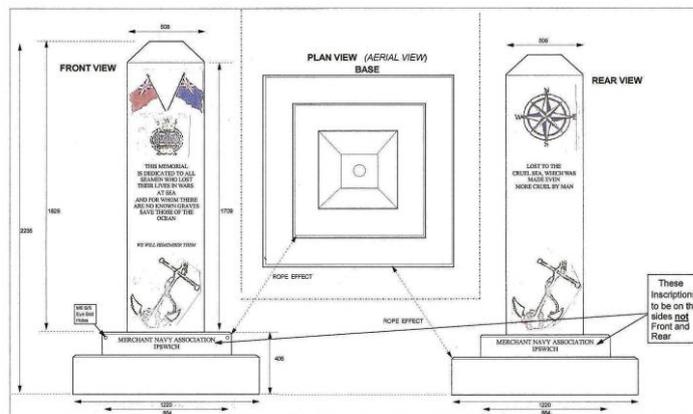


The Ipswich Maritime Trust is growing!

No, we do not mean that the IMT is sprouting leaves and growing roots, but perhaps that is not a bad analogy. We are organising more events, sponsoring worthwhile maritime related causes and reaching further into the local and wider community with our activities. There is plenty of information in this newsletter about the future and past events, and in particular please note the dates of the Heritage weekend event in September, the Broke Symposium in October and the monthly talks. We hope you enjoy reading the Newsletter.

Ipswich Merchant Navy Memorial



As it says in our Museum Window, Ipswich has been a seaport since the seventh century and the town has a continuing relationship with the sea, ships and sailors, many of whom must have been lost at sea in armed conflicts. And yet, there is no memorial in Ipswich dedicated to the memory of those merchant seafarers who perished in wars at sea.

Formed last year, the Ipswich Branch of the Merchant Navy Association, under the Chairmanship of Capt. Geoffrey Hartgrove, aims to correct this deficiency by funding, erecting and dedicating a permanent memorial on Ipswich waterfront. Several sites have been examined, including the quay outside the Old Custom House and Albion Quay, but to meet the need for enough space to hold services and other events at the memorial in safety, the final choice is the newly-refurbished Orwell Quay, close to the Orwell Lady departure berth and the James Hehir building.

The recent Dunkirk Little Ships event in Ipswich was highly relevant to us oldies but enquiries of young people revealed woeful ignorance of that wartime episode in particular and of the Merchant Navy in general. One man in his twenties I spoke to hadn't even heard of the Merchant Navy - it hadn't occurred to him that over 90% of goods we buy arrive here by sea. The Orwell Quay site is close to the University's student accommodation and we hope passers-by will pause and reflect on the proposed wordings on the polished granite obelisk:

"This memorial is dedicated to all seafarers who lost their lives in wars at sea and for whom there are no known graves, save those of the ocean".

"Lost to the cruel sea, made even more cruel by man".

It is very difficult to say how many seafarers were lost in the two World War: records of the number of people on board ships were not always accurate or complete but the historian John Keegan estimates that in the Battle of the Atlantic alone from 1939 to 1945, some 30,000 British merchant seamen were killed. Other theatres of war may have accounted for a similar number again: a total of 62,000 may not be an exaggeration.

The MNA branch is currently raising funds for the memorial and IMT has made a grant of £2,000 to what it feels is a thoroughly worthwhile cause. The target date for the installation is late-August 2013, in time for the memorial to be dedicated and used as a focus for the celebration of the annual Merchant Navy Day - 3 September. That is the anniversary of the sinking of the s.s. "Athenia", the first merchant ship lost within hours of war being declared in 1939.

We will keep members updated on progress of this project and the MNA is very grateful for the generosity of the IMT and of those individual members who have donated do the cause. Any member who would like to know more about the project or who would like to contribute towards the memorial fund can contact Geoff Hartgrove on 01206 395256 or geoffharty@yahoo.com

Richard Watkinson

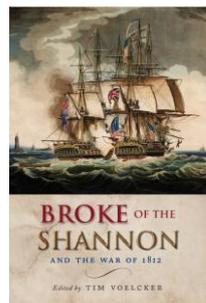
Book Launch (1)



The story of Dunkirk and the part that over seven hundred small craft played in saving the allied forces and evacuating them back to England has been well documented, but Barbara Butler is writing for the first time about sailing barges.

