

The Friends of the Ipswich Museums

Newsletter SUMMER 2013



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we look forward

FoIM

to promote the past

Our cover : Anna Airy:
Mrs Telford Simpson, 1906

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 Autumn 2013 Newsletter should be sent to the editor by 1 September 2013.

We look forward



to promote the past

Contents

Editor's Notes -----	3
Legacies -----	3
Chairman's Letter-----	4
Bill Seaman's Column-----	6
The 2013 AGM -----	7
Friends Diary -----	9
Friends News-----	10
Friends in Yorkshire -----	13
Costumes at Mansion-----	15
Gardening at Museum -----	17
Inspired by Museum-----	18
Some History -----	19
Corporate Members -----	23
The Committee-----	23
Membership Information-----	23

Advertisements

3, 8, 12, 20, 21

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?](http://www.facebook.com/ipswichmuseums)

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

Front cover picture: Mrs Telford Simpson by Anna Airy. In October Paul Bruce will be running a Saturday morning workshop about Anna Airy, see page 9 & 11



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

In April Bill Seaman took up his post as the manager of Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service (CIMS). Those Friends who attended the AGM will already have met him. On page 6 he has written his first column for our newsletter. We welcome him as our new manager.

We also have the first message from our new Chairman, Erica Burrows on page 4. While on page 19 our retiring Chairman, Alan Swerdlow, takes the opportunity to remind us of the problems faced by our museums prior to the formation of CIMS.

Since the last round of staff cuts there has been an increasing number of tasks carried out by volunteers. In this issue we hear about the Mansion Guides tours and talks (page 11), help provided with the new costume displays (see page 15) and gardening (page 17) being done around the High Street Museum.

The Friends trip to Yorkshire is reported on page 14. I was delighted to have the opportunity of using three pieces of art

work done by Friends who went on the trip as illustrations.

Mary Halliwell

Editor

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Legacies

From time to time Friends remember us in their wills. The money is always used to enhance our Museum Service. 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



This is my first newsletter report as Chairman and I would like to thank my predecessor, Alan Swerdlow, for all his support and for his service to the Friends. I am also grateful to all the committee who give their time freely in arranging events, getting the newsletter out and keeping the accounts and paperwork in order.

We had a very good turnout for our AGM on 9th April and welcomed new committee members – Gary Butler as Secretary, John Lapsley as Corporate Membership Representative, Joan Munns as Guides' Representative and Jean Attenborrow who has done such a good job of taking over responsibility for the trips. Bill Seaman introduced himself at the meeting, and although he had only been in post for a couple of weeks, gave an encouraging and enthusiastic introduction. Jayne Austin gave an interesting talk about the history of the Museum and some of the future development plans

I have been to two focus group meetings

regarding the redevelopment of the museum site, where consultants Barker Langham are assessing who uses the Museum, what visitors expect from it, and how it can be utilised into a “cultural quarter” involving performance and visual arts. Members of the public have had the opportunity to take part in a survey and we await the results.

At the last focus meeting, I proposed a walking tour of the town for some of those present who were fairly new to Ipswich, so that they could put the redevelopment ideas in context with the story of Ipswich. I am pleased to say that Bill Seaman, Helen Pluck and her PA, Jenny, together with Gordon Mole, all from IBC, took me up on it and we had a very informative tour of the town led by Robert Burlinson, who is also one of our Mansion guides.

A couple of our members contacted me concerning the de-accessioning of some items from the Ipswich collection, and I brought this matter up at our FOIM committee meeting in April. This concerned some decorative ivories from Nimrud that are being transferred to the British Museum to join the larger collection of similar pieces held there. Whilst the Museum Service had a valid argument and procedure for transferring these pieces, some of the committee were very worried about losing these items from the Ipswich collection.

Alan's archive article (page 19) will

remind us why we must be vigilant in safeguarding the collections.

At the April Committee meeting we also agreed to contribute £500 for the purchase of a complete gold brooch from Hollesley c.1300-1400.

Anyone who has been to the Mansion



recently will
have The Hollesley Brooch seen
that we have a selection of costumes in the House. We have often made requests for more of our costume collection to be displayed and FOIM have funded this exhibition. invitation was put in the last newsletter for volunteers to help with the costume and to choose some pieces for display. A few of us had great fun choosing clothes from our wonderful collection and our thanks go to Anna, Bob and Ciara for conserving and displaying the costumes so beautifully with help from volunteers Stella, Pippa and Sarah. If you have seen The Great Gatsby currently being shown in cinemas, now see real 1920s beaded dresses on display in the Music Room. We are promised Lady Munning's sumptuous ball gown, decorated by the artist himself, and the

wedding dress and photos of Benjamin Britten's sister later in this centenary year (see more on page 15).

Our Summer Party on 19 June at the Mansion was enjoyed by over 60 people on a lovely sunny evening. Gary Butler reports on the Friends trip to Yorkshire in May on page 17. By the time this newsletter is published, around 40 members will have enjoyed a Woodbridge Town Walk followed by tea at the Bull Hotel.

We look forward to a trip to Houghton Hall in September and Paul Bruce is arranging a couple of study sessions in October which will give us the chance to look in detail at some of the walnut furniture in the collection and the work of Anna Airy. Our Christmas Party, which will be back in the Mansion again this year, is on 4th December. We try to have at least one event every month and our Events sub-committee is always interested in any ideas for trips and events from our members.

Erica Burrows
Chairman

Please contact me if you would like to discuss any aspect of the work of FOIM. My email address is ericab@btinternet.com

☎ 01473 785152

Bill Seaman's Column



I had the pleasure of meeting many of the Friends of Ipswich Museums at your AGM shortly after I started in April. Thank you for your warm welcome. I was taken with your evident pride in Ipswich's museums, its extensive collections, magnificent buildings and the active engagement with people of the town. I look forward to your support in the development of this splendid service in the coming months and years.

