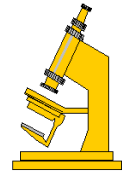
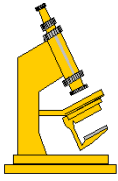


## Manchester Microscopical & Natural History Society at Etherow Country Park



**Saturday June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024**



MMS held its second annual outreach meeting at Etherow Country park located between Romiley and Marple to the East of Manchester. The all day gathering organised by MMS Treasurer Phil Slatter took place in the Sailing Club Boathouse on the edge of the lake. Although a little quieter than the previous get together here, due to early rain and tired out families at the end of half term school holidays, things picked up late afternoon with a flurry of visitors.

Graham Marsh did his Victorian Gentleman impression demonstrating a JB Dancer brass monocular brilliantly illuminated by a bulls-eye lens and an oil lamp which miraculously lasted almost all day. He also demonstrated an antique ringing table, a set of microscopist's tools and a brass pocket microscope as well as numerous old slides. Who needs electricity to do microscopy!



Tom Moon showed off his large antique Ramsden brass and leather mariner's telescope outside the boathouse to attract in visitors and help us observe when the café across the lake was open for lunch. Incidentally, members of the Dancer family did apprenticeships with Ramsden's optical company.

In stark contrast Phil Slatter showed off the Society's latest acquisition – a Chinese made inspection microscope with LED illumination, all electronics and few lenses.

This fascinated families, especially children, who could see Brine shrimps as tiny specks swimming about in a wine glass and then enlarged to over two feet across on the TV monitor. Phil also brought his Lomo stereomicroscope showing off flowers, leaves and bugs collected from around the park.





Mike Mahon lugged in five microscopes, several specimens and slides, a cuddly toy, mounted prints, and some microscopical literature. The Society's Brunel stereomicroscope with attached Jenoptik 5-megapixel CCD camera attached to a laptop was used to show off butterflies, a bluebottle fly, wasp, and printed circuit boards. An Olympus VMZ stereomicroscope with a cob LED light allowed visitors to look at coarse sand and shells. An adapted Olympus CH2 compound microscope set up for polarising microscopy fascinated visitors with the changeable colours of a crystal melt and samples of

human, dog or their own hairs. A UK made Vickers M15C compound microscope with a 5p coin placed below the condenser to serve as a patch stop produced darkfield illumination and showed off all sorts of fast-moving creatures (ciliates, rotifers etc) in a drop of stagnant rainwater collected the previous day. Many visitors thought it was disgusting and thought it may help to encourage their children to wash their hands more regularly! We also showed some moss containing tardigrades but found it easier to show off a video on a laptop of the one we prepared earlier in good old fashioned 'Blue Peter' style. The Water Bears (tardigrades) were

great crowd pleasers especially when it was explained that they were only a fifth of a millimetre long and the demonstration included a cuddly toy tardigrade. It was good to hear how many people already knew about these creatures and their great resistance to temperature extremes, radiation and living after a trip to the vacuum of outer space. A small Beck (London) portable microscope was also set up to show coins under reflected light microscopy.



Several visitors also perused the provided booklets on Insects, Pond

**The Manchester Microscopical Society.**  
(Affiliated to the Royal Microscopical Society.)  
President: PROFESSOR F. E. WEISS, D.Sc., F.R.S., F.L.S.  
Hon. Secretary: WILLIAM DIXON, Broadwater, 43, Pine Road, Disabury, Manchester.

This Society was founded in 1880 to associate residents in the city and its suburbs interested in microscopy and natural history.  
Its members number over two hundred, including honorary, corresponding, and ordinary members. Ladies are eligible for election.  
Subscription.—Entrance fee, 5s.; annual subscription, 5s., 6d.  
The meetings are held in the rooms of the Literary and Philosophical Society, 36, George Street, on the first Thursday of the month, except in July and August, when there are no meetings, and September, when the meeting is held on the third Thursday.  
All meetings commence at 7.0 p.m.

A Mounting Section was formed in 1882, with the object of holding demonstrations in the most approved methods of preparing and mounting microscopical objects, and in practical histology and microscopy. Membership is confined to members of the Society. Subscription, 5s. per annum. The meetings are held on the third Thursday in the month, except during July, August, and September.

An Extension Section was founded in 1898, its object being to bring scientific knowledge, in a popular form, before other societies who are unable to pay large fees to professional lecturers. The work is entirely voluntary and gratuitous on the part of the members.

The Society possesses an extensive library, a large collection of microscopical slides, and several microscopes, with the necessary accessories, all of which are accessible to members.

Rambles are arranged for most Saturdays in the summer, for the collection of various microscopical objects, 'pond life' being the most popular.

The Society issues a monthly circular to members, and publishes its Annual Report and Transactions in September. The latter is obtainable from the Secretary at the address given above, the charge to non-members being 1s. 6d. (by post 1s. 7½d.).

NOTE.—A number of provincial Natural History Societies have a microscopical section, particulars as to any one of which can be obtained by communicating in the first instance with the Secretary of the Royal Microscopical Society, 36, Hanover Square, London, W. 1.

Life, Freshwater Algae, Microscopy, plus the Newsletters of the MMS and Quekett. You can also see Tom re-acquainting himself with Micro Miscellanea articles during rainy periods when he had to bring the telescope inside.



Graham also brought along a 1922 5<sup>th</sup> edition of 'Modern Microscopy' by Cross & Cole in which page 91 described the Manchester Microscopical Society 102 years ago!

All in all, a worthwhile outreach day. Many thanks to Phil for organisation and to Etherow Sailing Club for providing the accommodation and to Mike Hollingworth for setting up the tables.

**Mike Mahon, President MMS**