It promises to be a good read and will be a definitive record of all the stories and pictures collected by Barbara in one volume. The Ipswich Maritime Trust is breaking new ground by their sponsorship from the beginning of this project when Barbara Butler first approached the Trust for assistance.

Book Launch (2)



This book is being launched to coincide with the Broke Bicentary Symposium (full details later in the newsletter).

The illustrated hardback book with contributions from all the speakers, and others, will be launched at the Broke Bicentary International Symposium on 12th October 2013.

The book will be priced at **£19.99** with a special pre-publication price of **£15** for orders placed and paid for by 1st September.

More information on the books and an order form are included with the newsletter,

IMT Sponsorships

The IMT has made many donations and sponsorships to worthwhile causes since it formed in 1982. Amongst those in recent years are:

- 2013/2014 Merchant Navy memorial - £2000
- 2013 Sailing Barges - The Dunkirk Story - £700
- 2013 Stem to Stern project to build a dingy for the 5th Woodbridge Sea Scouts - £500
- 2012 Sponsorship of Emma White to the World Cadet championships in NZ - £500
- 2011 Sponsorship of Richard Smith's definitive book on Ipswich Port and its Trades - £2000
- 2009 Sponsorship of a Sea Cadet for one week on Tall Ships - £300

Museum News

Window Wizards Work Magic

The eighth Ipswich Maritime Trust Window Museum Display celebrates Admiral Philip Broke, of Broke Hall, Nacton and his victory in the Shannon over the Chesapeake on the 1st of June, 1813 .

To create this display, which contains a full size 9 pounder cannon, a false floor had to be made (thank you Ben Bendall & Richard Bradbrook).



The cannon weighs 900 lb and the doors to the window were not wide enough to allow for the cannon to just be rolled in, so the whole cannon had to be disassembled and manhandled in. Somehow 4 people just managed to get the barrel in through the doors and on to the carriage. Magic indeed!



The display gives an insight into the kind of things the sailors of the period would have had to contend with; a 9 pounder was one of the smallest guns on the Shannon and there were 32 pounders - how difficult they must have been to manoeuvre.

Apart from the cannon there is a magnificent model of the Shannon (thank you Phil Owen) a flintlock pistol, a figure of eight cutlass, models demonstrating some of Broke's gunnery improvements and items on loan from Ipswich School, Broke's old school.

This window display will remain in place until after the Symposium and Concert on the 12th and 13th of October.

It was gratifying to receive an unsolicited e-mail of praise from a visitor to Ipswich:-

I am a visitor to Ipswich and came across your window museum display yesterday which I found so interesting and well presented I felt I should give you some positive feedback. The physical contents of the display and the explanatory texts are extremely clearly presented and give a clear and fascinating explanation of the workings of naval gunnery at the time and of the political and historical context and the local connection. Congratulations. It should be a required visit for all local schoolchildren doing history.

Praise indeed, thanks to all who lent items and those who put in the effort to create the display.

Des Pawson

Future Events

Barge Trip on 'Victor'

Thursday 15th August

This is now fully booked!

Maritime Ipswich

August 24th and 25th

As part of Maritime Festival a fleet of large sailing yachts crewed by young people will visit the Marina. These vessels, some of which are up to 100 years old are taking part in a race to Cowes, providing a unique and challenging experience to their young crew, some of whom have never been to sea before.

The vessels will enter the marina over the weekend, and will be moored near the University Campus where the public can view them, and at certain times will be allowed on board. On Monday 26th Aug at 3pm the vessels leave and proceed down the Orwell in a spectacular parade of sail. The start of the race is 1030 on Tuesday morning off Felixstowe finishing in Cowes on Friday 30th August.

The race is being organised by the Association of Sail Training Organisations, ASTO, a charity devoted to providing adventure and challenge to young people through voyages under sail at sea. ASTO was the main beneficiary of the will of the author Ralph Hammond Innes, who died in 1998 and lived near Ipswich. 2013 marks the 100th anniversary of his birth and the event has been named "The Hammond Innes Race".

Boats taking part include Jolie Brise, Duet, and the newly restored Leila amongst others.

