



D M A Newsletter

June 2013

Editorial

David M Riches

As I write this it's a beautiful sunny day, here in Weymouth. June has certainly got off to a good start weather-wise. Things are improving for Weymouth Museum as well, more later. Following my appeal for more articles there has been an excellent response and this is now the largest newsletter that I have edited!

I did receive one suggestion that the newsletter be reduced from three (sic) to two issues a year as it was difficult for a museum to find something new to write for each one. If, indeed, every one of the 30-something member museums did write an article of average length each month this Newsletter would be about 40 pages long, so that's hardly necessary although I'd still be happy to publish it. A typical Newsletter is 16 pages so if every member museum contributed an article or some news just twice a year that would be fine.

In reality some museums do contribute to virtually every issue whilst others seldom, if ever, provide anything and, in my experience, the most regular contributors are the volunteer run 'community' museums. All contributions are welcome and I would like to thank all those who have put in the valuable time and effort to write something for this one. I will continue to produce four a year.

The next issue will be in September but feel free to send me news or articles at any time.

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Gillingham Local History Society & Museum

David Lloyd, Chairman & Peter Barker, Curator

Our Diamond Anniversary - History of the Society and Museum 1953 -2013

On 23 March, 1953, members of the Gillingham Parish Council decided to sponsor the formation of a local history society. Present at the meeting were Mr E. Batho, Mr R.G.J Shute, Mr T. Haydon, Mr E.R. Samways and Lt.Col. C.R.A. Wallis (brother of Barnes Wallis, inventor of the Bouncing Bomb).

Less than three weeks later, at a public meeting held on **9 April 1953**, the Society officially began.

Mr Shute became its Chairman and Mr J. Burt its joint secretary and treasurer. Lt.-Col. C.R.A. Wallis was appointed Hon.Curator. There was a committee of five and the addition of two nominated members of the Parish Council. Capt. Blandford Matthews was asked to become President. Ordinary members' subscriptions were fixed at five shillings (25p).

Within a short time the membership became established and offers of objects were received including the Freame collection of local artefacts. Initially the new collection was housed in a room in the then Secondary Modern School. Col. Wallis was determined to have a proper museum. "We must have a museum" was Wallis' constant war cry. In 1957 his dream came true when Mr E.R. Samways (a local chemist) generously donated his cottage property in Church Walk to the Society for its museum. After months of intensive work and preparation by committee members and local traders the museum was officially opened on 6 November 1958.

The museum collection continued to grow and Col. Wallis remained as curator until his tragic death in 1962. Mr W.W. Slade (of Slade & Sons, The Square) continued until 1977. Mr George Butcher followed until 1980 when Charles Howe took over as chairman and curator until his death in 1985. Peter Crocker succeeded as chairman and John Pinnock as curator. Lyn Light became curator in 1989. She was followed by Bill Moore in 2004. David Lloyd took over as Chairman in 1999 and Sam Woodcock took office in 2002.

In 2012, David Lloyd was elected Chairman with Peter Crocker as President.

In 1987 the Society suggested to the Library authorities that they should discuss the possibility of a new museum being included with their project of a new Library in Gillingham. The response was encouraging. By 1991 plans were being drawn up and sponsorship sought.

Under the leadership of Peter Crocker, supported by an enthusiastic committee and helped by Tom Craig, County Museums Advisor, the Society obtained various grants. These were from Dorset County Council, North Dorset District Council, Gillingham Town Council and the Museums and Galleries Commission totalling £83,000 towards the estimated building costs of £110,000 and fitting costs of £25,000. With generous individual donations, further grants and fund-raising the shortfall was eventually met. In December 1993 the new Museum had been built within the Library at Chantry Fields and the Society took possession in January 1994. During the next two years fitting out took place and further fund raising was necessary. An application for £15,000 to the Heritage Lottery Fund was successful and on 26 April 1995 Gillingham became the first recipient in the country of a Heritage Lottery Award. On 23 October 1996 the Official Opening was performed by Mr Herbert Green, President of the Society.

Other landmarks – The Society's first newsletter was launched in 1979 by Bill Shreeves and has continued on an annual basis in the form of *The Journal*.

In the autumn of 2004, the Museum's first Interactive Game was installed and told the story of Gillingham Forest. The game was produced by *Entbuse* and was officially opened by the Mayor of Gillingham, Colin Dann.

In the summer of 2011, *The Gillingham Historian* was launched by David Lloyd. This newsletter was designed to be emailed to members and friends to relate news about the Society and Museum activities.

David Lloyd, Chairman

Museum Re-opens after Winter Closure

After what has seemed an eternal winter, the museum opened on Tuesday 2nd April, and despite the weather remaining unseasonably chilly, volunteers were on hand to give a warm welcome to members of the public visiting the museum for the first time or to see the changes made during the winter closing period.

Following the departure of the builders it was a race against time for all the hardworking volunteers to put the current displays back in situ and create a few new ones following the extension of the storage area.

