



LOSS OF A LANDMARK *by David Burnett*

The fire on the night of Sunday 6th September was first and foremost a tragedy for the people who lost their homes but it also ripped out a hole in the street frontage at the lower end of Market Hill. In so doing it destroyed a major building which had been the family home and shop premises of three generations of the Mattinglys.

Robert Mattingly arrived from Ipswich in 1876, buying Nos. 41-42 Gainsborough Street from the tailor William Ready for £2,000. The 1881 census shows him living above the business with his second wife, Gertrude nee Boggis, Robert, his son by his short-lived first marriage, and his second family of eventually eight children. He employed 23 men, eight women and four boys and was described as a 'clothier, outfitter, draper and boot manufacturer'. Clearly a mover and shaker in the town he served as Mayor five times between 1883 and 1905. He died in 1906 and is buried in the family plot in the cemetery.

Robert Henry took over the business, initially living

shops behind and above the shop into the four flats, no 5 Gainsborough Street, from which the residents fled for their lives during the fire. After his retirement Wyard and his wife Edna lived at 155 Melford Road—they were our neighbours when we moved into No. 157 in 1976. The clothing business was taken over by Graeme Garden and more recently CR Hardware Supplies and then Oxfam, although the premises are still owned by the Mattingly family.

Like many old buildings in Sudbury Nos. 41-42 had a timber-framed core concealed behind a later brick front – one explanation for the fire taking hold so rapidly. Some of the structures behind that 1893 facade may have been part of the former White Hart Inn. One remarkable discovery after the fire was an intact section of wall painting showing a huntsman blowing a horn and seated on a prancing horse. This seems to date from the late 16th/early 17th century.



By kind permission of Robert Mattingly



over the shop but by 1937 he had moved to Friars Croft in Meadow Lane and was serving as a JP. He in turn was followed by Robert Wyard who converted the residential apartments and former tailoring work-

What next? The building is Grade 2 Listed and the choice seems to be between attempting to replicate the late Victorian frontage or seeking a new, discernibly 21st Century frontage which, like its predecessor, contributes to the interest and variety of the local townscape. After all the Corn Exchange was once a radical new addition to the street scene but is now accepted and loved.

THOUGHTS STIMULATED BY THE FIRE *by Andrew Phillips*

Perhaps you will join me in thanking our Victorian forebears for the legacy they have left us in terms of architecture and buildings of all sorts. Such thoughts are, of course, prompted by the dreadful destruction of the old Mattingly's building. One's mourning is only tempered by the fact that the neighbouring buildings weren't also devoured by the flames which, when I observed them at their height, seemed certain to do just that.

Mattingly's was the sort of building which, I suspect, many of us did not sufficiently cherish when it was in being. Funnily enough I gave it a prolonged look less than a year ago, admiring its proportions and detail more than I had before. Now that it is gone its merits shine out the more. It was built in 1851 by George Ready who established the men's clothing emporium (including shoemaking) which Robert H Mattingly took over in 1876 from his two sons.

My family used the shop, which was, with Winch & Blatch, the biggest men's outfitters in the Town post-war, in its heyday employing five tailors presided over by Luther Chapman. He had gone there in 1911 after growing up and training in Norfolk as both Tailor and Cutter. He joined the first Mattingly, Robert H, who was succeeded by Wyard Mattingly. I knew both of them fairly well.

The store was typical of the Town then, namely an independent establishment, which cherished its reputation in what was a very cohesive community. Indeed, before the invasion of the massive multiples – faceless, characterless and largely detached from the town (except for Waitrose) – such proprietors ruled the roost. Their businesses were everything to them, and as a result so were their reputations. And that meant reputation as a person and not just as a retailer, service provider or manufacturer. It led to a rare but invaluable elision between self-interest and community interest.

As a result, a local professional business person who only feathered his own nest, and never took any part in town life nor did any pro bono work,

work, would soon earn a negative reputation, which would have damaging consequences. Oh that this was still so.

As a result, leading business people tended to be the leading citizens. That was true of Wyard Mattingly and Luther Chapman. Both were very involved in the non-conformist life of the Town, and Luther for example was a great singer/actor, and a chapel man, as well as secretary of the local boat club and of one of the Masonic Lodges.

The foregoing also explains why so many Victorian properties in the Town, business and domestic, are so meritorious in design and construction. When someone put up a building, for example, they were intimately identified with it. It became a statement of who they were and their aspirations and, as a result, the sort of minimalist/faceless buildings which multiply today would have been unthinkable then. Sudbury was lucky to have several first class brick makers and builders to realise the aspirations of their local clients.

In our time we surely have to put a stop to the slow but devastating loss of some of our finer Victorian buildings. A fire or Wartime damage is one thing, but the post war destruction of buildings like East House (next to the Post Office), Borehamgate House (where the precinct is), and the old Police Station, an exceptional Edwardian terracotta construction, is quite another.



