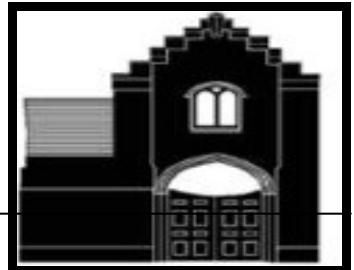


# IPSWICH BUILDING PRESERVATION TRUST

# NEWSLETTER



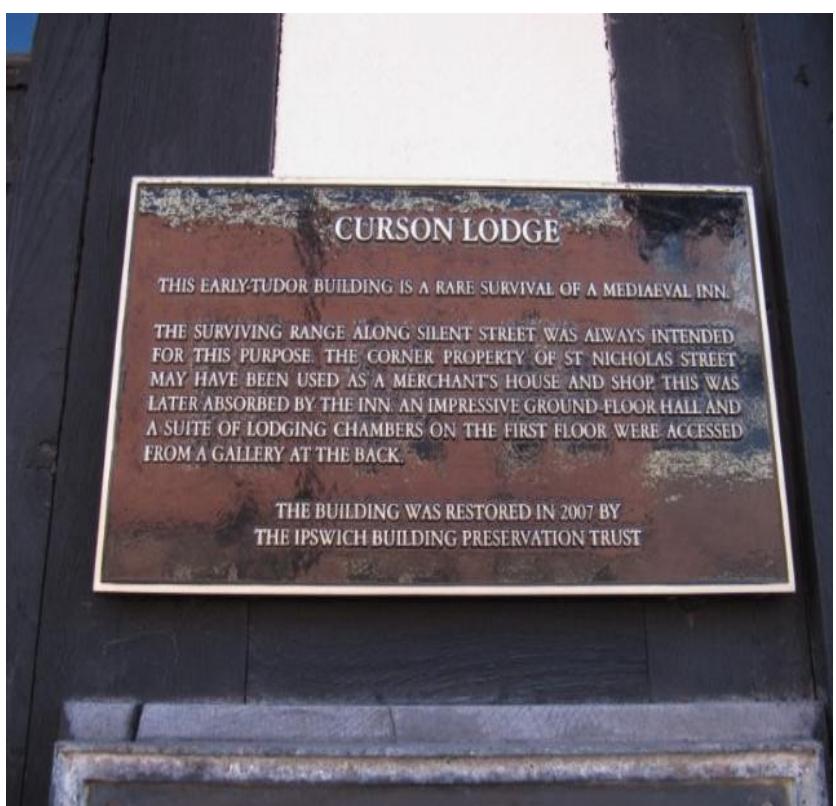
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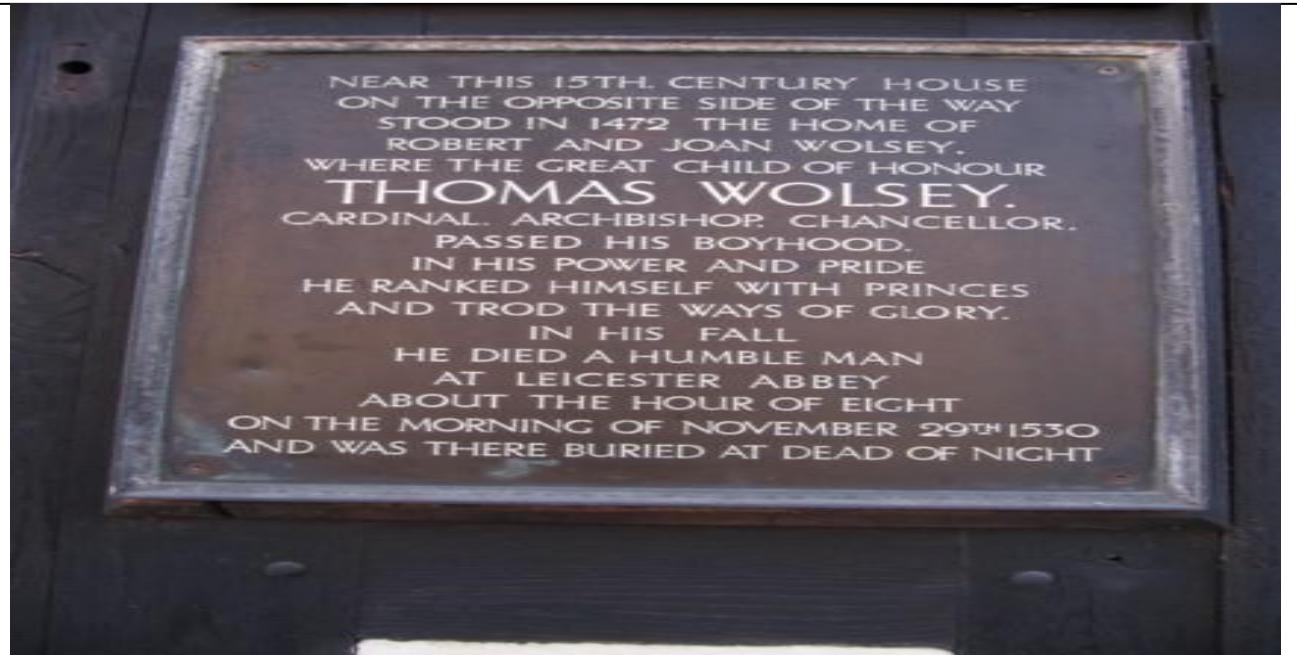
[www.ibpt.info](http://www.ibpt.info)

