



BOURNEMOUTH NATURAL SCIENCE SOCIETY & MUSEUM

Share our love of science

Newsletter Summer 2018

What's YOUR special interest? Hunting for ammonites on a geology field trip to Charmouth? This is just one of the amazing BNSS field trips you'll find advertised at bnss.org.uk – they're FREE to members and non-members will be made to feel very welcome too (please make a small donation on the day).



Introduction

by BNSS President and Chairman of Archaeology – Bryan Popple

Now we have at last welcomed summer, the good news so far appears to be the increase in numbers of birds, insects and flowers and many of those have been appearing earlier.

We also seem to be getting more and more new members, and many of them have been very active for our open days and are very eager to help in any way they can. We've also seen an increase in the numbers of students and groups from Schools and other Societies visiting us.

The Arts University Bournemouth has been very active in many ways including using us as inspiration for an exhibition, 'New Matter', held at the

BNSS museum and many students are planning to use us for more research and inspiration for the future. One of the works of art can still be seen on display in the museum room.

Another student has been helping by producing a readable disc of the scan images of our mummy Tahemaa and is working on an art project based on the Egyptology collection. I must also mention the increased bonds between ourselves and Bournemouth University, working together for research which benefits both parties. (Watch this space for more news! Why not get involved, using your own skills and interests to further our cause?)

Once again I must thank everyone for their support and input. There are too many to mention them all by name.

Keep up the good work!

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SPRING WEEKEND EVENT April 14-15



The name was changed from Open Weekend to Spring Weekend, as the Trustees decided to incur an entrance charge for all non-members. Numbers were down, slightly, but still very busy. A downer this year was the theft of our Megalodon Shark's tooth, always a major attraction,

when comparisons are shown to a modern-day shark's tooth. No-one's fault, the BNSS put trust in the public, and just occasionally, that will be abused.

This was the first major event with Kate Seaman in charge, and apart from the above, all went well and smoothly. As usual, thoroughly enjoyed by both the public and the volunteers, manning the tea and cakes, the stalls, the insects, artworks and so on, plus a good showing in the garden by various other societies, with pond-dipping proving as popular as ever.

Or rather, the garden was enjoyed on Saturday, a rare sunny, hot, spring day this year, but a contrast to the following day that started off raining, continued to rain, and then poured, twinned with that grey sky which had enveloped us for months. A total washout, nothing outdoors, everyone confined inside.

Does hot weather attract or detract from people bringing their families to such an event? The answer is probably both; some will choose to come to Bournemouth and the BNSS because of the pleasant weather, whereas others will decide to opt for the beach or parks and leave museums for another time.

Money taken this year was £1,658.35 and £1,537.88 gross, on the 2 days, so not much difference. Brian and Mary Tiller took £303 on their sales over 2 days, as opposed to £307 last year, but then it was just one day, so a drop there. Brian and Mary believe it may be because the public have spent enough with the entrance fee and/or that our regulars have already bought the items they wanted from previous visits.

Overall, another well run, enjoyable, professional event, and surely the highlight of the year for the BNSS.



ASDA customers tell the BNSS 'you're better off'!



ASDA customers have voted the BNSS one of their favourite charities and as a result, President Bryan Popple and Curator Ray Chapman, along with fundraiser Kate Seaman were invited to drop by and receive a cheque for £200 on behalf of the society. Bryan Popple commented, 'What a pleasant first duty to perform as President of the Society! The funds will be put to good use – they will be used to help restore our wonderful Victorian lantern roof.' A further pleasant surprise was in store, as ASDA has also offered to provide our charity with goodies for meetings and open days!



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? For more information, simply email: contact@bnss.org.uk

We are still looking for more money and are hoping to raise around £5,000 i.e. 5% of the total needed. If you wish you can donate online via our website: www.bnss.org.uk

Thank you for your support.

FREE for members. It's time to go out and explore with friends. Don't miss your favourite Field Trips!

