



Gower Society Youth Activity Newsletter Autumn 2010



"Happy birthday to you, happy birthday
to you, happy birthday dear
Gower Society Youth,
happy birthday to you."

Gower Society Youth is 10 years old!!

Angela M. Brunt and someone called Angela Hughes took the first activity of GSY at Hill End called "Beach Finds and Beach Arts" in April 2000 and then in August 2000 they did an activity at Port Eynon called "Creative Activities on the Beach". The activities consisted of creating sculptures with things that they found on the beach. Any of our older members remember this event or took part? It would be great to hear about them.

As you can imagine I am always on the lookout for new activities and new locations for GSY activities so if you want us to do anything we haven't in the last 10 year or what a repeat of an event you missed please drop me a line.

In the mean time I have created a programme for the next few months. Fingers crossed that the star party does take place this year but if it does not I think we will just do our own star gazing somewhere on Gower and see what we can see.

I hope you all enjoyed the events from last year and look forward to seeing you again at an activity soon.

Best wishes

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DT March 2010

Past activities:

April: Cefn Bryn Day

A beautiful day on Cefn Bryn, not a cloud in the sky, or a con trail.



The families heard all about how Cefn Bryn was made and why it is there and why King Arthur's stone shouldn't be there. We then walked down to the stone and heard about the legends behind it before sitting back and sketching and painting. The children created some fantastic pictures and a lovely relaxed atmosphere descended.

We then moved on to the Great Cairn and hear about the uses as a sacrificial site and potentially a sauna! A lovely walk to the trig point via a stream teeming with tadpoles followed. At the trig point we looked at the new grass shoots growing through the burnt ground. To finish off we investigated the pond at the top of Cefn Bryn it really is teeming with life. Newts have now woken up from their hibernation and we caught 4, 2 male and 2 female and 2 newtpoles. A fun packed day which hopefully was enjoyed by all.



May Succession crawl



Another beautiful day in Oxwich for our “succession crawl”. Once we had all gathered we set off down the beach away from the crowds. The children then headed into the dunes armed with butterfly nets, magnify glasses, pots and identification guides. Their task, to see if they could find all the plants on the sheet and catch some bugs. The children, and parents, were very enthusiastic, searching high and low for the plants and running after butterflies, spider and lizards. The walking was quite demanding up almost every dune and down the other side, sometimes on a rather excellent slide! At the back of the dunes we popped into the woods and onto the boardwalk to see and feel the squelchy marsh. The boardwalk was under repair at the time unfortunately but we still managed to have a bog experience. It is now repaired and you walk its whole length across the bog, well worth a second visit. Tired but happy we then tramped back to the car park for a well deserved ice cream or cup of tea.



June Knights Day

Oystermouth Castle made a fine backdrop to a very colourful knight’s day this month. The children decorated wonderful shields and made themselves armour out of foil. That along with Stu’s model trebuchet and four blow up jousting horses meant we had a Knight, (well a day anyway) to remember.



July: Earth Walk

We had a real soaking for our final event before the summer holidays but what with the prickly tickly test, our eye in the sky, visiting the Lilliputian’s garden and seeing an amazing scenic view I’m not sure the children noticed. Our Earth walk at Gelli Hir went really well with even the parents appreciating looking at the wood from a different angle, be it through a mirror, your mind’s eye or a friend’s camera. We collected colours for a paint pallet and finished by painting the view. Quite an intense and mind blowing journey.

Mia at least wants to go back and see if the Lilliputians' liked the gifts we left for them.

August

Gower Show

A steady stream of children visited our corner of the Gower Society Marquee and enjoyed making creatures from play doh, shells, twigs, feathers and eyes. The theme for this year's colouring competition was Amphibians and Reptiles, because Newts and a lizard were found during some of GSY activities. We were lucky to have a lovely display of photos of Reptiles and Amphibians from the South West Wales Amphibians and Reptiles Group. They want us to report any finds to them at records@swwarg.co.uk as they are doing surveys. The three colouring competition winners won a £10 Smiths Token each. Everyone enjoyed the photos of our activities and the drawings and photos of young people's projects which GSY supported with their grants.