**BUILDING VISIT:** A visit to the Penoyer Centre is planned for all IBPT members this autumn. See page 9

## Curson Lodge

We are at last in the happy position of reporting that the remaining units of this major restoration have been transferred to new owners. A project that we began to consider almost ten years ago has finally come to an end. We can be proud of the final result in that this prominent historic building has been fully restored after years of neglect and will once more make a positive contribution to the fine townscape of the St Nicholas area. We also now have the much needed revenue from the sale to create a fund for future projects. The process of sale has not been without incident. We were unfortunate that the project was completed just as the recession began to affect all business activity. Originally we planned to market the whole complex as a single concern, but it became necessary to market separately two distinct units of shops with residential accommodation above. This led to an extended period of frustration and anxiety as we debated how best to proceed and we followed up a range of possible trails, often with no positive outcome and little sense of progress. At the same time the funds tied up in the project prevented us making substantial progress on future projects, other than keeping a weather-eye for buildings at risk. In addition, an error that originated with the connections between the flats and





their supply meters produced an extraordinary saga of protracted correspondence, meter reading (almost by candle light) and the involvement of debt recovery agencies on behalf of the ever-changing energy suppliers. The brunt of these absurd difficulties fell on several members of the executive committee who had to gather evidence and monitor the meters, but our treasurer, John Rendle, was driven almost to distraction by the Byzantine bureaucracy of bills and letters. This is one aspect of the project we shall be very glad to see the back of.

In the five years since the completion of the project there has of course been some minor deterioration of paint finishes, plastering and so on which have required monitoring visits and remedial work, together with some concerns about humidity and its effect on flooring. It will give us all great pleasure to see the buildings fully in use and making their contribution to a vibrant street scene.

#### EAST ANGLIAN ASSOCIATION OF PRESERVATION TRUSTS (APT) - jottings from the Ipswich Meeting - Friday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2011

The meeting began with an excellent presentation from Peter Hughes of The Charity Bank, itself a registered charity offering affordable finance to organisations that may not be able to borrow from commercial lenders on affordable terms. The bank lends to registered charities as well as community associations, voluntary organisations, community businesses, social enterprises, social landlords, and community interest companies. It offers loan finance ranging from a few thousand pounds to £1m helping those organisations that require funds for building purchase and refurbishment or to finance new developments.

**Update from Ian Rice (Architectural Heritage Fund - AHF)** Ian reported that the Grants scheme is very busy and oversubscribed, but no eligible application has been turned down. Amounts lent are lower. Development loans up to £50K are available at 2½% interest, with a loan period of 18 months. Further applications for loans will be considered in May.