Botany field trip – 3rd May

Here are a few pictures of the botany field trip, 3rd May, led by Charles Light.

It was the first warm dry day for a number of weeks, so we were very fortunate. Charles also found us a rickety old moss covered bench half way round on which to perch and have lunch. We will now expect this refinement every field trip.

(Thanks to Gerry Duggan for the pictures!)



Come along and share our love of science!

***Geology field trip to Seatown
(17th May) organised by
Ray Chapman, Chair of
Geology. Words and pictures,
by Ian Julian***

Never been there before. A good start. As I alighted from my car in the car park, immediately heard Ravens, and sure enough, two were sitting on posts kronking sweet nothings. Took a picture before they flew away, as you do, then closed in, as you do, and closed in, until I was quite close enough to capture the different shades of black and sheen which I have never seen before.



Ray Chapman (left) and Chris Davison (right) pictured against the Green Ammonite Beds.



The Belemnite Beds at low tide.



Just a few feet away, and they remained there. Can be difficult to get an exciting photo of any black bird with black eyes, but shining in the sun, this close, these were different.

There is a family of Ravens, maybe 2 families, and they are all tame. One landed by the WCs, and allowed me to get within 6 feet and still remained, quite chilled out by it all, sitting, posing and kronking. A resident asked me why I was photographing their Crows! Explained they were Ravens; she was

unbelieving to begin with, and then became somewhat animated.

I am no geologist, but as with many others, like to know a little about geology, and appreciate having the Jurassic Coast on our doorstep. Why does the strata go in straight horizontal lines, then suddenly shoot up, and twist? What do the strata signify, what is greensand, where can we find fossils, how old are they?

So it is with Ray's walks, usually held along some of the most scenic, photogenic

sites that Britain can offer, and in the case of Seatown, on the far west of our county, a chance to see and experience somewhere new. I have seen pictures of it, it looks inviting, so gave it a go.

Despite the blazing sun and blue skies, it was all very quiet, hardly anyone here, no one on the beaches. Maybe the unpleasant drive from the main road puts people off, but you are welcomed by a café and a pub, and of course the tame Ravens.

We walked to, thankfully not up, Golden Cap, the highest point on the south coast. The towering grey cliffs were strikingly blue in places, fruitful for ammonites and other fossils, and as the tide receded, thousands of belemnites revealed themselves, embedded into the rocks.

There we are, another geological treasure, somewhere rich in fossils, Ravens, a quiet beach and photogenic scenery.

An update from our Young Explorers

Our Spring Weekend was a hit with visitors and in particular the younger ones. The arts and crafts section in the hall saw a constant stream of enthusiastic little people coming to have a go at one of our activities. Hundreds of caterpillars on leaves were made, children used wool to produce flowers and little sea anemones which they glued to rocks. Some children also had a go at making ants with card and pipe cleaners. We were also able to inspire Andrew to make his very own dragonfly to use on his stand for Dorset Dragonflies!



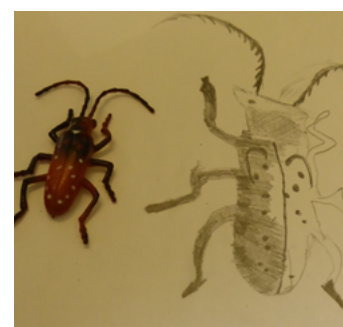
Young Explorers Minibeasts

A fabulous Saturday was had recently thanks to the expertise of Mark with his bugs, Grenham with the microscopes and Anna's arts and crafts. Children were treated to a brief lecture on types of minibeasts and then went out into the garden to discover their different habitats. They collected live specimens which they used to examine at close quarters under the microscope. They had a chance to make a bug hotel (thanks to Jill Abbott for chopping up all the cane for us) and draw anatomically correct sketches of the creatures.

