Rotary Club of Ipswich East

CREATE LASTING IMPACT

LOOKS EAST

The Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Ipswich East - D1080 | 2026-27, Edition 6: 9th October 2026

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Tuesday 13th October at 12:55pm
Speaker meeting: Sophie Mills and Sarah Hodges - Bookbanks
Menu: Salmon fillet

Tuesday 20th October at 5:00pm
Speaker meeting: John Cousins - Rewilding initiative
Menu: Beef bourguignon

Ipswich Bowls Club

Tuesday 27th October at 12:55pm
Business meeting
Menu: Sausage casserole

Please check Wild Apricot and Secretary's emails for Duty Rotarians

CLUB OFFICERS 2026-27

President	Steph Mackentyre
Senior vice-president	Eva Alcerreca
Junior vice-president	Robin Needham
Past-president	Steve Flory
Secretary	Robin Needham
Treasurer	Neill Keveren
Club service	Eva Alcerreca
Community service	Andy Lewis
Fundraising	Bill Robinson
International	Liz Harsant
Vocational	Ed Nicholls
Club membership	Mark Murphy
Almoner team	Tony Baker & Ray Walters
Environmental	Lucy Trenchard

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We have no upcoming birthdays for the rest of the month, so keep an eye out for next time!

OBITUARY: CLIFFORD SMITH

Clifford Smith CBE, 1929-2026

Clifford was born on 28-09-1929 in Grimsby, living there for most of his early and teenage years before his National Service in 1948. Prior to that, he worked as a Junior Draughtsman in the District Engineer for Docks Office Grimsby. He was fortunate to be posted to the Royal Signals unit at Edinburgh Castle, which also enabled him to continue his studies at Heriot Watt College.

His other stroke of good fortune was the advice given by a Royal Engineer colleague that he should pursue a career in Town Planning, which was very relevant in 1948 with the advent of new planning legislation and the need to set up Planning Departments in County and County Borough Councils. Rebuilding and re-energising the country were essential in those postwar years.

Following his demobilisation, Clifford joined the Town Planning Section of the Grimsby Borough Surveyor's Department in July 1950. This post was not only the first step on what would be an outstanding career pathway, but also led to him to meeting the love of his life – his beloved June – who was working in the very same section of the department; they were married in April 1953.

Disillusioned with his work environment at Grimsby, Clifford moved to Lincoln in 1952 and in the course of the next seven years, he moved four times, gaining more professional experience and knowledge, as well as honing his presentational skills, which were outstanding. His most valuable and calculated career moves were first to Coventry, which was highly regarded for its work in rebuilding the city after the war, and to Hertfordshire in 1959, where the Planning Department had gained a reputation as a "finishing school" for future chief planning officers.

Importantly, in 1956 he qualified as a Chartered Surveyor, which entitled him to go directly to the Final Examinations of the Town Planning Institute. Not only did he pass these, but he was awarded the Institute`s Pepler Prize for obtaining the highest marks in his year.

After nearly five years in Hertfordshire, Clifford's

career really took off when he was appointed Deputy County Planning Officer with E. Suffolk County Council, in January 1964. This appointment was speedily followed two years later by his promotion to County Planning Officer.

East Suffolk was facing pressures for change but lacked up-to-date planning policies or a county-wide strategy and there were no development plans for the county's towns. Clifford simply saw these challenges as an opportunity – remodelled the department and began the implementation of a work programme to meet the county's needs. By the late 1960s, plans for Lowestoft, Felixstowe, Woodbridge and Beccles had been produced while other major proposals now demanded attention. These included the expansion of Felixstowe Port and a new village along with the relocation of BT Research Station to Martlesham Heath.

Two major issues also confronting E. Suffolk at that time were a Government proposal to expand Ipswich by 70,000 people and Local Government re-organisation. The Ipswich proposal was eventually dropped because of opposition from E. Suffolk and Ipswich Councils. However, the re-organisation of the local authorities in Suffolk

Clifford and June after receiving his CBE award (1993)

would become Clifford's main pre-occupation from 1971 following his elevation to become Chief Executive of E. Suffolk County Council; the first Town Planner to be appointed to the top job, which had always been the preserve of a lawyer. This was because of the Courts Act of 1971, which removed the Clerk of the Peace function from local government jurisdiction, thus removing the need to appoint someone with a legal qualification.

