

# Autumn Newsletter



California Social Club, 191-199 Foxhall Road. Ipswich IP3 8LB. Tel: 01473 720633

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### OCTOBER

- Sun 4th 130th Anniversary Party (ticket holders only)
- Wed 7th Monthly Coffee Morning (11am—1pm)
- Sun 11th Poker Charity Day
- Fri 23rd Bingo Cancelled
- Sat 31st Halloween Party

### NOVEMBER

- Wed 4th Coffee Morning (11am—1pm)
- Sun 22nd Christmas Market (1pm—4pm)

### DECEMBER

- Wed 2nd Coffee Morning (11am—1pm)
- Sat 5th Drag Extravaganza (Ticketed event)
- Sun 6th Lakeside Trip
- Fri 11th Christmas Draw
- Sun 13th Kid's Xmas Party
- Sat 26th Hall Closed
- Thur 31st New Year's Eve (Ticketed Event)

Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter!

Firstly, we say goodbye and thank you to Pete Loweman, who has decided it is time to retire. The staff and committee thank him for all he has done and wish him a long and happy retirement.

A lot's gone on at the Cali— new bands, a trip to Newmarket Races, coffee mornings and the August Fun Day to name a few!

Our heartfelt thanks go to everyone who supports these events, which the staff and committee put a lot of work into behind the scenes. To those who bake, buy raffle tickets or turn up on the day—a huge thank you. You are helping to keep the club running for another 130 years!

We raised a total of £719.85 on Friday's MacMillan Coffee Morning, thank you to everyone who supported this.

Ann MacDonald has very kindly made two large hampers. Raffle tickets for these are now on sale at £1 per strip. The raffle will be drawn on Sunday afternoon.

We have a **Kid's Halloween Party** coming up. Tickets are free but there are a limited number, so don't miss out—see poster for details on page 2!

We hope to see you all at the club very soon!

Kate, Secretary

### Some Important Information:

Please **do not reserve seats**. Seats are first come, first serve at the club in all rooms.

The committee has trialled anonymous comments in the comment box but are now returning to the policy that, **if there is no name on the suggestion, it will not be read** at the committee meeting.

Please **do not park at the front of the club**. This can limit access to emergency vehicles and cars have been knocked there recently. There is an **overflow car park** at the lights (Wolsey Plumb Centre). Please only use this car park when the shop is closed and do not leave cars there overnight.



Club Secretary: Kate Hebden  
Treasurer: Sally Page  
Social Secretary: Pete Loweman

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# That's Entertainment @ **WINTER EVENTS**



## OCTOBER 2026

Sat 3rd **Disco & Karaoke**

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> **130th Anniversary party with ANNIKA RANDS** 1pm - 5pm

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> **TRICKS OF THE TRADE**

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> **ADAM HARROD**

Friday 23<sup>th</sup> **PRIVATE PARTY**

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> **RUDE & RECKLESS**

Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> **Kids Halloween Party** 1pm - 5pm

Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> **Flashdance 80's Band** 7pm - 11:30pm

## NOVEMBER

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> **PRIVATE PARTY**

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> **GLAMTASTICS**

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> **GOLDLINE**

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> **Christmas Market** 1pm - 4pm 

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> **PRIVATE PARTY**

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> **T.B.A.**

## DECEMBER

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> **WHAT A DRAG NIGHT** **TICKET EVENT** 

Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> **ANDY OTTLEY**

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> **Kids Xmas Disco** 1pm - 5pm

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> **BACK TO THE 80's BAND**

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> **Inhouse Disco** 7pm - 10:30pm

Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> **(N.Y.E.) TRICKS OF THE TRADE** (TICKET EVENT)

### 130th Anniversary Party

On Sunday, 4th October, we have a party 1-5pm in the hall to celebrate. Unfortunately, as much as we would have loved to, we could not fit 800+ members in the hall and give everyone a free buffet, so we had to limit it to 125 on a first come, first serve basis. These tickets have now all been taken. Annika Rands will be singing for us and the dress code is optional fancy dress from any period from 1896 to 2000 (anything that would not class as normal dress of today).

If anyone has tickets that they are no longer able to use, please let us know, as we can reissue them.