The last couple of months have been a steep learning curve for me as I've sought to build relations and contacts with museum staff, IBC/CBC officers and Councillors and the many stakeholders with a keen interest in the fortunes of the service. I always knew that Ipswich had a fine collection and I have been impressed with its breadth and quality. One of the many joys of working in a museum is the opportunity to keep learning and I look forward to finding out more about Ipswich's fascinating collections and buildings and

the histories they can reveal.

This is undoubtedly a testing time for Colchester and Ipswich Museums, as with any publicly funded service. Revenue funding has effectively reduced by one third with the loss of the Arts Council Renaissance support last year. This has resulted in the loss of fourteen posts and greatly reduced spend budgets. At the same time there are growing expectations on the service to enhance the offer and realise the enormous potential contained in the museums to contribute to the lives of citizens and to support the local economy through increased commercial activity and tourism.

I was attracted to this post because I recognise that Ipswich museums have the potential to develop significantly as regional and national destinations and are deserving of major investment from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Arts Council England and other external funders.

The Future

Despite the national economic backdrop, Ipswich is on the up and its museums can make an important contribution to the town's rising reputation as an innovative centre of culture and learning. A significant contribution will be the development of Ipswich Museum. We are planning to put in a Stage One bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund in October this year and have consulted widely (including FOIM of course). The original Victorian vision of the museum on the High Street to promote Arts and Science has inspired our thinking to date. With the Art School

Gallery now an important part of the museum complex, the New Wolsey Studio Theatre and the Pacitti company resident on site, there are many opportunities to promote access and understanding of the collections through a closer working with contemporary artists and other cultural partners. This is a fascinating project with the potential to raise significant sums for much needed investment in the museum and to build on its current popularity.

In the meantime I'm working with supportive colleagues in IBC to look at improving the decorative order for both Ipswich museums and to review security

arrangements. The museums have a relatively good security track record, but there can be no cause for complacency. We must ensure we put the time and effort into safeguarding our collections to avoid incidents, rather than acting in response to a loss as so often happens.

Thank you for your generous contribution of time and resources over many years. I look forward to working with you as the service evolves.

Bill Seaman
Museum Service Manager

Ipswich Museum Development Project

Jayne Austin tells us of recent progress with the Ipswich Museum Development plan.

It has been a busy few months working on the Ipswich Museum development project. One of our priorities has been to ensure that the people who visit the museum, or might do so in the future, have a say in how the museum is developed. Since we commissioned Barker Langham back in November last year we have worked with them in talking to a broad range of people. This has happened in the museum, at community events, by invitation to consultation workshops, on the street and through an online survey.

In response to the wide ranging consultations we now have a clear vision for the Ipswich Museum development that states...

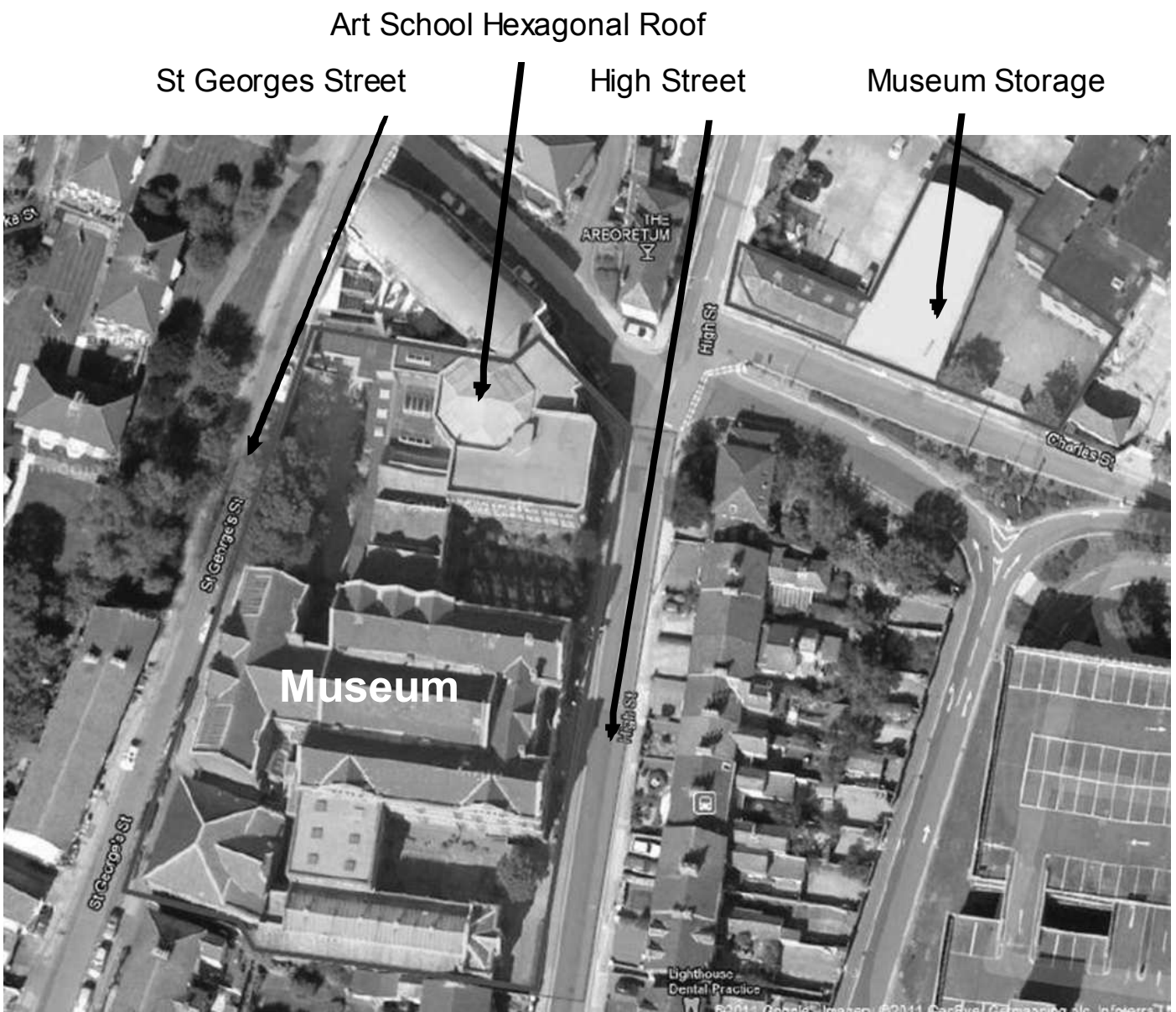
The development of Ipswich Museum will enable increasing numbers of local people and visitors to connect with collections through a fusion of culture, heritage, science and the arts. It will inspire and enable generations of explorers and creators to

