

# GEOSUFFOLK TIMES



Newsletter 63  
October 2024

Caroline Markham 12.10.24. The GeoSuffolk Archive, and more can be found at <https://geosuffolk.co.uk>

12th C Tournai Limestone font in St Peters, Ipswich

## A Weekend in London

We spent the weekend of International Geodiversity Day (06.10.24) in London. The rocks of the new Evolution Timeline Garden at the Natural History Museum in South Kensington were a must. They are best entered from the subway straight into the Pre-Cambrian of Scotland (wonderful), but my favourite was the Chalk with flints, well-known from Suffolk, but in this case the very hard version from Northern Ireland. A visit to Harrods in Knightsbridge (for the bookstore) provided a surprise on the lower ground floor – a complete *Triceratops* skull from the Maastrichtian Hell Creek Formation of Montana, USA. It is for sale – price on request to David Aaron, the Mayfair antiquities specialist. (Maastrichtian Chalk may be seen at Sidestrand and Trimingham in Norfolk.) Another surprise awaited us at the last stop of a tour of Mayfair building stones led by our friend Mike Howgate. The facing stone of the Sexy Fish restaurant in Berkley Square is the dramatic Esmeralda Onyx from Iran – green and brown, and cut by veins (take a look online). But, amongst all the exotica, a friendly face at 43 Old Bond Street - specially made bricks from local London Clay at Bulmer in Essex.

Bob Markham (RM)

## Voices From Easton Bavents

\* UEA PGR History Seminar 09.03.22 'Easton Bavents 1500-1750, a study of community, kinship and coastal erosion' by Louise Kennedy is available on YouTube [UEA PGR History Seminar 09-03-22 - Louise Kennedy and Emma Yeo \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...). A more recent 'Voices from...1376-1672' was delivered by Louise Kennedy at the October Suffolk Local History Council Conference.

\* The fine walrus mandible found by Ian and Alister Cruikshanks, from the Norwich Crag at Easton Bavents (now in the Norfolk Museums Service collection) has recently been reassigned to a new species *Ontocetus posti*, by Mathieu Boisville et al. – see PeerJ Life & Environment, 13, August 2024. RM

## Meet GeoSuffolk

### **Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape Work Party October 15th**

9.30am–3pm at Aldeburgh Brick Pit SSSI. Vegetation and a geological section to clear, wear suitable clothing and bring a packed lunch. It is essential to register with Neil Lister [neil.lister@suffolkandessex-nl.org.uk](mailto:neil.lister@suffolkandessex-nl.org.uk)

### **Ipswich Museum Discovery Day October 31st**

Ask experts, including GeoSuffolk, about the variety of finds you can bring along. At Christchurch Mansion from 10am-3pm. [Museum Discovery Day | Ipswich Museums \(cimuseums.org.uk\)](https://www.cimuseums.org.uk)

### **Geologists Association Festival of Geology**

**November 2nd**

At the Geological Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, 10.30am-4.30pm. Talks, walks, activities, stands and stalls - the GeoSuffolk display will showcase Ipswich geodiversity and the new Geolpswich leaflet. [Festival of Geology | Geologists' Association \(geologistsassociation.org.uk\)](https://www.geologistsassociation.org.uk)

## A New County Geodiversity Site



GeoSuffolk has designated Blackfriars, a 13th century Dominican Priory in Ipswich, a CGS for its extensive use of Eocene Harwich Formation mudstone. Modern marine borings suggest that (at least) some blocks of the 'London Clay' mudstone were obtained from local foreshore outcrops. This large scale use of local building stone in an attractive setting with excellent access promotes geodiversity in the urban environment. See the Geology and Sites section of our website for a complete list of Suffolk CGS. CM

### Discover Geolpswich

Our new leaflet was inspired by requests at previous GA Festivals for a geological walk accessible by train. This fits the bill, focusing on six locations in the town – the Question Mark on the Waterfront, St Nicholas Church, the Cornhill, Ipswich Museum, Christchurch Park, and Blackfriars. You can visit the six locations separately or take a longer walk and cover them all. Ipswich has such a wealth of geodiversity in its buildings, streets, and parks that this leaflet practically wrote itself – see the taster below.



