



BOURNEMOUTH NATURAL SCIENCE SOCIETY & MUSEUM

Share our love of science

Newsletter Spring 2018

According to the Met Office, the first (meteorological) day of spring was March 1st 2018 – photo by BNSS member Martin Western.



Introduction

*by new President and Chairman of
Archaeology & History – Bryan Popple*

Our winter weather has not been too good but hopefully the spring and lighter evenings will herald a much warmer, drier few months and, of course, new life in abundance.

Let us build on our successes of last year and welcome even more visitors through our doors.

I echo Mark's thanks to everyone who has got involved and hope many more of you will bring your skills and enthusiasm to make the whole experience of our Museum and Society even better (for example, we still seek Chairmen for a number of the sections, etc.)

We have seen an increase in building links with Universities, Schools, other Societies and Museums. It is very refreshing to have them work alongside us on projects, events and research. Archaeology has benefitted from students, new members and links with Bournemouth University and a number of projects have been started or are planned.

Our educational programme led by Steve Limburn, ably assisted by a number of other members has been reaching out more and more into the community and our Young Explorers Group goes from strength to strength.

Please do come and tell us your ideas, ask questions and above all enjoy the experiences that the society offers. Thanks once again for all your support and whatever you may offer in the future. After all, our Society's future relies upon ALL OF US!

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Margaret Evelyn is voted 'Volunteer of the Year 2017'



Margaret has devoted a lot of time and put in a lot of effort for the benefit of the Society for many years. She and her team have produced the BNSS calendar for a number of years and this involves sifting through many photographs submitted by members. Tough decisions have to be made to determine which photographs are special enough to be put on that

year's calendar. Then there is the organising of the printing, overseeing sales, so the tasks go on. She has run our annual coach trips for a number of years and her dedication is very much appreciated. Margaret has led botany field trips and is very knowledgeable in the subject. On occasions when she has not been present it is often said that we need 'a pocket Margaret' to help identify specimens. These are just a few of the reasons why Margaret was elected our Volunteer of the Year 2017.

Let's find out more this year!

Within our museum there are many things we have all seen and admired, but maybe not asked about and wished we had. Other things are hidden in the deepest depths of our collections, whether in the Library or in drawers or locked in cupboards.

Well, we think it is time to lift the lid on these secrets and discover more about our world. Ask other members and the experts and perhaps become involved: add your own knowledge, experience and enthusiasm to ours.

Let us see where it takes us...

Cartoon by Lord Grenville



Controlled explosions at the BNSS – nobody hurt



In January Steve Limburn led a wonderful 'introduction to chemistry' session. With his lab assistant Veronica's help, our Young Explorers were taught about the periodic table and reactivity of elements. Controlled explosions were carried out behind a screen luckily no one got hurt! We found out about acid and alkalis and built atoms and elements. There certainly seemed to be some budding scientists in the room!

You can find a link to the full programme at:
<http://bnss.org.uk/events/young-explorers>

Legacies make the difference between profit and loss

The generosity of our members never ceases to amaze us. Legacies can be made tax-free and, as in 2016, make a huge difference to the financial well being of the Society. It's a simple fact that if the BNSS had received the same amount in legacies in 2017 (when we received none at all), we would have shown a very small profit, rather than a very small loss. And although we're a not-for-profit organisation, it's crucial that we make a small profit to reinvest in our museum and in providing a future programme of events for our members and the general public. *Please* remember the BNSS in your will!

Helping to secure a resilient future for the BNSS & Museum

The Trustees of the BNSS have wasted no time this year in furthering the fundraising possibilities for our society and museum.

In December 2017, fundraising consultant Atul Srivastava put forward a series of recommendations to help the BNSS work towards a resilient, sustainable and brighter future.

Atul is an experienced senior fundraiser. He has written strategies for a number of charities and has a track record of securing six-figure gifts.

Having visited the BNSS several times, he presented a list of recommendations to the Trustees who have now tasked him with producing an integrated fundraising and communications strategy and plan for the next three years. This might include any or all of the following: setting out the case for supporting the BNSS, identifying which potential income streams will give us the greatest return on investment, seeking out the trusts and foundations most likely to support us with one-off and ongoing support. He will also identify and write to over 30 trusts and foundations for funds, help us to understand 'the supporter journey'; from one-off donors to those who will make a provision for the society with a legacy, and the development of major donor and corporate programmes.

