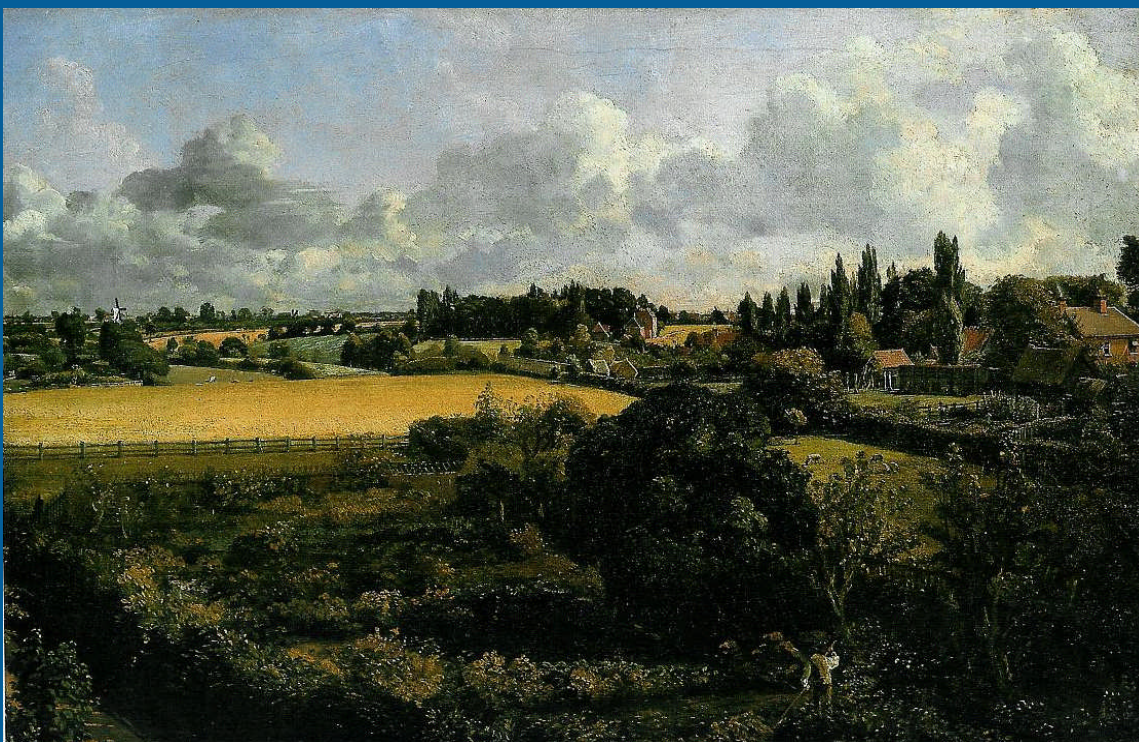


The Friends of the Ipswich Museums

Newsletter SPRING 2013



we look forward

FIM

to promote the past

Our cover celebrates the return of Constable's paintings of his parents' garden to the Wolsey Gallery

images © Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service

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, 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, talks and other events for their members.

The Friends provide guided tours of the Mansion and Museum, including free *Peeps into the Past* at the Mansion throughout most of the year. 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 the Ipswich Arts Association.

Contributions to the Summer 2013 Newsletter should be sent to the editor by 1 June 2013.

We look forward



www.foim.org.uk

to promote the past

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Our advertisements are all from Corporate members. Please support them.

Have you visited our website:

www.foim.org.uk and our facebook page www.facebook.com/ipswichmuseums?

We use our website to advertise events notified too late to be included in the Newsletter

Do you want to receive Museum Service events' listings by post?

This can be arranged if you contact Mary Halliwell, 31 Queens Road, Felixstowe IP11 7QU



FOIM is a subscribing member of the Ipswich Arts Association, please visit their website www.ipswich-arts.org.uk for further information.

Editor's Notes

As usual we enclose the papers for the annual general meeting with this Newsletter. The AGM will be on 9 April in the re-opened Wolsey Gallery with the Constable and Gainsborough paintings rehung. Bill Seaman, the recently appointed Manager of Colchester and Essex Museums, will speak to us during the meeting.

In March the Museum Service has invited the Friends to come and express their views about the future plans for Ipswich Museum and also to come along to the Private View of the newly rehung Wolsey Gallery. You will find details on pages 10-11.

Since the last Newsletter the Friends have arranged two walking tours of Woodbridge and a Summer Party in the Mansion. Although I have lived in Felixstowe for nearly 40 years I know very little about Woodbridge and look forward to taking part in one of these events.

I was very pleased to receive a final message from Peter Berridge who will be leaving us at the end of March. We have seen a lot of progress during his stay and wish him well for the future.

This is a 28 page newsletter with plenty of Friends News as well as interesting articles about our latest acquisitions from Philip Wise (pages 22-23), a trip to China by Bob Entwistle and Joan Lyall (pages 18-19) and a new portrait of John Stevens Henslow (pages 24-25) from local artist John Williams.

In recent months the Mansion Guides have been delighted to see more objects on display in the Mansion. They were also pleased to hear that their request for more costume displays will soon be satisfied (see page 17). There will also be an opportunity for a few Friends to help set up the displays.

Mary Halliwell
Editor

Legacies

In 2011 we received the good news that Vera Gwendoline Mary Auckland had remembered the Friends in her Will with a generous legacy. We now have the funds and the Museum service is of course aware of the gift: we expect to be able to announce shortly exactly what this donation has allowed us to acquire.

If you too would like to remember FOIM in your Will you can be assured that any gift we receive will be used to enhance or conserve the collections of the Ipswich Museums. If you are considering a legacy, please speak to your solicitor. Our registered charity number is: 275527.

Chairman's Letter

I am delighted to report that we have several interesting events planned for 2013, and all are booking well. The visit to the newly reopened William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow and Chelmsford Museum has already taken place and was a great success: two contrasting venues. There is a short report of the visit on page 14.