In the next three years, much of Clifford's time was taken up with developing the structures for the new two-tier system of local government. The need for co-operative working was self-evident and the successful launch of the new Suffolk County Council and seven new District Councils on 1 April 1974 was achieved. As Chief Executive to the County Council, he also took on two other very important functions – Clerk to the Police Authority and Clerk of the Lieutenancy; these roles kept him fully occupied until his retirement in March 1990.

He was awarded the CBE in 1993 for his outstanding service to local government and the community in Suffolk, and was also appointed to the post of Deputy Lieutenant.

In his retirement, he was able to give more of his time to voluntary activities, particularly as a member of Ipswich East Rotary Club, being President in 1997-98, and the East Suffolk National Trust Association, where he was Chairman for a number of years; he even organised short-break holidays for local members. He was particularly pleased that each organisation offered him an opportunity to be involved with service to the community.

In conclusion, I have to say that I owe a great deal to Clifford for his advice and guidance during the years I worked with him – he was a first-class mentor to me, as he was for many others who knew him, an outstanding town planner and local government officer; above all, Christine and I were delighted to count him, June and the family as friends for over sixty years.

While friendship was very important to him, and he maintained links with many friends from his schooldays and working life, overriding everything else was his love for his family. A devoted husband and father of three daughters – Rosemary, Pamela and Sarah – Clifford was always aware that the support given by June enabled him to cope more readily with the pressures of his working life, particularly in the rather frenetic first decade of their years in Suffolk – a true partnership!

— Eric Barnett

Clifford's memorial service will take place tomorrow 10th October at 11:00 at St Andrew's Church, Rushmere.

For more details, please see email from Sec Robin dated 6 September.

New Members Evening

By Steph Mackentyre

Thank you to all those who came along to our New Members Night at the Railway at Westerfield. Supporting each other is something we do particularly well at Ips East, and it was lovely to see everyone making the effort to get to know our newest recruits.

Croquet Evening

By Steph Mackentyre

Des Cunningham organised another fantastic night of Croquet for our annual visit to the Ipswich Croquet Club on Bucklesham Road. Members from their club were kindly on hand to take us through our paces. It was a really enjoyable and at times competitive (!) evening rounded off by a curry at the Jairpur. Our grateful thanks to Des, here's to another in 2027.

Rotary Night at the Proms

By Eva Alcerreca

Last Wednesday 30 September we held our annual Rotary Night at the Proms (formerly senior citizens concert) at Copleston High School, where the over 200 attendees enjoyed a good session of music, comedy, tea and biscuits, and even a raffle!

As usual, the Ipswich Over 50's Brass Band provided the music, and the comedy of Richard Whymark had everyone in stitches (and blushed more than one face) with his antics. The refreshments during the intermission were very well-received, and the super efficient raffle system proved very successful in allocating prizes to the appropriate winners.

Overall, it was another wonderful evening for our senior citizens, masterfully organised by David Knights and Andy Lewis. President Steph thanked all those helping with the organisation ahead of the event and during the evening.

Robert Keus - The Great River Race

By Eva Alcerreca

On Tuesday 6 October, we had the visit of Robert Keus, who told us all about the Great River Race, a sort of "marathon" for rowers which has been taking place annually since 1988. It runs along the river Thames, covering almost 22 miles and crossing beneath 28 bridges.

The race is a sort of monument to the times when ferrymen would chase each other along and across rivers in order to catch the most passengers, and last year, 300 teams took to their gigs to try and best everyone else in their most ferryman spirit.

The race usually takes place in September and goes, with the tide, from Millwall to Richmond. Robert explained to us that each gig has a team of 6 rowers, a pilot and a coxswain, and the race organisation is very strict, following tight timelines and areas for launching the gigs, as well as specific instructions about where to cross under each bridge along the way.

After getting in the water at Millwall, the gigs are essentially tied up together and then towed all the way to Richmond, from where the race starts, to end up again in Millwall. This is due to the logistic difficulties that getting that many vessels and people to Richmond would entail.

Robert said that when trying to get into place, the atmosphere is friendly, but once the race starts, "nobody is nice anymore". Robert and his team, members of the Felixstowe Rowing Club, do this for "fun", and their best time ever completing the route was 3:11. The winning team got it in about 2 hours, so you can guess just how seriously some people take it!

Robert said that although the four times he's taken part have been great fun, ending up with blisters everywhere (including some "delicate" areas) is definitely a downside of the whole thing.

It was a very interesting talk, and David Chittick gave the vote of thanks before president Steph gave Robert a token of our appreciation for his time in coming to talk to us.