Leila was built in the 1880s and has been locally based for most of her eventful life. She was both home and cruiser for a family who lived on her in the '50s. Diana Whayman (who was a member of the IMT until her recent death) recounts many stories of life aboard in those days. Leila was tied up on Ransomes

Quay in those days. Subsequently she was owned by the Carter Jonas family and cruised from Woolverstone. Leila has recently been totally rebuilt at Southwold and is owned by the Leila Sailing Trust.



Duet. A beautiful classic yawl. She belongs to the Rev Courtauld who lives locally and is sailed and managed by the Cirdan Trust (along with the "Queen" Baltic Trader Galadrel"



Jolie Brise. Not so local - but historic! An Ex Le Havre Pilot Cutter built at the turn of the last century. Now owned by Dauntsey's School and used for sail training. She was the last boat to carry Royal mail under sail and has won the Fastnet Race three times, including the inaugural race in 1925.

Further details on the Hammond Innes Race can be found at:

<http://www.uksailtraining.co.uk/hammond-innes-race>

and of Maritime Ipswich at:

www.allaboutipswich.com

Heritage Open Days, Old Custom House

'Unsung Heroes' Exhibition and Performance.

14th /15th September

IMT volunteers are manning the Old Custom House on Heritage Open Days (14th and 15th September) which this year will feature an exhibition of items and photographs from the IMT archives.

Additionally, there will be a display recalling some of the heroic stories told by men and women of the Merchant Navy in World War II, and at **7.45pm on Saturday 14 September** - for one night only! - there will be a live dramatic performance which will bring these stories to life. All this and a light buffet, too, for IMT members and guests! There is no charge but donations to the Ipswich Merchant Navy Association's fund for a seafarers' memorial on the dock will be very welcome.

So make a note of the date and please come along and see the exhibition and the live performance, and meet other IMT members in the historic Old Custom House.

Broke Bicentenary - An International Symposium

Saturday 12th October, 10.00-17.30

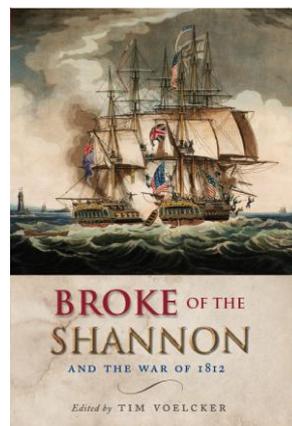
Celebratory Concert

Sunday 13th October, 15.00

The names Broke and HMS *Shannon* are not as well known as they deserve to be, yet Captain (later Admiral) Philip Broke became a famous hero in his day with the battle between HMS *Shannon* and USS *Chesapeake*, which he won so brilliantly. Why the young USA declared war on Britain in 1812 and fought us until peace was declared on Christmas Eve 1814 is not always understood.

Two hundred years later this will be revealed at a Commemorative Weekend in Ipswich near Broke's Suffolk home on 12/13th October 2013.

The Symposium on Saturday the 12th will have Professor John Hattendorf (USA), Professor Andrew Lambert (UK), Professor Chris Madsen (Canada), five PhDs and the gunnery expert who directed the gunfire of the film "*Master & Commander*", amongst others telling the story. They may not wholly agree with each other, so you will need to decide whom you must accept. They have promised to keep it simple, academic in its accuracy but not in its presentation, with time for questions at intervals. It will also see the launch of the book "*Broke of the Shannon and the War of 1812*", edited by Dr Tim Voelcker with contributions from the symposium speakers, and a number of other writers.



All this will take place in the University Campus Suffolk, Waterfront Building, Neptune Quay, Ipswich, IP4 1QJ, between 10.30 am and 5.30 pm, on Saturday 12 October.

The price of £35 per head (£30 if booked before the 31st of July) includes a finger buffet lunch and refreshments at the breaks and free parking – a bargain for a galaxy of international talent.

(The symposium Programme and a booking form are included with the posted copies of this newsletter, and can also be downloaded from

<http://www.ipswichmaritimetrust.org.uk/brokesymposium.html>

Free Parking will be available in the UCS car park.