We would like to thank parents who stepped in and volunteered on the morning when we found ourselves not with a handful of children, but with 30! Help in the kitchen was much appreciated.

We would also like to ask that for future reference families who wish to attend Young Explorers please book via our Facebook page - Bournemouth Natural Science Society or email Steve at youngexplorers@bnss.org.uk so that we have a better idea of how many children to expect and can cater for them accordingly.

Sessions normally run from 10 o'clock until 12:30 and children are encouraged to stay for the whole morn-



ing. The cost is £5 per child and all worksheets and any crafts may be taken home. Explorers is aimed at the 7 to 12-year-old age group but parental discretion can be exercised in terms of whether a session is suitable for younger or older children. We ask that a grown-up stays with the children at all times.

Future sessions include June 16th Seashores, Shipwrecks and Smugglers. July 14th Ecology. August 11th Plants, September 8th Architecture. Full details at: bnss.org.uk

Remembering Tony Ruth

by James Fradgley, Chairman of Astronomy



Tony Ruth, who died on May 1st, was an outstanding contributor to the BNSS. He was chairman of the Astronomy Section for many years, finally handing that over in 2005, and arranged many visits to interesting sites, as well as talks, over the years. More significantly, he was president of the BNSS in 2003-4. At that time there was considerable concern about whether BNSS could continue to exist, as membership was dropping rapidly and the financial situation looked unhelpful. Thanks to Tony's strategic and diplomatic skills as president, these discussions were resolved, and the Society owes him a debt for his major contribution.

It is hard today to see how things

were 15 years ago, when lectures were held only on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, and which meant that only retired members could enjoy all that was on offer. Tony's energy to overcome inertia, his initiative and guidance were a key part of the Society's transition.

The fruit of all this is now clear to see, in that we readily embrace change, not only with Tuesday evening talks, but also with e.g. BNSS's status as a Museum and many other activities, all of which show the society is very much alive. Without Tony's leadership at a key moment, one wonders whether we would have developed into the thriving Society and Museum of today.



In our spring newsletter we reported the £2,907 gift generously donated to the BNSS by the Coop Community Fund.

We're delighted to report that the hearing loop has now been upgraded and on behalf of all our members we would like to say many thanks to the Coop and all their customers.



Members of the BNSS recently dressed up in period costume in order to impress children in one of our Young Explorers classes. Recognise anybody?

Events and news updates

To automatically receive updates on BNSS events and news:

1. When next in Facebook, click on "Find Friends"
2. Type into the box "Bournemouth Natural Science Society" (not BNSS)
3. Click on "Follow"



The BNSS Facebook posts tend to be brief, and typically number 2 or 3 times a week. If, at anytime, you change your mind, you can stop BNSS updates going to your Facebook by clicking on "Unfollow". If in doubt, ask a 12 year old!



Volunteer roles don't get more interesting than this!

Do you regularly have 2-4 hours spare, between 10am and 4pm that you can offer to Bournemouth's emerging natural history museum?

MUSEUM ROOM STEWARDS

Could YOU help our members to keep our fabulous museum rooms open a little more often? If you can keep a careful eye on one of our rooms and have the confidence to tell our visitors a couple of simple, interesting facts about our wonderful exhibits, then you'll absolutely love volunteering with us!

Possible dates will be: Saturdays **June 23, July 28**, all of August, September 22 and November 24: all of them 10am–2pm

And in August: Tues, Wed and Sat, 10am–4pm, so it will be; 1st, 4th, 7th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 15th, 18th, 21st, 22nd, 25th, 28th and 29th. **Sept 22 and Nov 24.**

Of course, full training will be given! If you'd like to find out more, please email Mary Thornton your details at: contact@bnss.org.uk



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Bournemouth Natural Science Society & Museum
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Registered Charity no: 1165951.

***It costs nothing to pass it on!** Please help the BNSS by forwarding this newsletter to someone who might be interested in joining our society, guided walks or visiting our fabulous museum this summer!*