

GEOSUFFOLK TIMES

Welcome to issue no.29 of GeoSuffolk Times – for those who value Suffolk's Geodiversity. Caroline Markham 30.07.16 www.geosuffolk.co.uk

In Breckland with.....

Our new Breckland leaflet has been enthusiastically received at many outlets, so here is a challenge for you. What photograph and eye-catching title would you choose for the following four captions?

- This small community of nuns in Thetford has a caries rate much less than other inhabitants of the district, due to their frugal low sugar diet and their well water having 0.2 ppm of fluorine.
- Some flint knappers also made arrows and spearheads, and in 1857 a 'rogue' from Brandon was found selling these facsimile models to East Anglian collectors of antiquity.
- Fowlmere was dry and under cultivation in 1902 and a swede weighing 23lb and a cabbage weighing 15lb were exhibited in Thetford market on 8th November. The mere was full of water in 1884 and waterhens' nests took the place of old blackbirds' nests in the hedges.
- With the Brandon area having been a flint implement making place for thousands of years is it possible that some of the specialist words used by Victorian flint knappers were from the language of Neolithic times? Bob Markham (RM)

As well as taking GeoSuffolk's leaflet on your visit to Breckland this summer be sure to download the Breckland Society's comprehensive report *Flint in the Brecks*. <http://www.brecsoc.org.uk/projects/breaking-new-ground/flint-in-the-brecks/> CM

GeoSuffolk will be at Ipswich Museum this August

Do come and visit us!

Tuesday 2nd 1-4pm, demonstrating straight nautiloids

Tuesday 16th 1-4pm, with structural (rock) specimens

Tuesday 30th 1-4pm, with assayed rocks from Queensland

We shall also be at the *Show and Tell* at Ipswich Museum on Wednesday 10th, 11am-3pm and at *Fantastic Fossils* at Colchester Natural History Museum on Thursday 18th, 10am-12 and 2-4pm.

GeoSuffolk is on Facebook and Twitter – find us at: <https://www.facebook.com/GeoSuffolk>
<https://twitter.com/geosuffolk>

Blackfriars in Ipswich

John Norman of the Ipswich Society has a fine piece about Ipswich monasteries, geology and fresh drinking water in the *East Anglian Daily Times* 11.06.16. There is a photograph of Blackfriars ruins, where GeoSuffolk geologists will be on duty on 11.09.16 (Heritage Weekend*) to show visitors the septaria building stone. We'll be demonstrating modern *Polydora* borings which give a clue to where the rock is from. Talking of 'interesting borings' – did you see the Suffolk-produced Deposits magazine featured in *Have I Got News for You* on BBC television? RM



*<http://www.ipswichsociety.org.uk/events/heritage-open-days/>

Art: Science: Life Exhibition

In this recent Ipswich Museum exhibition, artists were invited to create an artwork in response to an object in the Museum's Natural Science Collections. The artworks were then swapped with the objects. Thus the very fine Red Crag scallop covered with fossil worm tubes went on show in the Ipswich Art School Gallery with the artwork *Garden String Crochet* by Gilly Burrell joining the Red Crag fossils in the Geology Gallery. (Crochet/knitted fossils are good fun – look them up on the web, e.g. the Geological Society blog <https://blog.geolsoc.org.uk/2014/11/03/granite-one-perlite-one-knitting-rocks/>) Museum artist Lucy Lyons sketchbook had some fine studies of fossils, including a woolly rhino skull and an *Inoceramus* in flint. And the *Garden String Crochet*? I bought it! RM

Open Day in the Pliocene Forest

On June 26th GeoSuffolk enthusiastically joined the Sutton village Open Gardens Day with our 'Pliocene Forest' - representing fossil pollen found in the Coralline Crag of Orford and Sutton. The 'forest' is on private land so we welcome the chance to show it to the public, offering visitors the experience of walking among living umbrella pines, redwood trees, hemlock spruces and many more - actually growing on the deposit that contains the pollen of their ancestors. The trees also enthusiastically joined in, looking splendid in response to the unusually wet June - which gave us a few hours respite on the open day, allowing some 40 people to visit in the sunshine. Copies of the latest edition of Barry Hall's *Pliocene Plant Profiles* were snapped up at £5 each. CM

Peter Odell

Born 1st July 1930 at Coalville, Leicestershire, died 12th April 2016, Peter R Odell was Professor Emeritus of Energy Economics at Erasmus University, Rotterdam, and visiting Professor at the London School of Economics. He wrote *Oil and World Power* in 1970, a standard textbook for LSE. In 1977 he moved to live in Ipswich, which was convenient for him to commute to Rotterdam from Harwich (ferry). In 1994 he was awarded the Royal Scottish Geographical Society's Centennial Medal for his studies on the development of North Sea oil and gas. RM

Snippets

- Culford School has some old flint walls in need of restoration and a *Breaking New Ground* 'People's Pot' project will provide training opportunities for pupils and local young people to learn how to repair flint walls. (EADT 25.06.16) RM
- St Mary's Church at Wherstead has an open day on 21st August. Take a look inside at the stone pulpit to see the carvings, including three very woolly sheep. Outside, the tower partly rests on sarsen stones, the walls contain much former ship ballast rocks, and there are fine views of the Orwell estuary. RM
- Tiger Wood near Assington - the wood's name is said by some to come from a sabre-tooth tiger canine found there. Does anyone know where the specimen is, or who found it? RM
- Many of us have treasured memories of *Touching the Tide* events along the Suffolk coast. The project may have come to an end, but you can still go beachcombing in Felixstowe with Kate Osborne this summer - see www.beachbonkers.org.uk CM

Have You Visited Needham Lake?

This popular attraction lies in a flooded and landscaped former aggregates quarry. A walk round the lake passes an erratic boulder 'rescued' from the pit - a large chunk of Spilsby Sandstone which was probably carried south by glacier ice and then incorporated into the 40,000 year-old river terrace here. GeoSuffolk has designated this a RIGS (Regionally Important Geological Site) chiefly because of its known origin. (Suffolk has so few boulders it values its large erratics but most, such as those at Blaxhall and Hartest, have their origins in myth and mystery.) Needham Erratic RIGS is subject to weathering and whilst this exposes successive strata with a variety of fossils of early Cretaceous age (small bivalves, belemnites, ammonites), it poses something of a management conundrum. Our RIGS is diminishing, but that is part of its scientific value! CM



More Breckland on the Web

Thomas T Paterson (1909-1994) spent some time at the University of Cambridge, researching local early Palaeolithic sites. That at Barnham in Suffolk was published in 1937 and the other Breckland sites were demonstrated at the British Association's 1938 meeting at Cambridge. His thesis has rested in the University Library since 1942 and I am delighted that Professor Richard West has 'rescued' (with comments) the Suffolk Geology part of it. Thanks also to Martin Sandford and the Suffolk Naturalists' Society for making this production possible - download at <https://issuu.com/suffolknaturalistsociety/docs/paterson> I am pleased that GeoSuffolk has been able to play a small part in this enterprise. RM

Moir's Oak

James Reid Moir, celebrated Ipswich pre-historian has a new information panel beside his oak tree at the junction of Valley Road and Westwood Avenue. Caroline Markham's article in the Ipswich Society Newsletter July 2016 explains the man and his memorial (which GeoSuffolk was pleased to advise). <http://www.ipswichsociety.org.uk/newsletter/newsletter-july-2016-issue-204/> CM