

Ipswich Maritime Trust is growing!

Water Sports Event – 25th July



On Sunday 25th July there is to be a Water Sports Event in the Ipswich Wet Dock. This is being organised and presented by the Ipswich Sea Cadets at their headquarters (near the lock gates) and the 13th Ipswich Sea Scouts jointly.

The Ipswich Maritime Trust are aware of the necessity to encourage and assist these young people and their dedicated volunteers who are keeping alive the seamanship and maritime skills that built Ipswich. Therefore the IMT applied for a grant from the SCC (available to celebrate the 'Open Weekend in Suffolk' events) and will forward this to the Cadets and Scouts to finance their joint event.

The event is from 10.00 to 16.00 and open to the public and will offer taster sessions of rowing, sailing, and motor boating for those attending who are between the ages of 10-18.

More information on the Open Weekend in Suffolk events can be found at <http://www.openweekendinsuffolk.com> and on the participating organisations at

<http://units.ms-sc.org/ipswich> and
<http://www.13thipswich.co.uk>

...and reception

In the evening, 18.00 – 20.00, the IMT will be hosting a reception at the Waterfront Conference Centre on the ground floor of the Old Custom House to celebrate what is a unique event of the two Ipswich water-based youth organisations working together for the first time on a local event, especially in the Wet Dock.

Please come along and meet these young people and their supporters and enjoy drinks and eats in a convivial atmosphere and show them our solidarity and support.

Tickets for the reception are £6 per person and a booking form is attached to the newsletter.

University College Suffolk – a new collaboration

We now share the Waterfront with a new source of knowledge and maritime expertise. Members will be pleased to hear that the Department of History has made known their interest in collaborating with the Trust.

Dr. Catherine Pearce, the UCS specialist in maritime history, will join the Council's next meeting to discuss, among other ideas, the possibility of producing a local maritime oral history. We also welcome her and her husband as Trust members.

In the meantime, if you have a wooden leg and a parrot on your shoulder, with a past life as a pirate, or even as a barge skipper or mate, be prepared to be approached by students bearing tape recorders! Seriously, this is a vital task, as, sadly, those who have had first hand experience of trading under sail become fewer every day. Their knowledge, in many cases learned from their grandfathers while their own fathers were away at War, can still give us a living link straight to the Victorian ways of sail. There is no time to lose, and so if you know of anyone who would be prepared to chat about their early experiences, however informally and briefly - it really doesn't matter, do please get in touch.

Museum News



The Window Museum display was changed in March, as part of the rolling six-monthly changes, to highlight 'Barges and Shipwrights', The display in particular features original shipwrights' tools and local photographs and is well worth visiting. Look out for another change in October.

The Window Museum of the Ipswich Maritime Trust, located at the head of the Victorian Wet Dock as part of the regeneration of this part of Ipswich, on the site of the Port's original Anglo-Saxon quays, provides an opportunity for Ipswich's and Suffolk's rich maritime heritage to be put before the public in a free and readily accessible manner, with potentially manageable manpower running costs. Renewal of the adjacent quay gives an added opportunity for the Trust to encourage historic vessels into the heart of the town once more.

Des Pawson

IMT Archive – The Leonard Woolf Collection

Some years ago, my fellow director and neighbour, Bob Pawsey, introduced me to his friend Leonard Woolf, with whom he shared a lifelong interest in old local picture postcards. It was soon apparent that Leonard's collection of images of the Wet Dock and the Orwell was uniquely comprehensive, having been painstakingly built up throughout his life.

My own interest in digitally restoring old photographs led us to discuss the idea of my scanning the entire collection, now containing around 1000 postcards. Leonard has been especially generous, not only in lending them to me to undertake the job, but also in granting us ownership of the copied images for inclusion in the IMT image archive. The process is time-consuming and will probably take a couple more winters yet to complete, but we are now well over halfway through, providing a wonderful resource from Victorian and Edwardian days. Some of the cards were posted around the time of the First World War, and provide touching reading, not to mention their evidence of the senders' faith in the Post Office to deliver them on the same day they were posted. It was the email of the time!

