

The SUDBURY SOCIETY

Newsletter

Spring 2013



TWO UNMISSABLE CELEBRATIONS

Happy Birthday, Thomas!

On **Saturday morning (4th May)** Market Hill will once again resound to the strains of "Happy Birthday" as we celebrate the birthday of Sudbury's world-famous artist Thomas Gainsborough (1727-88).

As last year, the Sudbury Society has booked a town crier and musicians and hopes to have some new attractions this year. Adding colour and atmosphere will be people from Gainsborough's House in 18th century costume. (Feel free to join in the dressing up if you have a suitable costume.) Shoppers and market stallholders will be given celebratory lapel stickers with 'Happy Birthday Thomas Gainsborough' before everyone gathers around his statue at 10am for the celebration itself.

Special thanks go to Turner Access Tools Hire Company for lending their cherry picker the previous day so that Thomas will already be sporting his garland for the celebrations.

When the 'birthday party' is over around the statue, town crier, musicians and townsfolk will proceed down Market Hill to Gainsborough's House where the May Market will be held. There will be stalls of all kinds, an opportunity for refreshments while sitting in the garden (weather permitting) and listen to the musicians playing a variety of country songs.

Anne Grimshaw



Town Crier, Geoff Banwell

Photo : Heather Coltman

Centenary Celebrations of the Thomas Gainsborough Statue Monday 10th June 2013, 4 pm – 8.30 pm

It was last February when Sudbury Society member Val Herbert was researching her book about the statue of Thomas Gainsborough in 1913 she suggested that Sudbury should be celebrating this unique event in 2013. This was too good an opportunity to miss so on behalf of the Sudbury Society I joined forces with Nick Winch from Gainsborough's House and Jacqui Howell from the Town Hall to see how this might be realised.

We have found local actors to give portrayals of Princess Louise, Queen Victoria's granddaughter who unveiled the statue, and Bertram Mackennal, the sculptor and also a Town Crier who will be heralding events and co-ordinating volunteer singers around the statue. Guests will include leaders from local groups and organisations as well as the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk, Lord Tollemache and local MPs, including Tim Yeo. A vintage car will be on hand to transport the Princess!

Two of the original organisers of the unveiling have descendants who still live locally and we are hoping that anyone who has ancestors who lived within a 15-mile radius of Sudbury in 1913 will also tell us so that we can include their descendants on the Guest List to witness this 100th anniversary re-enactment of the unveiling ceremony at 4 pm on Monday 10 June. Even if you don't have ancestors who were there in 1913 do come and join in with this very special occasion. As a record for the day everyone who either participates or who witnesses the afternoon's events will be asked to sign the **Special Visitors' Book**. Everyone involved will be asked to dress in 1913 style costume. All that is needed are shirts, waistcoats and baggy trousers with a cap for men and blouses, shawls and a long skirt with a decorated hat for women.

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Centenary Celebrations of the Thomas Gainsborough Statue

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Inside St Peter's there will be a display of artefacts from 1913 that we hope people be willing to lend. These might include small items such as coins or envelopes with stamps or anything similar. Also wanted are larger objects that depict the kinds of rural crafts and domestic activities that would represent 1913. For instance have you got an old wheelbarrow, craft tools and implements, medical equipment, domestic and cooking utensils etc. that you would lend us? It is hoped that these would help make 1913 come to life. Alongside these will be floral arrangements, craft stalls, food and drink from the period and tarot card readings as well as performances by Friendship Dancers and the two Academy Schools and of course Val will be signing copies of her book.

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Outside St Peter's we have invited artists to display their work on the railings and there will be a photographic booth for everyone in costume to have a sepia photograph taken to record the day. The Morris Dancers will be demonstrating their traditions and possibly beer will be served. There will be a display from children of games from 1913 with a maypole and we are arranging for there to be tug of war competitions between local groups. Also look out for a walk that has been arranged by the Tourist Information Centre. This will finish on Market Hill in time for the ceremony.

We will produce a Souvenir Programme which will set out the ceremony and activities together with a list of the volunteers and groups and those organisers who are involved. Photographers will be recording the day and an extra page depicting many of their images will be available afterwards to insert into a special Souvenir Programme.

We want as many groups and individuals as possible to be part of this special occasion – not only to participate but also to provide the important roles of stewarding and directing participants. If we have not contacted you please do contact us. I am particularly hoping that members of the Sudbury Society will be available to help with these important roles.

If that is you, would you either contact me on sallyfreer@btinternet.com or phone Nick Winch at Gainsborough's House on 01787 372958 (*Mondays to Wednesdays only*).

Sally Freer, Sudbury Society Member

COPY OF CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE SUDBURY SOCIETY AGM

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I refer you to my Chairman's report of last year. The main topics of interest being Walnuttree Hospital, Sandy Lane, the land behind the Town Hall and the derelict condition of our bus station and Hamilton Road. Nothing much has changed then!

