



Open at Last ...

We will be opening our Meeting House for visitors on the last day of May (30th) from 2 to 3pm, while our organist Robert plays a selection of music. Those who visited on 16th May enjoyed the chance to see the new facilities and to admire how well the craftsmen and women had restored our building. You are welcome to come and sit, reflect, or just to have a look round. The first live service back in the building is on 27th June – and we aim to stream it too!



Photo © Historic England Patricia Payne

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Congratulations to Claire and Henry!



We wish Claire and Henry every happiness together after their wedding on Saturday 15th May. The civil ceremony took place at Ipswich Library and the wedding party (restricted for numbers because of the Covid guidelines) then came to the Meeting House for a blessing ceremony led by Rev Cliff Reed, followed by refreshments outside.

The couple had designed and made their own wedding rings and had their outfits specially made in their favourite colours, which are reflected in the cake decorations.

Volunteers from the congregation set up the tables and acted as waitresses, serving the food and bubbly.

It was a shame that the rest of the congregation was unable to be present, but our good wishes come from us all.

Thanks to Maggie Hodges who arranged some of the flowers and took this photo.

Looking forward to Suffolk Pride 2021

July 23rd – 25th

Last year, *Suffolk Pride 2020* went digital as did so many activities during the pandemic, and saw a group of us Ipswich Unitarians contributing a short (and spirited!) video to the range of online celebrations reaching a wide audience. This year, although Suffolk Pride weekend is still a couple of months away, Ipswich's new Archive Center, *The Hold*, on Fore Street heralds future events through the opening of a vibrant and richly informative new exhibition, 'Pride in Suffolk's Past,' that explores the lives and loves of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender non-conforming individuals in our region. Curator, Emily Shepperson, underscores that the preparatory research for the exhibition (opened at the end of May) has been extensive, stretching over the last two years. And as with all research on a group whose lives and loves have been subject to harsh societal sanctions (medical, religious, legal, criminal), the research has called for "reading between the lines," looking beyond official documents and instead focusing on personal correspondence and diaries for example.

In an article that appeared in *The Ipswich Star* (May 21st), Shepperson notes that with an exhibition that spans several centuries, it was important to avoid the presentism of imposing contemporary labels and behaviours on past lives when referring to non-conforming lives and loves. Some of the exhibits feature well-known lives, such as the relationship between Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears. However, the exhibition also throws light on relationships that have received less attention, such as that between surgeon and suffragette, Louisa Garrett Anderson (founder of the Women's Hospital Corps in WWI) and Dr Flora Murray (Emmeline Pankhurst's personal physician) in the early twentieth century. This little foretaste indicates that the 'Pride in Suffolk's Past' exhibition (open until July 4th) offers a fabulous lens through which to discover regional knowledge of intimacies often subjugated by

dominant historical narratives.

Another part of the lead-up towards the Suffolk Pride weekend in July, Pride 2021 has organised three days of online seminars on 'Queering the Curriculum' for June 24th – 26th in collaboration with the University of Suffolk. Central to the questions that participants will address are the following: What does it mean for instructors to incorporate sexual and gender minority identities and experiences into the curriculum? How can the curriculum challenge heteronormativity and cisnormativity? How does such an inclusive framework positively affect and transform students' lives and experiences in higher education and beyond? The breadth and urgency of the questions posed make these seminars relevant for all of us engaged in generating inclusive community building practices in our work as Unitarians.

But what does the organizing team of *Suffolk Pride 2021* have lined up for the weekend of July 23rd – 25th itself? Instead of the Pride Parade on the waterfront, the team have planned a richly diverse series of events throughout the weekend.