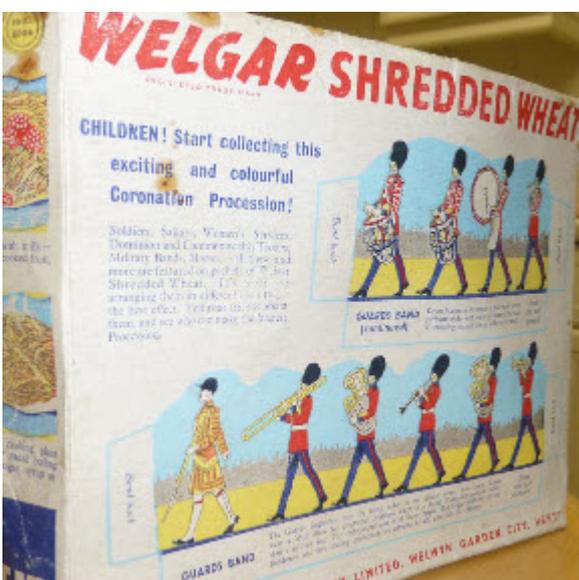
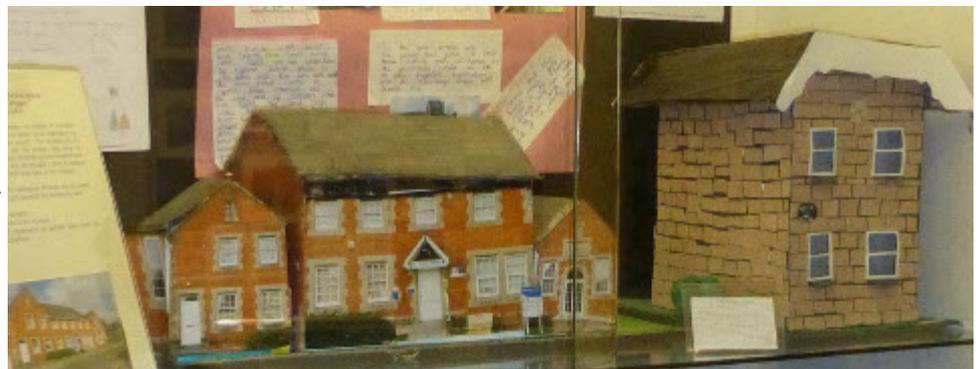
We are all very pleased with the additional storage space and now we have the 'shop floor' down below ready for visitors we will, during the forthcoming months, be concentrating on arranging the proper archiving and storage of our collections. We will be paying particular attention to an extensive map archive of Gillingham and surrounding parishes during our regular Tuesday evening 'working party' sessions. *Peter Barker, Curator*



Daisy and her Mum were the first visitors to the museum when it re-opened on 2 April.

Here they are looking at the 1953 room

Part of one of the new temporary displays show models of Gillingham buildings made by pupils of Milton-on-Stour Primary School.



The main display for 2013 is the '1953 Room' to reflect the year of the Queen's Coronation.

One new artefact is a Shredded Wheat packet featuring a Coronation scene.



Gillingham Museum

Part of the 1953 room

Blandford Museum

Peter Andrews

Blandford Museum has opened three new exhibits this year. There is a new archaeology exhibit using the material from the 2009 and 2011 digs in the Milldown area, including a very nice Bronze Age pin found during the Knighton House excavation. There is also a new touch screen display of the work on these digs and other subjects, such as an introduction to the Neolithic and later archaeology of the Blandford area and human evolution in Britain. This exhibit was supported by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, which also funded a large number of community and oral history projects over the last two years. On the upper floor, there are two new exhibits on military matters: a model of the Blandford area showing the defensive works set up against a possible German invasion, showing the layout of anti-tank traps, pill boxes and how these man-made structures were integrated with natural features in the landscape. A photo frame shows pictures from the time. The other exhibit combines museum holdings of artefacts from WW1, WW2 and the Gurkhas of Blandford Camp as well as interviews of soldiers and their families from the Blandford camp, in a large purpose-built display area. A second touch screen display provides background and shows additional material not on display. These exhibits were supported by a Community Covenant Grant from the MoD, a grant from DCC and material created with a grant from Activate.

Starting in June 2013 will be a monthly series of talks at the museum on the first Thursday of each month at 7:30. The first talk will be on the Neolithic of the Blandford area, based on the recent digs, and comparing this with the recent Neolithic finds in Turkey, specifically at Catalhoyuk (6th June). The second talk on July 4th will be on the Portman family and its links with Blandford. Free admission and everyone welcome.

Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Museum Development News

Vicky de Wit, Museum Development Officer

Funding Opportunities:

Small Grant, Big Improvement:

Do you have a project linked to your museum's sustainability that would benefit from up to £1k of funding support?

The next round of the Small Grant, Big Improvement scheme is now open for applications and full details on how to apply can be found at:

<http://www.swfed.org.uk/museum-development/funding>

The pages contain Guidance notes, an online application form and a downloadable application form, together with top tips on making successful grant applications.

As your Museum Development Officer, I can assist and advise you with your applications, so please don't hesitate to get in touch. **You have until 24th June** so get your thinking caps on!

In the last round Lyme Regis Museum secured support for their business planning, Sherborne Museum upgraded their shop and Poole Museum developed digital learning resources, so it really is a wide and varied scheme.

The Art Fund Goes Archaeological!

Do you have an idea to get your visitors enjoying your archaeology?

The Art Fund has just announced a new funding programme, Treasure Plus, supported by The Headley Trust. This programme hopes to deepen public engagement with archaeological material by funding interpretation and display projects in museums and galleries across the UK.

This funding programme is therefore designed to help museums of all sizes make the most of their items of Treasure, and bring these objects to life, through small grants of between £2,000 and £10,000.

There will be a regional roadshow in RAMM in Exeter to find out more on 18th June at 1.30pm to find out more. It's a free event.

For further information, and to book your place, please contact Alice Hargreaves or Penny Bull: programmes@artfund.org <<mailto:programmes@artfund.org>>, 020 7225 4822.

Training Opportunities

Do you want to get and keep more volunteers for your museum?

Attracting and Retaining Volunteers

Tuesday 25 June, 10.30-16.30

Poole Museum,

This session will look at how you can attract and recruit a broader range of volunteers to your museums, and in particular reach out to sections of your community that may not currently be engaged in volunteering with you. The workshop will also consider ways to motivate and retain volunteers once they have joined you. It will include a case study presentation from Gold Hill Museum, Shaftesbury, where the experience of writing volunteer policy and role descriptions will be shared, as well as how volunteers are inducted and trained here.

Emergency Planning

I will shortly be promoting Emergency Planning Training which will be held at the Tank Museum in Bovington. If you need to improve your expertise in this area save the following dates: **Monday 7 October- part 1**
Friday 29 November- part 2

Purchasing Opportunity!