Activities yet to come:

Saturday 18th September: Wild Food Foray

Parc le Breos **Grid Ref: 538 896**.
Follow the A 4118 South Gower Road until the turning for the Heritage centre at Parkmill. Do not turn into the Heritage Centre car park but follow a small pot-holed single track road sign posted to Parc le Breos trekking centre. Six hundred meters down this track on the left is a car park. Park here, cross the track and enter Parc le Breos.

At 2 pm Dawn Thomas of Nature Days will meet you in Parc le Breos through the kissing gate where we will search in the surrounding woods for edible food including Blackberries, Burdock, nettles and fungi. We will take our bounty to the fire and cook up a feast of foraged food. Once full we will play some games such as a mushroom hunt and scavenger hunt.

Saturday 16th October: Natural navigation and Geocaching.

East end of Cefn Bryn. **Grid ref: 528 888**
Follow the A1448, south Gower Road, from Swansea until the crossroads at the top of the hill just by the sign for Penmaen. Turn right, go over a cattle grid, pass a car park on your right, follow the road until you see an unmade road to the right. Turn onto this unmade road and follow it until you come to a small, flat, grassy, parking area on your left. We will meet at the path leading up Cefn Bryn.

Find out how to find your way without a compass using the sun, puddles, tree growth. Then if you haven't discovered the joy of Geocaching we will look at the other extreme using hand held Global Positioning System, (GPS) to locate boxes of treasure hidden all around the countryside which you can locate with your GPS and then swap one of the toys contained inside for a toy you have with you. For this event it would really help if anyone who had a GPS, either a sat nav, or phone app or hand held GPS, to bring them with them as I only have a limited number. Also each child needs to bring a number of small toys,(3), to swap for another toy found in the Geocache, cracker toys or other small toys are perfect.

Saturday 20th November: Gower Society Youth 10th anniversary craft party.

Penmaen village hall. **Grid Ref: 525 884**
Follow the A4118 past Parkmill. Car park on the left at the top of the hill. Penmaen Hall is through the gate which says "Private no parking".

Our annual Christmas craft event at Penmaen Hall. This year it has been 10 years since Angela M. Brunt took the first GSY activity in April 2000. Celebrate the GSY's achievements by looking at all the old photos of events and testing your knowledge on our

GSY quiz. Can you tell a bush cricket from a grasshopper? Or a fossil coral from a fossil snail? Also there will be the usual material to make cards, crackers, Christmas decorations and mobiles. Mulled wine and mince pies will complete the festive atmosphere.

February Date and venue to be confirmed. Star party.

After the closing of the Swansea Marina Observatory the Swansea astronomical society and our cancellation of last year's star party we are hoping to have one this year probably at the Swansea university Playing fields site on Fairwood common. The date will be confirmed closer to the time once the necessary astronomical measurements have been made. The date will be published on the Swansea astronomical website, <http://www.classroominspace.org.uk/publicevents.php> and on the Nature days web site, <http://www.naturedays.co.uk/publicactivities.asp> Take a chance to look at the Swansea night sky.

Saturday 19th March: Spring stroll.

Through Ilston valley. **Grid Ref: 551 891**
Take A118, South Gower road to Parkmill.
Just as you enter the village turn right into the **Gower Inn car park**. Park at the back of the car park, we will meet by the stream.

Walk through the beautiful woods of Ilston valley and look and listen out for signs of spring. Spot the spring flowers, smell the wild garlic and listen to the bird song. We will be walking from the Gower Inn car park to Ilston church and back. This valley is the prettiest on Gower especially in springtime and also gets wet and muddy, so wear wellies!

All activities will be published in the Gower Society programme and on the Gower Society web site www.gowersociety.org.uk and

www.naturedays.co.uk were a map of each location is available.

Hope to see you at an activity soon.

Any questions ring me 01792 392919
or email dawn.thomas@reynoldston.com

Have fun
Dawn Thomas XXX