Arlington's on Museum Street will be the venue for their Friday night drag show and party on the 23rd: it's the only ticketed event, and will be live-streamed. *Cult Café* will host a music event co-organised with *Suffolk MIND* and *Outreach Youth* during the weekend. And then on Sunday July 25th, *Christchurch Park* will be the venue for a path-breaking family-friendly theatre event staged by *Queer Rural Connections*. The latter is a project launched by Timothy Allsop, the director, writer and actor who seeks not only to explore, document and dramatize queer rural lives in collaboration with *The MERL*, *The Museum of East Anglian Life*, and researchers at Oxford University. Allsop's promenade show and documentary film seeks to 'challenge the idea that being queer means being urban,' and to correct the assumption that the countryside tends to be a heterosexual space. Historical research is central to Allsop's project. Trained as a

Looking forward to Suffolk Pride 2021 – cont.

historian at *Balliol College*, Oxford and a graduate of *The Guildhall School of Music and Drama*, Allsop's interdisciplinary background equips him to uncover little known East Anglian rural lives, and also to exercise an ethical imagination to fill in the blanks when dramatizing them. The ethical imagination came into play, Allsop notes, when dramatizing the lives of Nina Layard, an archaeologist from Ipswich, and one of the first women to enter *The Society of Antiquaries*, who lived with her partner, Mary.

The *Suffolk Pride 2021* organising team has many other events in the works for the weekend itself, ranging from a football tournament to small workshops (e.g., unconscious bias training). The *Suffolk Pride's* School Team is pushing forward with compiling resources for sex education programmes in schools with a greater emphasis on consent and healthy relationships; close working relationships are developing between *Suffolk Pride* and *Suffolk Fire and Rescue*, the *Suffolk Constabulary*, Ipswich Hospitals, the *Terrence Higgins Trust*, promoting sexual health and HIV prevention, and the *James Paget University Hospital*, Great Yarmouth. Dates and times for all the weekend events will be available once confirmed on the *Suffolk Pride 2021* website.

Finally Suffolk Pride 2021 isn't allowing the energy to fade after the weekend itself. For the month of August, Dance East will be hosting a Pride art exhibition extending the role of LGBTQ+ creative work in our area.

www.suffolkpride.org.uk

by Liz Constable

Poetry Group

The Group will next meet on Thursday 24th June at 2pm to discuss work by Emily Dickinson.

If you would like to join us please contact Riena Jackson - mjack76748@aol.com

Friends of the Ipswich Unitarian Meeting House

Sometimes there are chicken and egg problems which challenge us and we have one of these to solve for the Friends Group ... we have an initial committee, a draft constitution, volunteers to be Secretary, responsible for Publicity, website creator, designer of the logo, contact with a designer for the leaflet and LOTS of enthusiasm for the launch of a Group to support the history and creative use of the building in our community ... but – so far we have no volunteer to be the first Treasurer.

Maybe you know someone who has some skills in this area who has an interest in historic buildings and who may be willing to find out more about the role and responsibilities?

If so, please contact Ann Baeppler - annbaeppler@gmail.com

A sense of humour helps ...



Book Group

The next group meeting will be via Zoom on Thursday 24th June at 7pm. We will be reading and discussing 'An American Marriage' by Tayari Jones. This was the winner of the Women's Prize for Fiction 2019 and is available in paperback.

To request a link to the meeting, contact Tessa Forsdike – tessa@tessajordan.co.uk

Memories and reflections

- an article by Marianne Prime which has been included in the last two issues of this newsletter – here is the final instalment.

1957 to 1974 continued -

An interesting point during this period was the annual visit of Professor Georges S Cooke to take our service one Sunday during Nicks holiday. Prof: Cooke was born in Alexandria Egypt of Syrian parents, and graduated from the Syrian Protestant College, Beirut. He held degrees of MA. And STB from Harvard and has served on the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and Unitarian Churches in Massachusetts, Maine, and Illinois, and California. He also had a distinguished career as a Professor of German, and visited Germany as well as Suffolk each summer. He enjoyed coming to speak to us just as much as we enjoyed having him. During his last visit whilst staying with his niece in Stowmarket, he became ill and died, his wishes were – that his ashes be buried in our grave yard. Relatives came from Egypt for his funeral, they were also present at the internment of his ashes. The last job of work we all did together was to clear everything from the old hall in readiness for it to be demolished with the view of building our new hall. In 15 days Nick had died and we were left bereft!