I need hardly add that the wilful destruction of Belle Vue House would be another self-inflicted wound at a time when we need to cherish and maximise our built heritage for every reason under the sun – economic, historic, aesthetic and atmospheric (and I am thinking as much of its unconscious impact on Sudburians as upon tourists). Nor must we forget the rich stock of domestic buildings which so enhance the town. These are especially difficult times for towns like ours, and Sudbury has already suffered much from the 1973

organisation which stripped us of our ancient self-governing status and added another tier of bureaucracy. Yet we have so much to value and to be proud of, not least our strong and vibrant sense of identity. But, make no mistake, the imminent challenges require a contribution from every member of the Sudbury Society, and a continuing campaign which will hopefully draw many more local people – particularly the young and recent incomers – behind our cause. I know we can do it.

MATTINGLY'S AFTER THE FIRE *by Stephen Thorpe*



The matter of what should replace the demolished buildings may be a valid subject for debate even though there are insurance and ownership wrangles to be resolved before anything rises from the ground. In townscape terms the obvious loss is the fine brick façade of Mattingly's, although the façade of no 43 (HSBC) is still in position, propped up with nothing behind it.

Can't we just put it all back as it was? Or could we put up something of our time and make a present day contribution to the ongoing story of Market Hill which goes back centuries and has seen new buildings in place of older ones, frontages refaced, shops inserted in the base of merchants' town houses. As David Burnett suggests the damaged site was occupied by earlier buildings, some evidence of which is still in place.

Should any new buildings be "in keeping", a very recent approach, and with what? "Respecting the context" is also a recent approach but a more constructive one, which implies not copying nor playing safe but making a positive contribution on a key site.

the execrable Borehamgate which displays no architectural quality nor any sensitivity to its key site. Look at recent modern buildings on Market Hill and make your judgement of the two Winch and Blatch shops and the corner building at the entrance to Gaol Lane. I think the town deserves something much better than these.

Another factor is the depth of the site. Could a small courtyard be created behind the frontage to Friars Street? Whenever I see the photograph of the glazed roofed courtyard of the much lamented Rose and Crown Inn I grieve not just at the loss but that nothing comparable replaced it.

Make your contribution to the debate. Have you seen modern examples in other small towns which indicate how inserting a modern building in a historic context is possible and can be beneficial?

PLANNING NEWS

Some interesting applications:

Sainsbury's want to build a filling station on the front part of their site reached via their parking area and losing some parking spaces. Is this a sign of fewer customers than they had planned for?

Costa Coffee is coming to Market Hill, opening in the former Bakers Oven/Greggs. It will include an accessible loo for disabled customers or those needing a bit more space.

Proposals have been submitted to convert the locally listed Victoria Hall and Conservative Club to 8 flats. We welcomed these in principle but the plans submitted are very poor. They also raise concerns about retention of important features such as the windows and plaques in the gable elevation of Victoria Hall and the oriel windows in the New Street elevation of the Conservative Club. Conversion to residential use is quite a challenge and may involve more radical solutions and the planning and design skills of a good architect will be necessary. The third building on the site, the single storey workshop, Amur, is shown as demolished although it is also locally listed and has important historical associations.

We have recommended that the application be withdrawn and a more realistic one submitted. All three buildings were on our Buildings and Sites at Risk - see the Summer 2015 Newsletter. We still await some imaginative proposals for the former Steam Mill in New Street.

71 and 72 Ballingdon Street, an apparently de-

serted house with empty plot adjoining, should be added to the list.

35 Friars Street has at last emerged from scaffolding and to our relief has been well restored. We had concerns about the loss of the original bow windows but the replacements have been quite well detailed and the building once more contributes to the street scene.

Stephen Thorpe



***Conservative Club with Steam Mill
beyond***



FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK

How many of us, I wonder, in the aftermath of that fateful day, looked up at our ceiling beams or prodded our window-sills and thought 'Actually, this place would go up in seconds.' I certainly did, and my humble abode is brick-built and comparatively modern. But many of the buildings in Sudbury are very old and as dry as tinder. Brick walls which look so solid are often facades for ancient wooden structures. Those once-sturdy frames and beams are now fragile pieces of timber which are capable of burning for hours, re-combusting with each new gust of wind and sending sparks to nearby similar buildings.

This, of course, is exactly what happened with the wooden buildings of London in 1666. A simple spark from a baker's oven on 2 September of that year, combined with a strong easterly wind, meant disaster. Buckets of water were virtually useless. With no fire brigade to stop the fire spreading, fire-hooks were used to try to pull buildings down to make gaps or fire-breaks. The damage was immense; we are told that 13,200 houses were destroyed and London still smouldered for months afterwards.

Which leaves us with a sobering thought: Sudbury, as we know, has buildings which date from the 1600s, some even earlier. All of these are vital to our heritage, yet do they all have smoke alarms and fire blankets near the cooker? How many of us actually own a fire extinguisher? Er – no, I don't. Well, there simply isn't room in my tiny kitchen. And bright red wouldn't match anything. Yet – seriously - it's my guess that many of us are the same, caring more about our décor and attractive lighting than making sure the place doesn't burn down round our ears

before we can get out.

And that, I think, is my main concern over our Sudbury buildings—so few have any means of fire escape. 'Plan your route out in case of fire' the fire officers tell us, but what if you have no choice but a 300-year old wooden staircase which is already burning fiercely?

