

 **THE NATIONAL TRUST**
BROWNSEA ISLAND NEWS

Monday 29th June to Sunday 5th July 2009

News from the Archives

Article from Bournemouth Daily Echo July 1934

Island Church Peril

This Afternoon' Renewal of Brownsea Fire

Brigade prepare to embark the Engine

Under pressure from a stiff south-westerly wind, the fire on Brownsea Island broke out again this afternoon.

Flames were soon licking the high trees in Venetia Park and the wilderness on the north side of the island.

Later the fire broke right through and crossed the middle of the island, consuming trees which have hitherto been outside the zone opposite the Parkstone mainland.

At three o'clock the flames were bursting out furiously and spreading among this belt on pine trees. There was at that time every indication that the church might become involved.

The barge was made ready to convey the motor fire engine across the harbour, should it be the barge skipper be authorised to do so.

CHURCH PRECAUTIONS

"Mrs Bonham Christie has been up all night," says our correspondent, "and is now absolutely worn out." She has arranged for the removal of the alter ornaments in case the fire seriously endangers the building.

"Cottagers whose homes in other parts of the island had been burnt, have taken refuge in the quayside buildings."

"Fresh help will have to be got to deal with the fire now," the "Echo" was informed on Brownsea jetty at four o'clock this afternoon, but the flames have not yet reached St. Mary's the Castle and the farm buildings"

It is feared that by this evening, if the high south-westerly wind continues, the fire will sweep round the north shore towards the castle building the church and the farm building unless the fire can be cut off.

The photograph with the article showed that the residents of the cottages at Maryland had moved their furniture to the water's edge.

News for the Gift Shop

Well can you believe it the 2009 season is almost half way through, the sun has been shining so we have been selling hats ,sun cream and sunglasses like hot cakes.

No prizes for guessing what the top selling items are? - small squirrels, Brownsea guide book, fridge magnets, assorted biscuits and of course we can't forget the trusty postcards, we now have a 'Squirrel Post Box' in the shop, and are offering a red squirrel or a scout stone ink stamp to make your postcard from Brownsea Island special, then we will put in the royal mail post box for you.

We have a New range of books including Waders of the world, Ship wrecks of the Dorset coast, and The National Trusts 'Countryside book'

There's also 'Dracula plants' - Venus flytrap or even GIANT Sunflowers or did I mean 'Jack and the Beanstalk'?

The sun has brought us load of school parties and with their little way 'can I change this for the other' and so lots of void on the till, but it's all great fun.

THE NATIONAL TRUST BROWNSEA ISLAND NEWS

So far this season things are going well, 15% on total shop sales 24% on guide books thanks to extra sales in reception and the café. Well done everybody who helps in our little shop



If you see us running around like headless chickens in the next week it's because I'm panicking, no one else is a retail operation meeting on the island, and there bound to take a look around the shop.

During the Brownsea Open Air Theatre performances we are hoping to have a table on church field selling blankets, caps, wind up torches, hands free wine glass holders, liqueurs to pour into those glasses, sweets and much more, watch this space!

Keith Russell
Brownsea Island Retail Manager

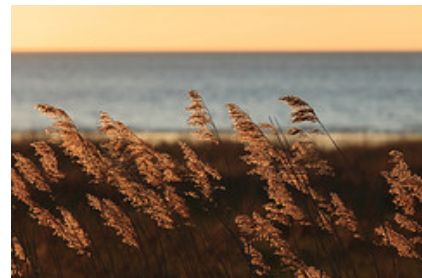
Wildlife Snippet

**Sedges have edges,
Rushes are round
And Grasses are hollow.**

Often overlooked at this time of the year in favour of more flamboyant colourful and scented species, grasses, sedges and rushes are also now in flower. Having no need of showy blooms to attract insects, being solely wind pollinated, they are just as fascinating. The adage above refers to the stems (or culms) and is only a generality. Not all forms of these families of plants drop neatly into this classification. Over 250 species grow in Britain, (150 grasses, 80 sedges, and 20 rushes) and significant swathes on Brownsea are dominated by one or more of them.

Many grasses have great value to man as they include cereals such as wheat, barley and oats and others are used as fodder for livestock. The tallest of our grasses is Phragmites or Common Reed. It is used for

thatching and grows around the fringes of the lagoon.



Unlike grasses, sedges have little value as animal fodder as its leaves are sharp edged and the stems triangular and stiff – unpleasant eating.

Some forms of rushes were traditionally used for basket making. Their tough cylindrical

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stems, like those of sedges are filled with pith, whereas grass stems have no content. The prevalent plant in the wet meadow adjoining the public hide is Toad Rush.



Note how the flowers emerge from the top of the glossy green stems, differing from two other very common rushes also growing around the margins of the lagoon which have their flower heads set below the stem tops. Soft Rush is also glossy green and Hard Rush is a matt blue/green colour.

John Lamming
Countryside Warden.

**Brownsea Island
Social Programme 2009
For staff and volunteers**

July

Monday 20th
Hamlet
Picnic and Dress Rehearsal
Boats from Poole Quay 6.15pm
Booking essential
Organiser – Trevor

September

Wednesday 9th
BBQ
At the Baden Powell Centre
Bring salads or sweets
Organiser – FOGBI

August

Thursday 20th
Songs in the Garden
with The 'Wareham Whalers'
Villano Garden
plate share supper
Organiser

October

Wednesday 21st
End of Season Awards Evening
Location TBC– 7.00pm
Booking essential
Organiser -