Atul is keen to point out that his appointment will not solve all our fundraising problems overnight, however, as he points out, 'if any organisation was worthy of attracting serious sponsorship and/or donations, it is the BNSS. My plan will outline some credible, affordable options and I'm really looking forward to working alongside the trustees and any volunteers who might like to join a fundraising group.'

Atul's ongoing level of input is to be agreed by the trustees after his first tranche of work is completed.



Atul Srivastava, Fundraising Consultant will begin working with the BNSS on Tuesday 27th February.

Would YOU like to be a part of our fundraising efforts?

Would YOU be willing to help a small group of volunteers who aim to meet up once a month for coffee and a chat, then help out with any fundraising activities? Simply email: contact@bnss.org.uk for more info.

Getting back to the outdoors



As the days grow longer, and fingers crossed, get brighter, drier and warmer, we dream of walking in the countryside, on the beach and spending time in our gardens.

It's the perfect time to keep your eyes peeled for unusual objects, plants, insects and other things. Remember to make notes of where and when they were found, and perhaps make a sketch or take a photograph, then bring your objects along for ID.

Pottery, fossils, metal items etc would be great and we can all tell a little piece of the story of this year.

Happy walking, digging and hunting everyone!

Mystery Items

By Bryan Popple, President & Chairman of Archaeology & History Section



*Can you guess what they are?
(Answers appear at the bottom
of this page.)*

Many times, visitors come into the Society & bring items for us to look at & identify. Sometimes they are things which have been found whilst gardening or on walks in the countryside, and others are things which have been given to them by friends and family; perhaps these have sat in boxes and drawers and have been forgotten about for years.

We never know quite what to expect when someone opens a carrier bag and starts rummaging inside!

Other people say that they have 'this and that' and we encourage them to bring their objects along – whether they are pottery, metal objects, possible ancient flint tools, old pictures, fossils – they are all worth looking at and hopefully we can inform them about the objects.

Please encourage your family and friends to help us all discover a bit more about our county, town & world.

You never know, it might fire up someone's imagination or give you a new interest to explore. Happy hunting!

From left to right: a neolithic flint knife blade: the other two items are made of pipeclay and were found in the River Allen. They are almost certainly a fairground balloon mould and Punch puppet.



It's time for an utterly fabulous Spring Weekend at the Science Museum!

There's a full guide to what's happening on the weekend of 14th/15th April on the back page: meanwhile, here's a 'sneak peak' at what some of our volunteers will be up to on the day...



Find out all about sun spots



We've arranged for a special guest to visit us on Sunday – John Smith is an archaeologist with expertise in military archaeology and is well known for his Roman Army talks. He will bring replica Roman Armour and other items for you to look at.



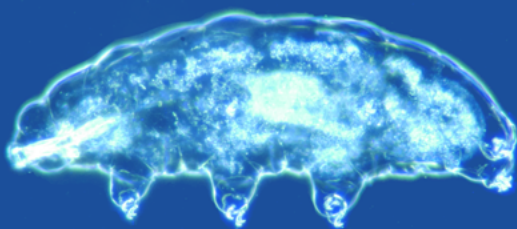
TELESCOPES... Weather permitting, Kate Seaman will be setting up two telescopes for solar observation on Saturday and Sunday.

She tells us 'this will be a great opportunity for anyone to see our closest star in all its glory! Hopefully, we will be able to see sun spots and solar flares too'. Images will be safely displayed on a laptop. This is a rare and exciting opportunity for those without their own scopes to learn about this fascinating subject.

...AND MICROSCOPES We will be demonstrating under the microscope some of the mini-beasts that live in moss including tardigrades and nematode worms.

Shown here is a 'dark field' microscope image of a tardigrade viewed from the side showing its outer cuticle, 4 pairs of limbs and bright feeding apparatus.

Did you know? Tardigrada – meaning 'slow stepper' – was discovered by the German zoologist Johann August Ephraim Goeze in 1773...



...but was named three years later by an Italian biologist Lazzaro Spallanzani. Now they have the nickname 'water bears'.