Russell Cotes has a case for sale – details as per below



MDF Wooden plinth and perspex top

Overall Case Height: 115cm (Plinth= 80cm, Perspex = 30cm), Width: 133cm, Depth 75cm

Best offer accepted. Buyer to collect.

Please note that the perspex top is not secured by locks, but by blocks to stop the top from moving around.

Plinth base is currently painted dark brown.

If interested please contact Helen on 01202 451810 or helen.ivaldi@bournemouth.gov.uk

Update on the Museum of Electricity

I know that many of you will have been sad to hear of the sudden closure of the museum of electricity. Since that point I have been liaising with the company that own it, Scottish and Southern Electric, to try and safeguard the future of the collections. I have been working with a colleague at the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry who has extraordinary expertise in this area and is guiding the company on how the collection can be best managed. The company have now grant-aided DCC to undertake a documentation pilot of the collection as much of it has no documentation and during June a group of five specialists will be based in the museum recording as much as they can using a professional photographer and MODES. We hope that the findings will inspire SSE to continue their investment in this unique collection and that a range of options for its future will be considered.

If you have a specific museum development or Accreditation enquiry, please do get in touch: Vicky de Wit, Museums Advisor for Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole, Tel: 07876 790641

Email: v.j.dewit@dorsetcc.gov.uk

The Blandford Fashion Museum Elaine Williamson, Publicity & Marketing

Our two exhibitions have been really successful A Passion for Pattern and Party Time and visitors have enjoyed seeing them this year, and in particular the children's party scene from the 1930's.



'Country Child'

During the season, this year, on Tuesday 21st. of May we had an illustrated talk given by Jen Goodwin on metal thread embroidery. The day started with coffee and shortbread and there were examples of pieces of metal thread work from the museum and also Jen's own collection on show. The talk was on both historical and modern pieces and showed how they are made and their uses from the early days of beautiful embroidery to the glamour of the Oscars today. The lecture was a delight to the audience and well received by those attending.

During the week beginning 24th June, we are running a special half price event for the benefit of visitors living in DT11 7- - on production of proof of postal address. The opening times for the museum are as follows:-

THE BLANDFORD FASHION MUSEUM

Monday, Thursday Friday and Saturday. October - Easter 10.30am. - 4pm. Easter - September 10.30 - 5pm.

LIME TREE HOUSE

THE PLOCKS

BLANDFORD FORUM

DT 11 7AA

tel: 01258 453006

On the 22 May we were all delighted when Gordon and June Boutelle received a certificate at a presentation given at the Blandford Corn Exchange by the Mayor in appreciation of their voluntary service to the Blandford Fashion Museum and town, which read as follows:-

'This Certificate of Appreciation is awarded to
Gordon & June Boutelle
In appreciation of long standing and dedicated
voluntary service to the Blandford Fashion Museum
and the citizens of Blandford Forum.'

A photograph of the occasion was taken by Forum Focus who gave us permission for its use if that was acknowledged in your newsletter.



*Gordon & June Boutelle with their award
(photo courtesy Forum Focus)*

Beaminster Museum

Brian Earl, Curator

What's in a Name?

That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet? True enough, but to what extent does it work for exhibitions?

We at Beaminster Museum, like most other museums, like to supplement our permanent collection with temporary exhibitions. We put on three new exhibitions every year, all of which have to be given identifying names. Words have been one of the main tools of my trade as well as a lifelong hobby, so, theoretically at least, naming an exhibition ought to be a reasonably straightforward task. I've realised, however, that it's a part of our work that should never be taken for granted.

Our naming convention has, hitherto at least, involved creating a two-part structure: a catchy bit, followed by an explanatory bit. The first part is designed to capture the reader's attention and imagination, while the remainder should confirm in plain English what the exhibition is actually about. The first exhibition with which I was personally involved was about roads, bridleways and footpaths in our local area. One of the main thrusts was that our route network has remained fundamentally unchanged for centuries. I coined the name *BackTrack* for the catchy bit. Having 'camelCase' words is terribly trendy of course, and I was rather pleased with the pun. Nobody batted an eyelid. We had lots of visitors. The name became a mini-brand, featuring on associated books and tea towels that are still proving a useful revenue stream two years on. The explanatory bit was *The histories and mysteries of local highways and byways*, which had a certain poetry of its own, but has now been largely forgotten.

Our current exhibition is about rural crafts and trades. We decided to call it *All In A Day's Work*. Visitor numbers have been disappointing, despite those that do venture over the threshold telling us how fantastic it is. Our committee suspected that the name might be part of the problem, in that it was neither very exciting nor very clear. The explanatory bit, *Recalling local crafts and trades of 100 years ago*, would seem to make things obvious, but

what we hear is that, because the catchy bit generally appears on notices in larger print than the explanatory bit, the explanatory bit frequently gets glossed over. Moreover, on our roadside blackboards in Beaminster and on all entries into the town, we only have room for a small amount of text to catch the eye of holidaymakers, so we choose the catchy bit – and it doesn't seem to register at all. Whether or not the name of the exhibition is a factor in reduced footfall, we've decided to review the names of our next two exhibitions with a view to making their catchy bits more explanatory if possible. One of them, about local novelists, poets and dramatists, plus outsiders whose work is about our local area, is currently called *Literati*. It apparently fails to resonate with our target audience. There is an obvious irony in my insistence on all our displayed text passing the Flesch-Kinkaid readability test when prospective visitors don't even know what the exhibition name means in the first place!

My conclusion is that, while having a good name for your exhibition can never in itself guarantee good attendance, getting the name *wrong* can effectively strangle it at birth. If in doubt, I've now decided, we should err on the side of the name being boring rather than too clever by half.

CASTLETON PUMPING STATION & SHERBORNE STEAM & WATERWHEEL CENTRE

Geoff Ward, Chairman

The installation of the large waterwheel at Castleton at the end of 1869 provided a crucial step change in the health of Sherborne's population which in recent years had suffered a disastrous death rate from waterborne disease of up to 67 per thousand. So bad that in August 1859 the Digby Estate Agent reported that work on the harvest was seriously hampered. Forty-one estate workers had died and, of the remainder, half were too ill to attend at their place of work.

