



GEOSUFFOLK TIMES

Welcome to issue no.37 of GeoSuffolk Times – for those who value Suffolk's Geodiversity. Caroline Markham 23.07.18 www.geosuffolk.co.uk

Norman Peake (1921-2010)

Some Memories

Professor Andy Gale of the University of Portsmouth has provided us with an appreciation of Norman Peake, 'Chalk revolutionary' in the 2017 Proceedings of the Geologists' Association (pp 829-839). Norman was an industrial chemist and had a special interest in Chalk and the echinoid *Echinocorys*. Upon retirement he was for many years proprietor of the Scientific Anglian Bookshop, a second-hand book store in St Benedict's Street, Norwich. Some of my memories of Norman appeared in GeoSuffolk Notes no.29, 'The Norwich Chalk', 2011. The bookshelves of his shop were engineered to turn and slide, sealing off his living quarters during the day, with a special passage constructed beneath the floorboards for his cats to travel between the living quarters and the garden. His telephone number was ONO3 24079 which, in the days when telephone dials also had letters, he was delighted to quote as ONO3 CHORX. In 1961 he, together with Dr Gilbert Larwood, donated a flint with *Echinocorys* tests, found loose in the Chalk pit at Caistor near Norwich to Norwich Castle Museum – the flint had the remains of tests of at least 36 individuals on the surface.

Bob Markham (RM)

Bawdsey Cliff SSSI

Our new banner photo was taken on a recent visit to Bawdsey where the SSSI was showing excellent exposures of Red Crag on local London Clay. The visit had to be carefully planned because of tides. CM

Salts at Quay Place, Ipswich

The retired church of St Mary at the Quay was opened as a Heritage Wellbeing Centre in 2016. A survey by Hirst Conservation of Laughton, Sleaford in May 2006 found a number of soluble salts in the Caen Limestone columns in the nave. The salts – sulphates, nitrates and chlorides, mainly of sodium, with lesser amounts of potassium and magnesium – were precipitated from rising damp, leading to erosion of the stonework and efflorescence on its surface. Estuarine water; biological materials; feldspar in the ground; and diesel fumes were probable contributors to the chemistry. As minerals, these salts are the chlorides Halite and Carnallite; the anhydrous sulphates Thenardite and Aphthitalite; the hydrated sulphate Bloedite; the sulphate nitrate Darapskite; and the nitrate Niter. Their ready solubility means that such minerals have to be kept in sealed airtight containers. RM

Snippets

- Paragon B391 (see GeoSuffolk Times no.36, April 2018). This gas drilling platform left Parkeston in late March for a new drilling campaign in the UK sector of the southern North Sea.
- Deep Store Colchester Museum has arranged (2017) for some bulk archaeological material, e.g. animal bones, not consulted on a frequent basis, to be stored in the Winsford Rock Salt Mine in Cheshire. This Triassic age deposit provides consistent temperature and humidity levels. RM

Meet GeoSuffolk this summer:

- Fantastic Fossils at Colchester Natural History Museum August 8th 10-12 and 2-4pm.
- Knettishall Fair at Knettishall Heath August 19th 11am - 4pm.
<https://www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/events/2018-08-19-knettishall-fair>
- Ask the Expert at Ipswich Museum August 22nd 10.30am - 3pm.
- Heritage Weekend at Blackfriars, Ipswich September 16th.

GeoSuffolk is on Facebook and Twitter – find us at:

<https://www.facebook.com/GeoSuffolk>

<https://twitter.com/geosuffolk>

Mary Somerville

The new face on the Royal Bank of Scotland's £10 note issued in 2017 is Mary Somerville (1780-1872), early promoter of science and use of the word 'scientist' for its practitioners. She knew Suffolk's George Airy, Astronomer Royal, from whom she learned how to calculate the density of the Earth. Mary Somerville was particularly interested in minerals and gave a young Charles Bunbury a large number of specimens when his parents visited their friends William and Mary Somerville in London. In 1844 Charles (later Sir Charles) (1809-1886) married Frances Horner (1814-1894), whose sister Mary was married to Charles Lyell. The Lyells were frequent visitors to the Bunburys, who resided at Great Barton Hall in Suffolk. Charles Bunbury's particular interest was palaeobotany and the genus *Bunburya* (later included in *Tricalysia*) was named after him. Upon his death his fossil plants were presented to the University of Cambridge. There is a brass to Sir Charles and Dame Frances in Great Barton village church. His mineral specimens went to Ipswich Museum in 1949/50, where some, e.g. small pieces of Spinel from Ceylon, have the name Somerville on the label. RM

Pliocene Forest Open Day



In June GeoSuffolk joined with Sutton village Open Gardens event, and the opportunity for the public to view our Pliocene Forest at Rockhall Wood SSSI in Sutton. We welcomed 60+ visitors through the gate to view the rapidly growing trees - 49 genera and 25 families representing the lost Pliocene flora, once native here. GeoSuffolk member Barry Hall, seen showing visitors around in the photo above, has been busy this year with new fencing, creating a unified deer-free zone with room for a few new trees - if you wish to sponsor one please reply to me via your GeoSuffolk email. CM

St Peter's Font



This photo of the bowl of the font was taken on a recent visit to St Peter's at the Waterfront, Ipswich. It is of black Carboniferous Limestone from Belgium, sometimes called 'Tournai Marble'. The carved animals seem to be of a quadruped with birds feet! There is also part of another similar font, found in Tower Ramparts, Ipswich in 1894, in the church. They are thought to date back to the 12th Century. For more on the geology of St Peter's see GeoSuffolk Notes no.16. <http://geosuffolk.co.uk/index.php/archive/geosuffolk-notes> CM/RM

The Suffolk 'summer desert' 2018

The current drought conditions have revealed again the 'giant fingerprints' of the periglacial patterned ground in West Suffolk. The East Anglian Daily Times on 23.06.18 and again on 30.06.18 reports the problems faced by farmers due to lack of water, exemplified by the Euston Estate. The accompanying 'drones eye' photo (a small part of this is shown below) clearly shows periglacial stripes and polygons although these are not commented on. <http://www.eadt.co.uk/news/east-anglian-farmers-crops-tom-bradshaw-sugar-beet-1-5586728>



On a recent visit to Christchurch Park in Ipswich the junction between Red Crag and London Clay showed clearly in the colour of the grass, with an abrupt change from brown to green grass where groundwater is held up at the crag/clay junction. CM