However, the one point of optimism is Walnuttree Hospital. As you are aware the society's aims regarding this iconic site were foremost the preservation of the original Victorian core of the building and the acquisition of the outpatients department for civic use. Well, I think we have achieved our ambition.

The Health Authority's architects have drawn up a very imaginative and sympathetic scheme, retaining all that is good with some additional housing, in keeping, along the river bank. As a conservation society we see much merit in the scheme. With the participation of St Gregory's Church council, who appear keen to use the ground floor as a church hall and for other community use, I am very hopeful that we can attain the first floor for a much needed town archive centre with a small museum displaying the historic significance of the site. Together with other interested bodies we hope to form a trust to manage the premises, the refurbishment of which could be largely funded with section 106 monies from the developers. After all, it would be better spent there than on repaving North Street again!

Talking of North Street, it now hosts sixteen closed or charity shops. The closure of local town centre retailers is, I know, not exclusive to Sudbury. But surely some imagination, for example, business rate holidays for start up businesses, cannot be beyond the remit of our local authority. Sudbury town centre, particularly in the evenings is in deep (although not irreversible) danger of being closed for business. The number of closed, semi-derelict, retail units and pubs, together with our bus park and adjoining waste land, must be rejuvenated to give Sudbury a fighting chance. Where is the political willpower to solve these not insurmountable problems?

I repeat my tired mantra of the last two years. This government promised localism. Well, deliver on it. Devolve back to Sudbury the power it enjoyed as a Borough. At least then we would have the clout and finances to make a difference. We know where our town councillors live - here! If they don't deliver we

know where the town councillors live, here! If they don't deliver we can replace them and decisions vital for the future of our Town would not be determined by politicians from the other end of the County.

However, all is not despondency. Last night, at the Masonic hall, we hosted the volunteers of the Kernos Centre, last week those of the Bridge

Project. They, and others of the voluntary sector, are making a positive impact on Sudbury and our fractured society. They make immediate decisions that change, for good, the lives of our townspeople. Why, therefore can't our politicians?

Peter Thorogood, Chairman

FRIARS, FOOTBALL AND BEYOND

On Friday 26th October Alan Cocksedge gave an entertaining illustrated talk on the history of Cricket in Sudbury; the earliest record being 225 years ago, in 1787 which as Mr. Cocksedge pointed out are the same figures as the Sudbury STD code (without the 0) making it an easy date to remember.

There was a good audience attending and after some teething troubles with the power point projection everyone settled down for what proved a most informative evening. It was in two parts: the first mainly history of the current site and matches played elsewhere in the town and the second after a coffee break, was anecdotes about various matches and their outcomes.

We were told that the present ground bordered by Friars Street and Quay Lane was once part of the Mediaeval Dominican Priory grounds (the orchard and vineyard). After the Dissolution it became private grazing and finally, several centuries later, became a purpose built cricket ground in 1891.

There were many stories told of the gradual development of a permanent Cricket Club and one particular story amused the audience. Apparently two teams, one from Sudbury and the other from Stoke started a game on the Great Common. Before long play was interrupted by several Freeman walking up and down and across the pitch. (One version had them lying down on the pitch!). They claimed that no one had the right to play games there without *their* permission. The players retired to Brundon Hall and completed the game there. Later the Watch Committee condemned the behaviour and invoked the authority of the Mayor and corporation. There were numerous articles in the local press on the matter and the Freeman made no further protests.

Another anecdote was of when the Priory Meadow, owned by a Mr. Andrews and his son-in-law Dr. Holden, was leased to the Cricket Club. It became the permanent home of the Club and was overlooked by Prospect House, owned by Dr. Holden. When lime trees were planted on the Friars Street boundary the doctor ordered that no trees were to be planted in front of the house so that the Doctor and his father-in-law could have an uninterrupted view of proceedings!

The opening of the Ground was marked by a luncheon and two theatrical performances plus much speechifying and general congratulations to all concerned. The first day's play was rained off but fared better the following day.

After a time various other sports were played at the ground and it became Sudbury Grammar School's games field as well. The football club, which had played at Belle Vue hired the ground for the winter months at a cost of £5.00. The above are just a few of the fascinating facts imparted by Mr. Cocksedge and a much fuller history is to be found in his book 'Tales from the Dew Drop Inn'.

The Ground celebrated its 110th birthday last year but cricket and games in general go back much further, played with passion in and around Sudbury. The town is fortunate indeed to have such a splendid facility within a few hundred yards of the Market Hill.

At the end of the two part talk there were numerous questions and memories from members of the audience.

Heather Coltman

SUDBURY'S WEAVERS' COTTAGES

About 60 members and guests turned out on a bitter night for the Society's first indoor meeting of 2013. In a change to the advertised programme (archive films), for the first half, David Burnett gave one of his always informed and interesting talks. A film was shown in the second part.