There are some new sources of funding:

**Challenge Fund** - £1m from Andrew Lloyd Webber has been match funded to give a pot of £2m for grants up to £200k for Grade 1 and Grade 1\* buildings at risk which though welcome will not go very far. There needs to be partnership working on projects and this is proving a particular challenge.

**Cold Spots** – These are in two identified geographic areas, South Wales and East Midlands. In addition, industrial buildings show a dearth of applications to AHF and have been targeted for funding with additional funds from English Heritage . There are no formal deadlines for applications.

**Industrial Heritage at Risk** – under EH rules ‘industrial’ includes mining, quarrying, processing and manufacturing, ironworks, engineering, brickmaking, organic process (food, drink & leather), warehousing, power and utilities, wind & water, power stations, water & sewage works. Also covered are bridges, railways, docks and harbours. This therefore provides very wide criteria for buildings between 1750 and 1914. Workers housing is not included and there is a question mark over agricultural buildings, but there seemed to be little that did not fall within the EH rules.

**Cold spot funding** gives grants of £5,000 maximum. Ghetty Trust has given £30K and English Heritage £30K specifically for industrial heritage buildings.

In the wider context this has been a year of change. The previous three years have seen cuts in staff and budgets at the AHF. Now with EH additional funding there can be increases in capacity for the future.

Dates of next year's Conference are **18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> October 2012** at St George's Church Theatre, Great Yarmouth.

Proposed Date of Next EAPT Meeting is **Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2012** in Norwich.

After a break for lunch at DanceEast, the meeting continued in the café with updates from individual Trusts as follows:-

**St Osyths Priory** – Sonia Grantham represented a group of people keen to set up a Preservation Trust and/or receive advice to save St Osyths Priory which is currently under threat from development. She was advised to discuss with SPAB if the £26m repair costs quoted by developers is realistic. The challenge is to put forward a really good business case for alternative to development. UKAPT may be able to help in supporting them at a meeting with Tendring DC.



(Richard Thomas © Photography)

**East Suffolk BPT** – has experienced difficulties in indentifying a project, but the Trimley Railway Station project is to go ahead.

**Bawdsey** – can now move the project forward without lease. Concern over public/private benefit. Next step is restoration of building and visitor attraction. Owners keen not to have large numbers of visitors. The 10 trustees are also volunteers.

**Norwich** - Part bad news part good. Gybsons Conduit now fully restored. Howard House in hands of administrators. Bitterns Arms tea rooms/restaurant – granted 21 year lease by Norwich City Council. EH grant agreed. Rent £8K p.a. will fund project.

Norwich BPT prefers to hold on to renovated properties and lease out for on-going income.

**North Norfolk PT** – needs 40mm Ack Ack gun! Old Chapel, Cromer will be developed for long term use as heritage centre.

**Broadland PT** – a proposed project has become non viable due to the requirement to provide 3 affordable houses.

**New Trust set up for Bentley Hall Barn** – a grade 2\* listed barn with bats.

**Bury Town Trust** – Pakenham Water Mill still has leak in pond. Considering whether Little Hall, Lavenham should be kept as museum or rented out as shop. Possibility of partnership for use of Thelnetham Mill.

**Mid Essex** – a 17<sup>th</sup> C property outside Chelmsford had an elderly lady resident, who has now moved out and the property sold and renovated privately. Edies Farmhouse, Gestingthorpe – there is a possibility of the Trust buying this Grade 2 listed property which is now on the market.

**Broom Hill Pool, Ipswich** – 3 options, Ipswich Borough Council to make decision in 10 days.



After the meeting Bob Kindred explained the background



to the renovation of St Peters Church and took visitors despite the failing light and cold, on a walk to view the waterfront development and hinterland. The background to several buildings-at-risk were explained: St Mary Quay, 1-5 and 4 College Street and also past/possible future IBPT projects including Curson Lodge & Old Bell Inn. A small number of visitors were also taken on to Broom Hill pool by Mike Cook.