The scheme was designed by a Lancashire engineer, John Lawson, using a 26 feet diameter triple breast-shot waterwheel with ventilated buckets, driven by water from the Osborne Stream and crucially water from the lake at Sherborne Castle piped under the railway line under an Agreement with Mr. Digby and a 60 years lease for the site at Castleton.

The minutes of a meeting of Sherborne Board of Health on 5th June 1866

Board of Health – The fortnightly meeting of the Local Board of Health was held on Tuesday last, present:- Mr Ensor (in the Chair), Mr Chandler, Mr Worsley, Mr Whittle, Mr Woolmington, Mr Dalwood, and Mr Lyon, - The Clerk (Mr J. Y. Melmouth), having read the minutes of the last meeting a letter from Messrs Fooks to whom plans had been sent of the proposed water-works at Castleton for Mr Digby's inspection, was read. The letter was to the effect that Mr Digby desired to say that he had examined the plan which the Board had been good enough to send, respecting the chimney and works proposed to be erected at Castleton, and presuming that the chimney would consume at once its own smoke, it met with his approval. Mr Digby wished that the top of the chimney should be ornamented according to the light tracing in the plan, giving openings on the side, but it must not be higher than that drawn in Mr Lawson's plan. Mr Digby could not agree to sell the place required for the site, but he had no objection to grant a lease for 60 years, and would be happy to the Court of Chancery to grant a lease, such lease being subject to certain conditions, the cost of the application, and any other expenses, to be borne by the Board. – In reply to a question, Mr Melmoth said he had no idea of the costs for the application – Mr Worsley inquired whether it was really necessary to apply to the Court of Chancery? – The Chairman thought it would be advisable to consider the terms of the letter before deciding upon doing anything. – Mr Chandler suggested an adjournment of the question which was evidently adopted, and it was also decided to send a copy of the letter, &c. to Mr Lawson. – The Surveyor's report was then read. It stated that on an examination of the outlet of the main sewer below the mill, it was found that the wall-work which had been put up as a protection, was in a very dilapidated state.

The ready supply of water led to an increase in demand beyond the waterwheel's delivery and consequently the Board of Health decided to install a steam engine to boost the supply. The contract for the engine was awarded to E S. Hindley of Bourton, Dorset at against a tender of £1,016 approx. An additional building to house the engine and two horizontal boilers was erected in 1876 along with the sinking of a new well, borehole pumps and pipework.

Although the waterwheel and steam engine ran in parallel for several years the demand for water continued to increase leading to further supplementary measures – the addition of a Crossley gas engine installed in the wheelhouse in 1898 and with the deteriorating condition of the steam engine a powerful Petter oil engine and Sulzer pumps were installed in 1929. The association with Hindleys extended beyond the supply of the steam engine and boilers – they were contracted to carry out various repairs on the waterwheel and modifications to the pumping arrangements in the steam-driven pump house. In 1898 a major rebuild of the waterwheel was undertaken, not by Stothert & Pitt the manufacturers of the 1869 wheel, but by Edward White of Redditch at a cost of £890 and it was this wheel that continued to pump water until replaced by electrical borehole pumps in 1958; in the following years the wheel remained in the wheel-pit until “rescued” by our volunteers in the 1980s. By this time the wheel house roof was in a dangerous condition and with the financial assistance of Sherborne Town Council the volunteers put on a new roof and obtained Grade II listing for the building. Further work was directed at cleaning out the wheel house and wheel pit leading to the waterwheel being run on the early open days when it opened to the public as a museum.

Further deterioration of the waterwheel led to its being in danger of collapse and the need to raise funds for a complete re-build carried out by Richard Vincent; the only parts of the 1898 wheel incorporated were the cast rim gear and hub. The new waterwheel was inaugurated by the Rt. Hon. Oliver Letwin in 2007. The link with E. S. Hindley has been further strengthened by the purchase of a large horizontal Hindley steam engine, originally driving a pug mill at Gillingham Brickworks, generously offered by one of our group members and this year by the loan of a smaller Hindley engine by Kew Pumping Station. The new Hindley Building was erected in 2012 and houses both engines and a boiler enabling them to be run under steam on open days.

With the acquisition of the steam engines we felt it appropriate to change the name from Castleton Waterwheel Museum to Sherborne Steam & Waterwheel Centre.



Hindley steam engine loaned by Kew

Large Hindley horizontal steam engine in the new building





The Hindley building

Removing the waterwheel



Geoff Ward inside the restored waterwheel

South Somerset District Council Community Heritage Access Centre

Joseph Lewis, Heritage Information Assistant

Wimborne Railway Society and the Western Gazette Hoardings

In the last DMA Newsletter we showed a fascinating donation we had just received of a Dorset object with a Somerset Connection. This was a photograph of the Cattistock Hounds sent as a Christmas Card by H.C.C. Batten, Yeovil Town Clerk (1884-1963) and with his signature.

Continuing this theme, the Wimborne Railway Society recently contacted us concerning two Western Gazette hoardings positioned on a railway bridge. The society has a photograph taken in the 1970s showing the hoardings at the base of an embankment in Leigh Rd. Wimborne. The photograph clearly shows the hoardings but what is written on them is not clear. The railway embankment and bridge have now been demolished. It would appear that the hoardings were, if compared with the clear height under the bridge of 14' 0" are about 16' 0" high.

William Henville of the Society explains the reason for the enquiry: "the Society has for several years been constructing a scale layout of the railway through Wimborne during the 1950's-60's and it is details such as the hoardings which add realism to the overall scheme of things. Hopefully the suitable information can be found." Staff and volunteers will check the archive of Western Gazette documents and photographs to see if the message can become clear.