Recently a 'straw poll' asked people what they would grab first if they had to leave their home in a hurry. The majority answered 'family photographs.' It would seem, then, that pictures are the things we hold dear, providing memories that make us feel comfortable and happy and serving as reminders of what we have lost. That was proven recently when many visitors to our Visions art exhibition not only sighed sadly over the paintings which depicted the Friars Street fire, but reminisced over the long-lost buildings in Steven Binks' large painting 'Seeing Jessie Home'.

Memories, however, are a poor substitute for the real thing. For this reason I would urge that we do everything we can to hold onto our heritage before it is too late. This means recognising the importance of what we've got and putting safety measures in place to ensure that we never again suffer a fire disaster like the one we have so recently experienced.

The Sudbury Society will shortly be compiling a book on Sudbury's Listed Buildings, which should serve to help us appreciate what we have before it is too late. As for me, I've got the smoke alarms and the blanket. Now I'm making space in my kitchen for that fire extinguisher.

Lorna Hoey

VISIONS OF SUDBURY 2015 *by Anne Grimshaw*

The sixth bi-annual Sudbury Society's *Visions of Sudbury* art exhibition opened to the public at St Peter's Church on Tuesday 6 October after the Private Viewing the evening before and the official opening by Lord Phillips. It finished on Sunday 11 October. Almost 90 artists and photographers as well as pupils from Thomas Gainsborough School and Ryes College displayed their works, each one depicting one of the 247 Listed Buildings in the town.

This year Visions was organised by Robin Drury, vice chairman of the Sudbury Society, who said that the theme of Sudbury's Listed Buildings was chosen as a focus for artists and visitors to the exhibition, many of whom were not aware that Sudbury had so many Listed Buildings. It was also intended to create community spirit – which it did – as indeed did the horrendous fire in Friars Street which some artists had chosen to depict. One of the most popular buildings to be depicted was the 15th century, black-and-white timber-frame building now called Salters Hall on Stour Street. Imagination was not in short supply here with creative 'takes' at buildings we see every day such as reflections in shop windows. Media included mosaic, acrylic, oil, pastel, watercolour and photography.

Most of the works were for sale and several were sold at the Private Viewing with many others finding new owners throughout the week. The largest by far both in size and price, (almost £7,000) was 'Seeing Jessie Home', a bird's-eye view of a B-17 Flying Fortress "coming in on a wing and a prayer" with one engine out of action as it returned over Sudbury to Chilton airfield in 1944. Sudbury artist Steven Binks had created one of those incredibly detailed pictures that every time you look at it you see something new.

About 2300 people visited *Visions*, with over 600 people through on Thursday alone. Overall sales totalled more than £3,500 with a further £280 donation to the Friends of St Peter's, collected during the event. The Sudbury Society also awarded prizes for art that the judges liked and answered

the brief well. Prize money was donated by Suffolk councillors John Sayers and Colin Spence from their Community Fund. Works from the exhibition will feature in a new book the Society now intends to publish highlighting Sudbury's Listed Buildings.

As an addition to the normal format, the exhibition also hosted the fledgling 'Sudbury Small Business Show'. This included stands presented by Sudbury-based micro businesses - a furniture maker; a decorative glass designer; a blacksmith; a stone mason and an architect, amongst others. This may well prove the start of an annual show of its own.

These events do not just happen. A huge amount of effort goes into organising an event like this. In 2013, after the last *Visions* show, our committee pledged that they would not hold another exhibition. But Robin Drury believed that by using Sudbury's Listed Buildings as a theme there was still life in the *Visions* format. Robin and his team, including artist Michelle Webber and your committee, have done a fantastic job in encouraging artists, promoting and getting all the exhibits hung on time – even though one of them only just made it and had to be labelled 'Wet paint'! Then, of course, it all had to be dismantled...and the books balanced!



Viewing in St Peter's Church



"Seeing Jessie Home" by Steven Binks



Students from Thomas Gainsborough School whose art work was on show, with Lorna Hoey, Sudbury Society, and Art Teacher Angela Bowman



Andrew Phillips officially opens the exhibition in St Peter's Church

ALTERNATIVE SITE FOR THE BUS STATION *by Stephen Thorpe RIBA*

Progress on identifying and agreeing an alternative site which frees up the space it currently occupies has seemingly stalled, though still linked to that equally long running saga: the redevelopment of the Hamilton Road site.