David started by asking the audience what Daniel Defoe, Francois de Rochefoucauld and Arthur Young had in common? Answer: they all visited Sudbury. The Frenchman was not impressed and wrote that *"while the scenery was agreeable the inhabitants all seemed to be smugglers and bankrupts despite the fact that there was a good trade in woollen and silk stuffs, there being at least 100 looms in the town."*

In the 18th Century there was an influx of weavers and merchants migrating from London. It was cheaper in the country. It was mainly a cottage industry and there were many small houses built by speculators and merchants to house their piece workers. In other parts of the country such as Macclesfield in Cheshire and Braintree in Essex, the weaving rooms were on the top (3rd) floor, to catch the most light. However, Sudbury always being a bit different, they were built on the middle of three floors. In spite of many alterations to the surviving buildings over the years it still possible to spot the larger windows as David showed in various photographs. In the past it was often possible to spot a weaver's cottage by a broken pane in the middle of the window where 'the flying shuttle' had done just that and shot through the glass!

David enlarged on the life of the weavers, which was far from idyllic. They were at the mercy of their employers who were usually merchants who supplied the raw material in rolls by weight; the finished cloth having to balance with the original yarn. If it didn't there was trouble and money docked. It was backbreaking and demanding work.

We were shown photographs of cottages in Station Road, Melford Road, New Street (once St. John's Terrace) and possibly the oldest, at 30-31, Cross Street. The builders were a varied collection; among them, Alexander Duff-Peacock, New Street,(he eventually went bankrupt); Kemp & Sons bought old timber framed houses in Cross Street, pulled them down and built Nos.70 - 74; Inkerman Row (demolished in the 70s) was built by Sam Webb. The quaintly named Batt Hall by Isaac Overall and finally a plaque on St. Gregory's Terrace in Melford has the initials 'A.C.' standing for Azariah Clubb, a weaver.

The merchants and owners flourished in Sudbury as they concentrated on the quality market and thus were less affected by the cheaper imports from France and elsewhere. This still holds true today with three silkweaving factories still in the town.

The final part of David's talk was devoted to an account of a weavers' life given to a researcher just before WW2. The hard life of Lydia Goodwin was vividly described in simple words. She made velvet and took two days to produce a yard of fabric.

After the break, a fuzzy but fascinating amateur archive film was shown of a few days before Christmas in Sudbury. It was 1987 and the crowds on Market Hill were astonishing. Even more amazing were long queues shown outside Watson's the greengrocer, the interior of King's and a specialist sausage shop, all now closed and still much missed.

The above is just a summary of the insights into the specialist built heritage of Sudbury which David gave us. It pays to look up at buildings anywhere but particularly in our historic town.

Heather Coltman



BATT HALL



STATION ROAD



MELFORD ROAD

PLANNING MATTERS

CHILTON/PROLOG A decision is still awaited. Discussions must still be going on about Prolog's attempt to rewrite the planning conditions, extending the completion period to 7 years from approval and guaranteeing the headline 500 jobs for no more than 18 months.

CHILTON WOODS The latest developer has pulled out. They cite the increased cost of electricity supplies but there may be other economic reasons. A further 350 homes were to be added under Barbergh's 2011-2031 Strategy.

BELLE VUE HOUSE The conundrum of what to do with this building is being addressed. It cannot be considered in isolation but should form part of a wider strategy (see below) embracing the possible hotel site (plus its parking), the grotty approach to the park, the unfriendliness of the Belle Vue traffic system and possibly the BT site. The House is not of sufficient "architectural or historic interest" to gain listing – it has been tried. The park frontage is fine but its connection to the lawn and park beyond is far from accessible. The CAB would seem to be located in a poor position for its clients, a long trek from buses and up a steep approach – have they been asked? Just possibly? – the hotel on the Belle Vue House site, replacing it or incorporating it, and a new community building on the BMX site visible from the town and closing the view down King Street, and incorporating an accessible and attractive approach to the park.

It is a good starting point that we should keep our existing buildings such as Belle Vue, perhaps by finding new uses for them, except of course the likes of Sulby House and Borehamgate, but it may not always be possible.

SUDBURY & GREAT CORNARD TRANSPORT AND THE PUBLIC REALM

I represented the Society at this all day Consultation. It was initiated by Suffolk County Council but put in the hands of excellent facilitators, Kevin Murray Associates, assisted by an experienced engineer/urban designer, Andrew Cameron. Their report on the event will appear on the Suffolk website. I put my immediate thoughts on the Society website (please visit it) so this is a more reflective view. I hope that out of it comes a strategy for the built up area within which all future developments fit, as opposed to the ad hoc and unrelated ones which has been our lot in recent years. Note the "Public Realm". We tend to think primarily of traffic and give little thought to the fine spaces within the town. Is that why we are concerned more about the parking on Market Hill than its character and function as the finest public space in the town?