Come along with family and friends and share our love of science!

It's unanimous! Here's your at-a-glance guide to some of those responsible for the successful running of our society & museum – we'll try to introduce others in our summer issue too!



Malcolm Hadley – Acting Chair of Trustees

In addition to cataloguing our Botany section and helping out with IT support, Malcolm's project management skills have been put to good use over the past year!



Gerry Dugan – Hon. Treasurer

By law, the BNSS must have a Treasurer. Gerry's responsibilities include: PAYE, Pensions, Membership Direct Debit reporting, reconciliations, financial reporting, etc.



Steve Limburn – Trustee/Microscopy

Steve Limburn is a Trustee, the Young Explorers Coordinator, Schools Liaison Officer and Section Leader for the newly established Microscopy Section.



Ray Chapman – Trustee

In addition to running our Geology department, Ray is responsible for our Museum status. His responsibilities include Secretary to the Society and Chief Museum Curator.



Anne Jolliffe – Trustee

Anne is responsible for looking after our beautiful Grade II listed, 'Italianate-style' House including: building, maintenance, fire and safety/health and safety regulations, etc.



Grenham Ireland – Trustee

Grenham has taken responsibility for editing our website and is looking forward to contributing to other activities – including fund-raising – in future.



Pam Field – Trustee

Where would we be without someone to manage all our correspondence? It's a busy and important role. First impressions count and Pam is our trusted 'interface' with the outside world.



Mary Thornton – Programme Chairman

Mary is ultimately responsible for our Programme of events and lectures. She also acts as Volunteer Coordinator, organises hall hire and as if that's not enough, helps sort out our Event Days too!



VACANT – General

Our Society would benefit greatly by having someone willing to organise talks on any topic that is deemed interesting or valuable to our members but which falls outside the remit of other sections.



Bryan Popple – Archaeology & History

Bryan has been a member of the Society for a few years now and became our Archaeology & History Section Chairman two years ago. He has an interest in research and education.



James Fradgley – Membership – Astronomy

James has been Astronomy chairman for many years and also has responsibility for membership administration including Direct Debit processing and annual Gift Aid rebates.



VACANT – Botany

Could YOU help? Too much responsibility? Would YOU be willing to share this role with somebody else?



Mark Spencer – Entomology

Botanist and gardener Mark has been President once before. He looks after our Entomology section and is the link between the Gardeners and our body of Trustees. He breeds butterflies!



VACANT – Geography

Could YOU help? Too much responsibility? Would YOU be willing to share this role with somebody else?



Ray Chapman – Geology

Ray is passionate about Geology – as is clear from the way he's transformed the Geology Section over the past couple of years. His walks and talks are eagerly anticipated by all.



Grenham Ireland – Science

Grenham was a biologist involved in teaching and research until retirement. He now organises the 'science strand' and attracts speakers in subjects not covered by the other Section Chairmen.



Jonathan McGowan – Zoology

Jonathan's a radio personality and really good field naturalist. Big cats are his specialism – he tracks them with movement-sensitive cameras, and collects their spoor, paw prints and hairs!



Keith Clements – Oology

Keith and Maureen Clements share responsibility for looking after our fantastic collections of birds eggs.



Brian Tiller – Librarian

Brian is our Librarian and his wife Mary is our Assistant Treasurer. Jointly, they run the sales table on Event Days.



Could YOU work alongside those above? We urgently seek a new Treasurer. We also need someone to Chair sections, such as General and Ornithology. Have you got what it takes? Then email us NOW: contact@bnss.org.uk



As promised in our last newsletter, here's a brief account of our last geology field trip of 2017 – to Charmouth on the 24th August – led by Ray Chapman, Chairman of Geology.

