

The Friends of the Ipswich Museums

Newsletter SUMMER 2016



Christchurch Mansion
The scaffolding goes up

we look forward

FoIM

to promote the past

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 (CIMS).

The Friends continue to provide financial support to the Ipswich Museums as well as acting as volunteers. We run outings and arrange talks and other events for 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, the Ipswich Arts Association and the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce.

Contributions to the Autumn 2016 Newsletter should be sent to the editor by 1 September 2016.

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Advertisements: 8,10,12,15,18,20,23

Our advertisements are all from corporate members, please support them.

Please visit our website, www.foim.org.uk, which we use to advertise events notified too late to be included in the Newsletter.

We are also on Facebook

we look forward



to promote the past

Front Cover

Christchurch Mansion, as scaffolding is erected to allow extensive repairs to the roof.



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

I have found putting together this edition of the newsletter very interesting. Just my second attempt, so please be patient with me ...

There are so many aspects of people's working lives that we don't even think about, never mind take for granted. So the various articles about how we have come to see Christchurch Mansion as pictured on the cover - and it may well look different again by the time you receive your copy of the newsletter - give us a fascinating insight into the working lives of the Friends' friends in the Museum Services and the Borough Council. Thank you all for your contributions.

Thank you, also, to the Friends who who provided copy for this issue and have checked that I put it all together in some semblance of order.

And if you enjoy the occasional Chinese meal, then take a look at what Bob Entwistle was offered by his hosts when bringing home the exhibition, which he described in the Spring edition, from Nanjing Museum in China.

I look forward to receiving any comments you may have, either by post or via the Internet.

Alick Barnett

Make Contact with Us

The Friends of Ipswich Museums Committee would like to hear from **you**.

We spend a lot of time organising events and trips for you as well as raising money for the Museums. Why not let us know of what you think of our efforts?

If you have any suggestions for places to visit, or exhibitions that you would like to see, please let us know.

You can write to us
c/o Ipswich Museum, High Street,
Ipswich, IP1 3QH.

or via our Website: www.foim.org.uk.

Click on the "Contact" button at the top of the screen.

The Newsletter

If you wish to contact the editor to comment on the content of the newsletter, or even submit an article for publication, this can also be done by post via the Museum, or by using the Internet.

On the FoIM Website, click on the "Activities" button, then select the "Newsletter" option.

Chairman's Letter



The Friends' Committee

As noted in the Spring 2016 report, there have been several changes to the Committee recently and I am delighted that Andrew Sewell has agreed to join us as treasurer, taking over from Peter Stockdale.

We are sorry that Barbara Cole has decided to step down. Barbara has been involved with the Museum for over 26 years, of which 20 were in the role of the Friends' membership secretary. Barbara and Derek have been key supporters of the Friends and at our recent Committee meeting we acknowledged the significant contribution that they have made over the years.

The Friends' Committee does a first class job covering a wide range of areas. These include legal compliance, treasury, Website, newsletter, events and membership as well as managing the external relationships with the Borough Council, Museum Services and the volunteers. I look forward to working with the Committee in 2016 to support our Museums in Ipswich.

Museum News

As well as the day to day management of the museums, our Museum Services have actively developed partnerships with external agencies including the national museums, funding bodies and educational establishments. This enabled the Museum to host the "*Aspire*" project and, in due course, we hope to have the ***Wolsey Angels*** from the V&A on loan.

This relationship is two way as demonstrated by the loan of objects from Ipswich and Colchester Museums to Nanjing Museum in China. I think that it is worth mentioning that the conservation team took copies of the Christchurch Mansion guide book to China as gifts from Ipswich to the conservation team there. The guide book was put together by the Friends using funds from a bequest by Miss Vera Auckland.

The Ipswich Art School Gallery programme includes two major exhibitions. The first is "*Open Choice*", which runs from 23 July to 28 August, where Ipswich Art Society members will

show new artwork created in response to the Museum's fine art collection, items of which will be on display, as well as a gallery highlighting acquisitions that have received funding from the Friends. The second exhibition, "*Open Call*", from 3 September to 9 October, will be an open exhibition and a chance to see a wide range of art submitted to the Gallery for the first time.

The Borough Council has a newsletter that contains all forthcoming events at the Museum; you can sign up to the newsletter via their Website:
<https://www.ipswich.gov.uk/content/keep-touch-ipswich-museums> .

We are delighted that the Borough Council has agreed to fund structural repairs to Christchurch Mansion and as you may have seen, work has already started. This will mean limiting car park space at the Mansion to make space for the contractor's storage compound.