We need to balance all means of getting around, on foot, including buggies and wheelchairs, on bikes, as well as in cars. Andrew suggested "de-engineering" the town, getting rid of barriers, signs, lines on the road and trusting our ability as road and pavement users to think for ourselves and be aware of others. We used to be able to do this before we started giving priority to motor traffic. Maybe "shared space" solutions for Belle Vue, the bottom end of Market Hill, the hazardous junction at the far end of Gainsborough Street, the Station/Great Eastern Road junction will work better for the town. We perhaps need to think of through traffic in a more lateral way. Andrew made the point that a trunk road remains a trunk road throughout its length from 60/70mph stretches to slow sections negotiating narrow historic streets and coping with lots of people. We certainly need a 20mph limit but it is possible to design for lower speeds. Perhaps we should make the town more difficult to get through with an HGV, perhaps best avoided. This could be done now rather than patiently wait for the increasingly unlikely bypass.

What will Highways make of the report? They did set up this event to ask us. They have limited funds at the moment but they could spend them implementing the first stage of the strategy. What do you think? The website is there for your comments and ideas on any of these comments. Email David Burnett david.burnett@uwclub.net to get them posted.

Are you worried about the "shared space" concept? Go to You Tube Poynton and see a video on the latest example, and for Sudbury the most relevant one.

Stephen Thorpe

GHOSTS IN SUDBURY

Have you seen a ghost recently? There are at least eight in Sudbury!
Well, ghost signs, that is

I have walked past the former shops on Melford Road umpteen times but had never noticed this particular 'ghost sign' before – it gets more ghostly as time goes by. Ghost signs are advertisements hand-painted onto brick walls. These signs gradually lost popularity in the early and mid 20th century in favour of printed billboards and posters.

There are several in Sudbury, all quite difficult to read but the easiest to read is on Church Street:

S. J. HOWELL
GENERAL ENGINEERS
MILLWRIGHTS
ALL SAINTS WORKS



S.J. Howell, Church St



A. J. Lock, Gregory St

A. J. LOCK
DEALER IN HARD-
WARE
??? ASS ETC

In the 1901 census, Sidney J. Howell was 16 and an apprentice millwright living with his parents at 46 Cross Street. His next-door neighbour was Charles Branch, a millwright so it may be that Sidney was apprenticed to him. Ten years later the 1911 census shows he was an engineering pattern maker, living in Upper East Street with his wife, Edith and son Basil (4) and daughter Kathleen (3). Sidney was an employee in the 'iron foundry' industry as was their boarder, Cecil Leggate. He was not mentioned in *Kelly's Directory of Suffolk 1912* which perhaps indicates that Sidney established his own business after that date and had the sign painted.

Across town on the corner of Gregory Street opposite Bazaar is another ghost sign on the wall of Paul James blinds. Unfortunately this sign (above, right) has been cut into to make windows and has had a large plastic sign fixed across the lower portion so that it is impossible to read the bottom line. An earlier photo on the Flickr website reveals a few more letters but not enough to decipher the whole line or even word. The SS is probably GLASS. I have not been able to trace A.J. Lock in the 1881, 1891, 1901 or 1911 censuses nor in 1912 Kelly's directory so it may be that the business was established and its sign painted after 1912.

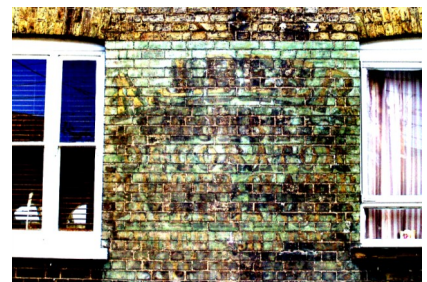
But to return to the ghost sign I spotted on the wall above 75-79 Melford Road, between two upstairs windows and above a shop door, is for A. J. Beer. The style of the lettering is colourful and ornate and would have required a skilled, and therefore expensive, signwriter to do this. It can perhaps, therefore, be concluded that A. J. Beer was 'doing very nicely' – or, of course, he *may* have done it himself as the advertisement states 'writer'.

The 1901 and 1911 censuses show this to be Arthur John Beer, a house painter and employer, who lived across the way at 38 Melford Road with his wife Alice. As Arthur Beer was not living there in the previous census of 1891, it would appear the sign was painted sometime after 1901. The photograph has been enhanced to clarify the lettering which, even so, took me a couple of hours to decipher using a crossword solver. It states:



A. J. Beer, Melford Rd

A. J. BEER
HOUSE DECORATOR
PLUMBER GLAZIER
PAPER HANGER
WRITER GRAINER



A. J. Beer (enhanced)

On the corner of Station Road and Great Eastern Road is a curved building (now a night club) but high up on the north-west wall is a barely legible sign with badly flaking paint:

GREAT
EASTERN



Station Road, Great Eastern



New Street, Wards Fine

I have been unable to decipher anything else but this building was the Great Eastern Railway Hotel in 1911. There is another one with a pub connection, high up on a house in New Street.