If any readers of the Dorset Museums Association Newsletter can help - please contact William Henville on:

(01202) 896732 or Gordon Edgar - (long involvement with the project) (01202) 877858



The railway bridge and embankment on Leigh Road, Wimborne in the 1970s – can any readers help with what is written on the Western Gazette hoarding.

(Courtesy of William Henville)

Sturminster Newton Museum & Mill Society

John Pidgeon, Chairman

This year sees the 100th anniversary of when the Creamery was established in 'Stur' and for William Barnes School and we have exhibits in the museum for both. There are pictures, awards and artefacts from the creamery and photos of staff and pupils from the school, which was the first council built school in the town that opened on 29th September 1913. Another recent display in the museum is of the results and artefacts from the archaeological digs carried out over the last two years around the Minster in 'Stur'. This now includes details of the geophysical surveys around the area and there are examples of the finds that visitors can handle.

Our first milling weekend of the year on the weekend of 11th/12th May marked a change over from simply demonstrating the mill to its return to commercial flour making after more than 20 years. This date was chosen to coincide with National Mills weekend, when owners and tenants of wind and water mills throughout the country are encouraged to make a special effort to promote public interest in these fine old buildings. Oxfords Bakery came to the mill on the Saturday to demonstrate bread-making using freshly ground wholemeal flour from the mill. Also our friends from the Blackmore Vale Amateur Radio Society were also on-site contacting as many other U.K. mills as possible over the weekend. This being a friendly contest which has developed over recent years.

On the 3rd April we had a talk by Brian Parsons on the Development of Cremation in Great Britain. He gave us many interesting facts such as: did you know that the first cremation in modern times took place in this country in 1885, that Manston House had one of the first crematorium or that only 0.87% of bodies were cremated in 1930 but the total now is around 74%.

On Wednesday 1st May we heard an amusing look at the changing face of medical treatment entitled 'Herbs and the History of Medicine' by the Rev. K F Timbrell. He told of whilst he was training in theology how he got interested in botany and from there to herbal remedies.

Coming events include a further visit to the museum, in August, by Giorstaidh Trevarthen, the County Finds Liaison Officer who will identify finds found in peoples gardens and fields. Also we are holding a Cream Teas afternoon at the mill alongside the River Stour on Saturday 10th August and are organising a coach trip to Portsmouth's historic dock land on Saturday 5th October.



The Creamery Display

William Barnes school display



Bread making demonstration

Bread making demonstration



Bournemouth Natural Science Society

Ben Limburn

About the Bournemouth Natural Science Society

The Bournemouth Natural Science Society (BNSS) was formed in 1903 with the aim of promoting the study of all branches of Science and Natural History. For more than a hundred years, the Society has educated and inspired both its members and the general public by providing a varied programme of lectures, museum open days, field trips, study groups and exhibitions.

For those of you who have never visited, the home of the BNSS is a grand, late Victorian Grade II listed building, located on the outskirts of Bournemouth town centre. It houses a fascinating museum which cherishes a menagerie of preserved natural history specimens, including plants, birds, mammals, reptiles, insects, eggs and shells, as well as extensive collections of fossils, rocks and minerals. The museum also has numerous archaeological artifacts and an Egyptology collection which boasts a 2500 year old mummy in its sarcophagus. In addition, there are many thousands of photographic slides dating from the late 19th century, and two libraries holding over 5000 volumes available for loan and reference to its members. The grounds of the building feature a marvellous garden aimed at encouraging wildlife in an urban environment. The Society welcomes the use of all of its facilities for research, education and enjoyment.

The BNSS is a registered charity which primarily generates funding through member subscriptions, donations and hire of its facilities. The organisation is run solely by a team of highly dedicated and experienced member volunteers, without whom, the Society would be unable to function. A trustee body of up to nine individuals and a President is elected annually by its members, of which there are approximately 250 at present. More than 50 members are active volunteers who perform a wide variety of roles, ranging from cataloguing and conserving the collections, to stewardship, gardening and treasury. Members also chair various interest groups, including archaeology and history, astronomy, botany, entomology, geography, geology, nature, ornithology, science and zoology. A newsletter and programme of events is published quarterly and reports are written regularly which document the Society's activities. In 2012 the BNSS hosted 10 museum open events, over 90 lectures and study groups, more than 30 field trips and, in addition, enjoyed numerous social events.



Bournemouth Natural Science Society

Vodafone World of Difference Winner 2013 - Ben Limburn

In February of this year the BNSS was delighted to welcome Ben Limburn as a member of staff, employed for four months part-time as a winner of the Vodafone World of Difference UK programme. This scheme invites applications from anyone who would like to receive paid employment for a charity of their choice over a 2 month (full-time) or 4 month (part-time) period. Ben submitted his application in November 2012, which was no small task, requiring several carefully answered questions, 3 references and a telephone interview. There were approximately 15,000 applicants for just 500 places!

The Vodafone World of Difference UK programme is funded by the Vodafone Foundation, a registered charity. Since 2002, the Vodafone Foundation has contributed over £200 million to charitable activities. The Vodafone Foundation is funded by annual contributions from Vodafone Group Plc and Vodafone UK. For full details visit the programme website: <http://worldofdifference.vodafone.co.uk>