The fact that the body of the Meeting House was full at his funeral service showed through the years he had made his presence felt in the town. I was speaking recently to a member of his congregation. She said, I quote “My abiding memory of Nick was his inspirational quality, and deep intellect and a spiritual content to his sermons which I had not heard before or since, and I am sure it was his personal quality as a human being which filled the Meeting House for his funeral, he was a rare man, and I think we all knew we would not see his like again”.

1974 – 1976

Once more we were left on our own resources, members taking the services until such time when Dr Edward Cahill came to us for six months. When he returned to America, he recommended the

the Rev Robert Holmes to come to us until such time as he was due to retire in two years – after a few months he left us saying “he didn’t like it here”!!!

1976

The Rev: Cliff Reed came to us in 1976, its now 1986 and Cliff is still with us, and what a change through the years!!! What was once a grave yard, is now partly a car park, on approaching the Meeting House, on our left is a garden of flowering shrubs and Spring flowers, to the right a lawn and flowering trees with a beautiful weeping willow, then the car park near the Meeting House. No more walking sedately down our drive into Friars St, we now laugh and talk as we wend our way towards our new hall for coffee and biscuits, a friendly chat or sometimes a kindly discussion on matters arising from the Minister’s sermon. Three times a year we have a midday meal, membership Sunday in January, the Anniversary in April and Harvest Festival in September. We have members coming in from Frinton-on-Sea, Halstead, Lawford, Dovercourt, Hadleigh, Felixstowe, Walton, Martlesham, Kesgrave, Saxstead, Rushmere-St-Andrew and Framsdon. This gives us a splendid opportunity of getting to know one another, and enjoy a pleasant hour or two. Paulette too has kept busy with the Sunday School. These numbers are increasing, she now has two helpers because of age groups. Although a number of our previous congregation have left us, for one reason or another, a considerable number of newcomers have joined – including Unitarians who have retired and come to live in Essex and Suffolk. Cliff is a keen member of the Christian CND we are also getting members in from that ‘cause’, our community is therefore now larger and one again very active, this is good and we look forward to still more brighter days ahead.

1986

Thank you to Linda King for finding this gem amongst the historic papers from the Meeting House.

**Timetable for Zoom Societies Days 17 – 19
June 2021**

Unitarian Societies: United in Diversity

Date & Time	Name of Society & Title of Slot
Thursday 17/6	
10.15	National Unitarian Fellowship <i>Sustaining Connections</i>
11.30	Unitarian Christian Association <i>The work of the Unitarian Christian Association</i>
12.30	Lunch
1.30	Penal & Social Affairs Panel <i>The importance of social action</i>
2.45	Unitarian Women's Group <i>Unitarian Women</i>
Friday 18/6	
10.15	Unitarian Historical Society <i>Philanthropy: the good and the bad</i>
11.30	Unitarian Renewal Group <i>Unitarian Renewal Group: Past, Present & Future</i>
12.30	Lunch
1.30	Unitarian Association for Lay Ministry <i>UALM – who's that for?</i>
2.45	Unitarian Music Society <i>Sixty Musical Minutes with the UMS</i>
Saturday 19/6	
10.15	Findhorn Unitarian Network <i>Meditation: This precious, precious moment</i>
11.30	Foy Society <i>Foy: the Unitarian Ginger Group</i>
12.30	Lunch
1.30	Unitarian Earth Spirit Network <i>Summer Solstice</i>
2.45	Unitarian Peace Fellowship <i>Compassion – the surest route to peace?</i>

Each day, we will gather at 10.00 am, for welcome and opening devotions, and close each day at 4.00 pm, following closing devotions. The Ministerial Fellowship will be leading the devotions for Thursday and Friday, the UPF on Saturday.