A long-standing requirement has been the review of the collections documentation. The museum holds a wealth of information about the collections but the connection between the objects and the information has either been lost or never made. The Collections Information Programme has been initiated with the objective of completing the documentation and in the longer-term, allowing the collection to be accessed on line.

Events

On 13 May, we had a talk by Giles Waterfield on the development of regional museums, starting in the Victorian age. It was appropriate that we were in the High Street Museum with everyone gathering in the main gallery beforehand. Next time, I will remember to bring my camera!

Giles painted a vivid picture of the origins of regional museums which stemmed from local concerns and social drivers. One thing that has not changed in over 100 years is the challenge of finding funding for museums.

The Friends' Events Committee has been busy and we have several events coming up including a visit to the Sainsbury Centre Giacometti exhibition in August, a "*Talk & Walk*" at Holywells Park in September and a lunchtime talk in November.

We are keen to arrange events that you will enjoy and that will be of interest to members. Your opinion is important to the committee and I would very much welcome your feedback and suggestions for next year's programme.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you would like to discuss our events, or any aspect of the work of FoIM.

John Lapsley
Chairman

☎ 01 473 738 008

✉ johnlapsley@hotmail.com

Bill Seaman's Column

Dear Friends

I had the pleasure of attending the Suffolk Adult Learners' Awards in June and am delighted to announce that we now have an award-winning **Training Museum** programme. Our Museum Trainees won the Arts and Cultural Learning Award. The **Creative Heritage in Mind** project was the runner up in this category, a project we are a partner in too. It is great to see the hard work of our teams receiving the recognition they deserve.

The **Training Museum** is a three-year workforce transformation programme for Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service funded by Arts Council England, including a number of traineeships as well as partnerships with universities, schools and arts organisations. If you would like to know more about what our trainees are up to, you can read their blog at www.trainingmuseum.wordpress.com.

Recruitment for our next cohort is well underway. Following successful taster days, we received 138 applications. Of these, 81 have been selected for video interview. This new method of recruitment has helped us select trainees who have an interest, passion and enthusiasm for working in museums. The trainees bring with them

exciting new ideas, which we have integrated into our programmes. We are learning as much from them as they are from us.

Also in June, we launched the new "*Open Season*" of exhibitions, an ongoing, annual opportunity for aspiring local artists to showcase their work in the Ipswich Art School Gallery. It began with "*Open Campus*", which features work by second-year Fine Art degree students from University Campus Suffolk and the winners of the Anna Airy awards run by Ipswich Art Society, sponsored by Ipswich Decorative and Fine Arts Society. This will be followed by "*Open Choice*", described on page 14, which will include a display of art works purchased with support from the Friends in recognition of the contribution you have made to the collection over a number of years. Art work created by Ipswich Art Society members in response to the museums' collection will feature alongside. The final part of the "*Open Season*" will be an "*Open Call*" for artists to submit work. I hope artistic members of the Friends will get involved with this.

We are looking forward to hosting Pacitti Company's "*SPILL*" festival once again in the Ipswich Art School Gallery in October. This will be followed by the

return to Ipswich of the “*Wildlife Photographer of the Year*” exhibition, which was a huge success at the Natural History Museum in London and proved to be of great interest when we previously hosted it in Ipswich.

Finally I would like to let you know that items loaned to Nanjing Museum, the second largest museum in China, were safely returned recently. The Ipswich

Museum objects were seen by over one million people while they were in display there. It’s great to see that there is international interest in the Ipswich collections. It demonstrates their significance and how lucky we are to be able to see them regularly here in Ipswich for free!

Bill Seaman
Museums Manager

The Mansion Guides

The Mansion Guides are a dedicated team of FoIM volunteers who each bring their own interests and expertise to help inform and enhance the visitor experience at Christchurch Mansion.

The team meets regularly throughout the year to exchange ideas and information about the Mansion and the collections. We have guides who have taken a special interest in clocks, costume, art, architecture, domestic life and the 18th Century, which we can share with visitors on guided tours or talks.

Lots of organizations book tours annually with the Mansion guides. Last year, we took around 46 separate groups including the University of the Third Age, The Decorative & Fine Arts Society, the Women’s Institute, historical societies and travel companies visiting Suffolk. We have also had groups of Girl Guides, students and even a choir.

We occasionally give outside talks too, but mostly we want to encourage visitors

to come to our Museums and find out more about the fascinating history and collections. Most of our tours are of Christchurch Mansion, but we are also happy to take visitors to the Museum too: it has its own interesting story to tell.

