



FRIENDS OF CHARMOUTH HERITAGE COAST CENTRE

Forthcoming Events for your Diary

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 January 22nd

**Trevor Weeks from the British Divers Marine Life Rescue
will talk on marine life rescue and the courses that they run.**

Annual Luncheon

at Highlands End

Thursday February 26th - 12.30 for 1pm.

AGM

Thursday March 26th - 4pm in the Centre
Followed by Tea & Cakes.

BBQ's

Thursday June 4th 6 pm until dusk.

On the grass to the West of the Centre .
BBQ, salads, bread provided.
BYO drink, food, cutlery, chairs etc.
All Friends and Guests welcome.

Thursday August 27th 6 pm until dusk.

Lectures

Thursday	October 15th 2009	TBA
Thursday	November 26th 2009	TBA
Thursday	January 21st 2010	TBA

Chris Horton Chairman of the Friends writes:

A Happy New Year to all members of The Friends.

Unfortunately for the local members our year did not start very happily as one of the first functions of the year was a Memorial Service for Tom Higgs who died, rather unexpectedly, just before Christmas. For a long time Tom was very active with various groups in the village and when he died at the age of 85 he was still a very prominent figure. He was President of The Charmouth Society and Chairman of the Village Hall Committee. He was also a very keen gardener, was President of Charmouth Gardeners and regularly won the top prizes at the Flower Show.

Tom, with his wife, Peggy, was frequently on duty at the desk in the Centre where his local knowledge, his good humour and an interest in both young and old people made him the perfect person to welcome visitors and answer their many questions. There is no doubt that Tom will be missed.

Meanwhile, looking back to 2008, The Friends again made a major contribution to the continuing success and progress of The Centre. Hopefully we can look forward with confidence to the future but to continue to maintain the level of support we are in serious need of extra help. More volunteers are required for the desk rota if we are to avoid asking too much from those already involved – hence if you are able to help either by becoming a volunteer yourself or by persuading a friend or neighbour to volunteer please do so. Now is a good time to begin as there are fewer visitors and it is easier to become familiar with the routine. A phone call to the Centre or a chat with Meirel is all that you need to do!

Please look at the dates for future events and try to support them. The lecture on 22nd. January should be very interesting; details for booking your place at the Annual Lunch are enclosed and please make a note of the date for the AGM and the traditional Beginning of Season Get-Together.

There will be vacancies on the Committee but, in particular, Edna is resigning as Treasurer and we need a volunteer to replace her. Anyone prepared to help or needing information please contact me as soon as possible (560134)

We are also in need of help with the Newsletter distribution. For some time Roy Churchman has been involved (many thanks for your help Roy) but he would now like a break. The task is fairly routine –

contact half a dozen distributors around the village and deliver a bundle of Newsletters for them to distribute. This is not necessarily a Committee post but I would welcome a message or phone call.

Chairman of Trustees

A Happy New Year to you all, I hope you haven't suffered too much with the Charmouth Cough and Flu bug.

2008 was a good year for the Centre with nearly 81,500 visitors and over 4,500 school visits totalling over 86,000 which is a record for the Centre. We have also improved our cash flow. Thank you and well done everybody.

I would like to thank everybody who helped at the Centre over the Christmas / New Year holiday period. Special thanks to Bob and Jacky Martin who covered 7 shifts. The opening was successful, over 1600 visitors and over £1000 taken. The new coffee machine was well utilized, we ran out of chocolate and coffee!

A new, hopefully more appealing donation box will be ready from the Feb. Half-term, it is being made locally and paid for by the generous donation from Mrs. Sybil Fine King.

As the majority of you know Sam is leaving us to join the World Heritage Team on 19th Jan, we thank him for all his work and the support that he has given to the Centre over the past 4 years and wish him well for the future.

2009 will again present many challenges to the Centre, we must strive to keep improving the visitor experience, and with the continued support from the Friends, I am certain that it is possible to achieve that goal.

Richard Salisbury

Meirel Whaites—Senior Warden

The end of an era.....all change for 2009!