Services in June

6th June - Rev Cliff Reed. Minister Emeritus

13th June - Rev Michael Allured. Chair of LDPA.

20th June - Deb Johnson. Lighthouse Women's Aid

27th June - John Stevens. Member, Ipswich Unitarians

On the 27th June we will celebrate our return to the Meeting House with a service led by John Stevens, one of our members now living in London. John led the last service in the Meeting House on the 16th February 2020, the day before the beginning of the restoration project and our move to hold services in the Unitarian Hall.

We are also working on being able to stream the services from 27th June onwards for those who are not able (for whatever reason) to join us in person. We will send the information out to all on the email list who now receive the Zoom link for each service.

East Anglian Unitarian Women's Group.

The next gathering of the group will be on 15th June via Zoom and the following one on 27th July (hopefully) in person in Norwich. For an invitation or more details, contact Linda King - lindapendal@gmail.com

Photographic Display

Ipswich & District Photographic Society are unable to hold their usual display in the Town Hall this year due to Covid. Instead, the photographs have been put on their website www.idps.org.uk and can be viewed during the next 6 months.

The photographs are well worth viewing, especially those of the birds.

Linda King.

Ipswich CAN (Clean Air Now)

Good news - Towns and cities [up and down the country](#) are grasping the air pollution nettle and actively taking action to protect the health of their citizens. [Birmingham](#), for instance, is introducing its Clean Air Zone in just a couple of weeks, and the city won't stop there as it has a vision of becoming a healthy city.

What's next?

We are collaborating with other groups to work out what we should do next, and we are *asking you* what you think.

Please get in contact if you'd like to be more involved in this campaign or if you have ideas. We will get back to everyone who contacts us.

Tony Horner for Ipswich CAN ipswichcan@gmail.com

Great East Swim, 19 June 2021

Swim to raise funds for WaterAid -



You'll be swimming at Alton Water in Suffolk. After your swim, you can join spectators to enjoy farmers' markets and musical entertainment.

https://greatswim.org/great-east-swim?gclid=CjwKCAjwqckFBhAhEiwAfer7zUEgkR_tUqNw6XekEbx9UnaEuB7gbJnVOCoa7ALdy7IhTpXe1T1HxoCZFEQAvD_BwE

Birthdays in June

Happy birthday to Molly Stevens on 1st; Zoe Bradbrook on 2nd; Alison White on 6th; Ian Gray on 14th; Stephen Reed and Malcolm Hawes on 17th; Lucy Shaw on 22nd and June Teape on 30th
We hope the sun shines on you all.

The Power of Stories

Free tickets are now available to book for the Power of Stories exhibition, opening at Christchurch Mansion on 26th June. Three iconic costumes from Marvel Studios' Black Panther will be displayed alongside Marvel comics, historic museum objects and local stories. From music to movies, carvings to cartoons, this exhibition will ask how the stories we know shape the way we see the world.

Explore the varied methods of storytelling used by humans through time and across place and the ways stories can be used to shape thoughts, beliefs and memories. There will be collections from across the globe, shadow puppets, carved poles, storybooks, musical instruments, sculptures and cartoons.

https://www.powerofstories.co.uk/?mc_cid=b1d7410a35&mc_eid=44c804978e



Disclaimer – We welcome contributions from all members and friends of our congregation. Views expressed in the articles are those of the individual and not necessarily those of our congregation or of our Unitarian community

Contacts Contributions PLEASE for the next newsletter to Tessa before the deadline of Wednesday 23rd June by email to ipswichunitarian@gmail.com or post to 48 Crabbe Street, Ipswich IP4 5HS
To contact our Secretary ring 01473 728498 email tessa@tessajordan.co.uk
Website – www.unitarianipswich.com

Thought for the month

You wouldn't worry so much what people thought of you if you realised how seldom they did – quoted in The Times by James Badenoch QC