

East Anglian maritime historian first recipient of new award

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The legacy of a man who devoted his life to the history of East Anglia has been honoured with a new award from a maritime trust.

The new Richard W Smith Memorial Award from the Ipswich Maritime Trust – named in honour of its founding member – is to be given annually to those who have contributed in a significant way to the understanding of maritime culture or heritage.

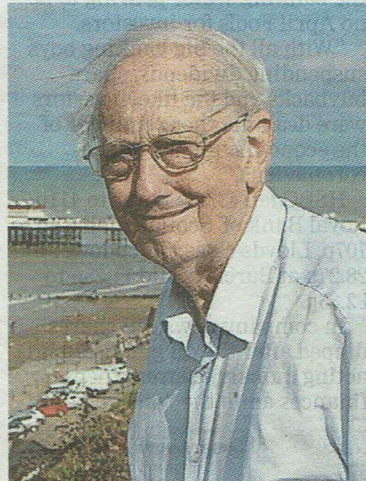
Among his biggest achievements was saving the ferry PINMILL in 1988.

Mr Smith died in 2017, leaving behind his legacy as an author, photographer and historian – with those who will receive the award set to have followed in his footsteps.

Taking home the inaugural award for 2020 is Ipswich historian Robert Malster, 87, who continues to document the rich maritime past of Suffolk's waterfront town.

A spokesman for Ipswich Maritime Trust said: "When it comes to knowledge of East Anglian history and heritage, especially maritime matters, there is no-one who has contributed more than Robert Malster. He has been a leading supporter in many local history societies, often taking an active role.

"Whenever a question of local maritime history arises, the answer would be to just 'ask Bob Malster' and, when asked, he is always extremely helpful, frequently going beyond a simple answer and providing incredibly



Local historian Robert Malster has been named the first recipient of Ipswich Maritime's Trust Richard W Smith Memorial Award
Pictures: IMT

in-depth information.

"Not only has he written and spoken on many aspects of East Anglian history but, less obviously, he has been for many years instrumental in getting large numbers of other people to put their research into writing, championing them and helping them get works published.

"These important works of local history would never have been published but for Bob Malster's efforts. He has almost turned 88, yet he still continues to work on other publications.

The trust had hoped to give Mr Malster his award at its annual general meeting today, but has had to postpone it due to the ongoing coronavirus crisis.

Founded in 1982, the trust has more than 2,000 images showing the rich history of the Ipswich ports and operates a window museum on Albion Quay telling the waterfront's story from as far back as the Anglo Saxons.



Mr Malster, 87, continues to write about the history of Ipswich