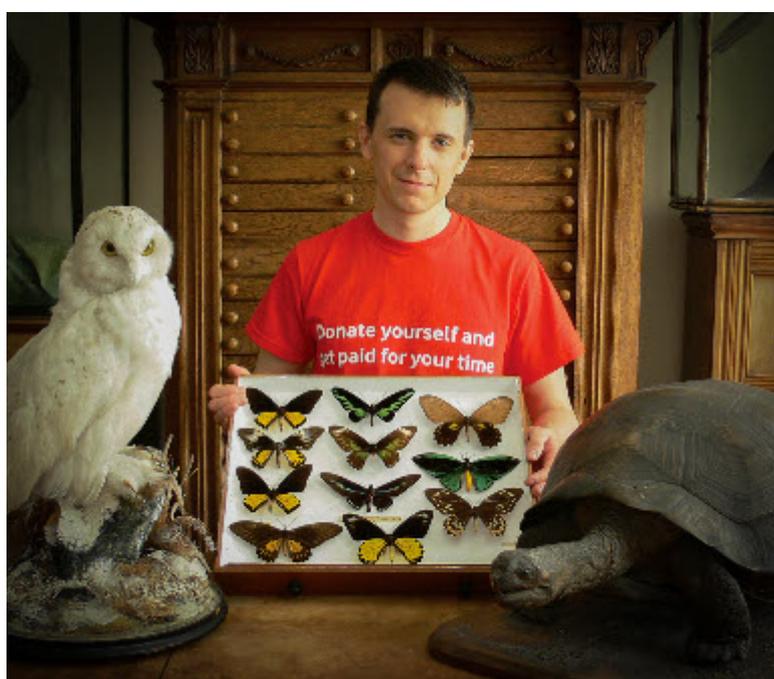
Ben has been a very active member and volunteer at the BNSS since 2007. His responsibilities within the BNSS include the development and maintenance of the Society's website and Facebook page, promotional roles, organisation of museum collections, pest control duties, newsletter editor, and this year he has also become a Trustee.

Ben's employment at the BNSS through the Vodafone World of Difference programme has been targeted towards three key areas:

- 1. Promotion of the BNSS and its activities:** Ben has been increasing awareness of BNSS activities within the community by promoting the Society's activities online and by producing publicity flyers. He has also been helping to organise and run Museum open days and other events.
- 2. Fundraising:** By promoting the BNSS, Ben aims to encourage new membership, providing income that is vital to the Society's survival and future development. Ben is also looking into ways the Society can generate further income, such as through text and online donations.
- 3. Organisation & preservation of collections:** As a qualified pest control technician, Ben carries out essential inspections, treatments and restoration measures to guard against pest species, such as the dreaded museum beetle (*Anthrenus museorum*), that damage the Society's precious collections. Ben also spends time organising these collections and the museum's storage areas.

If you would like find out more about Ben's employment at the BNSS, please visit his online blog:

<http://worldofdifference.vodafone.co.uk/blogs/benjamin-limburn2012>



Ben Limburn



**Vodafone
Foundation**

Vodafone World of Difference UK Winner 2013

Visiting and supporting the BNSS

The museum collections are open to visiting members of the public on Tuesday mornings between 10:00 and 12:00 by appointment. Groups from schools, universities or other educational establishments are also welcome by appointment to see the museum collections.

A series of museum open days take place between the start of April and end of October when members of the public can explore the museum and its collections. Details of open days, lectures and all other events are can be found on the Society's website and Facebook page, and on posters and flyers at the BNSS premises. Our events are open to everyone (a donation is requested from visiting non-members). If you have an interest in the Natural Sciences, or wish to support our organisation's activities, the BNSS welcomes your membership. Donations and member subscriptions are vital so the BNSS can continue to run such a varied programme of events throughout the year and maintain the museum building and collections.

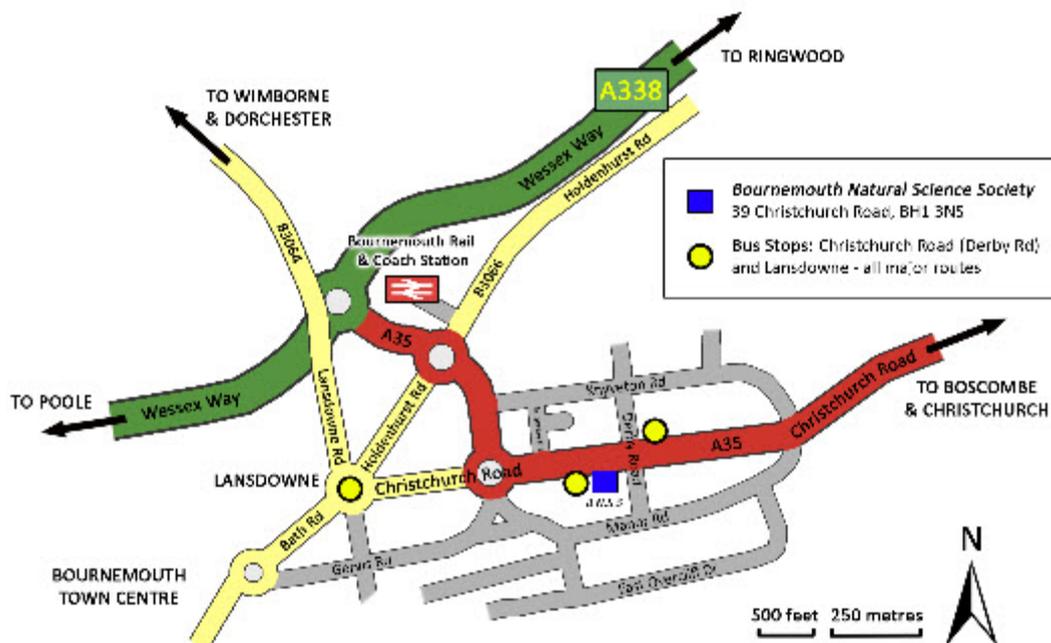
Volunteers at the BNSS are highly valued and essential to the survival and everyday running of the Society. We would love to hear from anyone with a keen interest, skills or enthusiasm to help us to continue and build upon the Society's fantastic achievements to date. Please see our website or visit our premises for more information on membership and volunteering at the BNSS.

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Owl moth



Weymouth Museum

David Riches, Collection Manager

Weymouth Museum is reopening. Because the redevelopment of Brewers Quay will not commence until 2015, as much of the building as possible is being re-let and the building has now reopened to the public, much of it housing an antiques 'Emporium'. This has created the opportunity to reopen the entrance and main gallery of Weymouth Museum and work is now in hand with a target of being open again in July. Regrettably we shall have to make a small admission charge.