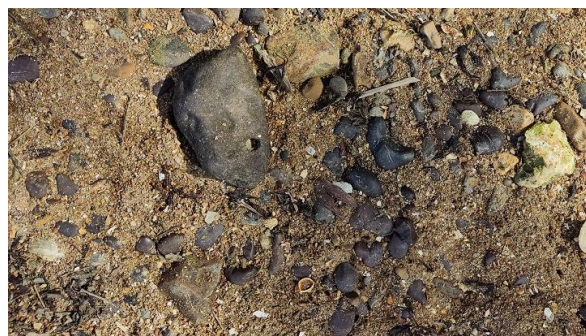
The late 19th century buildings surrounding the Cornhill owe their variety of British stones to the arrival of the railway in Ipswich in 1846. The Town Hall in the right foreground is made from Bath Stone, a yellow-brown Jurassic limestone, and grey Portland Stone, also a Jurassic limestone, from Dorset. The red sandstone pillars are Mansfield Stone from the Sherwood Forest area. Their rounded quartz grains and iron oxide colouring date back to Permian age desert Britain. The Old Post Office building beyond the Town Hall is made from Portland Stone and displays fine ornamental carving around its first floor windows. Find the Discover Geolpswich leaflet at outlets in Ipswich and in the Archive section of our website. CM

### The Local Ribbon

An article in New Scientist 13.06.24 gives evidence that the Solar System and the Local Ribbon of the dense hydrogen Cold Cloud probably crossed paths between 2 and 3 million years ago, shrinking the heliosphere and exposing Earth to cold interstellar space. Could this, as the timing suggests, have influenced the Norwich Crag/Red Crag environment and organisms? (See also GeoSuffolk Times 28 (2018) – ‘fall-out’ of radioactive iron-60 between 3.2 and 1.7 million years ago, interpreted as from a supernova.) RM

### Ramsholt Cliff SSSI

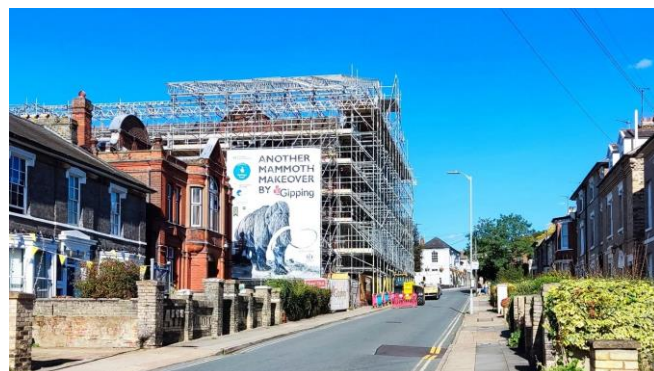
In August, the Geology Trusts employed GeoSuffolk to survey the Ramsholt Rocks area of the Deben Estuary for Natural England. The SSSI-designated Coralline Crag Cliff here is on private land, but the shore (also part of the SSSI and only exposed at low tide) can be accessed via the public footpath along the river wall from Ramsholt Quay. CM



A boxstone and phosphate nodules on the shore at Ramsholt Rocks.

### Stanley West

Stanley West, County Archaeologist for Suffolk 1970-1991, died earlier this year, aged 93. In 1948 he was appointed Assistant at Ipswich Museum, working with Basil Brown and with Harold Spencer. His donations to the Museum included (1948) a ‘rostro-carinate’ flaked flint from the Red Crag basement bed at Bramford and (1949) Pleistocene elephant calcaneum and metatarsal from Harkstead. He read archaeology at Cambridge University. He was Curator of (what is now) the National Museum and House of Culture in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, from 1960-1965. The collections included specimens collected by the Leakey family at Olduvai Gorge, and we had interesting chats about these on his later visits to Ipswich Museum. RM



We are reliably informed that there are ten miles of scaffolding on Ipswich Museum!