There was such a long waiting list for the Yorkshire holiday that we managed to secure extra bedrooms and a much larger coach rather than disappoint many members. Jean Attenborrow is now dealing with bookings while Barbara Cole continues with arrangements for talks and social events.

We have an excellent series of talks – do sign up if you have not done so by now.

The changes at the Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service (CIMS) seem to be settling down. You may have heard by now that Bill Seaman has been appointed to succeed Peter Berridge as Head of Service. He will talk to us at the AGM. I met Bill at a number of events over the years while he worked on a development programme for museums in the East of England. We look forward to working with him and wish him every success.

His most recent job has been Assistant Head of the county-wide Norfolk Museums Service. His first museum role was as Head of Public Events at The Natural History Museum. Developing his museum experience he moved into management at museums in Colchester and Birmingham while taking an MA in Museum Studies. He project managed

the redevelopment of Norwich Castle. His experience includes heading a team developing entrepreneurial opportunities for museums to meet growing public expectations in a context of reduced public funding.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Peter Berridge for his work in bringing the joint service into operation and for leading the museums so professionally. During the process of amalgamation he ensured that the Friends' committee was kept fully informed, explaining the way the service would work. He was involved in the acquisition of the old Art School building, a project that is now gathering momentum. Some of you will remember that Peter gave us a talk one evening about his archaeological work in Morocco with which he has been involved for some years. We wish him well.

Over the last months the staff have been under considerable pressure and have still made time to meet up with me and the committee to discuss ways in which we can work more closely together to the benefit of the service. We have established clearer lines of communication to facilitate our role as advocates as well as fund raisers.

I write elsewhere in this Newsletter about our first Annual Dinner (page 13) Comments afterwards have been very encouraging. The committee will be discussing how this event might become a fixture in our calendar.

Blue Skies Ideas Meeting

On 16 January our Vice-Chairman Jerry Latham hosted and facilitated a meeting at which we had an opportunity to

discuss strategy and how the Friends might develop and face the future. It was a productive meeting with lots of new ideas for consideration.

New members

As usual you will read the names of those who have joined us since the last Newsletter (see page 12). Several are as a result of another new member giving FoIM memberships as Christmas presents – the ideal gift.

Annual General Meeting 9 April 2013

The AGM is announced in separate papers accompanying this Newsletter including my Chairman's Report. I do hope that as many members as possible will join us for a review of the year and to support the election of the committee. Bill Seaman will give a short

presentation and we will also have an update on the service by a senior staff member. It promises to be an interesting evening and a good social event.

The meeting will be held in the Wolsey Art Gallery at the Mansion newly reopened after considerable investment by IBC. This will give members a chance to see the new picture hang and how the gallery has been considerably improved. Emma Roodhouse will explain the ideas behind the new displays.

I understand that IBC has secured a further £11,000 investment in the gallery and that it will have a new induction loop and PA system. So hearing the speakers should not be a problem!

Museum Development project

There are three significant consultations being carried out:

- 1) Audience Development which will involve consultation with a wide spectrum of groups, including FoIM. I suggested that museum service invites all members to a meeting with the specialist consultants. (see 10).
- 2) Campus Master Plan to give an overview of the Museum estate. Staff will be making a series of visits to new and established museums and galleries around the country to inform the discussion. A leading architectural firm will be appointed to prepare a master plan.



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3) The commissioning of a consultant to help develop the artistic programme for the site.

British Association of Friends of Museums

The eastern regional meeting was in Harlow on 18 October 2012. The main topic was the local museum service in the town. It was put out to tender with a three year town council grant reducing in value each year. The three speakers seemed unable to explain how the service might be run in year four, nor of any 'plan B'. The three professional staff were made redundant so they now seem to rely heavily on Friends and volunteers.

Christchurch Park Lighting

I received an email about the lack of lighting when parking for evening events in the Park. There were similar comments after our last Christmas party. I sent Richard Wilson of the Park Friends these comments in the hope that our joint pressure might achieve a result. It seems that IBC have some funds for the necessary work. Cllr Lockington has become involved.

Volunteer hours

IBC recently requested a note of how many of our members were involved in volunteering with us and the total number of hours a year this represented.

A rough calculation suggested that this could come to over 1300 hours from up to 56 people. Of course some do several jobs but if we apply just the minimum wage to this total the value is over £8,000 – and some people bring specialist skills worth far more than the minimum. We did not include members who volunteer at the Art School or who are involved in conservation work.

Apart from the committee members, who put in hours of their time for the benefit of the Friends, our guides are valued volunteers. The guides representative, Erica Burrows, and I attended an Ipswich Borough Council Culture & Leisure Working Group meeting in November at Grafton House. Several group organisers gave interesting presentations. Some of the outdoors organisations seem able to attract younger volunteers - a topic the FOIM committee has discussed. If you have any ideas on recruitment please let me know. The possibility of an IBC annual volunteer event, perhaps with awards, was discussed.

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Closures

Research by the Museums Journal has found that 42 museums, galleries and heritage sites have shut over the last decade, most of them in the last two years. Small local authority museums are most vulnerable but larger organisations are not immune to the funding cuts with sites closed at National Museums Liverpool, the British Museum and the British Film Institute. In this context CIMS may have come out of the funding cuts reasonably well. Perhaps if we had not become a joint service things might have been far worse in Ipswich. The Arts Council has made substantial cuts at all levels of its own operation. Newcastle on Tyne's Council have considered cutting their culture budget by 100%.

SHARE Conference

On 19 November 2012 I went to the second annual all day SHARE museums conference held this year at Christchurch Mansion attended by around 100 members of the museum world in the eastern region. The theme was *'How can we use collections to engage audiences?'* There were eight 20x20 presentations. Each speaker has 20 slides on the screen each for 20 seconds and has to confine what they say to that limit. Topics included: collections rationalization; working with young people; collecting for family learning;

museums as learning spaces in Hertfordshire; museums and health – the impact of reminiscence; community co-production; going digital and collections as inspiration. There was time for networking and informal discussion. Erica Burrows and her team of Guides provided much enjoyed tours of the Mansion at the end of the day.