Every day until the end of October, one of our Mansion Guides will be on duty to take visitors on a free short tour of the Mansion - “*A Peep into the Past*” at 11 am Tuesday to Saturday and 2 pm on Sundays. During Heritage Weekend, 10 and 11 September, we will be doing two “*Peeps*” - at 11 am and 2 pm each day and guides will be around to chat to visitors throughout the two days.

These tours are not suitable for larger groups, but anyone can book a full tour at a time to suit themselves by contacting me directly at ericab@btinternet.com or via the website www.foim.org.uk.

Erica Burrows

Squirrell Exhibition

Leonard Squirrell Talk

One of the privileges of membership of the Friends is receiving invitations to special viewings of the exhibitions at our Museums.



Emma Roodhouse.

On Thursday, 9 June, we enjoyed a glass of wine followed by a talk about Leonard Squirrell by our Collections & Learning Curator, Emma Roodhouse. Although many of the 50 or so Friends who attended the talk are familiar with

the life and work of this well-loved artist, Emma took a fresh look at his legacy.

Afterwards, members were able to view the current exhibition in the Wolsey Art Gallery, together with some works on paper which Emma brought out from the reserve collection.



Friends viewing the Squirrell Exhibition.

The exhibition will run for the next few months and more works by Squirrell will be displayed later in the summer.

Erica Burrows



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Friends' Diary

When booking, please use a Booking Slip (page 25) and enclose a cheque made out to "FolM". If you wish to have confirmation, please include your eMail address or enclose a self addressed, stamped envelope.

Date	Event	Booking & details
Wednesday 17 August	<p>Giacometti Exhibition at the Sainsbury Centre – <i>"A Line Through Time"</i>.</p> <p>Coach trip to the Sainsbury Centre, Norwich, to see this landmark exhibition.</p> <p>Tickets £25.50, which includes entry to the exhibition.</p>	<p>Coach leaves at 9 am (Woodbridge, Deben Pool) / 9.30 (Ipswich, Crown St. lay-by).</p> <p>Booking Slip with this newsletter.</p>
Wednesday 14 September	<p>Holywells Park – <i>"Talk & Walk"</i>.</p> <p>Adrian Howlett will give a talk on the history of the park and their recent, successful fundraising project. Tea will be provided by the Friends and afterwards, guests can walk through the park.</p>	<p>2 pm in the Orangery at Holywells Park.</p> <p>Booking Slip with this newsletter.</p>
Thursday 17 November	<p>Lunchtime Talk – <i>"The Architecture of Ipswich"</i>.</p> <p>John Field will talk about paintings by Brian Jepson and the architecture of the buildings in Ipswich.</p> <p>Tickets £16, includes lunch.</p>	<p>12 noon in the function room at Rushmere Golf Club, Heath Rd, Ipswich.</p> <p>Booking Slip with this newsletter.</p>
Thursday 15 December	Christmas Party.	Details to be confirmed.
May 2017	2/3 night break.	Details to be confirmed.

Friends' News

New Members

A warm welcome to our new members:

Miss G Anderson
Mr & Mrs N Birch
Mr & Mrs P Goodwin
Mr & Mrs D Miller & family
Miss S Mower
Mr A Sewell & Ms S Sharlott & family
Mr A Vince
Mr B West
Mr N Chandler
Mrs C Pearce
Mrs R Scott & son
Mr & Mrs J Standeven
Mr M & Ms C Sweet-Escott

Jean Attenborrow
Membership Secretary

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Professor Peter Odell

Alan Swerdlow has written the following piece about Professor Odell, who died recently.

I first met Peter and his wife, Jean, when I was Chairman of the Friends of the Ipswich Museums and Peter was Chairman of the Ipswich Society. We were both involved in campaigning and support for the Museum Services. He and Jean hosted several of our planning meetings. Peter's gravitas and clear thinking certainly helped that cause. Our papers to do with this campaign are now in the Suffolk Record Office.

They often joined the Friends' trips at home and abroad that I had arranged: Jean was particularly interested when I planned a visit to Liverpool in 1998 - home town for both of us.

Alan Swerdlow



Future Events

Wednesday, 17 August

Giacometti Exhibition, Norwich ***“A Line Through Time”***

Tickets £25.50, which includes entry to the exhibition.