In due course we shall consider exactly how this wonderful resource, together with the many other historic images which have been kindly donated by

others, may be used to further the aims of the Trust, but in the meantime they provide us with the ideal way to appreciate the past life and times of the port and its river since the earliest days of the Wet Dock.

Stuart Grimwade

Future Events

25th July

Reception for Water Sports event – 6pm at Old Custom House

11th & 12th September

Heritage Open Weekend

Once again the Trust will be opening the ground floor of the Old Custom House between 10am & 4pm, and will put on an exhibition on various aspects of the history of the port of Ipswich, together with some maritime and port related works of art by Michael Norman.

Autumn talks 2010

Three varied and interesting talks have been organised for this autumn starting on Wednesday 10th October at the Royal Harwich Yacht Club, and on the subsequent first Wednesday of November and December.

The talks start at 8pm and a 2-course supper is available from 7pm.

Wednesday 6th October

“Essex and Suffolk Boatyards and Boatbuilders”

by Mike Davies

Wednesday 3rd November

“Estuaries, Birds and Man – how can they co-exist?”

by Dr Nigel Clark

Wednesday 1st December

“The Maunsell Sea Forts. Their origin, building, placement and full history”

by Frank Turner

Further details on all the talks and supper booking slips can be found at the end of the newsletter, and reminder will be sent out closer to the date.

Spring 2011 talks

As well as the traditional talks in February and March, we have followed up on the suggestion that for the April talk we invite 5 or 6 members to speak for 10-15 minutes on a subject which you think would interest, entertain, inform, or amuse (or all 4!),

We already have two speakers lined up and are looking for a few more. So if you think you would like to take part in this, then please give Mark Grimwade a call on 01473 787210, or email markgrimwade@yahoo.co.uk. It doesn't even have to be local, historic or particularly maritime.

Past Events

Dunkirk 70th Anniversary

Sunday 1st of June saw a celebration on the Waterfront to mark the 70th anniversary of the retreat from Dunkirk. The day was focused around the presence of the Sailing Barge Pudge - one of the little ships that took part in that incredible event. There were military vehicles, singing, a march past and a drumhead service. Ipswich Maritime Trust had a stand with a small display alongside a number of other organisations inside the foyer of the University.

We talked to a lot of people, and collected some information about Ipswich and Suffolk's role at Dunkirk. One particularly interesting document kindly donated to us for our Archive was a copy of a detailed account of the 'Actions of the 58th (Suffolk) Medium Regiment R.A. during May 1940'. We gained at least one new member and a donation of shipwrights' tools that had been used in the Dock End Shipyard.

Well done Richard Watkinson, Ben Bendall, Des Pawson, and Geoff Hartgrove.

Des Pawson



Spring 2010 talks review

“Sailing with P&O in the 50’s & their History” by Fred Bridges – February 3rd



Fortunately for the 80+ members and guests who filled the Royal Harwich YC on Wednesday, February 3rd, it was, by last winter's standards, a warm evening! Appropriately, Fred took us on a series of tropical voyages in P&O the liners he served aboard in the '50s.

Possibly to his surprise, Fred recounted how he found himself aboard the luxury liner “Stratheden” as an Engineer Officer. He described the work as “hardly onerous”, the hours passing with the taking of many sumptuous meals as indicated by images of the menus he enjoyed at the time and amazing decors in the public spaces.

These were definitely the days when POSH still meant “Port Outwards, Starboard Home” and those who chose to fly in new-fangled airliners were in the minority – although seaplanes were more the order of the day.

After this sumptuous experience, Fred described how he came down to ~~earth~~ (sorry, sea) a little aboard the “Pinjara” which P&O described as a ‘cargo liner’ – in reality, a cargo ship carrying 12 passengers but still in considerable comfort.