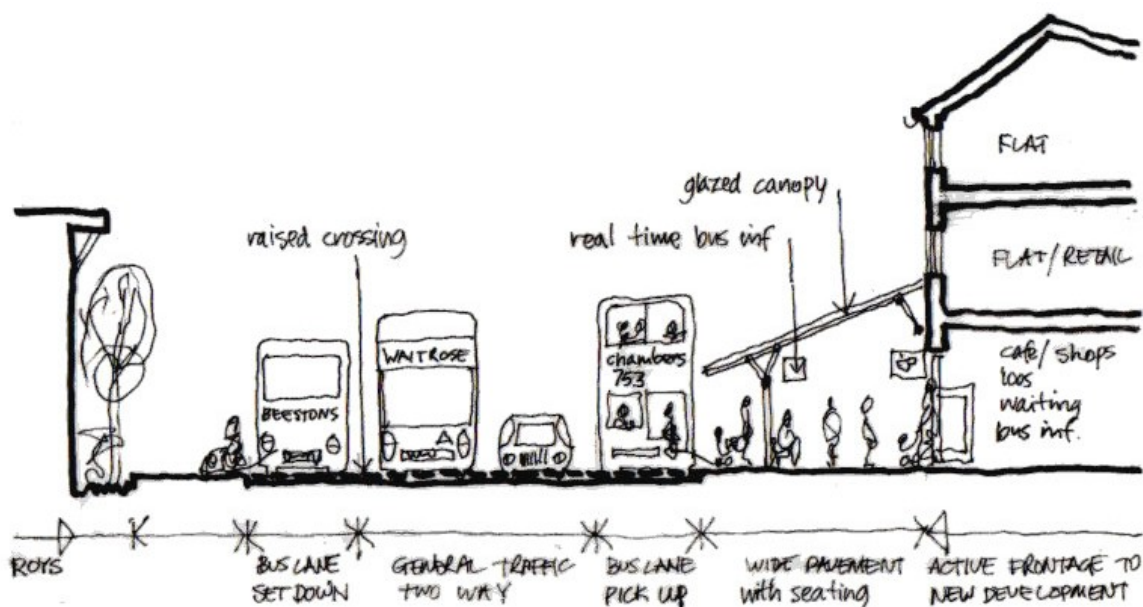
The two bus station sites idea is still vehemently opposed and for good reasons: loss of valuable parking spaces off Girling Street, the practicalities of relating the two sites, the realities of current bus movements. To elaborate on the latter, of the two distance operators only two of their services would call at Girling Street – Beestons from Haverhill and Chambers from Bury St Edmunds. The latter after a very short stay in the town departs for Colchester via Cornard Road and returns by the same road. The other Chambers service to Colchester leaves and returns via Waldingfield Road and the Health Centre. The Beestons service to Ipswich leaves and returns via Great Cornard and Cornard Road. So why the Girling Street station? There is already a stop by Aldi's. And how will the other non Girling Street services set down and pick up? In Great Eastern Road? I am surprised that the bus routes into and out of the town centre do not seem to have been taken into account.

So why not combine all services in Great Eastern Road? All buses could set down alongside Roys, turn around at a modified junction with Station Road and pick up on the development side.

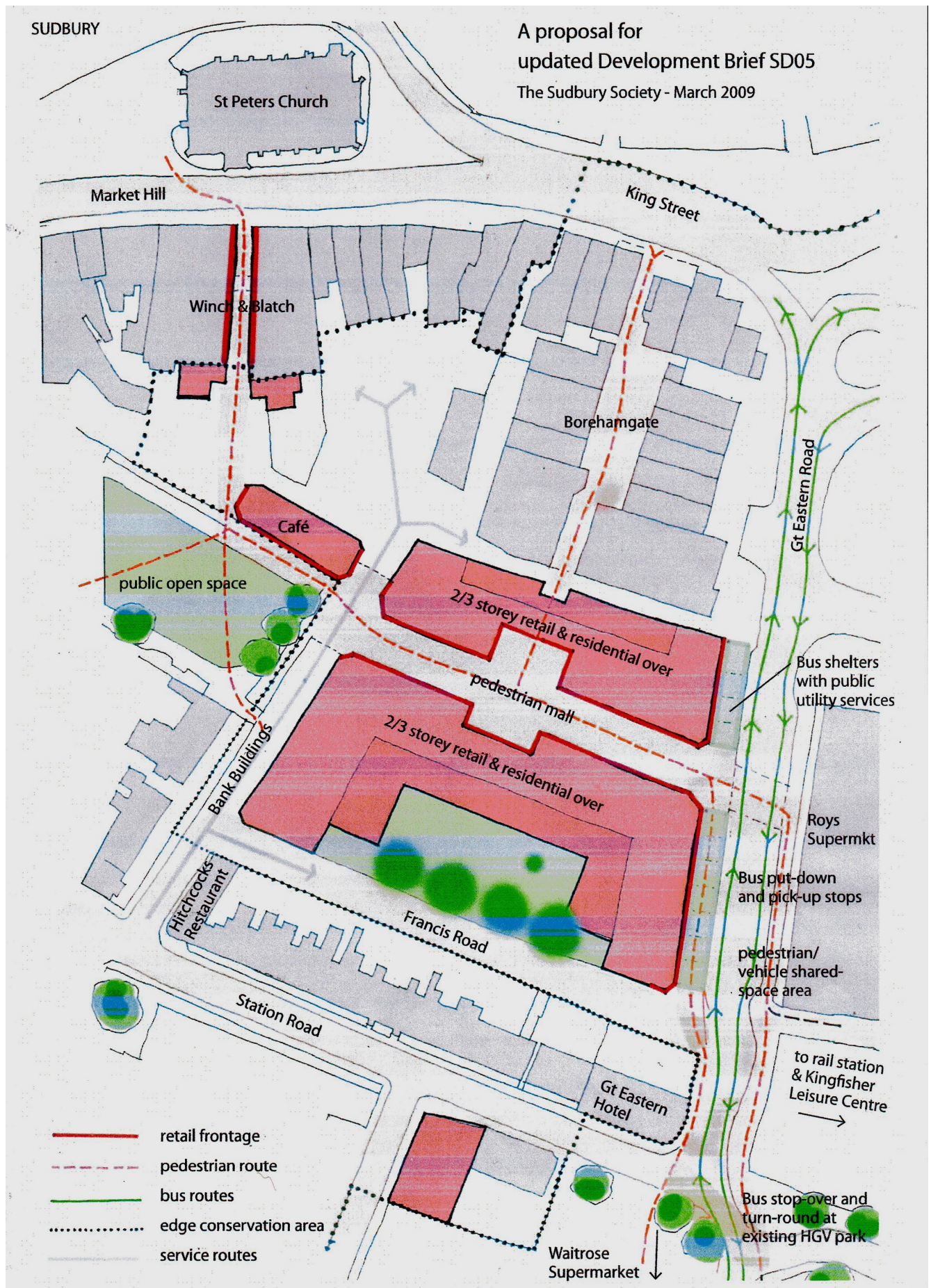
On the latter, pick up, side this linear bus station could be integrated with a new street frontage with covered waiting, seating and related facilities such as loos, café, small shops, bus information.

