

Ipswich Unitarian



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August/September 2016

Celebrations!

July was a month of celebrations and we wish Hottensiah and Robert Waller every happiness in their married lives together. The Meeting House was full of family, friends, members of the congregation and well wishers for their wedding on Saturday 16th July. The service was led by our minister Lewis Connolly and prayers and blessings were also given by Rev Edwin Mbugua Kabathi and Rev Cliff Reed.



Robert and Hottensiah outside the side door of the Meeting house following their wedding. More photos inside the newsletter!

We also celebrated the 40th wedding anniversary of Cliff and Paulette Reed. Paulette brought in photos from their wedding on 17th July 1976. They don't look a day older! We were interested to see that the flower arrangements for both weddings were in red and white – a lovely choice. Below is a photo of Cliff and Paulette beside Robert and Hottensiah's wedding flowers



Pokémon GO

On 14th July the mobile phone app PokémonGO was released and now you will find people searching for Pokémon characters which they then 'catch' by throwing a Poké Ball using the phone's camera. There are Pokéstops located at interesting places such as art installations, historical markers and monuments. In fact there is one Pokémon between our Meeting House and the Willis building. Lewis used this phenomenon to consider what we consider as real in his service on 24th July, entitled 'Monsters on Friars Street!' Pokémon are welcome into the MH too!

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A COUSIN OF THE IPSWICH MEETING HOUSE

If there had not been a long walk up a steep hill on a hot and humid day with the arthritis bits arguing with my knee and hip joints and the rather lush Jurassic and Cretaceous in front of the building initially distracting my attention, I would probably have noticed it. It was only when I was inside that I became aware of an increasing sense of *déjà vu*.

The occasion happened last month (June) whilst on holiday in the East Devon / West Dorset area. I was with my eldest son visiting the Dinosaurland Museum at Lyme Regis. It took a little while for me to notice the surroundings in an area crammed with fossils of all kinds and full size reproduction dinosaurs. But there it was: the gallery, two large pillars and a clock in exactly the same position as the one at Ipswich. It was then that I realised that the museum was certainly, if not a sister, a close cousin of the Ipswich Unitarian Meeting House,

The layout was generally the same, with two pillars in the same position of the I.U.H.M. 'ships masts' although square, and a surrounding gallery. Windows were in similar positions but the beautifully made pulpit had been removed and was at one side of the building complete with sounding board. The building had a double hipped roof, but, unlike the Ipswich Meeting House, was built of the local stone. One of the pillars is made of stone, the other having a wooden core. This is reputed to be one of the masts of the 'Mayflower'. Although there is no direct evidence for this, it is by no means impossible as the Mayflower was broken up at Plymouth and parts of the vessel distributed to non-conformist churches in the south of England.

The building was described as 'a fine example of a Georgian Meeting House', a Congregationalist Church where the first sermon was preached on November 23rd, 1755. Later a United Reform

Church, it closed in 1986. It is Grade 1 listed.

Of interest was the fact that Mary Anning (1799 - 1847), one of the first collectors of fossil remains, was a member of the congregation. She was also one of my granddaughter's heroines!

The emphasis of the museum on Charles Darwin certainly provided a Unitarian interest.

My son (who holds a Geology degree) and myself can heartily recommend the Museum and it is well worth a several hour visit if you have the time and are in the area. There is a huge amount to see. It is crammed full of fossils of many kinds with an emphasis on those found locally. It is a completely privately owned museum, the proprietor, Steve Davies having been the senior palaeontologist for BP. His short pamphlet on the 'History of the World@ is succinct and informative reading. He holds strong views on the 'dumbing down' of museums and the lack of amateur access to publicly owned museums and collections by the 'experts' with the consequent marginalisation of the non-professional. The museum receives no public funding whatsoever. Although one has great regret at the closing of beautiful old Churches and Meeting Houses, that of the Lyme Regis United Reform Church is one of the best of fates that could happen.

Ian Gray



There are also reminders inside this building of the Ipswich Museum in High Street with the fine examples of Victorian taxidermy and other fascinating attractions. (*Ed.*)

Wo/manning the Meeting House

Throughout the summer months and into September, we open our Meeting House to visitors and any people curious to come in and see what beauties it holds. We rely on the goodwill of volunteers to be there to answer questions (and to find out the answers if they don't know!). We would like to thank everyone who has given their time and especially Rosemary Hamilton who has been responsible for overseeing and ensuring we have enough people to open on three days a week – Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. So a big round of applause for – Carol and Andrew Gibbs; Malcolm and Sandra Hawes; Jenny Pile; Ann Baepler; Paulette Reed; Margaret Hutchins; Karen Tricker; Miranda McInnes; Tessa Forsdike; Lesley Southgate and apologies to anybody who I have missed.