I look forward to seeing you at the Annual General Meeting on 9 April.

Alan Swerdlow
FOIM Chairman

Please contact me if you would like to discuss any aspect of the work of FOIM.

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or

e-mail: alan@whr.demon.co.uk

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Dummett Copp
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Peter Berridge's Column

I will start this, my last article for the Friends Newsletter, with the words that I ended my last article with that it has been a pleasure and a privilege to have been associated with such important and inspiring museum collections and buildings in Ipswich over the last few years, and to thank all of you for your continuing support as Friends of Ipswich Museums.

My Plans

As I informed you late last year I will be leaving my post at the end of March and while I have not fully decided what I want to do, a number of plans are forming or coming to fruition. It's always interesting what comes along once you open yourself up to opportunities. I have already been invited to go and work on a project in Morocco for a couple of weeks and, seemingly out of the blue, I have had an approach about whether I would be interested in doing some short pieces of work for another organisation.

Whatever happens, however, I intend to carve out a significant amount of time to do research on a number of quite diverse subjects. In particular I have a significant number of academic articles that I want to write, often related to past work that due to the pressures of my managerial role I was previously unable to finish. So while the future is to some degree uncertain, and therefore scary, it is also quite exciting.

Achievements at Ipswich

I am going to keep this article fairly short but I do want to remind people of what has been achieved through the creation of the museum partnership between Ipswich and Colchester, of which I was

the main instigator and architect. As a number of you know full well, six years ago museums services in Ipswich were in crisis and in the couple of years before the creation of the joint museum service there were even repeated rumblings of closing Ipswich Museum. There had been years of falling visitor numbers, declining standards and a general loss of faith. As some of you have heard me say, at various events, I have compared this situation to a love affair and that people had fallen out of love particularly with Ipswich Museum. Six years ago I set out that our task was to make people fall back in love with Ipswich Museum and certainly from my perspective this has largely been achieved. A measure of how far we have travelled is that now investment in, and the redevelopment of, Ipswich Museum is seen as a critical element of the cultural and economic regeneration of Ipswich. Though formal political decisions still remain to be taken, Ipswich Borough Council are now working out the details of how they will secure just over £1 million from their capital programme to act as the match funding for an initial £5 million plus development of Ipswich Museum. This is in addition to the major investment that Ipswich Borough Council has already put into the building over the last few years as well as their major investment in Christchurch Mansion.

Things are in a far healthier situation than six years ago. Though there is still a huge task to accomplish, in such circumstances I always feel it is very important to remember the journey travelled and what has been achieved. Yes certainly things are still far from ideal in many areas but they are, overall,



immensely better than they were six years ago. The level, amount and nature of the achievements over the last few years have been immense and, also very importantly, solid foundations have been laid for future achievements and improvements. Having said this it is also very important that people do not get complacent because, as we all know, the economic climate is not good especially in relation to funding for culture and heritage in local government. In the professional journals almost on a weekly basis there is news of reduced funding or imminent closures of various museums. However, this is not the situation in Ipswich, and Ipswich Borough Council is demonstrably bucking the trend and continuing to strongly support the museum service.

The Future for Ipswich

So in ending I want to say that the museum service now has a very strong team in place, made up of many committed and talented individuals and one that is strongly supported by Ipswich Borough Council. The new museum manager Bill Seaman who takes up the reins on 1 April, as well as being a personal friend, is a highly talented and creative individual who I know is full of energy and enthusiasm to take on the task, and so I know things are in safe hands. I leave you with the thought that I look forward to hearing in a few years to come that, following the redevelopment of Ipswich Museum, it achieves the museum of the year award and is a major contender to be European Museum of the year. I assure you the future is bright and so thank you and goodbye.

Peter Berridge

An Invitation from the Museum Service

Colchester+Ipswich
Museums

Focus Group Invitation The Future of Ipswich Museum

Ipswich Museum is in the early stages of a development project to enhance the museum and wider site. As Friends of the Museum your views are crucial to the success of the project.

How could the Museum and wider site
transform in coming years?

Come and share your thoughts at a focus group session:

Location: Ipswich Museum
Date: Tuesday 19th March
Time: 6.30–8.30pm

Refreshments will be provided.

*Please RSVP to Jayne Austin,
Ipswich Development Manager:
Jayne.austin@ipswich.gov.uk 01473 433 569*

Get involved! We need your help!

As part of this project, we also want to understand more about our visitors. To gather this information, we will be undertaking visitor surveys at the Museum over the course of the next few months, and would like your help.

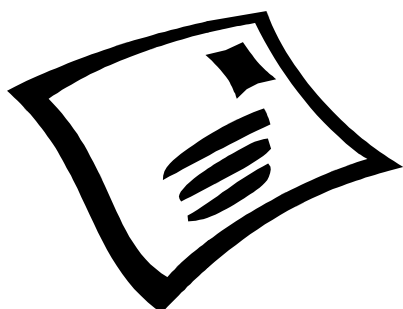
Would you be interested in undertaking some visitor surveys, and helping to ensure that any future developments meets the needs of our visitors?