Back in 2009 when the bus station and the Hamilton Road development were last seriously considered the Sudbury Society proposed such a solution as an alternative to three other proposals presented by the development team – revamp the existing bus station, locate it beyond the Great Eastern Road/Station Road junction, locate it on the Francis Road corner. The Town Council supported the last option but the Society's scheme was well supported locally and by the Suffolk Preservation Society.

The sketches attached here of course need to be developed but we still feel this is a way to resolve an essential element in our efforts to equip the town for the future. But bus travel needs to be established and encouraged as a vital contribution to a healthy town. The twin threats of increasing and unsustainable car use and the increased pollution they emit suggest an expanded role and more positive image for the humble bus. Quiet, electric, non polluting and really accessible to people and baggage, frequent and within reasonable distance of home and destinations – what's not to like?



THE ALTERNATIVE SITE AS PART OF THE REDEVELOPMENT



HERE'S TO THE NEXT 3000 YEARS

The few days of Indian summer of late September provided a wonderful excuse to just sit in the garden and read David Burnett's latest book, *Chilton: the first 3000 years*.

David is a well-known local historian and the author of several books. This one is attractively laid out by graphic designer Robin Drury with many coloured pictures and 'white space' so that its A4-size pages look spacious and inviting. Three small niggles: the print is a bit tight into the gutter so you have to pull open the book; I would have liked each chapter to start on a new page, and a modern map overlaid with historic landmarks and roads would have helped to pinpoint exact locations. However, the text is set in largish type, probably because the readership will mostly be over a certain age!

David has certainly done his homework and meticulously recorded his sources. He has left no stone unturned – not even those flint tools of Neolithic Chilton. Fast forward to the 7th century 'Ciltona' when a beautiful copper alloy bowl was crafted and remained here, undiscovered for over 1300 years. (It is now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.)

The Domesday Book of 1086 records the presence of a church in Chilton but with poor communications the locals may well have known nothing of the Norman invasion 20 years before. Chilton has never had a large population and the effects of the Black Death in making it a Plague Village are unknown. Indeed, much is unknown about Chilton and much is conjecture with evidence based on events in similar situations elsewhere but, where they have survived, documents of the wealthy are invaluable. Sadly, the poor leave few footprints in history. Nevertheless, throughout the book is the all-pervading sense of place and a 'feel' of the times. The atmosphere of a tiny settlement in rural Suffolk shines through.

In the mid 1400's the Crane family left 'concrete' evidence -well alabaster actually- in their wonderful memorials in the church. Virtually all white

now, the recumbent effigies of Robert Crane, his wife and son show small traces of colour giving a hint of how gorgeous they must have been. A wall-mounted memorial shows a later Robert Crane and his two wives. The last Crane died in 1643 during the English Civil War whose religious bigotry was felt everywhere. The earliest map of the area is the Crane estate drawn in 1597 and shows Chilton Hall and Church.

It is the Hall and Church which inevitably command most attention. The latter's earliest recorded priest was in 1279. After the Cranes died out, the Hall came under various owners, most of whom were absentee landlords, renting it out to tenant farmers, who often became the local squirearchy in the Georgian and Victorian periods and were sometimes the victims of rick-burning and machine smashing in the Swing Riots.

But progress marched on bringing industries to Chilton such as chalk, lime burning, brickmaking, flour milling, malting, mat-making and silk weaving. And, of course, the two world wars of the 20th century did not leave Chilton untouched. And what of the 21st century and beyond? Maybe in the distant future there will be another 'David Burnett' to write up the second 3000 years...



Chilton: the first 3000 years by David Burnett published by the Sudbury Museum Trust, 2015 at £8.95 is available from Tourist Information Centre (Sudbury), Kestrel Bookshop (Sudbury), Landers (Long Melford), Great Waldingfield Post Office, Beckham Books www.beckhambooksonline.com

“GOT ANY GUM CHUM?”