Coach trip to see this landmark exhibition at the Sainsbury Centre, Norwich. Over 100 works will be featured in a variety of media including sculpture, painting and photography, as well as important archival material. Much of the exhibition is dedicated to Giacometti's impact in Britain and features works by artists including Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud, Henry Moore, William Turnbull, Eduardo Paolozzi, Frank Auerbach, Elisabeth Frink and Isabel Rawsthorne.

Pick Up: 9 am (Woodbridge, Deben Pool) / 9.30 (Ipswich, Crown St. lay-by). Enter Exhibition at 11.30, lunch & view Sainsbury collection: 1 pm until 3.30.

Coach departs at 3.30 arriving Ipswich at approximately 4.30 and Woodbridge at 5.

Wednesday, 14 September

Holywells Park *“Talk & Walk”*

Tickets £7.

Meet in the Orangery at Holywells Park at 2 pm where Adrian Howlett will give a talk on the history of the park and the recent, successful, fundraising project.

Tea will be provided by the Friends and afterwards, guests can walk through the park.

Adrian is not charging FoIM for his talk but has asked that if any members wish to, they make a donation to the Ipswich & District Animal Welfare Centre.

There is limited parking for the disabled at the Cliff Lane entrance (IP3 0PG).

Thursday, 17 November

Lunchtime Talk by John Field ***“Architecture in Ipswich”***

Tickets £16 - includes lunch.

The talk and lunch will be at 12 noon in the function room at Rushmere Golf Club, Heath Rd, Ipswich, IP4 5QQ.

John Field will talk about paintings by Brian Jepson and the architecture of the buildings in Ipswich. John has kindly agreed to give the talk that was prepared in 2014 by the late Brian Jepson but never delivered.

Brian Jepson was heavily involved in Ipswich societies and had a great interest in the town and its architecture. His many paintings and photographs form an outstanding record of key buildings in Ipswich.

Parking and disabled parking/access is available at the golf club.

Visit by Nettuno Choir

At the end of May, Ipswich Choral Society played host to a visiting choir from Nettuno in Italy. Ipswich and Nettuno both have a long history.

The Shrine of our Lady in Ipswich was a site of pilgrimage until the Reformation. It was said that miracles happened here and even Henry VIII and Katharine of Aragon visited in the early days of their marriage. At the time of the Reformation, the statue of the **Madonna at the Shrine** was ordered to be burnt. The story goes that the statue was smuggled out of Ipswich by mariners and ended up in Nettuno. Groups of modern-day pilgrims from Nettuno now regularly visit Ipswich and go to the site in Lady Lane where the shrine once stood.

The choir had a busy itinerary, and after singing at St Mary Elms Church they walked up to Christchurch Mansion to give an impromptu performance from the balcony.

The wonderful singing resonated around the Great Hall and late visitors in the Mansion were drawn from all parts of the house to listen.



The Nettuno choir in the Great Hall.

The Guides had been asked to take the choir on a tour of the house. Although one or two spoke some English, the majority did not. Luckily, one of the ever-versatile Guides, Sarah Killick, speaks Italian so was able to tell the choir members the story of the Mansion without the need for interpreters.

Erica Burrows

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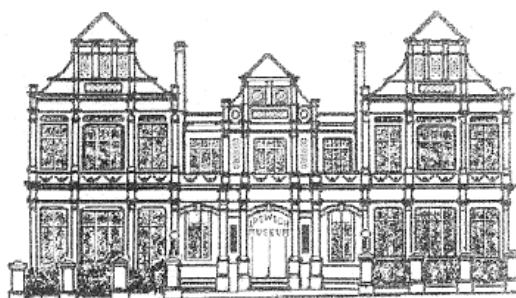
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Ipswich Museum Garden

Mary Halliwell has edited the FoIM newsletter for the last 13 years. She says she is pleased to now be able to devote more time to gardening.

The garden between the main Museum building and the Art School building was planted as a memorial garden to Jonathan Charles Drake (1958 - 2003) and his father, Paddie Drake, who died in 2006. Paddie served as Chairman and newsletter editor for FoIM, while his son's career in archaeology was fostered by frequent visits to Ipswich Museum.

Restoring the Garden

The Museum Service appealed for volunteer gardeners in 2013 as the garden had become overgrown. As a result, Sheila Brooks and I started work.

We contacted Jonathan Drake's widow and obtained a plan of it.



The distinctive leaves of the Ginkgo. 200 million year old fossils of Ginkgos have been found.

We learnt that the Ginkgo tree at the High Street end of the garden, and the black bamboo at the opposite end, were

both Jonathan's particular favourites. We identified *Hydrangea Annabelle*, *Osmanthus Birkwoodii* and *Sarcococcus Humili* shown on the plan, although they had been completely smothered by ivy and bamboo.