*If so, please contact Karen Webber, Volunteer Coordinator:
karen.webber@colchester.gov.uk 01473 433 545*



Friends' Diary

Date	Event	Booking
19 March 2013	Focus Group Session Ipswich Museum 6.30-8.30 pm	RSVP to Jayne Austin see facing page
22 March 2013	Private View of the Constable and Gainsborough paintings in the Wolsey Gallery 6.00 pm (Please note there is no parking on site)	RSVP to Emma Roodhouse 01473 233548
27 March 2013	Lunchtime Talk: Pippa Cross "Making a Film about Alfred Munnings" at Priory Park at noon	Booking required - contact Barbara Cole (Friends £13, others £14.50)
9 April 2013	AGM at the Mansion, 7.00 for 7.30	Notes enclosed
10 April 2013	Woodbridge tour/talk 2.00pm with tea and cake	booking form enclosed
May 2013	3 night trip to Yorkshire	Fully Booked
19 June 2013	Summer Party at the Mansion with wine and Strawberries at 7.00 pm	Booking form enclosed
16 July 2013	Woodbridge tour/talk 2.00pm with tea and cake	Booking form enclosed



Please enclose a stamped
self addressed envelope
when booking events.

Friends News

Annual General Meeting 2013

The Annual General Meeting will take place in Christchurch Mansion at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 9 April 2013. Tea and coffee will be served from 7.00 pm.

During the AGM Bill Seaman, the new head of Colchester and Ipswich Museums, will speak.

Please see the AGM notes distributed with this Newsletter.

2013 Subscriptions

Barbara Cole thanks all members who have paid their subscriptions promptly, but if you have not yet paid, Barbara will be very glad to hear from you (35 Pownall Road, Ipswich IP3 0DN). Subscription rates are given on page 27.

Membership Secretary's Report

There have been 16 new Members since the last newsletter:-

Mrs G Brannon
Mr & Mrs R Bell
Lord & Lady Deben
(John & Penny Gummer)
Mr C Curry-Hyde
Mr T Wilcox
Mr & Mrs G Hanson
Mrs V Jones
Mr A Blomfield
Mrs S Meecham
Mrs D Johnson
Mrs H Ely
Mr & Mrs S Karishna

Gifted by Lord & Lady Deben:
Sir Michael & Lady Hopkins
Mr & Mrs M Lynch

Lord & Lady Marlesford
Mr & Mrs C Michell
Miss C Spurrier

We extend a warm welcome to them all, and I hope to meet them soon.

We now have 356 Members, owing to the very welcome influx of new members, and hopefully most people will renew. If you haven't renewed your subscription yet, I will be very happy to hear from you soon!

May I take this opportunity of wishing you all a very happy and healthy New Year.

Barbara Cole
Membership Secretary

Two Obituaries

Alan Swerdlow writes about two members who have died recently.

Peter Underwood

I have fond memories of Peter who died early in December 2012 age 88. He gave many years valuable service on the Friends committee bringing a wealth of knowledge to our deliberations, particularly when we were discussing local history and geology. There was always a twinkle in his eye to go with the neat patriarchal grey beard.

When we were en route to Ipswich's twin town of Arras on our visit in 1997 I handed him the microphone: he gave us a fascinating talk on the geology of the landscape we were travelling through and many of the historical connections. Peter wrote a well-argued



article on the museum geology collections, bringing to life what some might have thought were just cases of stones, and pleading for better display and interpretation. He must have been an excellent teacher at Northgate.

Peter had a busy life: in the RAF, he was a flying instructor, partly in Canada during the second world war. He was a magistrate. For his services to the Ipswich Society he was appointed MBE.

At his funeral pints of a special ale, brewed in his honour at The Dove, were raised in his memory

Nan Myer

Nan died in January at the age of 100. She was Mayoress of Ipswich when her husband David was Mayor during a momentous year for the town, May 1977 to May 1978. That was the year when Ipswich Town FC won the FA Cup. There was a visit from the Queen and Prince Philip. While the Friends of the Ipswich Museums had been established in 1934, it was at her initiative that we were rejuvenated after quite a long period of little activity.

Our First Annual Dinner - 19 October 2012

A group of committee members researched various places to hold our first annual dinner and eventually settled on Alnesbourne Priory where we have had so many successful talks followed by good lunches. The date was settled as Friday 19 October 2012 and Andrew Phillips, Lord Phillips of Sudbury, was invited to be our guest of honour. It proved a most enjoyable, relaxed event. I have already had requests for this to become a fixed point on our calendar.

Forty of us arrived on a wet evening to a warm welcome and a drink. Our President, Gay Strutt, and Anthony Cobbold, Keeper of the Cobbold Family History Trust, who had come up specially from Devon, joined the top table. We enjoyed a delicious buffet supper followed by Andrew Phillips' after dinner talk.

He spoke about the way the legal profession used to work 'pro-bono' as an integral part of their commitment to the community, while today many are totally fee and bonus motivated. But Andrew went on to talk about John Stevens Henslow - he is clearly an enthusiast. Henslow, 1796-1861, was involved in the founding of our





work.

The collections themselves are shown off to perfection, including a nice connection with Alan's February trip to Brugge some years ago. This was a room dedicated to Frank Brangwyn's work including some of his marvellous industrial scenes. In here was the chance to make use of one of several aids to interpretation in the form of touch screen information. The other highlight for me was the room

museum in 1847 while having a distinguished career which included teaching Charles Darwin at Cambridge – when Henslow could not accept the invitation to join the voyage on the Beagle he recommended Darwin which led to one of the most important developments in anthropology. Henslow became Vicar of Hitcham and pioneered adult education projects in that parish.

We enjoyed Andrew reading a poem by George Williams Fulcher of Sudbury and, to lighten a most interesting talk, he finished with two jokes!

Alan Swerdlow

Visit to the William Morris Gallery and Chelmsford Museum - 24 Jan 2013

After the snow of the previous few days, it was a relieved group of 40 or so Friends who set off for Walthamstow. The journey down was completely uneventful and we were soon looking at the beautiful Georgian exterior of the gallery standing out from the run-down surrounding area. Once inside we were given an informative welcoming talk while admiring the exemplary restoration

dedicated to the Kelmscott Press with copies of several books including the beautiful Burne-Jones Chaucer. Also, in here, was a collection of Morris's souvenirs of his trip to Iceland, a proof of the man's broad-mindedness as he left Jane and Rossetti alone together at home!