## HOLYWELLS ORANGERY – Further Progress with the Heritage Lottery Fund Application for Holywells Park

Our Chairman has now received a letter from Councillor Rudkin confirming that the first stage of the Heritage Lottery Application has been successful. There is no expectation that the Trust will become involved financially in the project, but we can certainly play a very positive role in promoting the scheme for the Orangery in pursuit of the values and principles that IBPT represents. Our moral support and expertise we hope will contribute in some ways to the eventual realization of the project. The following article is largely taken from the Borough Council press release on their website.

### **“Parks for People application”**

*The Council is delighted to announce the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund has been successful. A first round pass and a development grant of £182,500 has been awarded to progress the project to the second round application stage, to be submitted by August 2012.*

*This is a tremendous achievement, made all the more possible by the support provided by local councillors, individuals, organisations and schools.*

*The first round pass will enable the Council to continue to work with the Friends of Holywells Park and other partners on this restoration project. This news comes at an important time for the park in its 75th Anniversary year and builds on the Green Flag success earlier in the year.*

*Key points of the second round of the bid include:*

- recruitment of a Project Manager, Community Engagement Officer and part-time Support Officer.
- further consultation in the park and surrounding areas, update the Audience Development Plan.
- appointment of consultants to inform the bid and develop the proposals.
- production of a Conservation Management Plan, Training Plan, Master plan, Management & Maintenance Plan for the Stable Block and Orangery, Volunteer Policy and Media Plan.
- submission of planning applications.

*We just wanted to take this opportunity to express our most sincere thanks for the support received so far and how much the Council is looking forward to developing the project to-*

Above: Holywells Mansion Tower



Above: The orangery in protective cladding

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gether the Friends of Holywells Park and other partners. Together, we believe, we will deliver a first class Round Two application which will finally unlock the capital funding required to restore this important, much loved park.

In brief, if the application is successful the following improvements for the park will be made possible:

- restoration of the Stable Block and Orangery, enabling public access and improved visitor facilities, such as refreshments and toilets;
- provision of an outdoor performance area to improve linkages between the Stable Block and Orangery;
- restoration of key landscape features including ornamental gardens and terrace features;
- improvement of park entrances to make them more welcoming;
- improvements to the general fabric of the park including paths, ponds, woodland trails, signage, seating;
- provide improved interpretation on the history of the park;
- develop a programme of activities to encourage greater involvement of local groups, organisations and individuals;

**Below: Holywells Park and Orangery, the latter still under wraps**



(left) *The Old Bell, Ipswich*



## The Old Bell – Appraisal Grant Application

Following the successful conclusion of the Curson Lodge project, the Executive Committee has been actively considering a number of possible schemes. By far the most compelling is the plight of the Old Bell public house. We originally visited the site some 18 months ago. It is reputed to be the oldest purpose-built pub in the town and has been out of use for some years. It occupies a very prominent site, and in addition to its timber frame, it retains some interesting decorative features such as carved spandrels and some original internal features. It would be ideal if a future use could re-instate the pub, but the location presents severe challenges for a successful venture of that kind. There is, however, potential for housing, both in the pub itself and by using adjoining land. There may well be other possible uses to secure the building's future.

A particularly exciting possibility is that we might be able to work jointly with Orwell Housing Association, whose anniversary falls this year.

Our first step has been to set up a small working committee, and we are submitting an application to the Architectural Heritage Fund for an Options Appraisal Grant. This will enable us to take a serious look at

the potential of the building and its site, with appropriate advice from various professional bodies. In due course any possible schemes could be matched against finances available and the cost of acquiring the property. Currently the asking price is £225,000, a considerable reduction in the original figure. However, the condition of the building suggests that very substantial sums would have to be spent on restoration, and the overall viability of the scheme remains to be determined.





