

Newsletter August 2008

Events this Autumn

There are many events organised for the Autumn/Winter of 2008 with something of interest for everyone.

Visit of *Picton Castle* to Ipswich September 5th - 10th

IMT Reception on-board Sunday 7th September



Three-masted Barque *Picton Castle*

The *Picton Castle* is registered in the Cook Islands, in the South Pacific, and is owned and operated by the Windward Isles Sailing Ship Company, Ltd. The ship's mission is deep-ocean sail training and long-distance education. Also, she carries supplies and educational materials to far-flung islands in the South Pacific.

Built as a trawler in 1928, the *Picton Castle* had a varied career, being renamed *HMS Picton Castle*, a mine sweeper, during the War, and later hauling freight in the Baltic & North Sea and known then as the *Dolmar*. Captain Dan Morland found her in

Norway and brought the *Dolmar*, looking pretty battered, into Ipswich during the winter of 1993-4 on her way to Lunenburg, via the Azores, West Indies, and New York. In Lunenburg she was transformed into the wonderful square-rigged Barque she is today.

The ship is a completely refitted barque that observes the rigorous standards of Germanischer Lloyds for steel-hulled Cape Horners. She is 179 feet overall, with riveted steel hull, clear oiled-pine decks, steel masts, and wooden and steel yards. She carries 12,450 square feet of canvas sail.

[You can find full details of the *Picton Castle* at www.picton-castle.com]

IMT Reception details

On the evening of Sunday September 7th the Trust has organised an on-board reception for Trust members to welcome *Picton Castle* back to Ipswich. **The number of places is strictly limited to 60, and attendance is by booking only (see separate sheet for details).** This is a unique opportunity to visit and support the aims of the ship...and see an amazing transformation .

Heritage Weekend 13th - 14th September

The Trust will again be manning the quay-level areas of the Old Custom House during the Heritage Open Days Weekend in September. This year there will be exhibitions of photographs of local historical maritime interest by Richard Smith, and of maritime and dock related paintings and drawings by local artist Brian Jepson.

Winter Talk Series 2008

There is a varied programme of talks this winter at the Royal Harwich Yacht Club, Woolverstone, and as usual there will be the opportunity a 2-course meal before the evening's talk. See last page for full details.

IMT Related News

Dock's Head Revisited

During May, St.Peter's Church near Stoke Bridge, completely refurbished with grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Borough Council, was reopened as a 200-seater concert hall. It has the longest and most varied history of Ipswich's 12 medieval churches, at first probably a wooden Anglo-Saxon building, then, successively, a priory church, a school chapel, and finally a parish church.



The history of the church and the sprawling dockland parish of St. Peter's is told in a series of permanent exhibition panels (see photo), which the Trust agreed to sponsor as part of a collaboration to publicise the Trust's work to the visiting public. For the panel which illustrates 19th Century industry and commerce, I was able to reproduce some previously unpublished historic photographs, and it is this panel which was chosen to carry the Trust's logo. It also contains the definitive history of the Dockland tramway.

We are delighted to be working with the Ipswich Hospital Band and the Ipswich Historic Churches Trust to use this wonderful dockland building to advertise our ourselves and our future programme of events, and I very much hope that everyone will make a point of visiting the church to view the exhibition organised by the Chairman of the IHTC, Dr John Blatchly. While you're there, make a point of looking at the fabulous Millennium Charter Hangings, which have finally

found a new home, and maybe book for a Band Concert, too! Volunteers are on hand to welcome the public between 10 and 3.30 on most days, and I note from the visitors' book that it has attracted people from all over the world already! [Stuart Grimwade]

Museum Service buys local maritime painting

There are very few artists of national renown who are known by their association with our town, but John Moore 1821-1902 is always known as JOHN MOORE OF IPSWICH.

When 'The West Cut' by John Moore came up for sale at Felixstowe, we speedily contacted the Museum Service to encourage them to purchase this painting. It seems that they had already got their eye on it, but our encouragement perhaps made them more determined to get the item. We are pleased that they were successful, and the painting is now on display in the Wolsey Gallery in Christchurch Mansion.