My wife enjoyed going through the pattern books and admiring the embroideries in a downstairs gallery, before we went for a bracing walk in the grounds, which have been made into a public park. An appetising lunch in the small but comfortable tea room was eaten while we admired the intricate Morris patterning in the glass roof used to tone down the sunlight.

Thus fortified we set off for Chelmsford,



The William Morris Gallery

where we were met with tea and home-made cake, before a talk from the Director with a description of what we'd find in the Museum and an insight into how lucky they were to get the extension. The cuts were starting to bite, but demolition work had already started, so the extension had to be finished. There had also been some pressure to move to the centre of the city, overruled by the majority of users who preferred its setting in parkland on the edge. The museum itself is an example of how to make collections relevant to 21st century visitors, including a music section with juke box and vinyl memories, local sports exhibits and interactive machines highlighting the contribution of the Marconi factory to the city. How amazing, as well, to see a section from a beehive with living bees inside it. Our hour there was certainly a taster which made you want to return and see more and was a fine end to a wonderfully enjoyable day.

Our appreciation goes out to Kath Daniel, who put hours of work into organising this superb day, and was then prevented by illness from actually going, and to Sheila Brooks, who came off the subs' bench to lead us and keep us in order on the day.

Richard Attenborough

Walking Tours of Woodbridge

We have arranged walking tour of Woodbridge for 10 April and 16 July 2013 led by Bob Merrett from The Friends of Woodbridge Museum. Woodbridge was home to Edward Fitzgerald and Thomas Churchyard, amongst other illustrious townspeople. The tour will take about an hour finishing at Woodbridge Museum and followed by tea and cake at the Bull Hotel.



Booking is required for these tours, cost £7 per person for Friends, £8 for others. A form is enclosed with this newsletter.

Further information from Erica Burrows:
ericab@btinternet.com
 or ☎ 01473 785152

Mansion Guides

On the evening of 13 December, the Mayor of Ipswich and her guests enjoyed a tour of the Mansion conducted by three of the guides. Altogether, the party numbered about 40, including several councillors. The Mayor's team provided mulled wine and mince pies afterwards in the Lower Tudor Room, making it a very festive occasion.

Some of the guides have been researching various items in the Victorian Wing in order to make more information available – particularly regarding the toys. There are some fascinating old games on display in the Mansion. Another of our guides has organized translations of the history of the house into French, Spanish, German, Italian and Chinese to help overseas visitors.

Our daily short tours of the Mansion “A

Peep into the Past” will recommence on 1 March at 11 am Tues – Saturdays and 2 pm on Sundays. These tours are free and there is no need to book but are not suitable for large groups.

If your party would like a private tour of the Mansion or Museum, contact ericab@btinternet.com. or telephone the Mansion on 01473 433554

Erica Burrows
Guides Co-ordinator



The Mayor with guides Erica and Brian

Ipswich Museums on the WEB

There are three websites of particular interest to FOIM members- our own website,



FOIM members can read all about our own events, contact committee members and read back issues of the newsletter on our own website: www.foim.org.uk

This also gives some information about the museums.

For full details of all Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service exhibitions, children's events and opening times you can access the website:

www.cimuseums.org.uk

The Public Catalogue Foundation and the BBC jointly run a website which includes images of all the oil paintings in public ownership in the UK (more than 210,000). Use the website:

www.thepcf.org.uk

and click on “your paintings”. The picture shows the screen for our Golding Constable's Flower Garden.

Please tell us your e-mail Address

If you have an e-mail address we would like you to tell us. This will enable us to keep you up to date with events which are planned between issues of the Newsletter.

If we do not already know your e-mail address please send a message to Jerry Latham using our website:

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An Opportunity to Volunteer

The Friends Committee asked if more costumes could be displayed at the Mansion. The Museum staff agreed that this could be done. As Jayne explains we have agreed to fund some urgent conservation work by experts and to provide volunteers to help set up the displays.

The Friends committee has agreed to fund urgent conservation of some items in our exceptional costume collection. We have offered £1,000 for professional freelance time and a further £1,200 to complete conservation of a ball gown with hand painted designs by Sir Alfred Munnings for his wife to wear at a Chelsea Arts Ball. This would be shown along with works by Sir Alfred from the collection. If this project is successful the Friends hope to fund further conservation of the costume collection.

We also hope to display costumes from different periods in other parts of the Mansion.

There is an opportunity for a few members who may have an interest in

this work to help with choosing the costumes and accessories, and assisting in setting up the exhibition under expert supervision.

The remedial conservation work will be carried out by CIMS museum conservators and led by an experienced textile conservator.

If you would like to offer to help in making costumes ready for the proposed new displays around the Mansion please contact Marcelle Bobby on 01473 433550 or Marcelle.Bobby@ipswich.gov.uk

Jayne Austin
Ipswich Development
Manager

A Visit to China

Bob Entwistle and Joan Lyall recently visited China to return the Chinese Treasures which had been on display in Colchester Castle.

In January this year the Treasures of China exhibition came to an end as Colchester Castle was closed for refurbishment.

The Chinese Visitors

I finished my Mandarin OU course in October so I was happy once again to meet our Chinese counterparts who came to help pack their objects.

I showed them round Ipswich Museum and the Mansion. The three Chinese Colleagues especially liked the costume collection in our store, hats, shoes and dresses, and appreciated the art collection but knew little about Constable or Gainsborough. They were also interested in our ethnographic collection, including our Chinese objects. (It is interesting to note that few Chinese social history objects are on show in Chinese Museums. Perhaps few have survived.)

I gave them dinner in my house where the ladies were shown round by my wife and I gave Bin, the only Chinese man in the group, a few beers.

Journey to China

All the objects were packed successfully in time, even with a change in the law that required us to unpack them again in the carrier's warehouse in London to have the packaging searched.