Happy New Year to one and all!

I'm sure that many of you will have already heard through the jungle drums that Sam is leaving the Centre to take up a new post on the World Heritage Site Team as Earth Science Advisor working directly with Richard Edmonds... in fact by the time the newsletter is in your hands he will already be gone. I'm sure you all wish him the best of luck in his new post and I especially would like to thank him for all the hard work he has put into the Centre during the three and a half years he has been here. He has been my right hand man here since the rebuild and I will be very sorry to see him go, especially as he totally understood me

bolting out of the office whenever a helicopter appeared on the horizon! Unfortunately I can't guarantee the same view of Golden Cap out of his window at County Hall as he has here...but as they say..."Dems the breaks kiddo!" Ha ha. I can assure you all though that he won't be a stranger to us.

So Sam has gone.....who is next? Well we will have interviewed for both Sam's and the Seasonal warden positions by the time you get this so hopefully I won't be on my lonesome for too long, which leads me onto my next point very nicely. Any help on the desk or with schools, groups and walks would be greatly appreciated over the next couple of months until I have new staff in place.

On a final note I would like to (as usual) thank all the Friends for their help and support, this place really wouldn't run without you all and an especially a huge thank you as it has been agreed that money raised by the Friends will be funding a new microscope for the Centre which will be in place hopefully by Easter at the latest!

That's all for now folks! Best wishes...Meirel

Meirel's Wish List.....

Volunteer roles needed at the Centre

1. Press and Publicity Officer

- Promotion materials
- TIC and holiday mail shots
- Hotels
- Website
- Radio and press

2.Legislation

- Update of Staff and Centre handbook in regard to current legislation including Health and Safety, Employers responsibilities and Disability policy

3.Funding Researcher

- Researching new sources of appropriate funding for the Warden team to compile bids on the internet and through publications
- Sponsorship
- Dorset County Council e.g. Art initiatives

- External bodies e.g. Natural England

4. Volunteer Recruitment

- Active recruitment of new volunteers
- Arrange volunteer open day once / twice a year
- Link with other local voluntary organisations

5. Junior Wardens / Environment Club

- Investigating whether there is a demand for this activity amongst the local community especially children's groups
- Sessions to run throughout the year with a wide focus just not on fossils but other environmental issues
- Research funding available for activities such as recycling workshops, sustainability issues
- Working as a team with the Wardens in regard to organisation and activities

6. Website Manager

- Data entry e.g. events programme, advertising
- Further development e.g. online shop

7. Super Volunteers

- Assisting the Warden team on the running of the Centre during opening hours
- Assisting on walks / events

Sam Scriven - Geology Warden

As many of you already know my time at the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre is drawing to a close. I have been employed as the Earth Science Adviser with the Jurassic Coast team at Dorset County Council and am due to start soon. I will effectively be an assistant to Richard Edmonds who was the first Warden here at the Centre and works as the Earth Science Manager for the Jurassic Coast.

My last day working at Charmouth will be the 17th and I start my new job the following Monday. I am looking forward to it. Change can be exciting. But I will be sad to say goodbye to the Centre and all the people I've got to know over the last four years. I have always felt very lucky to have got the job at the Centre. It has always been my ambition to work in geological conservation and heritage and now I almost feel like it is actually my career in stead of just my first job. And I have the

Centre to thank for that. Without the experience and opportunities that the Centre has made available to me over the last four years I simply wouldn't be where I am today. I think the fact that I am the third Warden from the Centre to be employed by the Jurassic Coast team is testament to the value of the work the Centre does and the esteem in which the staff and volunteers here are held by others working in the same field. As with Richard Edmonds I won't be a stranger. I am sure you will see me about occasionally as part of my new job. In fact in the first two weeks I will be back at the Centre twice! First to take a school group out and second to run the Jurassic Rocks and Fossils weekend at the end of January. It turns out I'm not as easy to get rid of as all that.

