

Heritage Coast Centre' website, select on the top bar 'Friends of CHCC' and then 'Friends Newsletter'.) So far approximately 30 Friends have agreed to receive their Newsletter notification by email. We would like to substantially increase this number and therefore if you are willing to receive notification of Newsletter publishing via email may we please have your email address? Please send email addresses to [john@berridge-online.com](mailto:john@berridge-online.com) Your email address will not be passed on to any other organisation.

Kind regards, John Berridge – Editor.

### **Total Visitors from January 1st to May 4th 2011:**

**Visitors: 19,246**

**Schools: 1,324**

**Grand Total: 20,570**

Newsletter of The Friends of Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre  
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### **Forthcoming Events for your Diary**

**You are invited to the  
Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre's  
25th ANNIVERSARY BUFFET LUNCH  
to be held at the Centre on  
TUESDAY 24th MAY 2011 at 12.30.**

**Price £8 per person.**

**Please book places with cheque  
(payable to FRIENDS OF CHARMOUTH HERITAGE COAST)  
and return to  
Jean Kesterton, Freedom Heights, Westcliff Road,  
Charmouth. DT6 6BG.**

**B.B.Q.'S - Thursday 9th June  
and  
Thursday 8th September, 2011**

### **Lectures**

**NB. All lectures will take place at the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre.  
Tea will be available from 3.30 pm. Lectures start at 4.00 pm.**

**Thursday's - 30th, September - 20th October,  
24th November - 1st December - January 26th 2012**

**Annual Dinner - at Highlands End - Feb 23rd 2012**

## **Chris Horton Chairman of the Friends writes:**

### **25 Years have passed!**

Soon after you receive this edition of our Newsletter the Centre will have been in existence for 25 years – on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> of May. During that time it has been visited and appreciated by well over 1 million people and many, many hours of time and effort have been given by members of “The Friends”. The current estimate of the value of this time, if someone had to pay for it, is around £25,000 a year so over the quarter of a century it adds up to a very useful amount. Many thanks to everyone who has helped in any way but also we need the support to continue for a successful future.

To celebrate the occasion we will be having a Buffet Lunch in the Centre. Jean Kesterton is arranging this with her team of helpers and details for ordering tickets are with this Newsletter. We have to say thank-you to the Trustees for their offer to provide the wine – this is a very nice gesture and shows their appreciation of the work which we do for the Centre.

Those of you who were around in early April will have seen the crowds out enjoying the fine weather and it also gave a boost to the Centre. Let us hope that this continues throughout the year and maybe break some more records.

### **Chairman of Trustees - Richard Salisbury**

2010 was the best year the Centre has had over its 25 year history from the perspective of numbers of visitors, 87,816, Schools 5,783, and numbers on Fossil Walks. Financially the Centre did not make so much money, about £9000, in 2010, compared with 2009 when about £10,000 was the margin. This was because our income went up by 5%, but our costs by 10%. Although we had more visitors they did not spend, per head, so much in the Centre, our shop sales were very similar to 2009, and staff costs have increased. We now have a very good warden team, 3 of

weather is as nice as it's been this last month.

### **Jacky Martin - Senior Administrator**

A busy April has seen the shop sales looking quite healthy, so we are pleased to report a good start to our summer season. We have now introduced some further new items to the shop including a lovely royal blue T-shirt for children with the CHCC logo covering the front, and also dinosaur T-shirts and hoodies for children.

Following requests from Friends to stock a china mug for adults, we now have a mug with a multi ammonite design which has been designed specifically for us by a junior Friend. We have also extended our recycled range of goods with brightly coloured notepads, pencils and rulers making a great gift when all three items are purchased together.

We all look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Centre during the coming months.

### **Jean Kesterton - Social Secretary**

Thank you for your support at functions that I have organised for the friends. To date I have not booked any speakers as I am hopefully awaiting a deluge of requests or information as to your favoured subjects. Seriously folks, I would appreciate your input.

### **Saving money - Reducing Newsletter costs.**

With the ever increasing postal costs (2<sup>nd</sup> class letter is now 36p) coupled to the cost of paper, envelopes and printing, the cost to the Centre of mailing a newsletter is a minimum of 50 pence. At the present time we send out approximately 70 newsletters by post, costing the Friends about £35 per mailing. Each time the Newsletter is published it appears on our website in the form of a .pdf file, which can be opened up on your computer and read, or if necessary, downloaded and printed off. (Go to the 'Charmouth

## **Lyndsey Bird - Seasonal Warden**

Well its been a busy start to my season here at Charmouth, with a couple of weeks getting used to schools and then heading straight into the busy Easter weekend followed by the bank holiday and fossil festival. I definitely have not had a dull moment and I'm enjoying every moment of it. I am very grateful for the support of the Friends and the team at Charmouth, as I definitely would have not coped as well in my first month if it weren't for them at this busy time.

For those of you I haven't had the opportunity to chat to a little about myself...I'm originally from Somerset and attended Plymouth University studying Plant Discovery and Exploitation. I went on to work at Berry Head in Brixham as a trainee ranger, completing an NVQ in Environmental Conservation while I was there. I then went on to become a seasonal education ranger for the National Trust for Scotland, staying there for two seasons and I have recently returned from a year in Canada working for the Winter Olympics in Whistler and then a whale watching company in the summer. I have become passionate about working in a coastal environment and feel working at the Centre will give me a great opportunity to learn new things and put my skills to good use.