On Sunday the 13th October at 3pm, there will be a Celebratory Concert at Broke's home church, St Martins, Nacton, IP10 0HZ. International tenor Richard Edgar-Wilson and Radio 3 presenter Louise Fryer, together with choir and orchestra under the direction of Andrew Leach, tell the story using contemporary words and music, including songs, Beethoven's extraordinary "*Wellington's Victory at the Battle of Vittoria*" and Haydn's "*Mass in Time of War*".

Tickets for this event are £10.

Places are limited at both events, so please book early.

Guided Ipswich Waterfront Tour

Sunday October 13th, 1030-1200

The Tourist Information centre have organised a special guided tour of Ipswich Waterfront on Sunday 13th October.

This starts from the entrance to UCS Reception area at 1030am and ending at 12 noon (at the same place) highlighting our rich maritime heritage. Walk through thirteen centuries of history, from Anglo Saxon origins; flourishing Mediaeval period, exciting Victorian industrial growth and the 21st century developments.

Discover architectural gems ranging from mediaeval churches to dramatic eco-friendly design of the UCS buildings.

Follow the footsteps of Cardinal Wolsey, the Cobbold family, Robert Ransome and other visionaries who shaped our town.

The walk cost £3 places are limited and **MUST BE PRE-BOOKED** through the Ipswich Tourist information centre.

To book a place please call the TIC on 01473 258070 or contact them by email at tourist@ipswich.gov.uk

Autumn 2013 talks

We are continuing the very successful talks and supper evenings at the UCS building on the Waterfront with four more interesting and varied talks booked for the autumn, with two shorter talks for the first evening on the 2nd October.

Brief details are below and reminders will be sent out closer to the events, together with information for the supper booking, but please make a note of the dates in your diary.

'Cadet World Championships', and 'Five East Anglian Boats'

Wednesday October 2nd

A double header to start the autumn series. Emma White was selected to represent Great Britain in the last Cadet Worlds in Tasmania, and finished a very creditable 9th place. This is her story told by Emma herself.

Ron and Wendy Caiels have owned five East Anglian-built boats since 1953. Each one had its own character and history which Ron will entertain us with.

'The Role of the Merchant Navy in the Falklands War'

Wednesday November 6th

The significance of the Merchant Navy is frequently overlooked and at best not properly recognized. This talk aims to redress the balance.

John Johnson-Allen is Commodore of the Merchant Navy Boat Club.

'The Wash Ports and the Hanseatic League'

Wednesday December 4th

The League was predominant in the development of trade between Northern Europe and England. Kings Lynn was their major port on this side of the North Sea, but Ipswich and Great Yarmouth were also involved.

Dr Paul Richards comes from Kings Lynn, and is a renowned expert on the League.

Past Events

Landguard Fort and Southend events

11th May and 2nd June.

The Trust attended two History/Maritime Fairs recently. One at Landguard Fort and one at Southend-on-Sea. The Southend event was at the end of the pier and it was surprising the number of visitors there were considering we were over a mile out to sea.



The exhibitions we provided, explained the history and aims of the Trust, and suggested that if they are in Ipswich at anytime they visit our Window Museum, Visitors were also informed of the forthcoming Broke Symposium. It was pleasing to see that a number of membership forms and Symposium flyers were taken.



In addition there was a display of artifacts together with photographs and explanation of the history and construction of the Thames Barge.

Thanks to members Shirley and William Patrick and Richard Watkinson for manning the exhibition.

Ben Bendall

Orford Ness visit

6th June

On the morning of 6 June twenty IMT members met on Orford Quay in sunny but breezy conditions to be taken over the River Ore to the shingle spit that is Orford Ness.



The spit is some 11 miles long; its connection with Aldeburgh at Slaughden Quay is both narrow and under constant threat. Its earliest claim to fame was as the protection from the North Sea which enabled Orford to become such an important port around the 12th Century but it is most widely known for its military history in the 20th Century.

The "military" part of the Ness was acquired in 1913 by the War Department. Part of the Central Flying School was based there from 1915; thus began the mainly experimental uses which lasted until late into the last century.

From the mid 1920's the Ness was used as a firing and bombing range. Then in 1935 an experimental team arrived to found the "Ionospheric Research Station" developing radar.