- *see and understand the world through new voices and new perspectives*
- ♦ *unlock creativity inspired by the collections and wider heritage*
- ♦ *make their own journeys of discovery by taking inspiration from the people who shaped and influenced the development of the collections*
- ♦ *understand, value and respect their heritage and those of others through participation*

Members of the Friends of the Ipswich Museums have played an active and important role in our consultations, for which I am very grateful. In response to the notice in the last newsletter many members of FOIM attended a positive and lively workshop in Ipswich Museum in March. I also know that many members filled in the online survey and got involved in the surveys that took place in the museum. We now have a really good understanding of who visits Ipswich Museum and why. We also know what would encourage more people to visit. I expect that the results of Barker Langham's work will be ready to publish by the time this goes to press.

Stephen Taylor Architects have also been busy on site at Ipswich Museum getting a feel for the plans for the development of Ipswich Museum. This will help them to develop their proposals for the master plan that they have been commissioned to undertake. Their research into the significance, sensitivities and vulnerabilities of the mix of buildings, supported by English Heritage, will give us an outline conservation assessment of the grade II* listed buildings. It is also within the master plan brief to provide an indicative layout of the potential spatial organisation arrangements of the site. This will ensure that the buildings can

Aerial View of Museum Site:



facilitate the needs of its users. Included in this will be proposals to link Ipswich Museum with the former Ipswich Art School building so visitors can at least go from one to the other without getting wet when it rains!

We continue to work very closely with colleagues from Ipswich Borough Council on all aspects of the Ipswich Museum development. It is great to have such strong leadership from the Borough and support from other partners. This has enabled the project to fit clearly in the plans for the cultural development of Ipswich as whole. It is a very exciting time to be at the forefront of cultural development in the town. Ipswich was the UK's 43rd most popular

destination for foreign visitors in 2012 according to Visit Britain. Around 76,000 foreign tourists visited the town, up from 53,000 in 2011. The vibrant cultural mix on offer in the town is something that local people can be proud of and Ipswich museums sit at the heart of this.

Jayne Austin

Ipswich Developments and Major Projects Manager

Report of the 2013 AGM

Our 2013 AGM was held at Christchurch Mansion on 9 April 2013. This brief report is included in the Newsletter for those unable to be present. A full report will be circulated with the papers for the 2014 AGM.

Fifty eight members attended the meeting, five museum staff and Councillor Bryony Rudkin from Ipswich Borough Council.

The meeting was chaired by Alan Swerdlow who thanked the committee for the support he had been given during his second term as chairman.

The Treasurer, Peter Stockdale presented the accounts. He drew attention to the profit received from the publication of the book "High Street Heyday" by Paul Bruce and Richard Scott.

The Membership Secretary, Barbara Cole reported that membership stands at 358 ordinary and 16 corporate. She said it is important for members to con-

tinue to recruit at least one new member during the year. John Lapsley is taking over the job of recruiting new corporate members and Barbara wished him success.

Reports by Museum Service Staff

Jayne Austin outlined the history of Ipswich Museum and spoke of the help provided by FoIM over recent years particularly in acquiring the Art School and refurbishing the Egyptian Gallery. Schools' attendance had doubled'. Jayne said that Ipswich held some particularly strong collections and the future is bright with the help of FoIM.

Philip Wise described the recent significant additions to the Ipswich collections

which had been helped by FoIM (already mentioned in previous newsletters). A recently acquired longcase clock made by Moore of Ipswich (active 1720-1762) has been placed on display in the Mansion.

Bill Seaman the new Museums Manager had been in post for only one week. He had already intensively explored the Mansion and Museum, including items in store. He has concluded that museums are the best places to work and he is particularly excited about his appointment. Bill said: "The key to the future of all museums is funding; exploring all options and being deserving of it. We must sell our excellence." He looks forward to working with FoIM.

President's Address

Gay Strutt, our president, said it had been a year of challenges and change for Alan Swerdlow and Peter Berridge. She thanked Ipswich Borough Council for their support of the museums. She welcomed Bill Seaman and said we look forward to working with him. Alan Swerdlow has been magnificent in his work for FoIM. His commitment and communication skills have been particularly noteworthy. We wish him well in the future.

A presentation to Alan was made on behalf of the committee.

Election of Officers and Committee Members:

The officers and committee members elected for 2013-2014 are given on page 23. After the elections

Alan Swerdlow stood down from the chair and handed over to Erica Burrows, the new chairman. She thanked Alan and paid tribute to his work as chairman commenting that he would be a hard act to follow.

She explained that she had been an enthusiastic worker for the museums over the past four years and is keen to develop the buildings, displays and visitors. She hoped the re-organisations have settled and looks forward to the completion of development of the museum site. She will work to ensure that as much of the collections as possible is on show.

The New Wolsey Gallery Display

Emma Woodhouse, Curator (Art) for CIMS gave a talk on the Constable and Gainsborough exhibition currently on show in the Wolsey Galley at the Mansion. She explained the origin of some of the exhibits and how the exhibition had been set up.

