

GEOSUFFOLK TIMES

Newsletter 54

July 2022

www.geosuffok.co.uk Caroline Markham 02.07.22

Orfordness from Flybury Point June 2022

Do you mean the hands?

One trace fossil on display in the geology gallery in Ipswich Museum ('What are Fossils?' case) was donated by Nina Layard (1853-1935), perhaps better known as an archaeologist. When young she read about *Cheirotherium* ('hand-beast') footprints from Triassic age rocks in Cheshire in Charles Lyell's 'Elements of Geology'. Thus, in the early 1880s and then living in Somerset she set off by railway to visit the site of the discovery at Storton Hill. Finding little, she enquired of the widow of the quarry foreman and was told that fossil footprints had never been found. About to return home disappointed she was then asked, "Do you mean the hands?", and thus heavily laden left for the railway station. The specimens were later donated to the Museum after she had moved to Ipswich.

Ipswich Museum in High Street will be closed for redevelopment from Autumn 2022 to Spring 2025. This summer will be a good time to visit.

Bob Markham (RM)

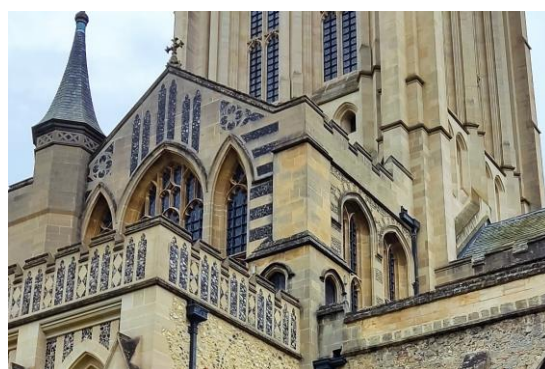
Heritage Open Days 2022

This nation-wide event is back this year – on September 10/11th. GeoSuffolk will have a stand at St Peters by the Waterfront in Ipswich on September 10th reprising the July building stones display in Bury St Edmunds (see opposite). Also to look out for in St Peters (see Note 16 in [GeoSuffolk Notes](#)) – the stained glass window with a commemoration by George Mason (of Mason's Cement, Great Blakenham); the Eocene mudstone wall behind Wolsey's Gate; the Tournai Marble font. CM



'God's Square Rocks' leaflet

GeoSuffolk has written a new leaflet about the building stones of the Cathedral gardens in Bury St Edmunds - John Betjeman's 'God's Square'. The text is by Tony Redman (who was Surveyor of the Fabric of St Edmundsbury Cathedral), with photos and captions by CM and RM respectively. We are publishing it as part of the celebrations for the 1000th Anniversary of the Abbey of St Edmund.



GeoSuffolk has a stand at the Picnic in the Park – Abbey 1000 event in the Cathedral gardens on July 16th ([Bury St Edmunds & Beyond | Picnic In The Park - Abbey 1000](#) (visit-burystedmunds.co.uk)). We shall feature a variety of building stones, both local e.g., Caen Stone from St Mary Quay, Ipswich, and exotic e.g., Makrana Marble as used for the Taj Mahal, Agra. Do pay us a visit. CM

Kauri Gum

Kauri gum is resin produced by the New Zealand kauri tree; some was presented to Ipswich Museum by local amber specialist Rosalind Denny in 1953. Older gum buried in sediment was used in late Victorian times for the manufacture of high grade varnish. From 1873 until c.2017 the pews in the Church of St John the Baptist in Saxmundham were of kauri wood. Did anyone discover kauri gum when they sat down? One of the shorter pews was presented to Saxmundham Museum. RM

Three Dunwich CGS

GeoSuffolk visited Dunwich at the start of May to monitor the three County Geodiversity Sites there. This summer, the cliffs beneath the National Trust reserve at Dunwich Heath are the best place to view the Norwich Crag sands and gravels, with the great channel of Westleton gravel showing high up in the cliff face. (Below and see also Howard Mottram's article on this site in Suffolk Natural History, 50, 2014. [Suffolk Natural History | Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service \(suffolkbis.org.uk\)](#))



The grey flint cobbles from the Westleton gravels (above) are easy to find at the foot of the cliffs along this stretch of coast. The cliffs at Dunwich village are also showing good exposures of the Norwich Crag Formation and the St James Church complex in the village remains in excellent condition. (For more on Dunwich village see 'Dunwich: the geology of Suffolk's lost city' at [GeoSuffolk Leaflets](#))

We have monitored 23 of our 28 CGS during the past year. They all have public access, excellent geology and are well worth visiting – for a full list see [Geology and Sites \(geosuffolk.co.uk\)](#) CM

Essex Rock

You won't be disappointed with this new book from Ian and Ros Mercer. Full of information; very readable; and lots of fabulous photos - it's a snip at £29.99. *Essex Rocks: Geology Beneath the Landscape*, Pelagic Publishing, ISBN 978-1-78427-279-1 CM

Staying with the Essex Rock and Mineral Society, their lecture at Stanway on August 18th is by Simon Taylor of the British Conchological Society – 'Molluscs: Ancient and Modern'. On September 25th they have a field meeting in Colchester to review the Geology Trail there. See [Meetings Programme - Essex Rock & Mineral Society \(erms.org\)](#) for more information. CM

Pathways to Ancient Britain

This project's news page is featuring, '2022 Excavations Begin at Barnham' and '2022 Field Season Begins at Beeches Pit' – two of Suffolk's (and the country's) major Palaeolithic sites. Find them at [Pathways to Ancient Britain – Pathways to Ancient Britain Palaeolithic Project \(pabproject.org\)](#) RM

Rock Imports

The shipping reports in the Ipswich Transport Journal offer a glimpse of geology related imports to Ipswich and to Mistley. Recent imports have included façade stone (larvikite) from Karmoy, Norway; crushed gritstone for roads (Silurian Gala Group greywacke) from Belfast; bricks from Aalst, Netherlands, made from 'soft mud' from the Rhine/Maas/Waal delta; aluminium ingots from Spain for e.g., cars – likely from bauxite from Guinea; and cement from Bilbao, Spain using Urgonian (Aptian age) limestone. RM

Lowestoft Erratic

The 2022 Lowestoft Scores Race will be on August 28th (senior race starts 2.30pm). The c.4.75 mile course includes 13 scores and 401 steps. The steeply sloping scores are paths connecting the top and bottom of the old cliff (now mainly built on) of Sand and Gravel on Chalky Boulder Clay (till) with occasional springs and seepages (now mostly drained) at the junction.

On a visit to the Heritage Workshop Centre in Wildes Score in early June we were shown this magnificent glacial erratic dug up only yards from the Centre. Its numerous bivalved fossils point to derivation from Jurassic-Cretaceous origins way to the north. The Centre is open from 10-4 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays – admission free. (The pen is 17cm long.) RM