The Museum Service provided us with a small shed full of garden tools. Clearing the ivy was our main task for the first year. That was eventually completed in 2015 by removing all the ivy from an old tree stump. We then planted three *Cobea Scandens* seedlings at the base and were rewarded with a good display of flowers until late into the Autumn.

There is now a group of woodland plants by the entrance to the garden and daffodils around the Ginkgo tree. We have also introduced a Dogwood which has red stems and white flowers.

We continue to pay regular visits to the garden to keep the weeds at bay, to keep over-vigorous shrubs trimmed and to keep a continuous watch on the black bamboo, which frequently sends out new shoots in all directions.

We would be delighted to have a little more help. Please contact us c/o Ipswich Museum or via the FoIM website if you would like to join us.

Mary Halliwell

Museum News

Open Season at Ipswich Art School Gallery

This summer, in Ipswich Art School Gallery we have our first “*Open Season*”, with two very different exhibitions involving a diverse group of artists and a chance for people to submit their own artwork.

Open Choice

23 July until 28 August

Invitation to a Private View:-

Friday, 22 July, 6 - 8 pm

RSVP to museums@ipswich.gov.uk

A collaboration between Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service, Ipswich Art Society and the Friends of Ipswich Museums. Members of Ipswich Art Society have selected art works from the Ipswich Borough Council collection and created a response.

Featuring art by Sir Alfred Munnings, Anna Airy, Harry Becker and Thomas Churchyard from the collection.

The Friends of Ipswich Museums over the years have helped to fund-raise and support Ipswich’s collections. Come and see a selection of objects that the Friends have been instrumental in helping the Borough to collect. Then go on a trail for more objects in Ipswich Museum and Christchurch Mansion.



© CIMS on behalf of Ipswich Borough Council

Melton Quay. Thomas Churchyard.

The Ipswich Art Society is one of Suffolk's foremost exhibiting organisations for painters, sculptors and printmakers and one which has played a distinguished role in the cultural life of Suffolk's county town since 1874. Indeed, outside London itself, it can claim to be one of the longest established art-societies in the country. Its history is closely linked with the Ipswich Art School, as many of its members are past teachers or students.

The Members have chosen works with particular connections to Ipswich, its artists, and the area. You will see and recognise local scenes, works by well-known and lesser known artists of the area – all of which deserve to be seen afresh. Several of the works come from a collection of 35 works gifted to Ipswich by the Art Society.

On Saturday, 6 August, come along to the “*Art in Ipswich*” study day. The Ipswich Art Society has organised a day of talks about Ipswich art, past, present and future. It will be a chance to hear from Emma Roodhouse, Collections and Learning Curator; Mark Beesley, artist, and Andrew Casey, artist, as well as Kate Bright, who was recently commissioned to respond to John Constable’s Wivenhoe House painting to mark its 200th anniversary.

To find out more eMail
emma.roodhouse@ipswich.gov.uk

Open Call

3 September until 9 October

Invitation to a Private View: -
Saturday, 3 September, 2 - 4 pm
RSVP to museums@ipswich.gov.uk

The final part of our “*Open Season*” is a call to all artists to submit artwork for the exhibition.

It will be the first time that the Ipswich Art School Gallery has hosted an open show and a chance to see a wide range of art.

The “*Open Call*” is organised by the Ipswich Art Society in collaboration with the Museum Service. There will be a chance to vote for your favourite picture and also purchase artwork for your own collection.

**Hand in your work on Thursday,
25 August ,10 am – 4 pm,
at Ipswich Art School Gallery.**

Application forms can be found on the Ipswich Art Society Website.
www.ipswich-art-society.org.uk
Registered Charity 219257

This is a “*Happening on High Street*” event enabled by funding from Arts Council England.

Emma Roodhouse



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ECHOES - Educative Costumed Historical Opportunities for Expression and Sharing



Some of the ECHOES team rehearsing at the Mansion.

ECHOES is a museum-funded initiative that aims to bring to life the hidden histories of various characters, based on the art collections housed at Christchurch Mansion.

Members of the Visitor Services Team have been working hard to unlock the secrets, stories, and everyday lives behind some of the most popular paintings at Christchurch Mansion so that they can be shared, enjoyed, and wondered about by our visitors today. These revelations will bring new perspectives to familiar images.