On Station Road on the red-brick warehouses on the left (going towards the station) are the words "Bottled Ale & Stout", possibly preceded by the name 'Whitbread' as David Burnett suggests in his book, *Sudbury, Suffolk: the Unlisted Heritage*.

Another ghost sign is simply the name Hills, which was a jewellers, painted in capitals on the gable of a building in Friars Street near the Anchor pub.

An interesting website on ghost signs is: www.ghostsigns.co.uk/ and http://www.hatads.org.uk/gallery/main.php?g2_itemId=33

Do you know of any other ghost signs in Sudbury? If so, please let me know.

Anne Grimshaw

OBITUARY Rev. Anthony Moore By Roger Green

Tony began his life in 1934. He grew up in the simple family cottage at Newton Green. Aged ten, he was greatly affected by the death from meningitis of his five-year-old sister and the huge impact this made on his parents. Retired head-teacher Eileen Bean introduced Tony to classical music on 78s, making the music come alive and sowing the seeds of a life-long love of music and particularly opera.

Another major influence was scouting. Tony was a King's Scout and later Chairman of the Sudbury and District Scout Council. Later still he served as an imaginative and enthusiastic District Chaplain. He undertook his National Service in the R. A. F., spending much time in the Middle East.

Tony was only in his twenties when he first stood for election to the Borough and later Town Council, at first as an Independent. He was also a Babergh District Councillor, and many will remember him as an inspirational and very-smartly-turned-out Mayor in 1975 and 1983. He was not a strong party-political man. He was much more interested in building bridges between the parties in order to work for the common good of the people of our town. He was the founder secretary of Sudbury Round Table and President of the Chamber of Commerce, famously resigning over what he saw as "short-sightedness" in resisting pedestrianisation. He was the last secretary of the old Corn Exchange Company and was a trustee of local charities and of the Common Lands.

Tony married his life-long partner Valerie in 1956. Together they made a formidable partnership, with complementary skills and strengths. They were blessed with five very individual and unforgettable children and a dynasty of grandchildren, all of whom were the object of their love and joy.

Tony was a man who took a huge pride in his town. He and Valerie represented Sudbury Suffolk in Sudbury Massachusetts during the American bicentenary celebrations. Together they owned and ran at least three successful businesses in the town. Tony was a happy man using his artistic talent in creating an enticing window display. He inherited a deep love of gardening from his father and took such pleasure in creating gardens.

In 1974 Tony started working, with a small team, on the first Festival of Sudbury. He was determined

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IT ISN'T ALL BRICKS!

The November meeting saw Peter Minter of Bulmer Brick and Tile Company as a 'substitute' for the booked speaker who was ill. It was a full house and standing room only.

Peter described the seven-acre site of the brick works (originally under a wide Thames estuary/North Sea), the type of clay seam and 'finds' including sharks teeth, arrowheads, quernstones and Bronze Age burial urns. In the 1950s a tile kiln was excavated and dated about 1450.

Just as in 1450, everything at Bulmer is hand-made; much of the work now is in matching and replicating old bricks and tiles that have deteriorated. A lump of clay called a 'warp', with the texture of soft butter, is thrown into an adjustable wooden mould which may or may not have a 'frog' (hollow) or other shape incorporated. A good brick maker can make up to 1,000 a day, generally, though, 600-800. The bricks are then laid out in the drying sheds before firing in one of three kilns, the oldest built 1938-40. Unlike other brick works, Bulmer kept going during the Second World War thanks to using blue clay to make land drains for farms and airfields.

The colours of the finished bricks depend upon the type of clay, the length of time and position and amount of oxygen in the kiln; generally, the longer the time, being fired, the darker the colour. Finished bricks are rubbed and cut into decorative shapes.

Peter explained the difference between conservation (keep as much of the original materials as possible) and restoration (replace with matching newly made materials).

Peter showed a small selection of then-and-now photos from Oxbrough Hall and Holkham Hall (Norfolk), Queen Anne's Summerhouse (Shuttleworth, Beds.), Hampton Court, Hill House (Theydon Bois) – what a transformation this was from virtual ruin to full restoration. Halstead church spire, St Patrick's church, Soho, Bury St Edmunds railway station (once threatened with demolition...) Every one had the 'wow factor' but probably the pièce de resistance is St Pancras railway station. Fantastic!

How fortunate is Sudbury, and indeed the whole country, to have Peter Minter and his brick works. He is passionate about what he does, knowledgeable, skilled, experienced and an asset to our built heritage. Our wonderful old buildings would be much the poorer without the Bulmer Brick and Tile Company.