I like to keep busy and was given the task of running the Great Dorset Beach clean here at Charmouth. The event was very successful with around 30 people participating and over 30 bags of rubbish being cleared from the beach, so I would like to thank those who participated.

I have had great fun meeting the many visitors over the Easter weekend and thoroughly enjoy giving the talks and heading out on the beach to find fossils on the walks. With our walks becoming ever more popular we often have two talks running simultaneously, with one in the education room. The team are always looking to make improvements where we can and I am currently working on creating slides to use on the TV as visual aids when showing the smaller fossils during the talks.

I'm certainly looking forward to the summer months ahead and meeting those of you I have not met yet. Lets just hope the

whom are fulltime. I have every confidence in our team and that they will continue to drive the Centre forward. We are at last starting to rebuild the reserves, and so the Centre is now also in a much better financial position.

Over the last 25 years the Centre has gone from strength to strength. In the first year 10,456 visitors attended and the Centre was open for 70 days during the year. Over the 25 years more than 1.4 million visitors have come through our doors and we are open all the year round. An achievement the Friends, should be very proud of, because without your unstinting support it would never have happened. Our 25<sup>th</sup> birthday is on Tues May 24<sup>th</sup> and we are having a party to celebrate! You are all invited to a Buffet Lunch to be held at the Centre 12:30 for 1pm on the 24<sup>th</sup>, £8/head.

What is going to happen over the next 25 years? We are being constantly reminded that the building in which we are, is unlikely to last much more than 20+ years, due to the erosion and possible rising sea levels. What will become of our Centre? Where is there a building into which we could move, close to the beach? Should we build a new Centre on land that we don't own, close to the beach? Where will the money come from to do this work? Plenty to exercise our minds in the future.

Our main focus must be on the next 5 years. We have a visitor Centre that is the envy of many and we must make sure that it continues to be so. With the Warden Team and the enthusiastic group of Friends that we have, I am certain we shall continue to prosper. The year has started well with a good prolonged Easter.

Thank you for all of your help over the past years and keep up the good work for the future

## **Meirel Whaites - Senior Warden**

What a month! The Centre had been busy with events and school groups during March and as always the Easter holidays is usually a slightly more gentle start to the season. Thanks to the fantastic weather the Centre had a bumper Easter break with many

people visiting the beach and Centre. We had over 700 participants on fossil walks and over 16,000 people have now visited the Centre so far this year. The warden team had a couple of days to breathe before we were straight back into it again with the Fossil Festival (which ran from Friday 29<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> May). As part of the festival we ran events both at Charmouth and Lyme Regis. Phil and Lyndsey held the fort at Charmouth with the support of many volunteers assisting with the walks over the Saturday and Sunday, while Nikki and I were over in the fossil marquee for the three days with rockpooling sessions on Broad Ledge and fossil cast painting. I haven't had the full numbers through for the marquee as yet but I think Nikki and I will have talked to, smiled at, or helped to paint a fossil with over 15,000 people. It is fair to say that we are all pretty worn out....but it is straight back into the schools programme, and we are now fully booked for the summer season and are taking bookings now for September. My thanks must go to all the Friends who help on the desk and with schools groups and walks as we really couldn't have got through the holidays without you all.

Bearing the above in mind, I really haven't had that much time for the garden yet this year but the veggies are on the go already..... My mother and father are both very keen gardeners and once they have planted out they will be bringing their surplus bedding plants and vegetables up to the Centre so that we can sell them in aid of the Centre. We will schedule the plant sale for late May so keep your eyes peeled for posters around the village. If any of the Friends have any spare plants that we could put in the sale around that time then please let me know.

My thanks again to you all.... Meirel

### **Phil Davidson - Geological Warden**

It begins again! I think we have kick started the season with a rather busy and sunny Easter holiday. During the Fossil Festival Lyndsey and I were left to hold the fort here in Charmouth while Meirel and Nikki went over to Lyme. We were busy at the Centre and had around 100 people on each of the walks over the

weekend. I managed to escape and catch with some old friends from the Natural History Museum and Portsmouth University in the evenings.

Before Easter we put up my new display panels about fossil collecting and one of my favorite local fossils, *Dimorphodon*, a pterosaur which Mary Anning found. The Recent Finds Cabinet has lots of interesting things in at the moment and I am in the process of preparing some interesting bits I have found over the winter.

I am off next week on holiday to Turkey with an old friend from home. We are flying to the South and travelling north up to Istanbul to stay with a friend. I have always wanted to go to Istanbul so it should be good fun, besides I think I need a holiday before the madness of the summer holidays begins again!

### **Nikki Hills - Marine Warden**

I had a brilliant start to the season with an exciting find in February half term. During one of our public fossil walks I found a piece of dinosaur bone. It is part of the knee joint of a Scelidosaur. It is definitely my best fossil find so far and more importantly means I can finally have my name in print in Phil's 'Recent Finds' cabinet at the Centre! It has been an extremely busy start to the season with the Easter holidays and Fossil Festival all rolled into one. We held three Rockpool Rambles over Easter which were all well attended. The critters that we collected helped to restock the rockpool tank in the Centre which we had emptied out and cleaned a few weeks before. Lyndsey and I will be cleaning out the large tank next (with the generous help of Mr Berridge!) and thanks to the Lyme Regis Aquarium will soon be full of new and interesting creatures. There was a marine theme for the Fossil Festival this year and we ran Rockpool Rambles in Lyme Regis. They were very popular and Meirel and I took over 100 people rockpooling during the weekend. We've got lots more marine events scheduled for the season...let's hope the fantastic weather continues...