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SCIENCE ROADSHOW COMES OF AGE AT CAMBRIDGE

Students at Cambridge University this week celebrated a decade of bringing fun science to the public.

As one of the few student-run projects in the country, the CHaOS Roadshow brings its own unique brand of fun science to children and parents. Armed with rockets, kiwi fruit, a minibus and a skeleton named Boris, the students not only explain some of science's intriguing puzzles but also encourage you to answer many for yourself.

Anthony James, who founded the group ten years ago, explained: “There is so much more to science than white coats and laboratories. We wanted to show that it’s fun, and relevant to everyone.”

And show they have. Over the last ten years, the roadshow minibuses have descended on towns from Scotland to Devon, with events at schools, festivals, bandstands and even a beach! From its modest origins in Cambridge, the roadshow has grown to reach over 8,000 people each year at venues across the country.

One of the visitors to the roadshow in Dover said “I think I learnt more about what my son actually knows about the world around him in the couple of hours he spent with their volunteers than I have done for many years – they opened his mind”.

Kirsty Leake remembers visiting the science roadshow as a child nine years ago, and now helps to run the experiments while she pursues her degree. She said “It’s a great chance to get your hands on some fun and perhaps surprising science. The students are lively and they can really tailor the experiment for you.”

The group is one of the few student-run science roadshows in the country. With no employed staff, the group relies entirely on the enthusiasm of its student volunteers. This informal approach keeps the group fresh and creative, with new experiments and events every year. Their latest innovation is a “lab on a bicycle” initiative to take experiments out to local schools.

What will the future hold for the group? “Science explains the world around us and impacts almost every aspect of our lives – it’s much more than just a school subject”, says Phil Tuddenham, one of the organisers. “Children need inspirational role models in science, now more than ever, and that’s where we come in. I would like to see every University have a student science roadshow.”

More information about the CHaOS Science Roadshow is available on their website, <http://www.chaosScience.org.uk/>.

Contact Information and Photos

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<http://www.chaosScience.org.uk/press-release>

Notes for Editors

The CHaOS Science Roadshow is a non-profit student-run society at the University of Cambridge. Their principal aim is to inspire children and families with some of their own enthusiasm for science.

Their most popular event, “Crash, Bang, Squelch!”, takes place annually in Cambridge and attracts over 2,000 people in a few hours. Every summer they run a two week summer roadshow to take experiments to schools and public venues around the country.

Their drop-in events are free and consist of short hands-on experiments for children of all ages to try, each staffed by an enthusiastic student volunteer who leads children through the experiment in small groups. The informal dialogue, young student volunteers, unique equipment and small group sizes all help to take science out of a classroom context. They choose experiments that demonstrate interesting and surprising science and help children to see the area as more than “just a school subject”.

The CHaOS Science Roadshow is supported by the Institute of Physics, the Royal Society of Chemistry, the University of Cambridge and a variety of further industrial and academic sponsors.

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