Anne Grimshaw

Have a look at <http://www.bulmerbrickandtile.co.uk/>

<http://www.landmarktrust.org.uk/news/QASRestoration.htm>

<http://www.simpsonbcltd.co.uk/>

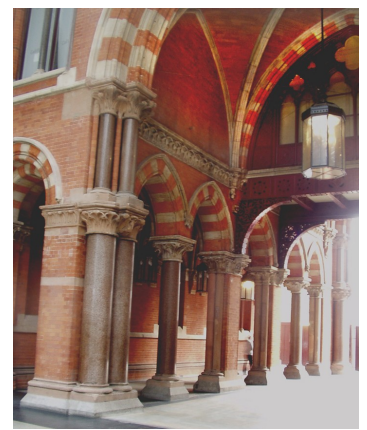
<http://www.hrp.org.uk/aboutus/whatwedo/WhatwedoBuildingconservationTudorBrickwork>



The Brickworks



St Pancras Station-arches



REMINDER from **Caryl Knight**

Subscriptions for 2013 fell due on 1st January.

Over 100 of our 275 members have yet to renew their membership and I would be grateful if they could let me have their cheques or a note that they do not wish to renew their membership.

O BRAVE NEW WORLD?

The AGM, held on 22 March, was followed by an excellent slide-talk by David Burnett entitled **O Brave New World** – its title should really have ended with a question mark. Its sub-title was the *Post-War Redevelopment of Sudbury* – which pretty much said it all – and could have been virtually anywhere in the Britain of the 1950s-70s whose planners were swept along on the tide of 'a fresh start'. David referred, charitably, to the post-war planners as "people of their time". Less charitable would be that they continued where the Luftwaffe left off.

Sudbury did indeed suffer at the hands of post-war planners and developers but perhaps not as badly as some places. Stand at the top of Market Hill and look around – there isn't one horrible building in sight. After looking at David's photos of early 20th century Sudbury, what an even nicer place Sudbury could have been given the present attitudes towards 'heritage', new uses for old buildings and the desire for 'make-overs'. This not a case of hindsight being a wonderful thing for such attitudes were voiced at the time but were drowned by the roar of the concrete mixer and the clang of the wrecker's ball.

David referred to the landmark book *A Full Life in the Country* by Keith Jeremiah published in 1949. It was certainly of its time: the emphasis on sweeping away virtually anything Victorian, especially rows of old cottages which undoubtedly were sub-standard but could have been modernised given the will and the skill. Indeed, Sudbury Borough Council commissioned architects who stated that the weavers' cottages on Inkerman Row presented a first-class case for renovation but down they came, nevertheless, in favour of a car park and later Playford Court which, fortunately, does have architectural merit, interest provided by decorative coloured brickwork and is quite pleasing – so unlike the flat-roofed, brutal horrors inflicted on North Street and, of course, the Borehamgate precinct and the Post Office.

David showed photos of cottages on Gregory Street, all swept away and in their place a wide, one-way street that encourages speed, flanked on one side by architecturally mediocre, poor quality, off-the-peg houses that add neither interesting character nor a sense of place – mere blueprints of those that were duplicated in a hundred other towns.

Houses in Church Street, never mind that they were the oldest in Sudbury dating from the 1300s, also went, as did the 1820s cottages of

Gooseberry Row (bottom side of North Street car park), the old Police Station, The Mount on North Street (now Sulby House) and so on... not that they were necessarily outstanding examples of their periods' architecture but they were not replaced by something better – far from it.

There is much to regret in what happened in those post-war years – demolition is forever – Sudbury's post-war legacy could have been so much better but, it could also have been so very, very much worse. Let us hope that lessons have been learned, painful though they were, and that future generations will approve of what 'we' are doing in the early 21st century. Or, maybe Borehamgate Precinct will one day be Grade I listed and have a blue plaque... as an example of what *not* to do in a rural market town? **Anne Grimshaw**



Inkerman Row



North Street demolition to be Woolworths



North Street 2010

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES 2012

'CIVIC PRIDE' CHRISTMAS TREE

For the first time the Sudbury Society joined in the Christmas Tree Festival in St Peter's church during the first week of December organised by Sudbury's two Rotary Clubs from 5-9 December. Beneficiaries this time were the East Anglian Air Ambulance, The Friends of St Peter, who care for the building, and the Rotary Clubs of Sudbury and Sudbury Talbot so they can continue to support a wide range of good causes.

About ninety trees were on display – and what a display it was! This festival always has the 'wow factor' particularly when viewed after dark so that the only lights are those on the Christmas trees.