Since January, the ECHOES team have embarked on a journey of discovery and, at the end of June, took part in the first costumed “taster” day at the Mansion. As the project has now evolved to a presentable stage we look forward to welcoming the FoIM to a future daytime event. This is when you can meet our diverse gallery of fascinating characters;

Amelia the cook, Marjorie, a passenger on ***The Felixstowe to Ipswich Coach***, Blanche Edith Fonnereau, Phoebe Fonnereau, (through the eyes of her dear friend Elizabeth Badeley), and James the head brewer at the Cobbold Brewery, Cliff Quay. We are also called upon to witness Stuart’s challenging examination of Robert Devereux’ ties to the crown and Lottie’s tales from the life and times of the Cotton family.

We will let you know when the next opportunity to present ECHOES occurs, which depends on everyone’s availability. In the meantime, please keep a look out for any ECHOES characters that may be wandering the corridors, we’d love to stop and share experiences with you through our characters’ time and place in the history of Ipswich and Christchurch Mansion.

Liz Bowell
Duty Officer
CIMS

What Was In The Christchurch Mansion Attic?

Emma Harper describes the work necessary before the work on Christchurch Manor roof could begin.

Anyone who has walked past Christchurch Mansion in recent weeks will have noticed that the Consolidation Works Project is now fully underway.

Scaffolding, boarding, and workmen on the roof are visible signs that work is being undertaken and that, by the end of the year, the Mansion infrastructure will have been considerably improved. However, for three months before the scaffolding was erected, work of a less-visible sort was being undertaken in the Mansion attics. The Consolidation Works have provided an opportunity for the Collections Information Programme team – the major, retrospective documentation project currently being carried out across all museum sites in Ipswich – to turn their attention to Christchurch Mansion.

From late February to mid-May, the Collections and Learning, and Collections Information Programme teams were working in the attics to inventory the contents of the rooms that are affected by the work: this was a considerable task! We went through every box, on every shelf, in each room, taking the objects out one by one, looking for accession numbers, measuring, photographing and conservation checking each one.

Over the course of the 11 weeks that we worked in the attics, we inventoried almost 5000 objects, ranging from model ships and rolls of brass rubbings to ceramics and Victorian toys.



Carrie Willis photographing one of the 5000 objects using a light box.

The next part of this stage of the Collections Information Programme will take place back in the office in the Museum, where members of the Collections Information Programme Team will work through the inventories and existing documentation to see what knowledge can be unlocked about their provenance and history.

Emma Harper
Collections Information
Programme Assistant

Thoughts from Carole Jones

Portfolio-holder for Development [including Museums], Ipswich Borough Council

Protecting our Heritage for the Future

We live in Bolton Lane, close to Ipswich town centre and to Christchurch Park. If I lean out of the back bedroom window I can see the roof of the Mansion and since the beginning of June it's been hidden behind a web of scaffolding. In the mornings I hear workmen shouting to one another, and periodically the sounds of banging and drilling. It's all part of a major refurbishment programme by Ipswich Borough Council and is planned to continue until the end of this year. The Mansion will remain open, though some rooms may be closed to the public when works are being carried out inside.



The Mansion as we've never seen it before.

Both the collections and the building itself are extremely sensitive to environmental fluctuations: the furniture,

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paintings, and panelling require a relative humidity of around 50%, but at the same time the building needs to be warm enough for visitors and staff to be comfortable. So the Council is installing a new management system to control the careful balance between heating and humidity. The Mansion is also near to its maximum electricity capacity, which could be dangerous, particularly in the winter season, so we are installing a new power supply.

Many roof-tiles are cracked or broken or simply worn out, so the roof is being re-tiled and properly insulated. There is a list of other jobs that will get done at the same time – for example, window repairs; new fire protection work; some

repair and conservation of panelling; underfloor heating in the Education Room; and a new CCTV system.

All this, as you can imagine, is a massive undertaking, but once it is completed it should mean that the Mansion is “fit for purpose” for the next 15 years – and the roof should not need any further major works for the next 50 years. Not only will the improvements protect our beautiful Ipswich heirloom, but they will also lower the building’s energy use and energy costs, and its overall carbon footprint.