Tales of American servicemen stationed around Sudbury in WWII

This familiar question was posed by bold children during the Second World War to the increasingly visible US Army/Airforce personnel seen on British streets, particularly so in East Anglia where enormous tracts of farmland were levelled and put under concrete for the runways for the aircraft of Bomber Command and the USAF.

Our former Chairman, Peter Thorogood, opened the new season of indoor meetings with quotations and stories of how East Anglia and Sudbury in particular came to be ‘invaded’ by thousands of US airmen. Sudbury had only a population of about 8000 at the time. Peter related many entertaining stories and anecdotes of that period, a lot of them recorded by servicemen themselves.

He began by telling us how Winston Churchill tried for a long time to get the US into the war and that they finally did so after the destruction of Pearl Harbour in 1941. By early January 1942 the smartly dressed, well fed GIs and USAF men were beginning to be seen on the streets of Britain. ‘Overpaid, oversexed and over here’ they found conditions far from ideal, having to live in tented camps and put up with British Army rations of tinned rabbit! However, things were soon better organised and the concrete began to roll across farmland and villages flattening everything in its path; all to accommodate the great Flying Fortresses and Lancaster bombers. In the end there were 70 aerodromes in East Anglia alone.

The man responsible for the logistics of all the construction was an ornithologist/botanist called Robert Arbib; he kept a diary which was later published as *‘Here we are together – the notebook of an American Soldier in Britain’*. Amongst many anecdotes he related how a group of servicemen went to a pub one night and for the first time in its long history it was drunk dry, even though the Americans didn’t think much of our ‘warm frothless beer’. Peter also quoted from a handbook given to all the American troops on how to behave in their ‘host’ country.

So many men descending on the towns and villages of East Anglia was bound to have an effect on the girls of the area many of whom were doing ‘war work’ of one kind and another. Dances were arranged, particularly in Ipswich, where there was ‘something on’ almost nightly. The US airmen went on their hazardous bombing raids during the day so presumably those that came back were more than willing to party into the night. Suffolk girls were considered to be the prettiest in the UK! At the end of hostilities 60,000 GI brides went to make their homes in the US - not all from East Anglia of course - while quite a few of the servicemen stayed on to make their life in Britain.

Peter related many other stories some touching, and some very funny, and kept his audience fascinated and entertained. The evening was rounded off with a vote of thanks from Andrew Phillips who added some of his own memories of that perilous time 70 years ago.

As a postscript, a friend of Peter’s, Brian Dunt, had come from Colchester to show us a rescued log of missions made by an unknown airman from Eye. The double page spread was framed but had obviously gone through a lot. It gave an extraordinary and curiously moving record of the raids which were carried out by the men of the USAF and Bomber Command.

Heather Coltman



The 486th Squadron in formation

ROAMING AROUND A ROMAN VILLA

Reporter: Anne Grimshaw

(taken from the Sudbury Society website)

The August outing to Ashley Cooper's farm at Gestingthorpe was a delight. Ashley picked up threads from his talk to the Sudbury Society in November 2014 about the Roman villa which his father, Harold, had uncovered in the late 1940s soon after he bought the land.

The tour began in the museum which is overflowing with finds ranging from pots and cooking utensils to rings, brooches and necklaces, shoe nails and buckles, from ingenious keys and locks to moulds for statuettes made by the lost wax process – hitherto unknown in Britain at the period. The site had been a market and craft-workers' village.

Not only were the finds on display but many were incorporated in the wonderful illustrations by Benjamin Perkins showing the site in pre-Roman times through to almost the present. The people in the pictures are like re-enactors bringing the past to life. Ashley added an ad hoc 'soundtrack' through imagined conversations of previous inhabitants, as depicted.

From the museum we drove to the site of the Roman villa, its outline cut in the turf – it was about the size of St Peter's church, Sudbury, with a curved room at one end containing a hypocaust and a plunge bath.

Here too Benjamin's Perkins' paintings were invaluable in depicting the scene, including plants and wildlife, as it would have been at various stages in its life until the last one showed the villa falling down: its roof caving in, weeds growing round it, no doors or windows. Ashley said he would have loved to meet the person who was the last to leave the villa. When did he leave – and why?

How fortuitous it was that this land came into the ownership of Harold Cooper and later Ashley – men interested in the past, who realised the significance of the finds and the site, had the enthusiasm and ability to convey their passion to others including, most important of all, children. The land could so easily have been bought by someone who did not know or care about archaeology, history and conservation – and we would all have been the poorer.



Why does the Society sit on the Sudbury Steering Group?

This much-maligned group features in our local papers fairly regularly. Complaints are made that the Group's members are unelected, that the Group makes decisions and then informs Sudbury Town Council, that the Group is an unnecessary level of consultancy and decision-making. None of these is true.

Let me try to clarify the role and purpose of the Steering Group and why I believe that the Society should be part of it.

The group is made up of representatives from Suffolk County Council, Babergh District Council, various members of Sudbury Town Council including Planning, Highways and Leisure and Tourism, The Chamber of Commerce and the Market Town Partnership. Gainsborough's House is also represented – and then there's us. All of us have been elected to our various groups or organisations.

And the purpose of these monthly meetings? Just consider how long would it take to email some of these busy people, wait for a reply, email others with that reply – and so on. How much easier, and how less time –consuming, it is to have a discussion with someone face-to-face.