SudSoc's tree had the theme 'Civic Pride' with its decorations being over 100 small photographs of Sudbury's buildings, architectural features, landmarks and historical sites, each photo being about 2 x 3 inches, laminated to reflect the light and hung on the branches by red satin ribbons. It was topped by a photo of the Corn Exchange (now the Library) from which SudSoc had its beginnings. The tree base was surrounded by SudSoc Newsletters and membership forms.

It was difficult to photograph the tree in situ at St Peter's so the photo here shows the tree elsewhere and a close-up of one of the decorations.



CHEESE AND WINE PARTY

The annual cheese and wine party attracted over sixty people with latecomers having to be found chairs and squashed at tables wherever there was room. Caryl Knight and David Taylor were meeting and greeting. It was good to see some new members – Derek and Sheila Cooper, Tony and Lesley Platt, Mr and Mrs Pearson – we hope they enjoyed themselves.

David Burnett had set a picture quiz with 48 photos of Sudbury buildings, architectural features, landmarks and historical sites (It could almost have been based on the Christmas tree decorations!) These were placed on each team's table and much discussion ensued about the location of windows, doors, roofs, chimneys and so on. We see them so often but we don't really *look* – but we should! Sudbury is such an interesting and lovely town, it cries out to be really looked at, especially at what is above eye-level. There's a wealth of fantastic architectural detail that give the town character.

Each member of the winning team, the Elderly Flowers (corruption of the label of Elderflower cordial on the table!) took home a bottle of wine.

As always, Diana Clifford had organised the tickets and the food and drink in her usual efficient way, and seemed to have plenty of helpers in the kitchen before and after the buffet. **Anne Grimshaw**

COMING EVENTS

Friday 26th April*

7.30pm Friars Hall, School Street

Quiz with Fish and Chip Supper

£6 Booking essential. Tickets from Diana Clifford 379499

Friday 31st May

7.30pm Friars Hall, School Street

Love, Intrigue and Parachute Weaving In World War Two Sudbury

A talk by Liz Trenow (Curry)

Friday 28th June

7pm Town Treasure Hunt

Meet at Gainsborough Statue in front of St Peters Market Hill, 7pm.

Finishing at the 'Black Boy' by

8.15pm sandwiches will be laid on, buy your own drink £3.00

All events are £2 for members and £3 for non-members unless otherwise stated.

Saturday 27th July *

12.30pm Summer Luncheon to be held at Moorlands Barn, Blackhorse Lane Gt. Cornard by the kind permission of Mr & Mrs Tony Platt, Please bring one dish of food with you for the meal, discuss choice with Diana Clifford on 379499

Tickets £3.00 including a glass of wine.

Friday August 30th *

(time not know at the moment)

Visit to Castle House Dedham (Munnings)

Entrance Fee £6.50 awaiting menu for

Tea roughly £5.00. Own Transport

(shared if possible).

***Booking essential, see full details in the appropriate newsletters and for the most up to-date information logon to website**

Rev. Anthony Moore (continued from page 7)

to prove a use for the neglected and unused building of St Peter's. The hugely successful festival led to the founding of the Friends of St Peter, Sudbury with Tony as its inspirational first chairman and later President. It was perhaps his most significant contribution to the town. What would Sudbury be without St Peter's?

Tony also launched the annual town centre Christmas Street Fair with all manner of exciting entertainments in the early days including fireworks from the top of the tower of St Peter's.

Tony had a life-long interest in the church. He said that it all started when he tripped over his cassock as a five-year-old server at Newton Green. When they moved to Little Cornard, Tony and Valerie became deeply involved with the church there. Tony was a church warden and later a lay-reader. In 1988, following two inspirational visits to Taize, he was accepted to train for the clergy. He saw this as a natural progression in his dedication to public and community service. He took his last service just a few weeks before his death. As a priest he worked first on the Woodbridge peninsula and later in Aldeburgh. There he earned the love and respect of so many of his parishioners. They speak of his innovation, moving the message ever closer to the people and reaching out into the community. He is very fondly remembered by those to whom he ministered.

Tony Moore died on 1st February 2013. What an example he gave us of how to live a full and active life with cancer. He filled St Peter's for his memorial service on 10th February, a sound indication of the genuine respect and affection for him in Sudbury, a town that would most assuredly not have been the same without his influence. Was there ever a time when he was not bursting with ideas? Did he ever rest? He was sometimes controversial. He was often outspoken. He held his views with a passion and he will be greatly missed.

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PLANNING STOP PRESS

We have just commented on an application to convert the upper floors of Javelin and the warehouse building in Station Road to provide a 3 bedroom flat and two 1 bedroom flats. If approved this will be a welcome boost to living space in the town centre.