During the Second World War work was mainly devoted to the science of bomb ballistics; in essence how bombs fly. From the late 1950's much of the work was devoted to the assessment of the effect on aircraft of various forms of attack. For example .303 bullets were fired into fuselages, the operation being carefully photographed.

The site was handed over to the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment in 1959. Their work concentrated on establishing the safety (or otherwise) of nuclear weapons; basically how much damage they could sustain before going off accidentally. From this era comes the laboratory buildings including the

two iconic “Pagodas”. The weapons were tested for extremes of vibration, heat, cold, fire and dropping. No other country had such a facility.



All work at Orford Ness was secret but perhaps none so secret as the “Cobra Mist” facility. This was the “over the horizon back scatter radar” project covering some 80 acres and including what was at the time the largest building in Suffolk. It was largely a US scheme begun in 1968 and eventually terminating in 1973. It was said to have failed but to date its true purpose has never been disclosed. It may have fallen into the net of the strategic arms limitation talks process. The building itself is now occupied partly by the BBC’s World Service.

The major part of the site was acquired by the National Trust in 1993 and has since been managed partly as a military history site but also as a wildlife reserve.

We were transported around the site by a National Trust trailer. We were taken first to the Information building showing the history of the site and somewhat unnervingly a nuclear bomb. We were then taken past the First World War airfield (the hangar was accidentally demolished some years ago) and then via the bomb ballistics building to the five laboratories. We were able to go inside one of the Pagodas. In overall size these buildings are perhaps a bit smaller than might be expected from a distant view but the concrete is massively thick. In the event of an explosion the force would be deflected by the roof and out through the thinly plastic glazed sides. For a serious explosion the supporting columns would be blown out and the roof would collapse onto the main structure. Happily

never tested. We then saw the Black Beacon allegedly a sea farer’s aid but in fact built as “rotating loop” aircraft navigation system. The tour then went to the base of the impressive lighthouse shortly to be closed and to which unfortunately there was no access. Back onto the trailer; a long distance view of the Cobra Mist complex and then returning to the river.



Our guide was Paddy Heazell, an enthusiast, and also the author of “Most Secret: The Hidden History of Orford Ness” (National Trust). Paddy’s deep affection and knowledge of the Ness made it come alive and contributed hugely to a most enjoyable trip. Thanks also to the National Trust and to the head ranger Duncan Kent.

Geoffrey Dyball

Commemorative return of Dunkirk Little Ships

25 -27th May

For the occasion of the Annual Commemorative Cruise of the Little Ships to the Wet Dock in Ipswich, the IMT in association with Hughes Electrical, mounted large-screen displays in the foyer of the UCS Waterfront building and in the Hughes Electrical shop. The displays provided a continuous display about the boats in the Association of Dunkirk Little Ships.

We would like to thank Hughes Electrical for the loan of the equipment and assistance with setting it up.

Barge Trips

Thursday June 20th

For the third year running the IMT have organised sailing barge trips, the first of which was on On 20 June, twelve members and friends boarded the sailing barge Centaur for a trip down the Orwell and up the Stour. Weather overcast but everyone in good spirits. Centaur was skippered for the day by the readily recognizable figure of Wes Westwood, aided by the barge's regular mate Gary Butler. Gently through the lock, under the majestic Orwell bridge, and sails up.



The river was quiet, so no distractions from the sight and sound of a Thames sailing barge under way. Down river past the new Royal Harwich club house and the chocolate-box Butt and Oyster pub at Pin Mill, with opportunities for all to take the wheel and help trim the sails. Morning coffee whilst under way, with biscuits and a bonus of home-made bread and butter pudding. Even Felixstowe Dock seemed peaceful.



Turning into the Stour, the mist closed in; not before we were able to admire the lines of the North Sea ferry, which hit the quay wall the

very next day. By the time we reached Holbrook Creek the rain started, so down below for the usual excellent three-course lunch and wine. Happily, the rain had stopped by the time we had finished eating, so back up on deck. The mist too was lifting, showing the attractive countryside. The wildlife was also there to be seen, from the seal at the lock gates to the cormorant on a buoy, drying its wings.

Eventually back to the Old Custom House and the end of our trip. Our thanks to Wes and Gary, and especially to Ben Bendall for the food.