John Moore was a prolific painter of mainly, but not exclusively, marine views. During his lifetime his work was much prized, but there followed a decline after his death, although the Borough built up a significant collection during this time. Today, however, he is well regarded again, and I am certain that there are many more out there in private collections - perhaps some of our members have one or two? It would be good if some time a full exhibition of work by this important maritime artist, so strongly associated with the town, could be mounted locally. I recently raised this idea with Emma Roodhouse,

the new Art Curator at Ipswich Museum, who had the lucky task of buying a John Moore of Ipswich in the first week of her appointment. She kindly gave Stuart Grimwade permission to take this photograph of the newly purchased painting before it was catalogued and some minor restoration work undertaken. [Des Pawson]

Past Events

Lecture programme

Our Spring Programme was completed with a fascinating talk in April on 'Philip Broke of The *Shannon*, Naval Hero of Nacton' by Martin Bibbings. It went with a big bang – well, two real bangs . . . one at the beginning, the other at the end!

Martin runs 'The Trafalgar Gun Company' and specialises in naval gunnery in the early 19th. Century. He has working examples of the armament used in those days (as he proved on the night!) and has worked on several films and TV series on this period as an advisor and a 'live gunner'.

The man who did an enormous amount for British Naval Gunnery over this period was Philip Broke who lived at Nacton. Martin told us how he sought to improve our navy's gunnery expertise. As captain of various naval vessels, ultimately *HMS Shannon*, he strove to perfect all aspects of his ship's fighting performance.

Thanks to rigorous training, his gunners could each fire many more rounds in the short period of a naval engagement than the enemy. In addition, the accuracy – which required firing into the gundeck of their opponents – was of the greatest importance, as was manoeuvring the ship to bring the greatest number of guns to bear, whilst presenting the smallest target.

Such was his dedication, Broke used his own money to fund the huge amounts of extra gunpowder and shot needed in training his gun crew.

The battle between *HMS Shannon* and the American *Chesapeake* originated in the form of a written challenge, both ships sailing to an agreed rendezvous off American coast where battle commenced. Broke's planning and training had an immediate and devastating effect; *Cheapeake* and her much reduced crew being captured after a very short engagement in which major damage was wrought.

Martin's knowledge and enthusiasm enabled him to pass on a graphic picture of Philip Broke, his ship and his methods to the large audience. We were left in no doubt as to Broke's dedication and its effect. The accompanying cannon fire was not only spectacular in itself but gave us just a small indication of what it must have been like to be there during the action. Thank you Martin for a thoroughly entertaining and enthralling evening

Barge Weekend - June 21st – 22nd

Barge Weekend (following the Gravesend – Pin Mill Barge Passage Race). Several Thames barges lay outside the Old Custom House over that weekend, and others were visible alongside the quay at the south end of the Wet Dock. Our thanks go to Richard Smith for mounting an Exhibition on 'Ships & Trade' at the Waterfront Centre on these days, ably assisted by Bob Pawsey, Peter Bendal & Geoff Hartgrove.

Welcome

We would like to welcome the following new members:

Philip Owen
Robert & Pearl Simper
Ronald & Wendy Caiels
Rev Paul Daltry & Jean Daltry
Terry Barnes
PR Ruffy Ruffles
Peter Dodd
K & E Ambler
Jan Jukes

Our membership now stands at 190! If you know of anyone who would be interested in supporting the IMT please get in touch. The aim is over 200 by the end of the year.

Autumn/Winter 2008 Talks

Wednesday October 1st 2008, “The Story of Pioneer”

Brian Kennell.

Pioneer was built in 1864 at Rowhedge and is the last of the 1st Class Essex Smacks. She started life as a *Skillinger*, dredging for deep-sea oysters off Terschelling. She lived a varied life and what little remained of her was salvaged from the West Mersea mud in 1999 by a team led by Brian Kennell and Shaun White. Totally rebuilt by this team and the whole project managed by Rupert Marks, she – all 68ft of her - is now sailing again under the flag of the Pioneer Sailing Trust.



Mervyn Maggs

Wednesday, November 5th 2008 “Bombs, Beams and Boffins”

Paddy Heazell of the National Trust has researched the “secret goings on” at Orfordness during the ‘60s and ‘70s. Now an NT site and open to the public, this was earlier very far from the case. ‘Bombs, Beams and Boffins’ summarises the situation perfectly. Come and learn the earlier secrets held by this shingle spit which we all know of . . . but little about!



National Trust.

Wednesday, December 3rd. “My Early Days Barging, Part III”.

James Lawrence has, over the last few years, vividly recounted how he came to skipper, at a very young age, cargo carrying sailing barges and to race them. He continues this fascinating story using a combination his ability to bring the audience into that world and some excellent illustrations.



**RHYC bar open at 18.45, optional supper (£11.00) at 19.00, talk starts at 20.00hrs.
Talk - £2.50 members/ £3.50 non-members**