Friends' Diary

Date	Event	Booking
12 September 2013	Coach trip to Houghton Revisited	Booking form enclosed with this newsletter
5 October 2013 2 pm	Walnut Furniture: A Study Session in the Mansion with Paul Bruce, limited to 20 participants	Book at Mansion Reception 01473 433554 Friends £5, others £7
19 October 2013 2 pm	Anna Airy: A Study Session in the Mansion with Paul Bruce, limited to 20 participants	Book at Mansion Reception 01473 433554 Friends £5, others £7
16 November 2013 11 am	Suffolk Artists: Mansion Tour with Mary Halliwell	Book at Mansion Reception 01473 433554 Friends £4, others £5
27 November 2013 Noon	Lunchtime Talk: Textiles and Memories with Mary Crehan	Booking form enclosed with this newsletter
4 December 2013	Christmas Party at Mansion	Booking form will be distributed with Autumn Newsletter
11 December 2013 7 pm (date to be confirmed)	A Scandal in the Family: Evening Tour of Mansion with Erica Burrows, including a glass of wine	Book at Mansion Reception 01473 433554 Friends £6.50, others £8



Please enclose a stamped self addressed envelope when booking events.

Friends' News

Introducing our new Secretary



My wife has been a member of FOIM for a couple of years or so. When the position of Honorary Secretary was advertised she suggested that I should put my name forward. This I did. Prior to the April AGM the Chairman telephoned me to say that it looked very likely that I was going to be the lucky candidate, there being only one. It was then that I realised that I wasn't actually a member. However, here I am fully paid up and in post. I am by circumstance a family man, my wife and I having seven children between us and countless grandchildren. Fortunately they are distributed throughout this country and the world so we get to travel quite a lot. I retired from my last post as Head of IT at Ipswich Borough Council over ten years ago, so you may guess that I am 71. One of my loves is Thames Sailing Barges and I still do some duties as

Mate during the sailing season. I was the Secretary and a Director of the Thames Sailing Barge Trust for 3 years. Other memberships are Ipswich Archaeological Trust and Ipswich Maritime Trust. My wife and I live with our cat in a little house in Witnesham with 4 acres and beautiful views over the valley of the River Fynn. Life is good.

Gary Butler
FOIM Secretary

Membership Secretary's Report

There have been 12 new Members since the last newsletter:-

Mr C Kreidwolf
Mr & Mrs J Cannell
Dr P Funnell & Family
Mr & Mrs J Lapsley
Ms E Cooper
Mrs S Hazelwood
Ms J Lawrence
Mr & Mrs J Harvey
Mr P Anderson
Dr & Mrs M Stevens
Mr & Mrs M Jones
Mrs M Crehan

We extend a warm welcome to them all, and look forward to meeting them in the near future.

We now have 350 Members and 16 Corporate Members, but unfortunately we have about 50 people who have not yet renewed their subscriptions. Whilst we realise that there are various reasons why some people may not feel they can renew, there are some who have simply forgotten – if you are one of these you will find a reminder enclosed. I look

forward to hearing from you soon, as we do value our members, and you all help so much by enabling us to support our wonderful museums.

Barbara Cole
FOIM Membership
Secretary

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Houghton Revisited



On Thursday 12 September 2013 a coach trip has been arranged to Houghton Hall in Norfolk, the home of Sir Hugh Walpole, Great Britain's first prime minister. Sir Hugh Walpole amassed a large art collection which was displayed at Houghton. After his death the complete collection was purchased by Catherine the Great and was subsequently displayed in the Hermitage in St Petersburg. After much negotiation all the paintings have been sent to Norfolk to hang for a few weeks in the positions they were placed by Walpole.

The visit will include a timed entrance ticket to the exhibition plus time to visit the award winning 5 acre garden and the contemporary sculpture park.

A booking form is included with this newsletter.

Lunchtime Talk with Mary Crehan

Mary is a visual artist who enjoys working with textiles. Mary is a Friend and has been living and working in Suffolk since 1986. She particularly enjoys creating pieces related to history, memories and relationships.

Mary will give her talk at Priory Park at noon on 27 Nov 2013, a booking form is being distributed with this newsletter.

Paul Bruce's Study Sessions

Paul Bruce will be conducting two Saturday afternoon study sessions at the Mansion this Autumn. Each workshop will commence at 2 pm and will be limited to 20 participants.

Booking is essential (at Mansion Reception, 01473 433554). Cost £5 for Friends, £7 for others.

5 October: Walnut Furniture

Paul writes: We will investigate the origins of walnut furniture which coincides with the alterations that the Devereaux family made to the Mansion at the end of the 17th Century. We will look at the construction, veneers used and fashion until the 1st quarter of the 18th century.



19 October: **Anna Airy**

Paul writes: Anna Airey was a highly respected Suffolk artist who lived in Playford. The house she lived in is still there and is now named Airys Cottage. We will investigate her early works. She went on to become a war artist. We will look at the paintings owned by the Borough along with some privately owned works and her life in Suffolk.

Anna Airy: Interior with Mrs Charles Burnard, 1919

© CIMS on behalf of Ipswich Borough Council



Daily Tours with the Mansion Guides

A steady stream of visitors continue to enjoy the daily free tours at the Mansion. These will continue until Friday 1 November.

Ten minute Summer talks (also free) are now available at 12.30 (Tuesdays – Fridays to end of August). These, spotlight a variety of objects and themes, chosen by the guiding team and it is hoped that people might enjoy them as a part of their lunchtime in the park or Mansion.

Do join us if you can.

Special Tours with the Mansion Guides

There will be a series of special tours led by the Mansion Guides over the Autumn and Winter months. Most will be on Saturday mornings, although some will be evening tours. Numbers will be limited, so booking is recommended—

contact Mansion Reception (01473 433554).

The diary includes those tours already planned. More will be arranged, please watch our Website and notices in Mansion. Costs will be £4 for Friends and £5 for others for daytime tours and £6.50 and £8 for evening tours.

OTHER NEWS

Guides Update

In 2012 the Guides showed about 1000 around the Mansion on their free “Peeps into the Past” tours and around 600 people booked for longer paid tours.