It is a major investment - but ironically one where the benefits will be largely invisible to members of the public. We will maybe notice (Cont'd overleaf)

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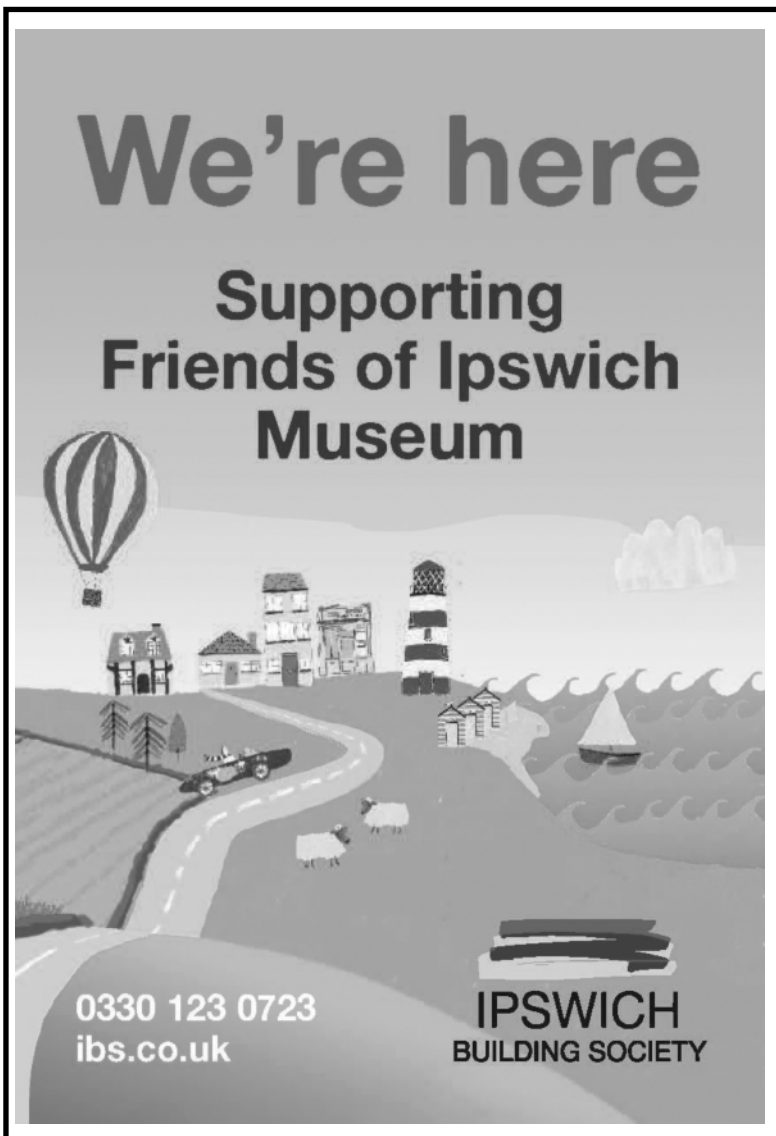
the repainted windows, but we'll never see the re-tiled roofs, the specialist air conditioning unit in the Tudor attic space, or the new insulation between the rafters!

Still, this is very good news. Equally plainly, it is very expensive - costing around £1,100,000, and at a time when local authority finances have been slashed year on year. It also involves the commitment and expertise of many people: Mark Hunter, head of Building and Design at IBC; his deputy and the project manager, Stuart Oxborrow; the

client team, headed by Ipswich Museums manager Jayne Austin, plus Saskia Stent and Damian Etherington; principal designer Hilary Brightman; Hyams quantity surveyors; Mechanical and Electrical design by MLM; Structural Engineering by The Morton Partnership; specialist health and safety advisors CCAS and, last but not least, R G Carters, the main building contractors.

My thanks to them all!

Carole Jones



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Conservation Corner

Bob Entwistle describes his continuing involvement with the Nanjing Museum in China as he arranges for the return of the exhibition he described in the last newsletter.

Here we go again

Last issue I thought I had had my last trip to China, however, never say never. I was thrilled to return again in May to take down the exhibition, pack it and bring it back to Ipswich and Colchester.

I felt as though I was sneaking back into the room to collect the present I had left behind at a leaving party, after saying my goodbyes.

However the trip proved equally enjoyable, if not a little tiring.



The team and Chen Li, our guide.

Three of us returned, myself and Emma Reeve, and Steve Yates from Colchester. Getting to Nanjing from Shanghai airport had become a well-oiled task. This is not to say it was easy, but the queues and confusion were expected.

We had to wait in an extremely long queue at Hong Qiou Station to pick up our pre-bought tickets. It seems as though there was only one ticket office open in the whole station, and that had only four desks. Each desk had one overworked and harassed looking person behind. My concern was, "Was this the right queue?", or would we get to the front and be directed to another equally long queue next to us. We stuck to our guns, waited, and when we got to the front the harassed young man gave us our tickets. I was amazed it had been relatively painless.