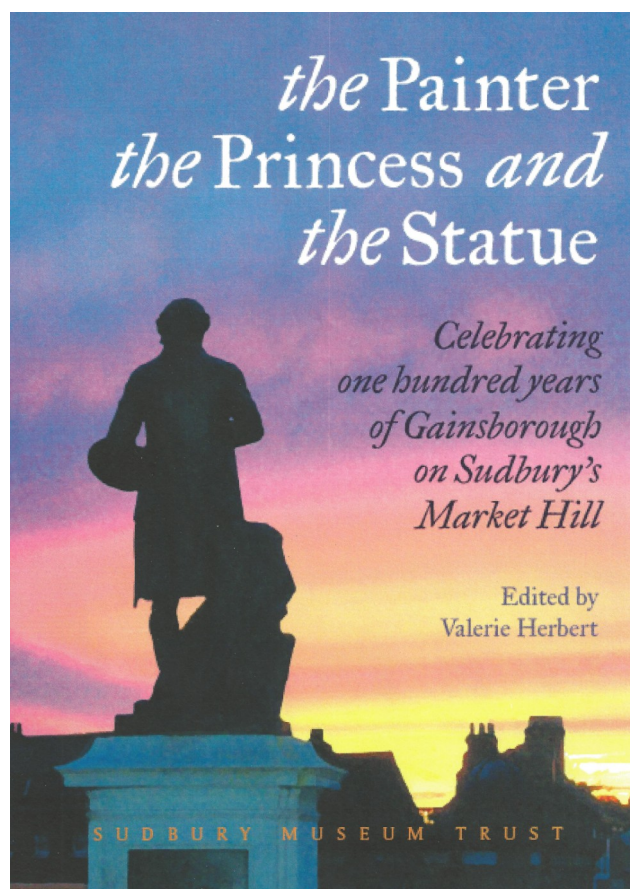
Stephen Thorpe

REVEALING THE INSIDE STORY OF TOM ON MARKET HILL

So, lots of celebration in June to mark the unveiling of Tom, the national memorial to Thomas Gainsborough which has been a feature of Market Hill for four generations. But how often do we look at it? Seldom, if we are honest, because Tom has become part of the scenery like a picture that has hung too long in the same place.

Yet there is a fascinating background to the existence of the memorial that could make you look at it with fresh eyes. There is the story of how a young Sudbury-born architect, not long out of university, inspired the town's leaders to raise a memorial to Gainsborough. How a local royal connection led to a rebellious daughter of Queen Victoria supporting the project and winning national support for it. And how an Australian sculptor, who made his name by challenging Victorian prudery, won the commission. Then there is moment of farce that shattered the stiff protocol of the royal unveiling.

All this is told, and much more, in a new Sudbury Museum Trust book being launched at Gainsborough's House May Market celebrations on Saturday, 4 May. As editor of ***The Painter the Princess and the Sculptor*** I have drawn the stories together and added much more associated history. This includes a romp through a century of sights, sounds and even smells on Market Hill. Some involved Tom being dressed up to celebrate occasions and private passions.



The book has been designed by Robin Drury with his usual imaginative flare and is lavishly illustrated. Contributors include David Burnett, vice-chairman of the Society who is also secretary of the Sudbury Museum Trust, He records the elaborate preparations for the unveiling by Princess Louise and fully chronicles what happened on the day, including the unexpected. Jenny Antill, who is a governor of Gainsborough's House, tells how a romantic, rustic Gainsborough scene led to the founding of Gainsborough's House, and Sally Freer, the leading organiser of the centenary celebrations, writes of the worries and wonders of the annual garlanding. This full-colour section includes artists' interpretations of the statue shown at the Society's Visions of Sudbury exhibitions.

Finally Hugh Belsey, former curator of Gainsborough's House, and an internationally recognised authority on Gainsborough, records the fall and rise in the popularity of his portraits after his death. One sold for a guinea at auction in 1802, yet by the end of the 19th century American multi-millionaires were competing for them. In 2011 one sold at Christie's for £6.5m.

In his foreword Andrew Phillips, the Society's president, describes the book as 'a thoroughly enlightening, enjoyable and timely tribute.'

This hardback book has more than 130 illustrations and will sell at £12.50. It will be available at the launch and stocked in the shop at Gainsborough's House. Other initial stockists will be the Tourist Information Centre in Sudbury Library, and Kestrel bookshop in Friars Street. For internet sales contact beckhambooksonline.com

Valerie Herbert

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Mr & Mrs Bourne; Mr & Mrs Hedley; Mrs Maltby; Mr & Mrs Turner; Mrs Audsley; Mr Chamberlain; Mr & Mrs Sonny; Mr & Mrs Pearson; Mr Bowen; Mr & Mrs Williams; Ms Ousbey; Mr & Mrs Bevan; Mr & Mrs Homan; Mr & Mrs Gordon; Mr C Wiles and Mrs Carter. We hope you enjoy your membership. Please invite your family, friends and neighbours to join our ranks. When we speak about local issues we want to be representing as many of you as possible.

Caryl Knight