In addition to the general tours we do of the house we have developed several special themed tours. We would always be pleased to hear any ideas you may have for tours.

The Guides have regular training sessions and are always trying to learn more about the Mansion. Over the last winter we concentrated on finding out as



Harry Becker:
A Man Hedging

© CIMS on behalf of Ipswich Borough Council

much as we could about items in the Victorian Wing. We have put some of our notes inside the room books for general use.

As you may have noticed there is no souvenir guide book available for purchase in the Mansion at present. There are plans to remedy this and also to provide some a short guide describing the 10 best items in the Mansion for visitors in a hurry. We are all planning to make up our own lists for this one — perhaps our readers would like to have a go too. Please send your ideas to Erica Burrows.

Joan Munns

Guides Representative

Mansion Guide inspired by Harry Becker

One of the Mansion guides was a recent prize winner in a poetry competition organised as part of the 3-year *Managing a Masterpiece* programme to understand, conserve & celebrate the landscape of the Stour Valley

(www.managingamasterpiece.org). The poem was inspired by Harry Becker's *A Man Hedging*, a painting on display in Christchurch Mansion, and is published in *The Sunshine of Fortune*, by Dean Parkin, obtainable from Gainsborough's House, Sudbury, price £4.

The artist Harry Becker was born in Colchester of German parents, and studied in Antwerp, Paris, and at the Bushey School of Art. He moved to Suffolk in 1912 and, until his death in 1928, he immersed himself in the rural life of the early 20th century, going out to paint the farm workers in the fields - very much as Van Gogh had done before him. A contemporary review described his work as 'impressionism at its best ... full of sincerity and significance'. Eight of his paintings from this period are held in the Ipswich Collection..



Dummett Copp
PATENT & TRADE MARK ATTORNEYS

Inspired by Ipswich Museum

Several who attended school in Ipswich have gone on to work in Museums. Alan Swerdlow invited Jonathan Betts MBE, who is senior specialist in horology at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich to tell his story (this has already been published in the Ipswich Angle). When the Friends visited Greenwich in 2002 Jonathan showed the group around the Royal Observatory.



As the son of a retail watchmaker, I suppose I was born with the ‘horological bug’. But what really captured my imagination, as an impressionable 10 year-old, was encountering the wonderful collection of antique clocks on a visit to Christchurch Mansion. They seemed so special – a piece of antique furniture with a machine in it! And could they really be so old and yet appear so real, being in just the kind of place they were made for? I had to find out more,

and was soon buying books and, with a little workshop in my bedroom, was taking old clocks to bits (and mostly getting them back together again!). In the (almost) half a century since, I have never looked back, though I have been back to Christchurch Mansion many times.

Jonathan Betts

**FREE 10 MINUTE
LUNCHTIME TALK**

featuring the “treasure” of the day at

Christchurch Mansion

12.30 TUESDAYS—FRIDAYS

up to 23 August 2013

Friends Visit to Yorkshire

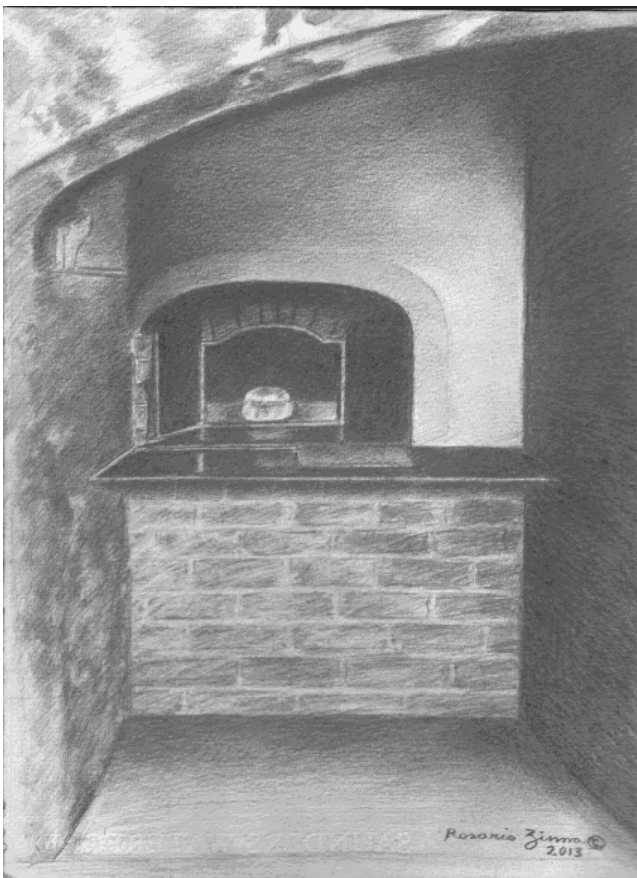
The Friends' visit to Yorkshire was from 20 May to 23 May. The report is illustrated with art work from Friends who were in the party. A colour photograph of some of the party outside their hotel in Harrogate is on the back cover.

Our large coach carried 58 happy souls including Alan our Group Leader, Jean in charge of administration and Peter the driver. A stop en route was at Burghley House just outside the pretty little town of Stamford. Burghley prides itself on being the largest and grandest Elizabethan house in England and it doesn't disappoint. Even the outside is worthy of extended viewing, there being so much to take in. Inside, although

magnificent, I found the decoration a little heavy for my taste. I couldn't imagine living there but I'm glad we went.

So on to the Old Swan Hotel, Harrogate our billet for 3 nights. Now this hotel is a museum in its own right. It dates from 1777 although the present building is mostly from 1840. Karl Marx stayed there in 1873 and it's where Agatha Christie went when she did her great disappearing act in 1926. My favourite exhibit in the hotel is the small lift (probably dating from not long after 1840). It, occasionally took its own decision as to which floor it would deliver its cargo, regardless of which button was pressed.