Joan Lyall and I accompanied the objects back to Nanjing. The flight was about 14 hours and we landed in Shanghai. I then had to wait and oversee the objects de-palletised checked, loaded, and then transported to Shanghai Museum where they were stored overnight. I was then able to have

my first sleep in a bed for 36 hours.

In Nanjing

The next day the objects were checked by customs and at midday we began the six and half hour journey to Nanjing by lorry. We arrived at 8 pm, had dinner and then set off to Nanjing Municipal Museum stores. (Nanjing Provincial Museum is currently undergoing a refurbishment – which in China means completely demolishing the old museum and building a new one.)

All objects were unloaded by 11pm. I sealed the room to prevent any tampering and wrote my signature on the seal.

The Chinese were very taken with my signature. Since they don't have an alphabet, only pictogram characters, they cannot really have a signature. They were very impressed with how quickly I was able to write my name in my own particular style.

The next day, Thursday, we began the condition reporting, unpacking and looking at each item individually, comparing it to the condition reports and



Shanghai Museum



Heaven, the Forbidden City, and the Great Wall. I tried to visit the National Museum but the queues were too long! I went to the Beijing Natural History Museum instead, which was a bit disappointing. We have better taxidermy in Ipswich, but then I am prejudiced. I love Ipswich.

We went by high speed train to Shanghai for our return flight. We found Shanghai Museum marvellous and the city all dressed up with lights and lanterns for Chinese New Year.

I hope we can continue our partnerships with Chinese Museums. I hope we can send them our objects and have a Treasures of Colchester and Ipswich Museums Exhibition.

Bob Entwistle
Conservation Officer

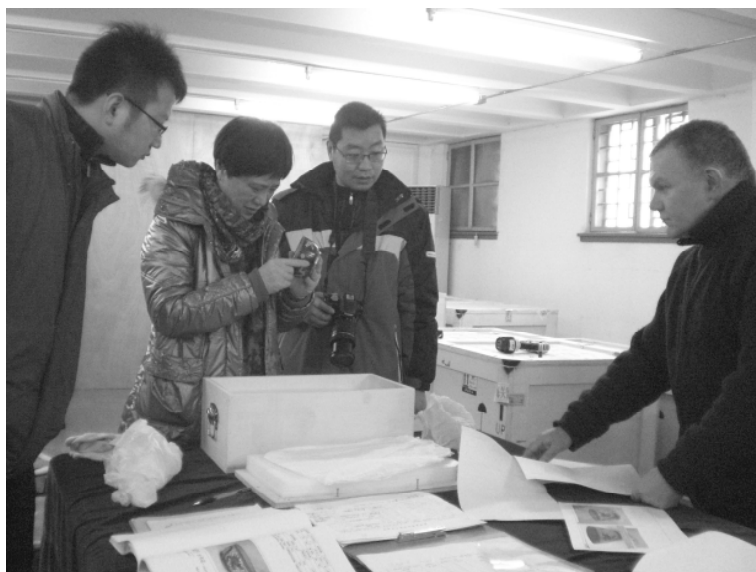
images, to ascertain no damage had been caused during transit.

With the possible exception of one object, everything was signed off with handshakes and smiles. We were treated to a meal that evening and again the next by colleagues who had come to England in 2012 and had been given the Bob Entwistle tour of Ipswich and eaten cake in my garden.

The next day we were shown Nanjing, and nearby archaeological sites and museums. We saw the Ming tombs, Confucius Temple and the Ming palace. The next day, Sunday, we said goodbye to Nanjing and caught the train to Beijing, as to visit China and not see the city would have been unthinkable.

In Beijing and Shanghai

We spent a few days in smoggy cold grey Beijing visiting the Temple of



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Constable's Gardens viewed by Andrew Motion

When I asked Alan to choose an image for the cover of this edition, without hesitation he asked for John Constable's moving paintings of his father Golding's gardens in East Bergholt painted from an upstairs window. He fell in love with these paintings on his first visit to the Mansion over twenty years ago.

Mary Halliwell

Alan Swerdlow writes:

Each winter, I walk past the site of the now-demolished house when attending East Bergholt chamber concerts in the village church and often think of these small and intimate oils. As a long-standing member of the Art Fund I was glad to know that these great works of art were part of the Ernest Edward Cook collection bequeathed to the Art Fund in 1955. Cook, grandson of the founder of Thomas Cook travel agency, left over 150 paintings, tapestries, furniture, silver and porcelain which were distributed to nearly 100 UK galleries.

Those of you who joined our visit to the Art Fund's centenary exhibition at the Hayward Gallery in London in 2003 may remember that the voice on the audio guide for these pictures was that of the then Poet Laureate, Andrew Motion.

Each work in the exhibition was described by an appropriate person: for example, David Attenborough spoke about the butterflies on a Chinese scroll, a Rabbi was interviewed about a Jewish marriage ring and so on. It was a truly memorable exhibition. We are fortunate to have these two works by Constable which together make a panorama of the village around 1815.

*The text of Andrew Motion's conversation is printed below
© Sir Andrew Motion*

NARRATOR:

John Constable painted these two views of a flower garden and a kitchen garden

from the upper windows of his father's house at East Bergholt in Suffolk.

Andrew Motion, the Poet Laureate, finds they reveal a good deal more about the painter than is immediately visible on the surface.

ANDREW MOTION:

Well these two small, but incredibly detailed, very beautiful paintings were both painted in 1815. 1815 is important for two reasons, I think. One is that of course it's the same year as the Battle of Waterloo. ... I think it's important to see these paintings which appear to be about stability ... in the context of a larger sense of stability, the final end of the long War against France. ... On the other hand, 1815 was also the year in which Constable's mother died, and in which his father became ill; his father in fact died the following year.