Parking at the heritage visitors centre we first had a look at the fossils and displays inside. We then headed towards Lyme Regis looking at the rocks on the beach and breaking some open if they looked likely to contain an ammonite. We continued studying the cliffs formed of the Black Ven Marls. The lower section is the Shales with Beef Member, an organic rich laminated mudstone with thin layers of 'Beef' the quarrymen's name for the fibrous calcite layers. At the top of this bed is the Birchi Nodule Bed named for the ammonite *Microdoceras birchi* which often appears in them. Above the Nodule Bed is the Birchi Tabular Bed a thin limestone. Above this bed is the Black Ven Member unfortunately often covered by landslips. It is a dark grey pyritic mudstone and shale with occasional thin. Although no fossils were found we were able to study the faulting and the limestone bands within the beds. A little further west there is an arc of boulders left be a previous rock fall, searching among these revealed belemnites, crinoid ossicles and pyrite nodules lying on the mud. A study of the 'Beef in the Blue Lias ended our trip.

What's your special interest? Membership of the BNSS costs less than £20 per quarter and includes numerous field trips and lectures, not to mention a free museum! Join today!



Piddocks (a kind of bivalve) excavate a safe burrow in rock. They then extend a syphon to filter food such as phytoplankton from the seawater.

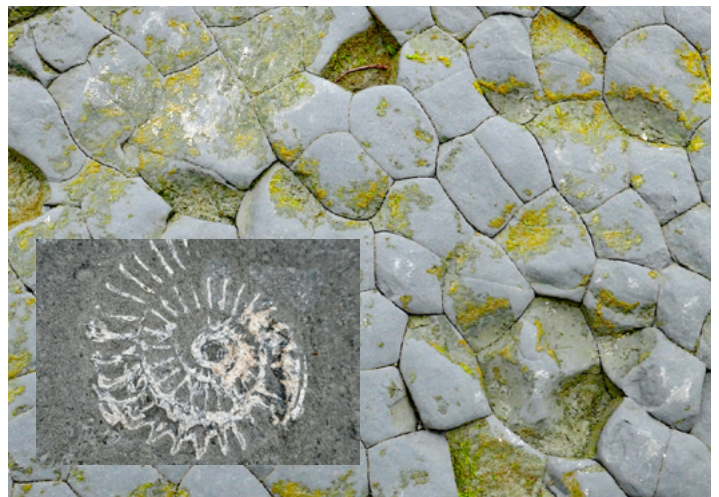
Geology Trip to Charmouth



Black Venn as viewed from the safety of the beach



This little shrew dropped in to share Steve Limburn's packed lunch. They're fast, but not as quick as Steve!



Would YOU like to receive your own FREE quarterly newsletter and programme of lectures & walks?

Email: contact@bnss.org.uk making the subject: 'keep me posted' (Our members will receive theirs automatically!)

Spring weekend at the MUSEUM

ENTRY: ADULTS £3 – CHILDREN £2 – UNDER 5s **FREE**

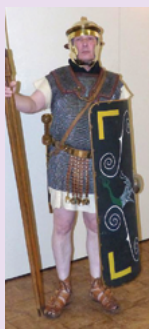
**14th/15th
April**
10am–4pm

SATURDAY ACTIVITIES

Solar scopes; *Stour Valley Rangers and supporters*; BU Festival of learning; *Dorset Wildlife Trust stalls*; Bournemouth & Christchurch Dorset Wildlife Group; Dragonfly sessions and arts and crafts; and more!

SUNDAY ACTIVITIES

Biologist and teacher Grenham Ireland will be enthraling us with visions of the micro-scopic world; *a visit from a Roman Soldier!* Solar scopes; *spring themed arts and crafts*; and more!



DARE YOU HOLD ROSIE THE TARANTULA?



Mark Spencer, Entomologist, with helpers will be showing live insects and spiders on both days.

DORSET WILDLIFE TRUST & other organisations on SATURDAY



SPRING-THEMED KIDS CRAFT ACTIVITIES LIGHT REFRESHMENTS

BRING US YOUR FINDS!



Bryan Popple, our Archaeologist will be on site to identify objects found by visitors in their gardens or whilst out walking. Please bring along YOUR found objects for identification!



POND DIPPING

Katie Wilkinson from Dorset Wildlife Trust will be dipping for, then showing, our pondlife on Saturday. Will our newts be there too, we wonder?



What's **YOUR** special interest?

Archaeology • Astronomy • Insects
Gardening • Geology • Geography
Ancient Egypt • Minerals • Fossils
Birds • Animals • General Science...

It's ALL here at your local
science society's museum!



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Share our love of science

Bournemouth Natural Science Society & Museum,
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