Next morning we were taken to the Hepworth Gallery in Wakefield. The gallery houses permanently some 44 works by Barbara Hepworth plus a number of temporary paintings and sculptures by contemporary artists. I must confess that contemporary art doesn't speak to me; I switched off after the early impressionists. As I strolled around I wondered whether it was the intention of the building's architect, David Chipperfield, that my attention should be frequently distracted from the exhibits inside. Some rooms have wide plate glass windows from floor to ceiling



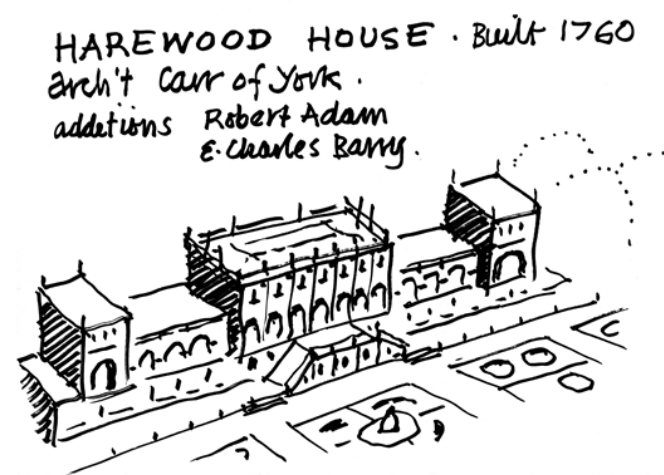
Rosario Zinna took a photograph of the oven in the small kitchen at Burghley and produced this pencil painting on his return to Suffolk.

drawing me to gaze at God's sculpture outside in the form of the River Calder tumbling over a weir on its hurried journey. The living sculpture of a heron stood motionless at the bottom of the weir waiting for lunch to happen by. I felt sympathy for the laid up old river barges and the long disused warehouse on the opposite river bank proclaiming "*J HIRST & CO CORN CANE & BARLEY MERCHANTS*".

The afternoon saw us at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park which is within the grounds of Bretton Hall. The park comprises 500 acres of truly beautiful Yorkshire providing space to over 60 sculptures in the open air. The weather kindly allowed us to stroll around the woods and banks of shrubs hiding the works of art. There was a pile of bricks not unlike those my 3 year old grandson arranges only on a much larger scale. But sometimes even I experience the "*WOW*" factor. We walked the park with friends. When we reached the lake in the valley two opted to continue along the lakeside and then back up the hill to base; whereas two of us chose the pleasant walk among the sheep, lambs and cattle up Longside Meadow to Longside Gallery (don't bother!). We just had time to look in on an exhibition of work by Yinka Shonibare. Truly amazing, stunning and lots of "*WOW*".

A more leisurely start on Wednesday as we travel to Harewood House just north of Leeds. Looking back this was for me the highlight of the trip. This is a very beautiful house in a scale for human

habitation. The work of Robert Adam pervades every room; fabulous ceilings, ornate fireplaces, beautiful cornices, friezes and architraves and carpets specially made to reflect the design of the ceilings. The house also contains a unique collection of Chippendale



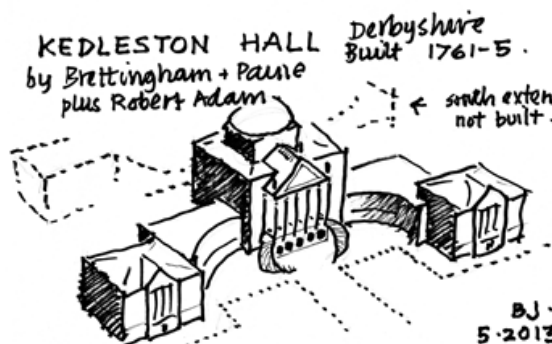
drawing by Brian Jepson

furniture mostly made for the house. Through the windows on the parkland side I frequently glimpsed the magnificent work of Capability Brown as I am meant to. The two options that afternoon were to explore Harrogate or to visit the Royal Horticultural Garden at Harlow Carr. I chose gardens.

The weather on the last day reflected the mood of some of the party, ambivalent. "Yes, I want to go home but I also want to stay here" said one. On the journey home we diverted to Kedleston Hall near Derby. It reckons to have the finest Palladian façade in Britain and I can believe it. It is a palace rather than a house. The scale of the interior made me feel very small. Again much of the decoration and furniture design within the Hall is by that busy Mr

Robert Adam who here also found time to design the grounds. An amazing place! I am so glad I came on the trip. I don't imagine I shall remember all the incredible sights we saw over these 4 action-packed days, but I hope I remember my bunch of amiable fellow travellers.

Gary Butler



drawing by Brian Jepson

New Costume Displays at the Mansion

The Friends have provided funds for costume conservation as well as volunteers to help mount new displays in the Mansions. Bob Entwistle tells us who was involved. He also tells us of yet more to come.

The Friends supplied us with a sum of money so that we could hire the services of Anna Peck, a textile conservator, and also get some materials for padding mannequins.

Together with Ciara Canning from Colchester, Bob Entwistle, Anna Peck, and a small team of willing volunteers from the Friends have been able to put on a costume display at the Mansion.

Ciara supplied us with some good mannequins used in Colchester and also with some materials. She gave her time to help Bob. Anna and the FOIM volunteers chose their favourite costumes for the display.

Volunteers Choice

We wanted the FOIM volunteers to choose some of the items on display as they were funding the conservation. However we all had our favourites and there was a bit of heated discussion. The costumes they chose span over 200 years. They range from a 1820s riding costume with an impossibly tiny waist to a 1950s evening gown (on right).





conserving the dress as I write. We have made replacement buttons for his sister's coat.

Over a period of weeks Anna carried out running repairs on the dresses and the FOIM volunteers Stella, Erica, Marjorie and Sarah helped Ciara and Bob mount the dresses. Philippa Wood a student placement from Durham University also helped.