Sydney, Capetown, Aden, Southampton, we saw it all through Fred's eyes aided by his vivid description and photographs of the places, people and ships.

The evening ended with a summary of how P&O grew from very small beginnings to become one of the world's premier and innovative shipping lines when experience proved that auxiliary sailing ships were highly inefficient. Then through two World Wars - when a large percentage of their fleet was lost - to the present day including many changes of ownership on the way.

Thank you Fred for giving us an evening much enjoyed by all with an insight of days past – and never to return.

Mark Grimwade

“Smugglers & Poachers” by William Tyler – 3rd March



On the evening of Wednesday, March 3rd. William Tyler presented, to over 90 members and their guests, his talk on “Smugglers and Poachers on the Suffolk and Essex Coast” at the RHYC.

The camera hadn't been invented when these activities were at their height – and neither parties would have welcomed being photographed if it had, so William's talk was just that!

Smuggling developed rapidly with the introduction of import taxes and became a major industry – especially in this area. The Revenue men were kept hard at it, both ashore and afloat, trying to outrun and outrun their adversaries but were severely hampered by the faster vessels of the smugglers and the considerable backup provided by the populace in general as well as by many of those in authority. “Brandy for the parson” whilst the font was full of gin!

Nowadays, old fashioned smuggling has given way to drug running and the like but the last days of “proper smuggling” in our area proved to be within living memory as recounted during Question Time by one of our members who recalled (hazily!) the arrival and consumption of duty-free rum at Pin Mill, which had been left attached to a temporary buoy somewhere off Landguard!

Poaching was also regarded as an “acceptable” activity by many country folk. Over many centuries, some residents had established, or were granted, the right to help themselves to certain items on common and private land. This included grazing their animals as well as gathering “fallen” firewood and taking specific animals for the pot. Poaching naturally developed from this. William mentioned that poachers were a much sought after source of army recruits thanks to their finely honed shooting, hunting and tracking skills. However, the penalty for overstepping the mark, or just being caught, could be – and frequently was – extremely harsh.

As with condemned smugglers, this could mean death, transportation or a very heavy fine. The fate of our own local smuggler/heroine, Margaret

Catchpole, who was herself transported to Australia, was recalled during questions to William, and an interesting fact emerged about her subsequent life there as a midwife and all round ‘good citizen’, as her grave records to this day.

We were given an excellent and very professional presentation with the happy combination of fact, vivid descriptions and humour.

Thank you William for a thoroughly enjoyable and interesting evening.

Mark Grimwade

“150 Years of Ipswich Dock Life” by Stuart Grimwade and Des Pawson MBE – 7th April



When we advertised this talk as “This is what the IMT is all about” it was sincerely meant but the reality far exceeded our expectations! To cap it all, this was an entirely “in house” event, Stuart and Des both being IMT members.

The size of the audience - nearly 140 members and guests, by far the largest we have ever experienced (apologies to those who had difficulty in finding seats!) - indicated that an informative and interesting subject was expected. We were certainly not disappointed.

The quality of the photographs together with the description of their content was exceptional. The time and care involved in collecting, enhancing and obtaining details on the photographs, together with the research into the various associated maritime trades, was very evident.

Visiting the Dock today, it is hard to realise what a hive of maritime industry – and humanity - existed where today yachts bob and blocks of flats rise. The photographs gave a graphic illustration of the sheer size and number of people and vessels working there together with alehouses, sailmakers,

ropewalks and factories; horses, carts, steamtrains and even a Luftwaffe plan of their “choice” targets (luckily, they missed!)

There were numerous pictures of “The Island Site” featuring not only the pleasure steamers and fun and games centred on it but also the glorious avenue of trees leading to the pierhead bandstand. Perhaps these images can be used to bring added pressure to bear to re-create this very worthwhile amenity for Ipswich.