For it is a discussion. The Steering Group does not make decisions. I sometimes wish it did – things might happen faster. Individuals can contribute specific facts and figures relating to the topics under discussion, and then a general opinion and/or recommendation is *steered* to the Council. But ultimately it is the Council's decision.

Being part of the Steering Group means that the Society's voice is heard, and in turn we are kept abreast of current thinking on the many developmental changes which are proposed for Sudbury.

That is why I believe it is important, indeed necessary, for us to be part of the Sudbury Steering Group.

Lorna Hoey

“OUT OF ADVERSITY COMES OPPORTUNITY”

Although the fire was a dreadful tragedy, it occurred to me that it presents a golden opportunity to deal with the hazardous junction and difficult road island at the junction with Friars Street and Gainsborough Street.

The temporary blocking off of Friars Street has, inadvertently, made it less dangerous to cross from Barclays Bank and the Library in to the market and to the other side of Market Hill, and has highlighted how difficult and dangerous this area was. This and the need for road works to repair the damage caused by the fire gives us a welcome opportunity to make improvements. The difficulty with this junction is the fact that the road through Market Hill is in fact two roads, one lot of traffic going to Friars Street the other to Gainsborough Street. Gainsborough Street is the main thoroughfare with fewer drivers using Friars Street, but drivers rarely indicate that they are turning left, thus making it dangerous to cross.

The pressing need is to define these two roads. This could be done during the repairs by moving the road island a little to the left thus making the approach to Friars Street narrower, and with clear road markings, defining the left hand lane for Friars Street and the right hand lane for Gainsborough Street. This would slow down the cars entering Friars Street which in turn would make the dangerous crossing at Station Road much safer. There have been accidents here and several near misses as traffic speeds along from Market Hill.

At the same time the traffic island could be improved to make it more accessible for disabled people.

In an earlier article I wrote about the difficulties the pavements and kerbs present to wheelchair users, walking aids and buggies. This was subsequently taken up by the Suffolk Free Press. Not surprisingly nothing has happened. So as not to miss this present opportunity for an improvement to our roads it needs a concerted effort to badger the Town Council to press for this. Contrary to popular belief the Town Council is not responsible for highways. This is the responsibility of Suffolk County Council but the Town Council is our representative there. Perhaps the Sudbury Society can be instrumental in persuading the Town Council to act.

Patricia Thorpe



WHAT HAPPENED TO THE WILDLIFE?

As a relative newcomer to Sudbury, I am surprised how little wildlife there is around. In the back garden of our previous house in North London, we had a variety of animals the like of which I've not seen in Sudbury. Who'd have thought that 'moving to the country' would mean that we would be leaving wildlife behind?

We had a family of foxes who lived two gardens away under what was known locally as Peggy's Shed. They produced cubs year after year and had no fear of humans. During the Summer months when we dined out on our patio, they sat on the garden wall or on the grass yards away, hoping to get thrown a few titbits, not that of course we ever did.

Also we had family of hedgehogs to which we fed dog food, not milk. They were frequent visitors until suddenly one day they disappeared. An occasional owl arrived, I think it was a Tawny Owl, and all the usual garden birds we have here in Sudbury, but what we also had were woodpeckers, nesting swifts and green parakeets who flew in from Hampstead Heath and Kenwood House to feed on the apples in the garden next door. Their flocks were so large that you could hear their loud cheeping and beating of wings long before you saw them. A few yards down the road we had the Parkland Walk, a disused railway track very similar to our

own Valley Walk which runs along the back of the water meadows. It once carried a railway which ran from Finsbury Park to Alexandra Palace. I was a volunteer helping to maintain the track and the plant life as I do here in Sudbury.

But the big difference is the lack of danger! When working on the Parkland Walk there was always the chance that you'd plunge your hands into the undergrowth and get pricked by a needle attached to a syringe, so heavy duty gloves and a grabber were the order of the day, along with a yellow bucket for said items. Twice a year we did a deep clean, enlisting the help of as many volunteers as we could. This usually uncovered stolen bags, wallets, electrical equipment, bicycles and household rubbish, including the inevitable mattresses tossed over garden fences. We removed trees to gain more light so smaller plants and flowers could grow, as well as cutting back the margins to widen the trail. It's very similar to what we do here as Rangers, except we have the cattle to deal with and much more land to maintain, but it is a lot safer. Here I can walk the Valley Trail or the Meadows at midnight, probably not really advisable but something I could never have contemplated on the Parkland Walk in North London.

Bob Andrews

Fancy getting into print?

It may have occurred to you, while flicking through your Newsletter, that the articles and news seem to have been put together by approximately half-a dozen people.

You would be right. In fact, if it was not for the sterling efforts of these journalistic stalwarts, your Newsletter would be much thinner. We are sure there are plenty of people out there who could contribute a memory, an article or a comment about our Meetings – or even just to tell us what you'd like to see in the Newsletter. You don't have to write like the Daily Telegraph (which has the best written-English style, apparently!) as your editor will fix grammar and sort out spelling – but it would be so refreshing to hear from some new correspondents. Any length is acceptable – even a few lines on the back of an envelope! Above, gratefully, we have a new contributor.