Here is a photo of Lesley beside the new banners we are using this summer to advertise that we are open and to welcome any interested people. Lesley volunteers mainly on Tuesdays and says she has met 'a lot of nice people' during her sessions. Lesley has been interested in Ipswich and its history and has taught family history locally too. She grew up in the Stoke area of Ipswich and was invited to one of our Christmas Carol Services. Once she came into the building she fell in love with it. Lesley says she especially loves seeing the reaction when people come into the Meeting House for the first time – it is a real 'WOW' factor and they often even gasp audibly at the beauty.

More wedding photos –



Robert and Hottensiah with the three ministers involved in their wedding ceremony.



Views from the balcony, inside the Meeting House during the ceremony and (below) in the courtyard with Robert's family



Our Sound System

It will not have escaped the notice of everyone at our Sunday services that the Meeting House sound system is in need of some attention. At the last Trustees' Meeting we approved an estimate for the necessary work to be done, so before too long all sound should be reliably relayed loud and clear through our speakers!

Ann Baepler

UFOS

The **Unitarian Focus on Seeing** project invites us all to look at what goes on around us and to take a photo linked to a different title each month. The theme for July was 'After the rain'



Here is a contribution from Riena Jackson of a road in St Petersburg after an enormous downpour. She says – 'Water came straight down from the roofs onto the road but it was amazing how quickly it disappeared.'

August's subject is 'Sport' with the Olympics in mind perhaps? September's subject is 'Holidays'.

A Poem in Celebration – in recognition of their 40 years of marriage Cliff wrote Paulette a poem –

I've been to many weddings
and conducted quite a few.
Some were dire but most were
happy enough. Some were really
special and a few, a very few, were
truly magical.
But the best wedding I ever went to –
forty years ago, in the summer of '76 –
was my own, when I married the
beautiful woman I love on a glorious
afternoon in Golders Green.
And what a party followed!

I remember it well – or most of it, anyway!
The wine and champagne flowed very free,
in a garden in Islington, where we cut the
cake with a cavalry sword.

We were surrounded by the diverse faces
of our diverse families and friends. They
were an improbable assemblage, but a
happy one!

All too many of that company have gone,
now, claimed by the Reaper or just faded
from our lives. We couldn't gather them
all together again, however hard we tried.

But some are still around who remember that
joyous day. We may be a depleted company,
grown older, but were the call to go out, there
are enough new faces to restore our ranks on
another glorious summer's afternoon.

*Cliff Reed,
for 17th July 2016*

Happy Birthday -

In August to – Christine Hyde and Madeleine Spence on 11th; Phil Chatfield on 15th; Saskia Sakals on 20th; Jenny Spence on 21st; John Stevens on 23rd; Sidonie Sakals on 31st.

In September to – Karen Tricker on 7th; Thomas Shaw on 8th; Freddie Gray on 14th; Ann Baeppler on 20th

Events for your diary – in August –

5th at 6pm at the MH Hall – talk by Dan Cohen – 'New Moral Absolutisms & Genocide – Lessons from the Holocaust'.

6th & 7th 10am to 9pm – Ipswich Waterfront Celebration

21st – after the service – Fundraising BBQ at Maggie Hodges' home.

In September – 6th – Trustees Meeting

10th – Suffolk Historic Churches Bike Ride

10th & 11th – Ipswich Heritage Open Days – volunteers to man the Meeting House please.

Ipswich Unitarian Newsletter – This

issue covers two months because of holidays. For contributions to future newsletters, please email them to Tessa at - ipswichunitarian@gmail.com or post them to 48 Crabbe Street, Ipswich IP4 5HS before the copy deadline for the next issue of Friday 30th September If you would like to be added to the mailing list to receive this regularly by email, please just send us a request.

To contact our secretary Riena Jackson, ring 01473 210064/email - mjack76748@aol.com

To contact our Minister, Lewis Connolly, you can email him at reviewisconnolly@gmail.com or ring him on 01473 422528

Thought for the month –

The opposite of love is not hatred, it's indifference
– *Elie Wiesel*