Philippa first came to the museum when she was 14 for work experience, and carrying on a long tradition never really left; Anna Peck also came as a student 10 years ago and has worked at and for the museum on and off ever since.

1920s Dresses

To coincide with the release of *The Great Gatsby* film, a selection of 1920s flapper dresses are also be on display. The 1920s was a time when high society dresses dripped with crystals, ladies wore elaborate headpieces, real fur draped elegant shoulders and Tiffany & Co was the favoured jeweler of the glitterati.

More Costumes for the Autumn

Later on in the year we intend to display Lady Munnings' ball gown worn to the Chelsea Art Ball in 1933, as painted by Sir Alfred Munnings.

At the same time, since it is Benjamin Britten's centenary, we hope to display a number of items supplied by the Britten Pears Foundation as well as his sister's wedding dress. Anna is busy



A 1920s dress from our collection

..and 2014

We hope the Friends may be able to help us out again next year when we can put another costume exhibition on. We have been discussing different ideas such as "Just Shoes" or handbags or hats etc. Together with Colchester we have a great collection and I am sure we can do something equally marvellous next year.

Bob Entwistle
Senior Conservator

Volunteer Gardeners at the Museum

Ipswich Borough Council gardeners have reduced the amount of time they can spend working on the Museum garden. Karen Webber, from the museum service, has organised volunteers to help maintain the garden area.

Recently committed FOIM's volunteers and Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service colleagues came together to form a gardening group for Ipswich Museums. Working alongside IBC gardeners the group have been working hard to bring a sparkle back to the Memorial Garden and the other outside spaces.

The Memorial Garden is dedicated to Jonathan Charles Drake and his father, Paddie Drake (see transcription of memorial plaque, below). Jonathan worked in Southampton before ending up as Head of Cultural Services for Kirklees Council. Paddie was a member of FOIM for many years, acting as both Newsletter Editor and Chairman. He was also involved with army Museums.

The gardeners have been meeting weekly to help turn the spaces into areas which will entice our visitors into the museum. We know that our visitors really appreciate the courtyard spaces but we also want to entice more local wildlife into the gardens. There are plans to build bee and butterfly houses, create a log pile for beetles and plant more plants to attract other local wildlife.

The picture shows lavender being planted along the front of the Museum. Unfortunately the soil contains a lot of rubble in this area. The gardeners have decided to concentrate on the memorial garden during the summer months. In the Autumn they hope to establish rockery plants in the poorer soils along the front of the museum and plant spring bulbs.



Jonathan Charles Drake

1958 ~ 2003

Scholar of Ipswich School and Peterhouse, Cambridge
Archaeologist, whose youthful interest was fostered
in this Museum.

Cultural and Heritage Manager and Passionate Gardener.
This space was planted by his family in ever loving memory.

Also in memory of his father

C.S. (Paddie) Drake

1928 ~ 2005

If you are interested in offering any help, be it a few hours or something on a more regular basis please contact Karen Webber (karen.webber @colchester.gov.uk) or leave a message for Mary Halliwell at the Museum or on the FOIM website.

A Little Bit of History

Alan Swerdlow, who has served as our Chirman from 1996-1999 and 2010 to 2013 tells us about some of the problems encountered by the Ipswich Museums prior to the formation of the Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service in 2007.

One of my tasks after coming out of the Chair of the Friends in April was to go through various files relating to the Friends and the museum service.

Possible Sale of Items

One set of papers goes back to 1996 when Sara Muldoon, the then Curator, had been told by Ipswich Borough Council (IBC) that it had taken the decision to consider selling certain items which fell outside its current collecting policy. She and her staff identified paintings, firearms and a stamp collection fitting the criteria. In a letter to the Director of the Museums & Galleries Commission dated 5 August 1996 she reported that '... a barrister's Opinion has been sought as to the legality of disposing of items: our next step will be to obtain valuations of the items concerned.' Sara went on to confirm that Cllr Sheila Baguley, Chair of the Leisure Committee of IBC, was keen to ensure that the Museums Association Code of Practice was followed.

The Friends were consulted, as was Maurice Davies of the the Museums Association and the matter went to the Leisure Committee followed by a two month advertisement period in the Museums Journal. It was envisaged that any proceeds would be used to enhance the museum service and not to offset general revenue costs. I obtained clarification from Museums & Galleries Commission that even exceptional case items such as toilets, roof leaks etc

could not be funded by such sales.

To back up our argument I had an informative set of booklets: from Museums & Galleries Commission 'The Legal Status of Collections in the United Kingdom', 'Charitable Status and Local Authority Museums' and 'Treasures in Trust' from the Department of National Heritage. We met on 16 August 1996 for a useful meeting at IBC which was seen as the first of a possible series of biannual meetings between the Friends and the Borough Council.

Some of the items considered for disposal had been acquired with funds from the then National Art Collections Fund (now the Art Fund) and other donors. Such funds might have to be returned if IBC went through with any sale. The Friends' position was that even if all legal criteria were met the idea went against good practice and would set a precedent. In my letter to Cllr Baguley dated 27 August 1996 I wrote: 'It is our belief that the criteria could not be met and that the idea should be dropped'. We suggested that the way forward was that the forthcoming re-registration be seen as an opportunity to take a fresh look at all aspects of the museum service and to involve the Museums & Galleries Commission, the Museums Association and the South Eastern Museums Service to help in the discussions but with the lead coming from the curatorial staff. Eventually the idea of disposal was dropped.

Borough Spending Review 1998

The following further recollections are based on other records which I have now deposited at the Ipswich Record Office. One file, nearly two inches thick, goes back to 1998-2000 during my first chairmanship. The first item is a copy letter dated 21 November 1998 to the Right Honourable Chris Smith MP, the then Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport. In it I refer to a phone call I had just received from Cllr Baguley advising me that the Borough was instituting a spending review of the Council's Museums Service. In a Press Release dated 20 November 1998 the then Leader of the Council Cllr Peter Gardiner said that the museums receive no financial support from other Suffolk councils despite it being a county-wide service.