What do you remember about your early days in Sudbury? Anybody remember a particularly bad snowfall? Where were you at the time of the Great Storm of 1987? Send your contribution to lehoey@btinternet.com or drop it in to The Christopher Centre, 10 Gainsborough Street, Sudbury CO10 2EU marked 'Sudbury Society Newsletter'. We plan to make some changes to your Newsletter for next time and hopefully one of those changes will be more contributions from Members. So, get writing!

Lorna Hoey



SUDBURY SOCIETY NEWS

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

It will have been apparent from recent financial reports that our membership subscriptions have not been covering our running costs. The production of the Newsletter has substantially increased in price and its distribution costs would be even higher without the wonderful team of volunteers. Similarly the cost of holding meetings has increased since the last time the events fee was fixed. Although the balance sheet shows a healthy sum in the bank, this is by way of a legacy and we want to use it for projects and improvements. Recently we purchased a display board which was used to great effect at Sudbury on Show.

Those who attended the meeting at the end of October will have benefitted from our new equipment: a projector, screen and microphone. Because Friars Hall is used by more than one organisation we have had to obtain a cupboard that can be locked to keep this equipment secure. We are also hoping to make improvements to the website. The Newsletter will have a revamp and, hopefully, will be published three times a year. Contributions from the membership are always welcome.

It will come as no surprise therefore that the Committee needs to increase the annual subscription to £10 per person from 1st January 2016. All membership dues should be paid into our bank account or with a cheque and completed membership renewal form. Cash for subscriptions can no longer be accepted. This is because of the confusion it can cause, (particularly when handed over at a meeting minus the renewal form). Similarly we will need to increase the events attendance cost to £3 for members and £5 for non-members. A Membership Card with name and membership number will be issued each year.

Tina Read

FROM THE EVENTS COMMITTEE

On 27th November we welcome local councillor and former Mayor, Adrian Osborne, who will regale us with *A Mayor's Tale*, then December brings our ever popular Quiz Evening and Cheese & Wine Supper. Tickets for this will be available at the November talk. Bryan Thurlow makes a welcome return on January 29th with *An Evacuee's Story*. On 26th February we will hear all about Dad's Army with Elizabeth Brown, our March (18th) AGM will feature news from Gainsborough's House with Director, Mark Bills and on April 29th *Call My Bluff* with a fish & chip supper.

We are still finalising our talks and visits for 2016/17 but just to give you a taster and dates for your diaries we are planning a visit to the Wardman Meadow with Adrian Walters on May 27th, a Treasure Hunt on 8th June, a visit to Little Hall, Lavenham on 24th June and our Garden Party on 30th July.

More details in the next NewsJournal.

Rosemary

MICHAEL LEWIS

Members of the Society were saddened to learn of the death of Michael Lewis. Michael came to Sudbury in 1998, retiring after a long career in local government. He served on the Committee for some years and more recently on the Planning Committee. A gentle lovely man with a ready smile - he will be much missed.

David Burnett

COMING EVENTS

Friday 27th November

7.30pm Friars Hall, School Street
'A Mayor's Tale'.

A talk by Adrian Osborne.

Friday 11th December ***

7.30pm Friars Hall, School Street
Christmas Buffet and Quiz.

Bring your own drinks.

Tickets £10.

2016

Friday 29th January

7.30pm Friars Hall, School Street
'We'll Meet Again'.

A talk by Bryan Thurlow.

Friday 26th February

7.30pm Friars Hall, School Street
'Dad's Army'.

a talk by Elizabeth Brown.

Friday 18th March

7.30pm Friars Hall, School Street
AGM followed by a talk by Mark Bills,
Director, Gainsborough's House.

Friday 29th April 7.30***

7.30pm Friars Hall, School Street
'Call My Bluff'. Followed by Fish and Chips from the
Codfather. Bring your own drinks.

*** Booking essential

Contact Rosemary on
01787 372186 for more details

All other events

£2 members

£3 non members

NOTE After Jan 1st the charge will
be

£3 members

£5 non members

Eagle-eyed readers among you will
have spotted the new title of this
publication. You will also have
noted more pages and pictures.

Now we need more contributions
and pictures!

HOW TO CONTACT US

Chairman

Lorna Hoey
379598

Vice- Chairman

Robin Drury
373710

Minutes Secretary

Sue Ayres
310219

Treasurer

Position to be filled

Membership Secretary

Tina Read
464507

Planning

Stephen Thorpe
881661

Press Officer

Anne Grimshaw
375736

Events

Rosemary Woodward
372186

NewsJournal

Patricia Thorpe
881661

Other Members

Pat and Roy Laithwaite
377697

John Taylor
373921

Sam Thornton
375646

Copy date for next issue
31st January 2016

WHAT IS THE SUDBURY SOCIETY?

The Sudbury Society is a non-political Civic Society whose mission is to conserve what is of value in Sudbury and surrounding area, and tries to ensure that new works enhance our heritage.

In short, The Sudbury Society cares for the past and the future.

Members meet on the last Friday of months September to May at Friars Hall, School Street, Sudbury. During the summer months members visit places of historic or heritage interest.