**CALIFORNIA SOCIAL CLUB**  
GREAT FOOD • GOOD COMPANY • EVERYONE WELCOME

LOCAL FOOD VANS

**FOOD VANS**  
*at the California Social Club*

**COMING SOON - SAVE THE DATES!**

|                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Saturday 3rd October   | G's Burgers             |
| Saturday 10th October  | G's Burgers             |
| Sunday 11th October    | White Gold Fish & Chips |
| Saturday 17th October  | Azure Wood Fired Pizzas |
| Saturday 24th October  | White Gold Fish & Chips |
| Saturday 31st October  | Azure Wood Fired Pizzas |
| Saturday 7th November  | TBC                     |
| Saturday 14th November | G's Burgers             |
| Saturday 21st November | G's Burgers             |
| Saturday 28th November | Little Red Catering     |
| Saturday 5th December  | Little Red Catering     |
| Saturday 12th December | G's Burgers             |
| Saturday 19th December | TBC                     |

GREAT FOOD FOR GREAT PEOPLE!

EVERYONE WELCOME

LARGE CAR PARK • GOOD FOOD • FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE

**CALIFORNIA SOCIAL CLUB**

**MONTHLY COFFEE MORNING**

**NEXT GATHERING:**  
**WEDNESDAY, 7th OCTOBER**  
**11AM TO 1PM**

**EVERYBODY WELCOME**

Join us for coffee, tea, and delightful conversation. Connect with friends and meet new people!



**Tickets Now Available!**



JOIN US FOR A **Members Kids HALLOWEEN PARTY!**  
**LEON'S SPOOKY DISCO**

**GAMES! PRIZES! TREATS!**  
**COSTUME CONTEST!**  
FUN ACTIVITIES • SPOOKY MUSIC

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31ST**   
**1:00 PM - 5:00 PM**  
**CALIFORNIA SOCIAL CLUB**

Tickets available from the bar.  
There is a limited amount of tickets available  
once they're gone, they're gone!  
Served on a first come, first served basis.

California Social Club

Why not bring your office party to our  
**What A Drag** night with loads of fun and  
laughter hosted by the fantastic **MIA MANN**.  
Join Mia and friends for a great night out.

**WHAT A DRAG** HOSTED BY **Mia Mann**

DOORS OPEN **7:00PM** **Saturday 5th December 2026** Show Starts **8pm**

Members: £10.00 Guests: £15.00

**CHRISTMAS SHOPPING TRIP**  
California Social Club to Lakeside

**Sunday 6th December 2026**  
**Tickets £26**

Tickets are available from the club & on the day morning  
at Lakeside Shopping Centre

# ENTERTAINMENT

**DISCO & KARAOKE**  
**SATURDAY 3rd OCTOBER 2016**  
**California Social Club**



**ADMISSION:**  
**MEMBERS: FREE**  
**ADMISSION: GUESTS**  
**GUESTS: £2.00**  
**ADMISSION:**  
**GUEST CHILD: £1.00**

**HOT FOOD AVAILABLE IN THE CAR PARK**

1896 - 2026  
**130th ANNIVERSARY**  
 Starring the very versatile  
**ANNIKA RANDS**



**TICKETS ARE ALL TAKEN.**  
**SUNDAY**  
 4th OCTOBER 2026 1pm - 5pm  
 G's Burgers served in the car

*That's Entertainment @*  
**Saturday 10th October 2026**

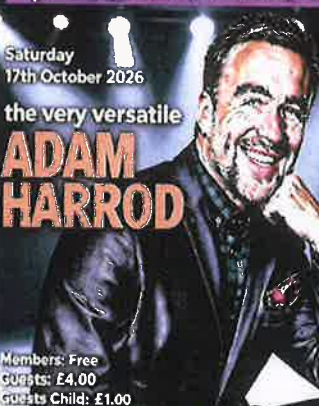


**Hot food available in car park  
 supplied by G's Burgers.**

**Members: Free**

**Members: Free  
 Guests Child: £1.00**

*That's Entertainment @*  
**Saturday 17th October 2026**  
 the very versatile  
**ADAM HARROD**



**Members: Free**  
**Guests: £4.00**  
**Guests Child: £1.00**

**Food:**  
 Hot food available in car park supplied by  
 by Azure Wood Fired Pizzas New to the club

**SATURDAY 24th OCTOBER 2026**



**THE RETURN OF SUFFOLK'S  
 SUFFOLK'S TOP SKA BAND**  
**RUDE & RECKLESS**  
**Members: FREE**  
**Guests: £5.00**  
**Guests Child: £1.00**  
**Hot food available in car park**  
**WHITE GOLD FISH & CHIPS**