Geoffrey Dyball

Winter/Spring 2013 talks

‘Creating a Living Landscape for Suffolk’ by Michael Strand
January 9th 2013

Michael Strand, Community Fundraising Manager of the Suffolk Wildlife Trust started off our New Year season at UCS with a splendid presentation of the work carried out by the Trust, it's Members & Volunteers, across the county.



He took us on a fascinating trip through some of the 52 nature reserves in Suffolk, with an excellent slide show, punctuated with quiz questions, and anecdotes, pointing out the work they do, to preserve our natural heritage, by conserving our native flora, fauna and many species of endangered wildlife for now, and for future generations. They also liaise with and assist other organisations, including the RSPB, and private nature conservation sites on

peoples' own property. It seems that at least one member of IMT could soon have a SWT barn owl nest box in their garden!

A most informative, entertaining and well presented talk, thank you Michael!

Mark Grimwade

'Pilotage on the Orwell and other associated tales'

by Capt David Ingham.

February 6th 2013

We had a record attendance of well over 100 and 49 "supperers". This augured well for the evening and most definitely proved to be the case!

David had 3 stories to tell – how he came to spend his working life at sea; the development of Pilotage, particularly in our area; tales of a local pilot – the good, the bad and the downright funny.



All 3 subjects and a lot more besides were beautifully interwoven into what seamen would call "a good yarn". As a bonus, several of David's associates were present in the audience and one of them stepped in to recall how our pilot managed to steer his course to avoid a confrontation (rather than a collision) with a group of "ladies of the night" on the Ipswich Quayside!

A brief spell piloting ships into, out of and around Jeddah was well covered and brought another dimension - as well as sunny climes – into the picture.

Throughout his talk, David showed numerous photographs of ships he had either sailed in or piloted into Ipswich. Many were

remembered by numerous members of the audience for whom they took on the mantle of "old friends returning". The stories he told concerning many of them were yet another bonus in a really excellent evening.

"Captain Ingham, very many thanks indeed for guiding us along the course for a memorable evening!" (At which point, aboard ship now safely berthed, the bottle would come down from the shelf!)

Peter Norton

'Bringing the MS Amuda (Il Punto/Mariners Restaurant ship) to Ipswich'

by Peter Cockayne

March 6th 2013

A near capacity audience listened with fascination to Peter Cockayne's careful account of the search, purchase and successful 1990 North Sea crossing of the M/S Amuda. Of all the ship options available, he demonstrated a very wise choice in advising his clients, Contship, to raise their budget, and go for an old Dutch 'party-boat' of surprising antiquity and attractiveness to adorn their Wet Dock quay. Apparently their original plan was for a kind of floating pontoon car park, so we have even more than we ever imagined to thank Peter for!



Peter took us through the maze of shipping and other bureaucracies necessary to take an essentially river craft into international waters, sparing us none of the amusing details of her mechanical and electrical eccentricities. After months of preparation, much to-ing and fro-ing

between Ipswich and Amsterdam by road, rail and sea, searching for 'the right sort of crew', a last minute canal closure and long detour, and with the November weather forecast offering only a small 'weather window' to meet the insurers' requirement of 'forecast Force 4 or less' for the crossing, the ship finally arrived in Flushing ready to meet the autumnal North Sea. Of particular concern to Peter was the ancient chain-steered unbalanced rudder, and the consequent need for a strong crew to man the huge wheel when she rolled (and oh boy, did she roll!). So, with the ship's windows boarded up, thousands of pieces of cutlery and glass and all the other 'party-boot' inventory safely packed, and a home-made gas-lit compass above his head, Peter set sail. What could go wrong then proceeded to do so, not helped by a rising Nor'easterly on the starboard quarter. The cooling system water pipes leaked, then all the electrics failed, leaving the helmsman with nothing but Peter's wisely fitted gaslit compass, but no means of communication, until they finally made it to Harwich Harbour, and an overnight wait on the Felixstowe tug mooring for a level at Ipswich (no 24-hour locking, even then).

Suddenly the saga was over, with the ship safely secured in front of Contship's building with just a couple of feet to spare, and Peter found himself nursing a pint in a nearby pub quietly reflecting on a job well done, but with a unique story to tell – which he has now done for us, most entertainingly. Since then of course the ship was transformed from the intended, but never implemented staff canteen, into 'Il Punto', and now 'Mariners', where, thanks to her new owner's care and attention we can continue to enjoy her beautifully maintained interior wood and brass and fine dining – a major asset for the town. Long may her plates survive!