I don't want to imply, as I say this, that one can only understand a work of art through the biography or through the surrounding history, but these are important things about the paintings. ...Just to take the Flower Garden ... because it follows on from that interesting fact about Constable's mother, this is the garden that she, his mother designed. It's a painting which is brightly lit at various parts of the middle and background, but is almost entirely in shadow in the foreground. And especially the flower garden itself is in shadow in the foreground and very strikingly empty too. It has the plants in it; the plants that Mrs Constable herself



that's absolutely typical of Constable's paintings as a whole between what is intimate, private, personal, local and what is more generally true.

So what I'm driving at really is that I think that there's a tendency for us to look at Constable generally as

bedded down there, but no human figure. In fact, so far as I can see, there's only one human figure in the whole picture and that's a tiny ... labourer in the further part of the middle ground.

This is a painting, in other words, which is full of a sense of presence, the presence of the garden, the presence of the Constable family's ownership of this place, the presence of the difference that exists between an agricultural, scene and a more domesticated scene; that is to say that the difference between the garden itself and the field and what lies

beyond the field in a further part of the painting, but at same time, a painting which is full of the idea of absence. The shadow as I say, falling across the garden alerts us to this, the dark cloud which occupies most of the top right-hand side of the sky. It's a balance, I think,

somebody who deserves a place on tea towels and biscuit tin lids, but whose paintings are routinely a great deal more complicated than those resting places seem to suggest. ... And more particularly, in these two paintings - images which seem to speak of settledness and of fulfilment and of control, but are actually very, very interesting and troublingly - and this- it's the trouble, which gives it so much life, I think - full of the idea of absence, lack of control, uncertainty, death and so on. So they're very, very nice poised in those respects.



Recent Acquisitions

Philip Wise tells us about new items which have recently been added to Ipswich Museums Collections. For the Anglo-Saxon objects, the scales are centimetres.



Henry Davey,
**The Great White Horse
Hotel, Ipswich**
(watercolour)

The last few months have seen the usual mix of art, archaeology, social and natural history items being acquired for the museum collections at Ipswich.

The Museum Service was particularly pleased to acquire **The Great White Horse Hotel, Ipswich** at a recent auction sale at Bonhams in London. This watercolour is by Henry Davy (1793-1865) and was painted in 1859. Originally known as The Tavern, The Great White Horse Hotel opened in 1518 and subsequently became one of Ipswich's most celebrated landmarks. It was frequented by many notable figures including Charles Dickens who stayed in the Hotel in 1835 and immortalised it in 'The Pickwick Papers'. The horse statue which appears in the painting is now best known as the inspiration for the Ipswich Town Football Club logo. Henry Davy was born near Halesworth in Suffolk and was apprenticed to John Sell Cotman. The Ipswich collection has a number of works by Davy,

including two oil paintings and numerous prints of Suffolk and Ipswich, that this watercolour compliments.

Sometimes items are offered to the museum which come with a particularly interesting story. A case in point is a **lead farm set**, comprising farm animals, fences, trees, a chicken coup, a farmer and a scarecrow, which was made by Britain's between 1920 and 1960. Such toys are relatively common, but what makes these remarkable is their context. The donor found them in an air-raid shelter recently discovered adjoining their home. The toys may have been used to keep children calm and amused during an air-raid or may have been played with in the years following the Second World War, perhaps when the shelter was used as a den.

The Museum Service is continuing to acquire examples of taxidermy to add to its nationally important collection. A recent local example is a **cased and mounted otter specimen** which



Anglo-Saxon Tremissis (gold coin)
from Rendlesham

belonged to the donor's grandfather, who was a gamekeeper on the Rendlesham Estate and lived in one of the tied cottages in Tunstall Forest. On retirement he was presented with the otter by Lord Rendlesham. The otter was probably caught near the river Alde, about a century ago, and was preserved by the Woodbridge taxidermist F. Asten. From further afield is **the mounted head of an Indian Black Buck** shot in Bihar, India in the 1920s by Sir John Houlton, a colonial administrator and author of *Bihar, The Heart of India* (1949). The Indian black buck is now an endangered and protected species.

Lastly, after many months of fundraising, the Museum Service was delighted to be able to complete the purchase shortly before Christmas of the first part of a **nationally important collection of finds from Rendlesham** in Suffolk for the collections at Ipswich Museum. This collection covers a broad date range, including Roman, Anglo-Saxon and Medieval finds, although of these the Anglo-Saxon finds are the most historically interesting. There are clear links between items in the collection and the contents of the royal burial mound excavated in 1939 at Sutton Hoo and the internationally important Staffordshire Hoard of Anglo-Saxon gold metalwork

found in 2009. The Anglo-Saxon coinage in particular is notable both for the total number (40) and types of gold and silver coinage represented. Several items may be regarded as high status objects, including a complete gold pin, a silver sword mount, and a gold bead from a woman's necklace. Other items are foreign imports such as two brooches from France, a coin weight of Byzantine-type from the eastern Mediterranean and a fragment of a Coptic, or Egyptian, bronze vessel. The collection also includes ten brooches, eighteen buckles, a fragment of a silver wrist clasp, a cosmetic implement, a girdle hanger, three finger rings, five hooked tags, four Late Saxon strap ends, three spangles, twelve mounts, three pins, one stud and two weights.

The purchase of the Rendlesham Collection has been made possible by generous grants from the **Friends of Ipswich Museums**, the Art Fund, the V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the Headley Trust and the Sutton Hoo Society.

Philip Wise
Collections and
Curatorial Manager



Anglo-Saxon Gold Pin from
Rendlesham

Invisible Collectors

John Williams describes himself as a lens based artist. He is also South East Area Co-ordinator for the British Association of Friends of Museums. Over the last four years he has been working on a project to create digital images of people who have made a large contribution to the cultural life of East Anglia, but who are little recognised today. Some of these portraits can be seen on his website: www.freeformphoto.co.uk.

His most recent project has been a portrait of John Stevens Henslow, who was responsible for starting Ipswich's extensive natural history collection. John has based his portrait on the portrait which hangs on the main staircase at the Museum.