**HALLOWEEN DISCO & 80s BAND**  
**Saturday 31st October**



**Members: Free**  
**Guests: £4.00**  
**Guests Child: £1.00**  
**Hot food available in car park**  
**supplied by Azure Wood Fired Pizzas.**



## Games shown at the Cali

**Friday 23rd October**

**Ipswich v Nottingham Forrest 8pm**

**Sunday 8th November**

**Ipswich v Bournemouth 2pm**

**Saturday 28th November**

**Ipswich v Aston Villa 5.30pm**

**Wednesday 30th December**

**Ipswich V Chelsea 8.15pm**

# 130 years of the Cali: A social club that has changed with the times

Written by Nicola Sebastian, Ipswich.co.uk

From gas lights and all-male bars to a smoking ban and a warmer welcome, the California Social Club's oldest members have watched their club – and their town – change. As the club turns 130 this year, they are reflecting on everything they have witnessed from behind the bar.



## Named in the midst of the gold rush

Known affectionately to its members as "the Cali", the California Social Club takes its name not from the American state, but from the Ipswich neighbourhood that surrounds it on Foxhall Road.

The area earned its nickname around 1849, when the Ipswich and Suffolk Freehold Land Society began developing the former Cauldwell Hall Estate. Workers on the site were seen carrying shovels and pickaxes at around the same time as the Californian gold rush was making headlines around the world, and the nickname stuck. In fact, Ipswich's "California" predates California itself – the American state was not formally established until a year later, in 1850.

The club itself has been an institution of the area for well over a century. The earliest known reference to it comes from the Ipswich Journal, dated Saturday, 29 February 1896, which noted: "It will be remembered that on the occasion of the opening of the California Social Club, several prominent members of the Ipswich Radical Party declared that these clubs were instituted for educational purposes, and that liquor was only supplied as refreshments."

## Memories from the bar

To mark the club's 130th anniversary, club secretary Kate Hebden went into the bar at lunchtime to speak with some of the club's longest-serving members – gentlemen in their eighties and nineties who have watched decades of change unfold and develop from their bar stools.

Peter, who remembers coming to the club in the mid-1960s, told Kate that things improved when "the gas lights were taken out". In those days, women were not allowed into the bar, and Peter recalls arriving on a Sunday to play cards through a thick cloud of smoke. With the smoking ban now in place, he says the club is a much healthier place to be.

He also remembers the old membership renewal system, when long queues of people would wait to renew outside the club. Today, with no more queuing down the street, membership is processed on the tills over a period of three months.

One of the club's most loyal regulars, Winston, remembers a very different Ipswich – one where he was turned away from other clubs in the area because of the colour of his skin. Notably, this was still happening as recently as the 1980s. Winston now comes to the Cali every day, and Kate says it means a great deal to the club that those attitudes are firmly in the past.

## **Generational threads within the club**

For some members, the club's history is woven through their own family history. Colin Canham, 87, is a committee member whose family connection to the Cali stretches back generations. His father was a member, as were his aunt and uncle, Mr and Mrs Bill Nunn, who lived on Back Hamlet, and his grandparents, the Arbons of Newton Road.

"The dart boards at that time were plasticine, and he reworked them each week as required by using a hot iron," Colin recalls of his father. "I still have one of these boards today, but his rollers have been misplaced."

Colin remembers Saturday nights with more children in attendance compared with today, and Christmas morning celebrations that looked very different 75 years ago. "The bar was always full on Christmas morning with lots of wine and spirit draws going on, and this was also a 'men-only' bar," he says.

The actual shape of the hall itself has changed too. Colin remembers a very different layout from the one members would recognise today. Within this hall, Saturday nights were once brought to life by concert parties – live entertainment put on by musicians who worked for some of Ipswich's biggest employers of the era, among them Ransomes and Rapier, and Cranes. Colin's wife, meanwhile, ran the club's ladies' darts team for many seasons under the Mencap banner.

"I am proud to be a committee member today," Colin says.

## **The bottom line**

The Cali was never really about the bar. It was about who stood around it. As the club marks 130 years, the regulars – Peter, Winston, Colin and the rest – are proof of the lesson every social club eventually teaches: that people, not liquor, are what keep a place alive for over a century. Though 130 years of loyal custom suggests the bar has done its bit too. That said, a decent pint never put anyone off.