

Essex Rock & Mineral Society Annual Report for 2017

Membership

Our membership list stood at 117 individuals at the end of September 2017. Our Affiliation to the Geologists' Association is aided by the fact that 16 ERMS members are also GA members.

New Branch of ERMS

Following a suggestion by ERMS founder Rowley Collier, and after requests and discussion with members and potential members living in Essex - but far away from our Hornchurch venue - we hired the Village Hall at Stanway near Colchester. This proved to be a resounding success and attracted many new members. A Family Day was run there, which attracted well over 100 visitors and raised its profile. Both venues are open monthly to all members. Hornchurch meetings are on the second Tuesday, Stanway on the third Thursday.

Indoor Meetings

We have enjoyed a good range of talks, on subjects such as soil, fracking, querns and gems. Thanks again to our Secretary Ros Mercer for organising both programmes. The success of the Members' Evenings was due to the efforts of many enthusiastic members. Average attendance increased to over 30, peaking at 40. Visitors paid £4 for attendance, which boosted Society funds.

New ERMS publication: 'Pebbles in Essex- and beyond'

Produced by Ros Mercer and printed with the aid of the Curry Fund, at £2 per copy this folded full-colour chart/poster has proved to be very popular within and well beyond the county.

Field Visits

Up to the end of September, 10 planned trips took place. Some trips were well attended. The majority of participants were again from other clubs or joined in as guests, plus new members centred at both Hornchurch and Stanway. Thanks go to David Turner for finding and organising suitable sites to visit.

Shows and Open Days

The ERMS *Essex Gem and Mineral Show* in February was again well attended, with three halls in use for this 35th Anniversary show. Thanks go to Jeff Saward for his careful planning and management. Ros and Ian Mercer set up an ERMS exhibit for the November GA Festival of Geology entitled 'GeoPatterns in Essex Walls'. The display was also shown at Essex Field Club. Family days were run by Ian and Ros with help from a number of ERMS members at Essex Field Club, Lowewood Museum, Chelmsford Museum and Stanway Village Hall.

Publicity

The publicity leaflet print-run has lasted the year and helped maintain visibility. Members attending mineral shows around the country also distribute our leaflets. ERMS Facebook was set up by Becky Stamp and Lisa Nunn this year and our website carries full information including the new Walls Survey.

Website

The ERMS website was updated with current activity lists and news. Regular external communication has been received through the website, including enquiries for membership, advice on specimens and requests for talks and displays. The Essex Walls Survey and images were put online in September.

Greenwood Award

The Greenwood Award was presented this year to ERMS founder Rowley Collier who has given so much support in our anniversary year, 50 years after he started the club in Romford.

50th Anniversary

Fifty Anniversary London Clay bricks were made at Bulmer Brick & Tile Works in north Essex and were made available to attending members at the anniversary talk in February by Peter Minter, owner of the brickworks. Part of the production cost was offset by a grant from the Havering Arts Council, to which ERMS is affiliated. The inscribed brick was a good success and featured on Facebook and website.

Ian F Mercer, Chairman