October
Fellowship Pub Night
14 October
6:30pm onwards
Marinero Lounge (waterfront)
No need to book, just show up!

THE ROCK 'N' ROLL PANTO
CINDERELLA
WRITTEN BY
Vikki Stone
New Wolsey Theatre
10 December 2026, 7:00pm
Tickets £25 each, register via Wild Apricot

From the Archives: The Shovel, Buttons and Our Charity Account - A Personal View

By Tony Baker

An old tradition of the club was that an ornate collection shovel was passed around at each lunch time meeting and club members would donate a small amount of money. Originally, it was to pay for the cost of a speaker's lunch. The use of the shovel was changed when the cost of speaker lunches was incorporated into the budget that was set to determine club member's monthly subscriptions. Club members then agreed that the collection from the shovel would be used to boost the charity account and a nominal sum of 50 pence was set.

Times changed and less members attended our lunch time meetings, so the overall burden for charitable giving fell to a falling number of club members who attended lunch on a regular basis. Our Treasurer at that time, Richard Porter, also found that the collection did not always match the number of club members who had attended lunch and that the collection often contained a collection of interesting foreign coins and buttons. At the same time, an opportunity arose whereby the club could take advantage of changes to the rules for Gift Aid. Therefore, all club members agreed to cease the shovel collections and make a donation under Gift Aid to our charity account at the start of each year in the sum of £26, the equivalent of 52 times 50p. Club members set up standing orders with their banks and completed gift aid forms, which were held by the treasurer. New members to the club were requested to complete the same procedure. The club treasurer was then able to make a claim for 25% of each donation to boost the donation from £26 to £32.50. The claim is a confidential matter and the treasurer will only inform the club of the total amount claimed back.

In financial terms, Gift Aid has advantages for both the club and for club members. A club member making a donation under Gift Aid, can reclaim the difference between their highest rate of tax and the basic rate of tax. Therefore if you pay tax at 40%, you can claim back 20% of your donation and thereby reduce a £26 donation to £20.80. Therefore

a donation costing an individual a net sum of £20.80 realises a gross sum of £32.50 for our charity account. For those paying tax at 55%, the net cost of the donation decreased from £26 to £16.90.

Inflation has greatly diminished the value of the original donation of £26. A quick assessment reveals that inflation has risen by 115% since the inception of our use of Gift Aid. Therefore each donation would now have to be £56 to have maintained the equivalent value of the original level of donation. I have made a personal decision to revise my annual donation. That decision is personal and confidential to me, but perhaps provides the answer to resolve the question that was raised recently in the club as to how senior club members might contribute to the overall objectives of the club, if they become unable to take part in hands-on service projects. It avoids any division in the club caused by the potential introduction of fund raising ventures such as a lottery[1]. Any decision regarding Gift Aid is a matter for each individual and is private and confidential, known only to that club member.

Donations using Gift aid are not restricted to occurring just once a year. We use Gift Aided donations at Christmas in lieu of sending Christmas cards to fellow Rotarians. Our names are then recorded in the Newsletter. In a similar manner, Gift Aided donations can be made at any time.

The use of the money that club members raise and donate is always under the strict control of club members. Applications for grants are made to the club and are scrutinised by the "Gang of Four" who assess, among many factors, worthiness, governance and value to the community. They make recommendations to club members at Business Meetings, Club members are then in a position to reject, or accept and then increase or reduce the recommended amount. Club members contribute to and are involved in a unique arrangement whereby they are involved in all aspects of the raising of charitable funds and then how those funds are to be used.

A donation using Gift Aid to our charity account enhances our ability to support charities and good causes in the Ipswich area, and senior club members may wish to use Gift Aided donations in lieu of a hands-on service contribution. However, it is a private and confidential decision for each individual. Each of us can determine our own donations to the charity account acknowledging the long standing history of the fund.

[1] *Note from Editor: the proposed venture of a lottery has been now officially dismissed by the Club and will not proceed any further.*

The Club Almoner Team is Here for You

THE CLUB ALMONER TEAM

The Club Almoner Team endeavours to play a broad role with members of the club with a target of making two home visits each month and contacting six club members by telephone. Confidential updates will be sent to club members by email. That information is confidential to club members and cannot be made known to a wider audience.

Any relevant information to Ray please.

WHERE HAVE ROTARIANS BEEN?

Neil & Helen Hewitt sent this lovely photo from beautiful Lake Como in Italy, where they recently had a holiday!