We were also entertained in the queue by a bit of local street theatre. An argument erupted over whether someone had paid the correct money in a nearby café. It all got very heated and then just stopped as the participants got bored and moved on to something new. However it was all very entertaining. I enjoyed it immensely, as did the queue and a local policeman. Impartial onlookers happily shouted advice to each side.

But back to the real business. Packing the objects went well and without incident. The only thing of note was the official photographer (Cont'd overleaf)

falling asleep and slipping off his chair. Huxie, the Chinese carriers, helped Steve and Emma safely pack the objects whilst I concentrated on the condition reports. Emma then organised the reports into neat piles, which was very nice.

The Chinese carriers from Huxie were the same as assisted us in setting up the exhibition so the take down went very smoothly. I lost my posh Swiss Army penknife to Jiutian the boss of the carriers. He had been eyeing it up on the journey out so I made a present of it to him.

The only part of the journey back that caused me concern was the customs sheds at Shanghai Airport. Three companies, including ours, were trying to put their cargo through the X-Ray at the same time. This resulted in the fork lift trucks of each company vying to get their objects off the trucks and into the loading bay before their rivals. Fork lifts were whizzing around all over the area, people shouting at each other, and me in the middle counting the crates and trying not to get run over. Add to this the fact that it was 10 pm, dark, and my reactions were slightly slower. Strangely enough nobody was killed, and no crates were damaged. In fact, throughout the whole of my times in China, despite the colourful driving techniques of motor cyclists, taxi drivers, buses and other motorists, I never saw a single accident.

Unfortunately, as soon as I returned to the UK, we were held up by a smash on the M25. It's a mystery.



The exhibition took up rather less space, packaged, ready to be loaded, than it had when the objects where on display.

The usual round of hospitality took place at the weekend. We were again taken to dinner by various friends and made to eat local delicacies. I was stoic about all the food, except for the duck's blood soup. Our hosts watched in amusement as we ate the boiled frogs and the very spicy hot pot, (my eyes and ears were sweating, my mouth went numb and my voice completely disappeared). The duck's blood was al dente.



Duck's Blood Soup.

We were taken for lunch in the museum's own restaurant. This was exceptionally good. We were also shown their five-a-side court, badminton courts, basketball court, and told of the lunch time clubs. The Nanjing staff had 2 hour lunch breaks lasting from 11.30 to 1.30. They were all encouraged to do sport, take walks or join lunchtime clubs during their break. We were very surprised as this is not our normal view of the Chinese work ethic. Everyone had left the building by 5.30. They have a work-life balance to be envied.

It was estimated by the Nanjing staff that nearly one million people had visited the museum during the time of the exhibition. So an awful lot of people in China know about Ipswich and

Colchester, which can only be good. I hope we can build on this and see more co-operations.

I returned with an electronic, dancing minion figure which lights up, dances, and sings a Chinese pop song. The best £2.50 I have ever spent. I also returned with a lot of presents and lots of tea.

Now this, I believe, was my last work trip to China. I left with a heavy heart.

However, the deputy director of Nanjing Art Gallery asked me how many Constables and Gainsboroughs we have. Never say Never!

Bob Entwistle
Conservator

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The BAfM has an extremely informative website providing lots of useful information on a range of activities including promoting your museum, fundraising and codes of ethics!

Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

Do you know about this? It is the highest award given to volunteer groups. It has recently been awarded to the Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum in recognition of nearly 50 years support for their museum. They have not only given financial support over these years but also done physical and academic work since its inception. Perhaps a group in our region might receive such an honour in the future.

Ironbridge is the venue for the next BAfM One Day Conference, "*Marketing for Excellence*", on 1 October, hosted by The Friends of The Ironbridge Gorge Museum.

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All members of the Committee can be contacted via
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We are always pleased to hear from anyone who would like to join our Committee

Membership Details

Membership rates are:

Joint/Household	£15
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These are the minimum fees. We would not dream of preventing anyone from paying more.

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If you wish to become a corporate member, please contact us direct via the Website, www.foim.org.uk.

In this issue:



The Nettuno Choir from Italy in the Great Hall.

See page 12



© The Munnings Art Museum, Dedham, Essex

King George V Riding His Favourite Pony 'Jock' In Sandringham Great Park.

Sir Alfred James Munnings See page 14



Some of the 5000 objects stored in the Christchurch Mansion Attic.

See page 17

Museum Trainees win the Arts and Cultural learning award.

See page 6



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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.