I'm afraid I feel rather guilty for leaving poor Meirel to cope all by her self. She will be responsible for all my duties as well as her own until my replacement starts and is settled enough to take over. I am reassured however by the fact that she is, of course not by herself, as she has the support of the Friends to help her carry the load during the transition.

So let me finish by wishing you all a fond farewell and thank you for making the Coast Centre a really enjoyable place to work.

Social Secretary - Jean Kesterton

British Divers Marine Life Rescue (BDMLR)

Trevor Weeks is the co-ordinator for the BDMLR — He ran a course for the general public centred at our Heritage Coast Centre.

Because we hosted the event for 2 consecutive years our Wardens, Meirel, Steffie and Ally received their training, thus becoming qualified to deal with any large sea mammals, free of charge.

*He has enthusiastically accepted our invitation to talk about their roles, **so please support this event as he is coming from East Sussex.***

Jean

Commercial Report

Our fourth Jurassic Art and Ceramics exhibition was our most successful yet. Despite the credit crunch, we sold 24 paintings out of around 220 which were on display. Whilst this may not sound many, our sales are higher than many week long exhibitions. In addition we had

'new' potters exhibiting, almost all of them sold something, too. All in all we think that over 40 people received a unique Christmas present. Overall we made over £600. Thanks to all the Friends who volunteered to help and also to those who supported us at the preview evening.

During the post Christmas opening period, we were delighted that the coffee machine was used so much that we ran out of supplies of coffee and hot chocolate!!! Visitors were delighted that they could enjoy a warming drink, wander round the Centre and then go out again to renew their search for fossils. Whilst the evidence is only anecdotal, and the weather was cold, visitors did seem to stay longer.

Many of our web-site advertisers have now renewed, but we have plenty of space. so if you know anyone who might benefit from advertising with us, please let Sam or me know

Finally, although the sales are not dramatic, can we thank you for your continued support in donating second hand books. It keeps ticking over, we never quite run out of books to sell, and it brings in valuable income without placing an extra burden on anyone. Post Christmas our stocks are quite low, so if you are planning to spring-clean your book collection, we would be pleased to have anything you no longer want.

Bob Hughes (560487)

Editor writes:

Times are in deed a changing and in an effort to reduce our costs and become ecologically more efficient, it is now possible to view the latest Friends Newsletter on the CHCC website home page <http://www.charmouth.org> , in the form of a .pdf file, which may also be printed off if required. To this end those Friends wishing to avail themselves of this facility should send us their e-mail address and, providing they have paid their annual subscription, we will notify them by e-mail when a new Newsletter has been produced.

John Berridge

Charmouth Natural History Group

Here are the following trips for the next six months:

January - Topsham RSPB Bowling Green Marsh and Starlings at West Bexington. **February** - Axmouth and Colyford **March** - Champernhayes - Daffodils walk. **April** - Langdon Hill. **May** - Stonebarrow. - **June** - Kingcombe Reserve. If anyone is interested in any of these outings please contact Kate Stapleton on 01297 560

255. We need new members to join our merry band, don't worry if you are not expert, it is just a group of Friends getting together once a month. All you need to do is to help out with the occasional car share.

Birding News. A male Goosander arrived on the river Char down at the beach above the bridge for about a week. With the Goosander, which is quite rare in itself, a Mediterranean Gull was with a group of Black Headed Gulls and a Kingfisher landed briefly on the mud before flying away. This all happened in 10 minutes.

Just before Christmas I walked down to the beach. I just wanted to know how many Pied Wagtails used the square marsh for a winter roost. Believe it or not I counted at least 150 to 200 birds. They suddenly shot up in the sky from the marsh and I saw Merlin quickly pass over. They circled over my head for a good 10 minutes before they settled back into the marsh. It wasn't as good as the Starlings big show but it was still an amazing sight to see. **Kate Stapleton**

Total number of Visitors to the Centre for 2008

80,187

+

4521 School Children

=

Grand total 84,708

Total number of visitors to the Centre for 2009

as of 08/01/2009

541

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