The savings to meet budget requirements were suggested as being £150,000 in that year and possibly a further £350,000 the next year. The Friends were concerned that qualified museum experts should be brought in to help in the preparation of an in-depth, objective, and meaningful report. We thought that the report was being carried out in far too little time, that the consultation team was of four IBC staff, and that the options and savings targets had been politically predetermined.

I asked the Chairman of the Museums & Galleries Commission to use his best offices in the matter: the Friends' committee saw this review as an opportunity as well as a threat. Alan Howarth, Minister for the Arts replied, heartened by the Friends' commitment to Ipswich Museums. Joe Orr, then Corporate Director at IBC, had been brought in to the situation at a meeting on 16 December 1998 when we stressed the concerns of the Friends. I explained the situation to members at our Christmas party that year when I said 'for the moment we are doing what we can in a spirit of cooperation ... but depending on how the report develops

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we may have to start shouting’.

There was even talk of selling off the High Street museum building which we pointed out had been erected by public subscription with a major contribution from Richard Wallace of Sudbourne and the Wallace Collection. We developed 16 points for consideration by IBC sent with a letter to Joe Orr just before Christmas 1998. The Professor of Art History at University of Essex and others joined the debate - including the eastern region director of the Museums & Galleries Commission.

By January, Professor Peter Odell, Chairman of the Ipswich Society, was involved. He referred to the forthcoming millennium and the 800th anniversary of the Town Charter and the efforts to obtain city status. One of our members wrote wishing IBC had more confidence, that they should truly value its museums and collections, and that the suggestions being put forward for a more Ipswich-based programme reflected a narrow-minded and provincial view.


The file includes letters from Paddie Drake a past Chairman of the Friends and others. My own feeling was that the draft Leisure Strategy 1999-2000 was a rather bland document saying little that could not apply to many towns and having a limited vision for the future. In April Joe Orr wrote to me that the assistance of the MGC would be best in helping crystalizing Members’ thoughts and advising on visionary issues. Staff morale was understandably affected.

Adrian Parry, as Chairman of the Friends from the AGM in April 1999, sent a comprehensive response to the Review on 21 June 1999 in which he rejected the findings as failing in a constructive manner to address the problems. Less than two days had been used of the time of Brian Loughbrough the MGC Local Government Adviser, whose involvement we had helped negotiate. We even offered a grant to pay for his further expert input.

In a report by IBC’s Director Team dated 22 June 1999 they said that the leisure industry was changing and that the museums service in Ipswich had not moved on: now would be the opportunity to review the overall provision. The

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Museum Service Users Group had met on 18 June 1999 with Cllr Ian Grimwood in the chair. The idea of setting up a museum trust was raised and the conclusions flagged up the risk of losing Registered Museum status; that the Report had not given guidance to Members and that there were no costings; and that the offer of Mr Loughbrough's further expertise had not been taken up - a point I raised in my letter to Joe Orr of 22 July 1999.

Management Changes

We were not happy about the replacement of Sara Muldoon, the experienced curator, with a Heritage Manager. Paddie Drake wrote to the East Anglian Daily Times early in August making it clear that the Friends did in no way endorse the proposals being put forward. Adrian Parry wrote to FOIM members on 9 August setting out the various points to be challenged and urging members to write to IBC and to their Councillor. It should be pointed out that around £200,000 had been spent by IBC on the Mansion at the time but no 'partnership' funding had been sought which might have taken the sum available up to around £1m which could have funded better access, toilets and other facilities still needed today.

Judicial Review

Later in the year the Friends (Chairman Adrian Parry), Ipswich Society (Chairman Professor Peter Odell) and the Ipswich Archaeological Trust (President Dr John Blatchly), coordinated by Peter Odell, asked a solicitor in Cambridge to look into our concerns. A letter was sent to Paul Turner, IBC solicitor at the end of October 1999 concluding that the decision proposed in the report going to Committee on 1 November should be

challenged in judicial review. (The internally produced review had begun in September 1998 working in parallel with the Best Value review and during all this time staff were stressed over their job security.)

Peter Odell wrote letters setting out the situation seeking contributions to a fund to secure the judicial review and nearly £25,000 was raised but IBC challenged whether this fund was a proper use of charitable funds. This was not the case as it came from individual donations. There were legally worded letters to and fro.

On 8 March 2000 the three societies issued a statement based on legal advice (from Robert Jay QC, who was to be prominent in last year's Leveson press enquiry). The conclusion not to proceed was in part based on IBC's decision to appoint a professionally qualified Head of Service rather than a Heritage Manager who would have had wider responsibilities than just the Museums.

It was a time of great concern for the museums, staff, and the collections. The way in which the three organisations worked together towards ensuring the best management of the service was an interesting process. There were official assurances that the proposed cuts were by no means a certainty and that the sale of the environmentally-controlled store was no longer a high priority. In the Evening Star on 10 March 2000 Cllr Sheila Baguley said 'We are delighted that this issue has now been settled and that we can go on to develop the museum service together'.

My file contains a mass of press cuttings with headlines such as:

Museum jobs go in £172,000 cuts, Important natural history collection is under threat

You call this democracy – Councillors accused of excess secrecy after voting for £150,000 museum cuts

Museum staff threatened with sack for speaking out over cuts

Is council poised to ruin our museums? And so on.

The Friends' committee will certainly continue its vigilance on behalf of the buildings and our collections all of which are held in trust for the people of Ipswich.

Alan Swerdlow



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In this issue:

Bill Seaman the new Manager
of the Colchester and Ipswich
Museum Service (page 6)



Friends outside the Old Swan Hotel
in Harrogate in May (page 17)

Anna and Stella prepare a dress for
display in the Mansion (page 19)



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We welcome new members to help us support our excellent Ipswich Museums.
Details of membership are given on page 27
We use the website to advertise events which are notified too late to be
printed in the Newsletter.