Weymouth Museum's telephone line and broadband connection has been reinstated and the computer network will now be restored enabling our local history and information service to function fully again. It will also enable us to accession the donations we have received whilst closed, including many items from the former Brewers Quay Timewalk and Weymouth & Portland Olympic memorabilia donated by the Borough Council. I hope to illustrate some of these in the next edition of this newsletter.

The small exhibition set up by the Friends of Weymouth Museum in the Ivy Coffee House, overlooking the harbour in Cove Row, remains open, continuing to publicise the museum and there has also been a popular exhibition in Weymouth Library, prepared by Weymouth Museum Trust trustees Richard Samways and Maureen Attwooll. This will re-open there later in the summer. Also the Friends held another, very successful, series of Teas & Talks in St Nicholas Church, Buxton Road in the spring.

There are some problems remaining to be solved, however. The 25 year Museum Agreement between the Borough Council and the owners of Brewers Quay is due to expire in June 2014 after which funding for the museum is unclear. Hopefully a new, interim agreement can be negotiated to keep the museum running until it has to close again when redevelopment work commences.

Also the operation of the museum is still the responsibility of the company set up at the start of the agreement, Weymouth Museum Ltd. However its board has not met for 2½ years and it has no funds. In fact the bills are paid by Weymouth Museum Trust, who are in reality now the operators, with funds advanced by the building owners (the developers), Brewers Quay Investments LLP. The Council has been asked to amend the Museum Agreement to make the Trust the governing body.

Weymouth Museum Trust has now commented formally on the most recent plans for the redevelopment, requesting additional ground floor space. However these plans date from December 2012 and there seems to have been little progress with them since although discussions between the developer and the council are believed to have continued. Until there are new plans sufficiently advanced for submission for planning approval, work on a new HLF bid will remain on hold.

Weymouth Museum office and information centre is now manned on Mondays from 10 am to 3.30 pm and has a new telephone number, 01305 457982.



The Priest's House Museum & Garden, Wimborne

James Webb, Assistant Curator

LEARNING SERVICE

The Priest's House Museum provides active hands-on sessions which support the National Curriculum and school topics across the curriculum. Sessions can be adapted to suit all Key Stages. All the themes link to the museum building and collections. From September 2013 we are pleased to offer a selection of new session options for all our traditional topics as well as four brand new hands-on learning sessions:

- * Houses and Homes
- * Tudor Life
- * 17th Century Life
- * Britain since 1940

The new topic and session options will provide teachers with a greater and more flexible range of creative and hands-on learning opportunities, which will enable them to create a programme that suits their teaching and learning needs. All topic and session options make the most of the museum building, and extensive collections of objects and ephemera to provide a stimulating and unique learning experience.

2012-13 has been our most successful year so far with school visits up 46% from last year. The new learning room located in the Hilda Coles Learning Centre has enabled us to expand our learning programme with more space to provide a greater range of topics and sessions - including messy ones!

The museum is committed to providing formal and informal learning opportunities for adults. Using the building and collections as inspiration, a programme of local and family history, arts, crafts and subjects of interest to the local community are provided through short and long courses, talks, lectures, workshops and reminiscence sessions.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Archaeological Finds Surgery

Sat 13 Jul, 10 to 3

Have your archaeological finds identified by the county's Finds Liaison Officer. If you have objects unearthed through metal detecting, fieldwalking or casual finds from gardening etc. then please bring them along. Part of the Festival of British Archaeology.

Admission FREE if you bring a find for identification

Earth Detectives

Sat 20 Jul, 10 to 4.30

Delve into our archaeological past with a dig and activities. Budding archaeologists will be able to put on a hard hat and try their hand at a mini archaeological excavation. There will be something for everyone, with quizzes, trails and hands-on activities. Part of the Festival of British Archaeology.

Admission £2 (YAC members FREE)

Sally's Summer Sun Activities

27 Jul to 31 Aug, Mon to Sat 10 to 4.30

Self directed craft activities.

Admission charge

President's Summer Fete

Sat 3 Aug, 10 to 4

Adults 50p, Children FREE

Garden Mini Beasts

Thu 15 Aug, 10 to 4 (last entry 3pm)

Fun art and craft activities for all the family. There will also be trails, quizzes and much, much more.

Admission £2 (annual pass not valid for this event)

Sinbad the Sailor

With Graham Rogers

Fri 23 Aug, 7.30pm (house and museum open from 6.45 p.m.)

Sinbad the Sailor is a young man who sails off to gain a fortune; but how, as he struggles from monstrous disaster to precarious predicament? This is a tale full of strange and wondrous creatures, laughs and colourful intrigue. Part of 'The Sting in the Tale - a festival of stories'.

£6 adults / £4 children (booking recommended as places limited) (annual pass not valid for this event)

A Walk and Talk Around Old Knowlton

Sat 24 Aug, 2pm

A few miles north of Wimborne lies a ruined medieval church, unusually constructed in the middle of a prehistoric monument. These earthworks were built some 3,000 years before the first arrival of Christianity in Britain. Nearby is a deserted medieval settlement. Starting from the church, Keith Childs, a local archaeologist, will lead a guided tour of the site and settlement. Part of 'The Sting in the Tale - a festival of stories'.

£5 adults / £4 children (booking essential as places limited) (annual pass not valid for this event)

Romans in Residence

Sat 31 Aug

The Ermine Street Guard Roman Re-enactment Society will be paying a visit to the museum. Discover how the Roman soldier lived on campaign.

Admission charge (annual pass not valid for this event)

Every Pitcher Tells a Story

31 Aug to 2 Nov, Mon to Sat 10 to 4.30

An exhibition celebrating the museum's fascinating ceramic collection.

Admission charge

Tours of the Stores

Sat 14 and Sun 15 Sep, 10 to 4.30

Free opening of the house, museum and garden. Talk and tour of the new museum stores (booking essential). Part of Dorset Architectural Heritage Week.