Not only were we given a most entertaining and informative evening. This presentation forms the basis of a unique record of “our” port and local history both for the Trust and town. The work is definitely “ongoing” so Stuart and Des can certainly expect a recall! Our thanks to them both and also to Leonard Woolf, an IMT member who collected and made available many of the original photographs.

At the last moment, to enable the “earlier release” of the many non-members present, it was decided to reverse the evening’s running order and conduct the AGM after the talk. This appeared to meet with general approval and possibly resulted in yet another record for the evening – a 9 minute AGM!

Mark Grimwade

Membership news

The IMT continues to attract new members, partly as a result of greater exposure in the local media, and also involvement with the Ipswich Council, the UCS, and other organisations concerning maritime history and promotion of Ipswich.

A warm welcome to the new members who have recently joined:

Kevin & Denise Burton; James Pratt; Dr Cathryn Pearce & Robert Boyd; John Appleyard; David Fincham & Sarah Wilde; Jonathan Harvey; Philip Hubert; David & Sally Fletcher; Michael & Inger Pawsey; James & Barbara Pawsey.

2010 Subscriptions

Thank you to all who renewed this year by standing order – this does reduce the cost and time of the administrative overhead.

Fraser Yates

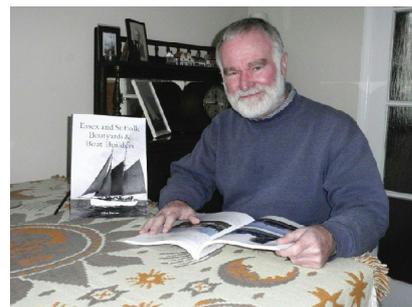
Autumn 2010 Talks



Wednesday 6th October, 8pm

“Essex and Suffolk Boatyards and Boatbuilders” by Mike Davies

Mike Davies has spent his life with boats. For many years he owned and ran the Yacht Brokerage “Marine Traders” originally based on the River Colne and later at Tichmarsh Marina at Walton, coming into contact with boatbuilders, boatyards, marinas and boat people.



Having witnessed the major changes taking place in the industry, on selling his business and retiring in 2004, Mike decided to use his local knowledge and contacts to document these developments before details were lost and set out to write his book.

Boatbuilding materials and methods have changed dramatically. From wood to fibreglass, steel, alloy, ferro cement, and now there is a return to wood - the boatbuilding industry has changed with them. Mike takes us from Slaughden to Walton, detailing the builders, yards, changes and developments along the way. He will tell us about the many designs and builders he has encountered over the years. Copies of his book “Essex and Suffolk Boatyards and Boatbuilders” will be available – at a special price – to members at the talk.

Wednesday 3rd November, 8pm

“Estuaries, Birds and Man – how can they co-exist?” by Dr Nigel Clark

Estuaries are the most productive environments in the world and so they attract a wide range of wildlife including very large numbers of migratory birds which come to estuaries to spend the winter or to refuel en route to the Arctic .

For centuries Man has used estuaries for fishing, hunting and safe anchorage for shipping. As society has developed so has the pressure on estuaries especially from development of ports and associated industry. This has often been seen as putting development on a collision course with conservation interests although this does not have to be the case.



Nigel’s talk will explore the issues and use case studies from around the world to investigate ways in which conflicts can be resolved.

Dr. Nigel Clark is Head of Projects at the British Trust for Ornithology based at Thetford but travels worldwide.

Wednesday 1st December, 8pm

“The Maunsell Sea Forts. Their origin, building, placement and full history” by Frank Turner

During WWII, the Luftwaffe used the Thames as a “road” to guide them to London Docks, also for mining this, our vital shipping lane. In order to deter this, Guy Maunsell, an innovator in reinforced concrete construction was commissioned to (rapidly) design, build and place a series of anti-aircraft gun emplacements in the entrance to the Thames. Frank Turner watched these being built at Gravesend and has become their historian.