Mini honorary Rotarian James attended the Club's meeting on 6th October, his last day as a 0-year-old, and enjoyed being sung "Happy Birthday" to. Then he had a nap!

ROLLING CALENDAR

Date	Event
12th October	**Club Council meeting.**
13th October	**Speaker meeting: Sophie Mills and Sarah - Bookbanks.** Details and registration via Wild Apricot.
14th October	**Pub night - Marinero Lounge.** 6:30pm onwards. No reservation needed, just drop in!
20th October	**Speaker meeting: John Cousins - Rewilding, a local and private initiative.** Details and registration via Wild Apricot.
27th October	**Business meeting.** Details and registration via Wild Apricot.
3rd November	**Speaker meeting: Sabine Sutton - James' Team.** Details and registration via Wild Apricot.

Date	Event
10th November	**Speaker meeting: Eva Alcerreca - Day of the Dead.** Details and registration via Wild Apricot.
17th November	**Speaker meeting: Jo Ashton - Footsteps, Walking with You.** Details and registration via Wild Apricot.
27th November	**Wine Tasting Evening.** More details soon.
28th November	**Ukrainian Children's ChristmasWrap-a-thon 2026.** Details on page 12.
19th December	**Volunteering: Christmas Tree Lantern Parade.** Please see email from Sec Robin dated 8 October.
10th December	**Rock 'n Roll Panto: Cinderella.** New Wolsey Theatre, £24. Booking via Wild Apricot.

ONGOING COLLECTIONS

Remember we have an ongoing collection of ring pulls, as well as ink cartridges, which you can give to **Andy Lewis**.

The ring pulls are sent to the Philippines so that people there can make crafts to be sold, which helps them support their families.

John Button is still collecting postage stamps (they can be used ones), so if you're lucky enough to still receive any post with those, keep them and make sure to give them to him.

The Ipswich Rotary Club is collecting spectacles, which get forwarded to SpecSort York. After sorting and grading them, they're taken to Africa. Please contact Peter Rogers at: peterrogers327515@gmail.com.

LUNCH MENU

Date	Menu*
13th October	Salmon fillet
20th October	Beef Bourguignon
27th October	Sausage casserole

*Dietary requirements/Vegetarian option available upon request, please contact Eva Alcerreca at iercnewsletter@gmail.com

UPCOMING PROJECTS UPDATES

We have a few projects and activities coming up, and volunteers are welcome. Please contact the relevant club member and join in!

-Upcoming projects with dates TBD: Chantry walled garden for Activ Lives, Garden fence project for disadvantaged family, Decorating a house for family in need, Gardening assistance at St Peter's Churchyard, Furniture assembly and curtain rail fixing for family in need, Lighthouse Women's Refuge redecoration. More information on email from Sec Robin dated 29th August. Please contact Andy Lewis if you can help.

- Got 2 Read are looking for volunteers to give one hour per week to assist adults with literacy challentes. No physical effort required. Contact Andy Lewis.

- Greener Ipswich has created a series of planters in Ipswich TC which need watering. Help is needed to drive a van with a tank of water in the back around the town to do the watering. Please contact Andy Lewis if you can help.

- FareShare - are in need of van drivers and stores people 2 hours per week or per month. Please contact Andy Lewis if you can help.

- FIND: Christmas parcel deliveries - volunteers required to deliver the annual parcels. Please see all the details in email from Sec Robin dated 4 October, including where to sign up. Donations for the parcels are also encouraged.

- Community Action Suffolk are looking for volunteers and to come to our Club to talk about the work they do. Please contact Andy Lewis if you can help.

- Christmas Tree Lantern Parade - 19th December, 5:00 to 7:30pm. Volunteers required to marshal the event. Please contact Andy if you can help.

- Ukrainian Children's Christmas Wrap-a-thon 2026 - 28th November at Claydon High School - Organised by Ardent Hire Solutions, this year they've received 60 pallets of toys to wrap so far, so they are looking for about 180 volunteers to help with the wrapping. Music and nibbles provided, and it's always a great opportunity to ejoy some fellowship in the run up to the festive season. If you can help, please register at the following link: Register here for the Wrap-a-thon 2026

And that's it for today!

Just the usual reminder: to send photos, news, articles, stories, announcements, or any material (yes, even jokes) for publication in the newsletter, please address them to:

iercnewsletter@gmail.com

The deadline to receive items for publication will be the Tuesday prior to the next issue (so for the next issue, that will be 28th of October). Needless to say, I would be very grateful if members kept the deadline in mind for a timely publication of materials.
— Editor