Admission FREE

Portland Museum

David Carter

A BLAST FROM THE PAST

The joy of e-bay is that the most unexpected objects will frequently pop up from the oddest places and at quite nominal prices. One such object was the 'Weymouth and Portland Museum Service' book mark, said by the owner to be at least 30 years old and definitely unused. So for the princely sum of 99p, it returned from the other side of the country back to the borough of its birth. It comes from the days before Portland Museum was run by the Trust and before Weymouth Museum was the responsibility of the owners of Brewers Quay, in the days when the Borough Council ran both museums through its 'Weymouth and Portland Museum Service', sometime before 1989.

At about the same time, records of attendance and income for the 'Weymouth and Portland Museum Service' surfaced in a box of till rolls and receipts from the 1970s that had been carefully stored in the Portland Museum archives.

An inspection of the record of attendances for 1975, 1976 and 1977 makes for interesting reading and comparison. Portland Museum had 17,521 visitors in 1975 and then saw a steady increase to 20,421 in 1977 and to 21,444 in the following year. Meanwhile, for the same period Weymouth Museum experienced a decline from 32,554 to 26,897.

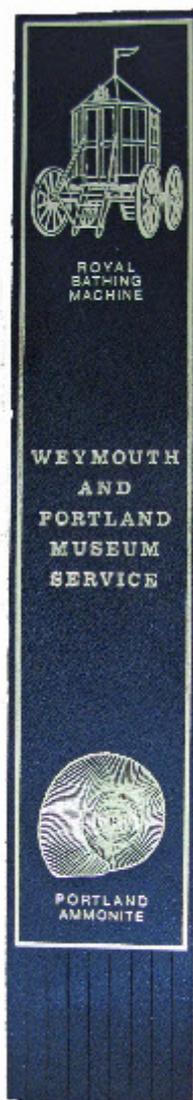
This year Portland Museum hopes to get 6,000 visitors a very significant decline from over 21,000 visitors thirty five years ago. Something has clearly changed!

When the figures were broken down it became apparent that the attendance figures for the two museums in the borough tended to balance themselves out and that there was always about 48,000 museum visitors in the borough each year, but what was most interesting was that for both museums 40% of the visitors were students, a total of nearly 19,000 each year.

Although it is not easy to be precise, in the 1970s Weymouth and Portland had approximately 9,000 children of school age, so it would appear that every child in the borough went to both museums at least once a year. By asking around to those adults now in their 40s, 50s and 60s all remembered their museum visits. Was there any specific memory? Quite a number vividly remembered the petrified cat found bricked up in a wall to ward off witches and were reassured when they subsequently revisited the museum to see that it was still there. Not being from Portland but Oxford I had to be inspired by the shrunken heads in the Pitt Rivers Museum!

In the period since the Trust took over the museum we have seen the percentage of children and students steadily increase from 13% to last year's figure of 28% due to our education programme and our children's Annual Pass scheme linked to themed days starting with dinosaurs, via the Romans and the ever popular pirates to Halloween at the end of the season and we are back to that petrified cat again.

In the 1970's only approximately 7% of those visitors were concessions which today has quadrupled to around 30% reflecting our aging population and possibly visitors inspired by those childhood visits and that cat.



The bookmark found on ebay



The petrified cat found bricked up in a wall to ward off witches

Shaftesbury Abbey Museum and Garden

Anthony Claydon

Shaftesbury Abbey Museum and garden is on Park Walk in Shaftesbury just two minutes from the High Street. It is open from Easter to the end of October. This year's special exhibition focuses on the fascinating but sad life of Dorothy Clausey who was one of the final group of nuns evicted when the Abbey was closed down in 1539. The display was created by Tony Claydon, Claire Ryley and Annabel Turner.

The Cardinal's Daughter: The Life and Times of Dorothy Clausey

Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey, the son of a Suffolk butcher, was ordained priest in his early 20's. Possessed of a great legal mind; this busy diplomat rose to be the organiser of King Henry VIII's state affairs. Created a Cardinal and made Papal Legate, Wolsey worked diligently and ruthlessly for his King, in his capacity as Royal Almoner. Henry was intelligent, ambitious and ruthlessly effective as a ruler, but personally lazy; - however, he knew how to pick competent men to do his bidding. Wolsey's failure to get the Pope to agree to annul Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon - so that the King could marry again and, hopefully, father a son and heir - was the root cause of his downfall. With many nobles hating the low-born overbearing Cardinal, The King's mind was turned against him. Wolsey was arrested, charged with Treason, and sent from York to London for trial. He died on the way.

Whilst in post as Almoner, Wolsey took as his mistress a lady member of the Wynter family, a prominent member of which was John Wynter, sea captain and Treasurer of the Navy. A son called Thomas was born, given the surname 'Wynter' and received a good education. He entered the church, becoming an archdeacon and Chancellor of Salisbury Cathedral.

Thomas had a younger sister, significantly baptised 'Dorothy' from the Greek for 'Gift of God'. She was assigned to a guardian and given his surname of 'Clausey'. When a young teenager she was shunted off to Shaftesbury Abbey as a 'Postulant' to become a nun.

A summer exhibition in the main gallery of Shaftesbury Abbey Museum traces the principal stages of her life .

Dorothy is portrayed at her Christening, with the King, the Cardinal, her mother and guardian in attendance. Next is shown her arrival as a teenager at the Abbey Gatehouse, after which she was placed in the care of the Mistress of the Novices for training nearby, submitting to the Benedictine Rule with its practice of prayer, manual work and sacred reading. Having taken her full vows she joined the other nuns in their accommodation on one side of the cloister. The daily routine and life of the Abbey is then described, and is compared with the regime in the modern Benedictine Nunnery at Stanbrook Abbey, Wass, near York.

Finally, after the Abbess Elizabeth Zouch signs the document of Surrender to the King's Commissioners in 1539, the nuns are dispersed and the buildings dismantled. Each received a pension, in Dorothy's case nearly £5 a year. The displaced Abbess did not forget her former charges, and it is recorded that at Christmas time Dorothy received the gift of a goose!