



LESTER HOVENDEN (1949-2020)

Monkton Nature Reserve Newsletter



November 2020

Farewell, 'Old Fossil'

We start our November edition with the very sad news of the passing of stalwart volunteer, Lester Hovenden – affectionately known as our 'Old Fossil'! Working for many years in the museum with Graham Goodwin, Lester has been a wonderful and much-loved part of the Monkton Nature Reserve 'furniture'.

Always willing to spare his time and considerable knowledge, Lester will be greatly missed by all who knew him. His natural history drawings and descriptions – especially of his favourite dinosaurs - remain on display in the Field Centre but nothing can replace his enthusiastic contributions to our educational work.

Lester will 'live on' at Monkton through the creation of 'Lester's Trail' (see over). With generous support from his family, a new fossil and dinosaur trail will be installed at the reserve and will be ready to go in the New Year.

Rest in peace, Lester.



Lester's wife, Vera, with son, Chris, and daughter, Jo, at the handover of the sculptures for 'Lester's Trail'

DESPITE THE SAD FRONT PAGE NEWS & THE GLOOMY COVID SITUATION IN THANET, WE ARE MOVING FORWARD WITH EXCITING PROJECTS AT THE RESERVE TO ENSURE WE ARE READY TO RE-OPEN WITH NEW ATTRACTIONS WHEN WE WELCOME EVERYONE BACK. SEE OVER FOR DETAILS.

contact@monkton-reserve.org
01843 822666

The Bookshop

Thanks to your generous donations we have managed to maintain some income during lockdown.

We are keen to explore the Ebay market and to have a Monkton account; however, as many of you will know, this is a time-consuming affair. If anyone is willing to take on this vital role we would love to hear from you. We would gladly deliver the books to you if you would rather work from home.



Some of the books we receive are too damaged to sell but have beautiful covers, so we are trialling our new vintage "Book Boxes." We think they will make unique and stylish gifts, particularly for Christmas. The photographs will be taken professionally and the goods sold online, however we wanted to give our valued members a preview and first refusal!



They will retail at £15 each, including local delivery. Cash on delivery, contents are for styling only and not included.

Do let us know what you think of them.

We are still taking book donations and can collect if requested.

IF YOU WANT FURTHER INFORMATION ON DONATIONS,
HELPING IN THE BOOKSHOP OR WITH EBAY SALES -

Email: contact@monkton-reserve.org

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01843 822666
contact@monkton-reserve.org
<http://monkton-reserve.org>

Walk, watch, listen and learn trail



Work has been going on for over a year to prepare new trail infrastructure and associated activities for school visits that will also be a fun addition for our family members and anyone with an interest in the environment.

By Spring 2021, the trails will be ready to go with 20 new information boards and interpretation panels dotted around the reserve to explain about the landscape and natural history of the reserve and surrounding environment. Trail maps and activity leaflets to complement the trails will be available and include questions to answer from details found on the boards and panels.

We hope that a 'virtual' trail will be available on our website in the New Year, incorporating drone footage of the reserve and downloadable activity leaflets to give a taste of the 'real thing' before we reopen.

'Top Trail' and Monkton Nature Shed

Two more exciting developments at the reserve are also nearing completion.



A new footpath has been created from the car park to link with Marbled White Meadow, giving easier access to Sparrowhawk Wood for those who cannot manage the steep steps from the lower level. The path has an observation point with views across the reserve towards the observatory and is fully fenced along the cliff line of the old quarry workings. This part of the reserve has previously been inaccessible for several decades.

The Monkton Nature SHED project will also be offering new facilities when we re-open. A newly-constructed workshop has been installed by local contractors, Albion Fencing, and will be ready for use in the New Year – and accessible for new members once the Covid situation changes. Along with private donations, the funding for the workshop was also boosted by a contribution from Kent County Council; the trustees thank Councillor Liz Hurst and all those who supported the project.

One of the main objectives of the SHED project is to encourage all older people to be more socially active through hands-on DIY activities. We aim to improve physical, emotional and spiritual health & general wellbeing.



Chairman of the trustees, Trevor Shonk, with the new trail map at the entrance to the reserve.

‘Lester’s Trail’

As reported on the front page, there will be a new trail attraction at Monkton Nature Reserve when we re-open – a tribute to Lester Hovenden that will allow future visitors to learn about Lester’s beloved fossils and dinosaurs.

Sculptor and member, Annie Begley, has produced 6 sculptures that will be placed around the lower part of the reserve. Armed with a trail map, children can spend a fun hour finding the ceramic fossils and dinosaurs, answering questions on an accompanying leaflet about each animal.

Information sheets on each animal, featuring drawings by Lester, will be available at the Field Studies Centre.



Tyrannosaurus rex, one of 6 sculptures on the new trail



Left. Relief sculpture of an ammonite



Above. Reconstruction of a living belemnite