Although this is the working title I began with 4 years ago I have had little reason to modify it. As I looked into the names and backgrounds of the people who contributed so much to our cultural life today I was astounded at the generally poor regard in which they were held!

The Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge is of international standing and yet the man who founded the collection and gave the building to house it, is still largely mocked for his curatorial stance.

James Reeve at Norwich Castle fared little better. He was largely responsible for collecting and supporting the Norwich School of water colour painters. So little was known of him, that I had to travel to the British

Museum reserve collection in west London to find a portrait of him.

So I have kept the "invisible" in the title.

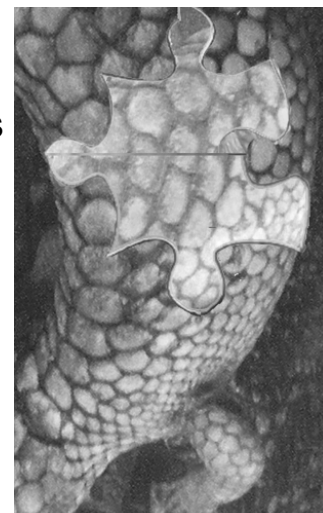
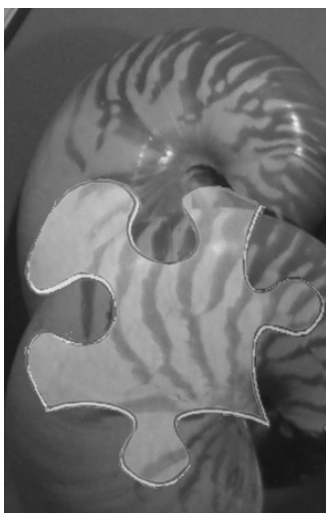
I did not simply want to generate a brighter more contemporary

portrait. I wanted to underline what these people left us and in particular I wanted to draw attention to the collections, the actual objects, themselves.

I have a background which includes Visual Science and illusions in particular so I was already familiar with "cause pixel" as well as "peripheral vision" tolerances in image recognition so I knew it was possible to use any set of shapes or objects to represent a face and or body.

By the time Alan Swerdlow suggested, a couple of years ago, that I should include John Stevens Henslow in these portraits, I had already created more than a dozen of them. As content for these portraits, I used what they collected and this resulted in my using paintings, sculptures, domestic utensils, sandpaper, sundials and even hand written original documents.

Surely Henslow would be easy after these as I had hundreds of carefully preserved





Detail of Henslow's face - the full portrait is shown on the back cover

animals, many still in their original glass cases, in the Museum Collection. However he was to prove rather more difficult. He was Darwin's tutor, so carried rather more scientific weight; random groupings of furry animals based on his features was never really going to be convincing!

Having made a small bust in this manner I realised my error. This first version left much to be desired.

However I was not to be beaten. I had got something right in this initial approach, that of containing each creature within a puzzle piece. The

problem in this first portrait was that I could not identify, with any degree of certainty, any of the creatures themselves.

I emailed this version to Alan and promised to do better.

A few weeks later I was able to access Ipswich Museum's reserve and stored collections and this really opened out the range, creating new opportunities for grouping specimens such as butterflies, beetles, shells, reptiles, birds and of course small and large mammals to particular areas within the portrait.

I had in the back of my mind that it might be useful if this portrait of Henslow could be used by even quite young visitors to identify not just, say, a butterfly but also what kind: a peacock, red admiral or even chalk blue.

I have saved many of the original images used to generate the portrait and many of the individual puzzle pieces themselves.

Viewers should be able to hunt for the specimens used within my portrait of Henslow and as they scan the image they should become more familiar with his likeness.

And finally within its puzzle maze, they might appreciate a little the great contribution he and his collection has made for all of us today.

John Williams



need a Secretary, can you help?

The Friends are currently looking for someone to fill the position of Secretary.

The main duties are the taking of minutes for the quarterly meetings of the Committee (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. Each committee member prepares a meeting report which is emailed to the group and the secretary ensures that this happens and circulates the Agenda, booking the room for the meeting.

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 post box 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.

Each member of the Committee looks after a particular aspect of the Friends' activities, thus ensuring that no one member is asked to shoulder too great a workload. It is interesting, stimulating and rewarding work, in the company of talented and supportive colleagues.

If you might be interested in this role please contact our Chairman Alan Swerdlow who will explain in more detail: 01394 380044 or alan@whr.demon.co.uk

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All members of the Committee can be contacted via
our Website www.foim.org.uk
or c/o Ipswich Museum, High Street, Ipswich IP1 3QH

Membership Details

Membership rates are:

Joint/Household	£15
Single	£12
Student (under 25)	£3
Corporate	£100

These are the minimum fees. We would not dream of preventing anyone paying more. A membership form can be downloaded from our website or contact our Membership Secretary; Barbara Cole, 35 Pownall Road,

Ipswich IP3 0DN, 01473 287716.

Those interested in becoming corporate members should contact us direct via the website.

Membership as a Gift

All you have to do is send the appropriate subscription (payable to FOIM) together with contact details of the recipient to Jerry Latham, who will prepare a gift pack for you to send.

In this issue:



John Williams has produced a new digital portrait of Henslow -see page 24



Friends enjoying an evening dinner at Alnesbourne Priory in October-see page 13



The FOIM Committee 2012-13:
Back row: Alan Swerdlow , Paul Bruce, Ferial Evans Rogers, Peter Stockdale. Front row: Ken Wilaon, Mary Halliwell, Sheila Brooks, Barbara Cole and Erica Burrows
(5 members absent)

plus Friends activities and more museum news

www.foim.org.uk

www.facebook.com/ipswichmuseums

Registered Charity Number: 275527

We welcome new members to help us support our excellent Ipswich Museums.
Details of membership are given on page 26
We use the website to advertise events which are notified too late to be printed in the Newsletter.