Stuart Grimwade

AGM and 'DIY' night by the IMT members 3rd April 2013

The evening of Wednesday April 3rd saw nearly 90 IMT members and guests again assembled at, what we now consider to be "our" No. 2 Lecture Theatre at UCS. A high turnout indeed bearing in mind the inclement weather and the fact that it was the night of our Annual General Meeting – not the most magnetic attraction in our calendar but mercifully harmonious and short . . . at 26 minutes!

The AGM was preceded by an excellent (optional) supper provided for those members intent on making it a full evening out.

For the 3rd year running, the AGM was followed by three 20 minute talks by IMT members, their chosen subjects covered a wide range:

Ron and Wendy Caiels had arranged to talk about their 5 locally-built yachts but Ron contracted a (fortunately brief) infection so, as an alternative, Mark Grimwade presented a photographic record of the two recent Brest Maritime Festivals in which he and Judith have participated.

Peter Wright then told of how he sailed to Copenhagen and back, navigating with an ipad. Our membership probably being equally split between those who own and use ipads and those who believe they might be useful for treating corns, Peter faced a challenge! By the time his 20 minutes were up we all knew the function of these amazing navigational (as well as other uses) tools and most had a pretty good idea of how to use one to find the way home. In the process, we thoroughly enjoyed the voyage to Copenhagen and back.

Des Pawson lives – and works – on Wherstead Road. His house and garden were, until fairly recently on the bank of the river and had, in previous centuries, been the site of Halifax Shipyard. In researching what had gone on there before, many old paintings and plans were studied and fascinating facts came to light along with some inspired guesswork. From this groundwork it became clear that the famous ship 'Orwell' being built there had

been sketched 'in build' by Constable – while a watercolour by George Frost showed a cottage on the site (sadly for Des, his is not the house in question!). Clearly Des's Wherstead Road garden was, and remains, a haunt for arts and crafts! Finally, another ship – the 'Volante' – was also built there and she competed (sadly unsuccessfully) in the very first Americas Cup race.

Investigations continue we are told!

Thus the title of Des's talk 'John Constable, the Americas Cup and Wherstead Road' is now explained but we are told that investigations continue!

and finally.....

Thus our first "season" at UCS is completed and agreement has been made to continue there next season. This new venue has been extremely successful in that it has proved comfortable, capacious and convenient for access by the majority of our members. Attendance has risen considerably as a result and the average is now around 100.

As many of you will be aware, we had to make alternative catering arrangements midway through the last season when UCS decided to close their kitchens. We appointed an outside caterer who, although facing several site problems early on, has provided growing numbers with worthy suppers – almost reaching 50 recently.

We feel that the provision of a bar and suppers make our evenings much more of a social occasion than, as in our early days, just attending a talk. We have the RHYC to thank for this transformation and several members have mentioned their understandable regret that we are not returning there to take advantage of their newly-built facilities. The main stumbling-block is capacity. Although high on "ambience", the new RHYC will have the same maximum capacity (80) as previously so we had the option of returning to the RHYC but limiting the number who can attend - or staying with UCS. No contest, but we hope to continue our connection with them.

Mark Grimwade

Membership News

The membership has continued to increase steadily throughout the year and now totals 286. we are aiming to reach the 300 mark before the end of the year!

New members

A warm welcome to the new members who have joined since December 2012 (with apologies for missing off names of some of the joint memberships where it has not been supplied) -

Neil & Gill Goldie Alan & Janet Nicholls
David Ridall Captain John Bowen
David Ingham Nigel Ruffles
Jane Best & Peter Dye Philip Ironfield
Colin Read Tim Fox
Miss Mary East G Stewart
John Norman Colin & Celia Waters
Ray Collins Thirza Witts
Steve Kentfield Susan Chapman

Very sadly we have lost two long standing members who have recently passed away.

David Fletcher and
Diana Whayman

David was a valued Council member in recent years, and Diana's connections with the Wet Dock and the River Orwell go back to the earliest days of non-commercial boat use of the dock in the 1950s.

Fraser Yates