His talk includes the full stories and images of their design, building and placement including film of the (not-uneventful!) sinking in place, fully manned and armed, of our nearest tower, Roughs (now Sealand) off Felixstowe. The towers’ wartime use and their colourful and fascinating peacetime roles are covered as is their current situation.

Redsands Towers are now being restored by a charity - Google “Project Redsand” and “Maunsell Seaforts” - while, if you have a £Million or so, “Sealand/Roughs Tower is, we believe, still for sale!

Even if you are not gripped with the desire to learn of the design of reinforced concrete structures, this is a fascinating evening telling of great drive, bravery and even intrigue!

All are welcome to our lectures at the Royal Harwich Yacht Club, Woolverstone where a warm welcome and bar awaits. There is adjacent parking.

Lecture charges: Members £3.50, non-members £4.50. No need to pre-book.

BUT why not make it a full evening out and enjoy the optional 7pm. pre-talk supper (sit-down, 2 course + coffee) at £12.00? Suppers should be booked 7 days in advance (see below for details).

Enquiries or bookings – either email bookings@ipswichmaritimetrust.org.uk (booking will be acknowledged), or call Fraser on 07531 083576, or the number given on the booking form below.

Wednesday 6th October, 8pm

“Essex and Suffolk Boatyards and Boatbuilders” by Mike Davies

Reservations for supper must be received by Wednesday, October 1st. It is only necessary to reserve places for supper but please add payment for the lecture.

Please reserve place/s for supper at £12.00 per head. £ _____
Any special dietary requirements
I require members’ seat/s at £3.50 per head £ _____
I require non-members’ seat/s at £4.50 per head £ _____
Total enclosed (by Wednesday, October 1st.) £ _____

Name (printed please)

Cheques made payable to ‘IMT’ and sent to: IMT, 309 Norwich Road, Ipswich, IP1 4BW
Or you can email your reservation to <bookings@ipswichmaritimetrust.org.uk> and pay on the night,
Or call Fraser on 07531 083576 to make a reservation.

Wednesday 3rd November, 8pm

“Estuaries, Birds and Man – how can they co-exist?” by Dr Nigel Clark

Reservations for supper must be received by Wednesday, October 27th. It is only necessary to reserve places for supper but please add payment for the lecture.

Please reserve place/s for supper at £12.00 per head. £ _____
Any special dietary requirements
I require members’ seat/s at £3.50 per head £ _____
I require non-members’ seat/s at £4.50 per head £ _____
Total enclosed (by Wednesday, October 27th.) £ _____

Name (printed please)

Cheques made payable to ‘IMT’ and sent to: IMT, 309 Norwich Road, Ipswich, IP1 4BW
Or you can email your reservation to bookings@ipswichmaritimetrust.org.uk and pay on the night.
Or call Mark on 01473 787210 to make a reservation.

Wednesday 1st December, 8pm

“The Maunsell Sea Forts. Their origin, building, placement and full history” by Frank Turner

Reservations for supper must be received by Wednesday, November 24th. It is only necessary to reserve places for supper but please add payment for the lecture.

Please reserve place/s for supper at £12.00 per head. £ _____
Any special dietary requirements
I require members’ seat/s at £3.50 per head £ _____
I require non-members’ seat/s at £4.50 per head £ _____
Total enclosed (by Wednesday, November 24th.) £ _____

Name (printed please)

Cheques made payable to ‘IMT’ and sent to: IMT, 309 Norwich Road, Ipswich IP1 4BW
Or you can email your reservation to bookings@ipswichmaritimetrust.org.uk and pay on the night.
Or call Mark on 01473 787210 to make a reservation.



The Sea Cadets



Sunday 25th July 18.00- 20.00

Water Sports event Reception at the Old Custom House

Please book places for the reception on the 25th July at £6.00 per head

Name (printed please)

Cheques made payable to 'IMT' and sent to: IMT, 309 Norwich Road, Ipswich, IP1 4BW
Or call Fraser on 07531 083576 to make a reservation.

[Please make bookings by Monday 19th July, thanks]