## A VISIT TO COPPED HALL

by Margaret Hancock

### COPPED HALL, EPPING

First impressions of Copped Hall are that any BPT would be mad to take it on. The building has an extensive Georgian frontage with masonry still bearing the marks of a fire in 1917, windows are shuttered, and the entrance door leads into a shell of a building. Add to this the knowledge that when the M25 was constructed the estate became highly desirable to developers with a price tag of £19m, the house was a popular 'recreation ground' for hordes of local vandals, the extensive grounds were completely overgrown with brambles and you would seriously doubt the sanity of the small group of people determined to save the building and bring its fascinating history back to life. This is a massive undertaking as the property includes not just the Georgian core of the house, but Victorian alterations, extensive & expensive stables – the horses had solid teak stalls and tiled walls - and a rackets court, as well as a 4 acre 18<sup>th</sup> century walled kitchen garden and an extensive Italianate architectural garden constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century complete with temples, grand flights of steps, gates, fountains and statuary. Regular archaeological excavations in the grounds add to the history of the site and are focussing on the remains of the earlier Tudor mansion, home/prison to a Catholic Queen

Mary during the staunchly Protestant reign of her brother Edward VI.

Undaunted by the scale of the undertaking Alan Cox and his fellow trustees of what is now the Copped Hall Trust fought on against local planners and heritage bodies whose preference was for a scheme to con-



vert the house into hotel with golf club in the grounds. Plans for the scheme are displayed in the entrance hall and to quote Alan would have been failed if produced by a 2<sup>nd</sup> year architecture student! The story of the setting up of the Trust, and its military campaign against weeds, vandals and crumbling masonry is inspirational. This is still 'work in progress' and bearing in mind the scale of the property is likely to remain one for many years but this lends a very special charm to visitors. Standing in a space that

once contained a grand staircase Alan announces “I think we’ll start here very soon, it’s a popular project with the Friends of Copped Hall (there are now 1,000 of them) – all we have to do is raise about £2,000 per tread”.

And that’s the philosophy behind the project, concentrate on small sections that are achievable; make a room safe for public access, usable and therefore income generating. Take for example the Rackets Court, not finished but basically converted for use as a café and shop where volunteers provide excellent home cooked food and surplus produce from the walled garden is sold. Or the dining room regularly hired out for dinners to august bodies like the London livery companies; the walls may not be plastered and the elegant fireplace is a full size photograph of what might go there when the money is raised but it’s watertight and warm with comfortable chairs and beautifully laid tables and no doubt the food served is of excellent quality.

I look forward to my next visit to see further progress.



For further info <http://www.coppedhalltrust.org.uk>

### **FUTURE VISITS FOR IBPT MEMBERS AND FRIENDS**

#### **Visit to Pennoyer Centre – Pulham St Mary – on the A140 north of Diss**

A visit to this “*..contemporary facility for business, community and heritage*” is being arranged for later this autumn for all IBPT Members, families and friends. This will be in the morning and we expect to go on to view other sites of interest in the area during the afternoon. The following details are taken from the Pennoyer website

**The Pennoyer Centre ([www.Pennoyer.org.uk](http://www.Pennoyer.org.uk))  
– 01379 676660**

**The history of the inspirational Pennoyer Centre spans the Middle Ages, the Civil War, Victorian England and the 21st century. What was once a spiritual centre has evolved via a complex history of (sometimes dubious) trading, benevolence and schooling into a contemporary facility for business, community and heritage. Please see our history page for details of the Guild Chapel, time line and activities of William Pennoyer.**



Architecturally, the award-winning building is a harmonious marriage of three different elements – 15th century Guild Chapel, Victorian school extension and 21st century atrium of steel, oak and glass. Multi-function in conception, the school rooms and old Chapel have been sympathetically restored.

Abundant natural light with contemporary steel and oak finishes create a wonderful ambience throughout the ground floor. On the first floor, a suite of rooms is available for meetings and training - including a fully-equipped IT suite with state of the art technology for delivery of training or presentations. A viewing gallery with a floor-to-ceiling glass wall overlooking the Guild Chapel is an area for heritage interpretation and display. For a description of floor plans, layouts and equipment please see our Venue Booking page.

**STOP PRESS:** Since preparing this newsletter, the vendor of The Old Bell has decided to put the building up for auction on the 20th June. This means we will have to carry out the options appraisal very rapidly in order to decide whether we can bid at the auction and, if so, how much.

Despite being on the market for several years and a reduction in the asking price, no offer has been accepted and the condition continues to deteriorate. Whether the Trust has a part to play in the restoration of this important, grade II\* listed building remains to be seen; we will keep you posted.