

# *Lundy Field Society Newsletter*

No. 38



*Summer 2008*

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**Any opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those  
of the Lundy Field Society.**

## Chairman's Message - Keith Hiscock



*Keith Hiscock. Chairman of the LFS  
Sketch by John Dyke*

One of the reasons for inviting me to become Chairman just over a year ago was that I was going to retire in November 2007 and so would have plenty of time to devote to the Society. Well, we all know that you actually get busier after retirement and that is just what has happened. Nevertheless, I have been able to pick-up several matters (apart from Committee meetings) concerned with Lundy. They include ensuring that the original field notes from the intertidal surveys undertaken by one of our founders, Professor Lesley Harvey, were interpreted, transferred to spread sheets and submitted to the UK National Biodiversity Network. Such records are invaluable as a comparison with Lundy today, and I will be leading a trip to Lundy at the end of August to do just that. The first issue of the LFS Journal will be published this year and, following-on from all of the wide-ranging publications in the Report, will provide a valuable touch-stone for all interested in the history, archaeology, geology and wildlife of Lundy. Please make sure that if you encounter folks undertaking field studies on Lundy you make certain that they are aware of the Society and that they are asked to publish an account of their findings in the Journal, or at least an abstract from wherever else they publish.

So, if I am able to spend more time on LFS matters, where was I at the time of the AGM? Surely, a Chairman should, particularly after the end of his first year, be there to lead proceedings. Well, I had a dilemma. I have always wanted to visit the Antarctic and especially to dive there. And, when is the best time? Yes, just before the Antarctic winter. So, at the time of the AGM, I was on my way south. Thank you to Jenny George for ably taking my place at the AGM and my apologies for not being there. Yes, it was a super trip, I saw lots and survived (even enjoyed) the leopard seals that found me on almost every dive.

In the past year, we have seen the publication of the LFS 60th Anniversary Symposium, *The Birds of Lundy*, *Lundy Lichens* and a *Lundy colouring book*, [Ed's note: doing v. well in the Shop] all published or supported by the Society. I was pleased to be able to represent the Society at the *Birds of Lundy* book launch in South Molton on 29th September last year and congratulate Tim Davies and Tim Jones on an excellent publication. The Annual Report was produced speedily and professionally by Tony Cutler. Some of you might query 'speedily' in relation to the Annual Report but those of you not involved in

publishing such volumes may not appreciate the amount of toing-and-froing, chasing, checking and liaising that is needed. Likewise, this Newsletter which we are immensely grateful to Ann Westcott for continuing to pull together. All-in-all the Society has a terrific hard-working Committee - thank you to all.

Oh yes, and this year's picture of me is a John Dyke line drawing executed from a photograph taken of me in 1971 and to support an article in the Illustrated Lundy News on 'The underwater gardens of Lundy'. The deal was that I would write the article if I could keep the line drawing. If it helps you to recognise me on Lundy, do say hello.

Two of our strongest supporters and ex-Committee members, Keith Gardner and Ken Rodley, have passed away in 2008. We are grateful for their contributions to Lundy and the Society and offer condolences to their families.

### **EDITORIAL - Ann Westcott**

The LFS now has an enterprising new publishing policy. We are to have, in April following the AGM, a Report (containing an account of the AGM, the Bird Report and at least some of the papers presented at the AGM). In June/July there will be a Newsletter (the content of which will be slightly different from previous Newsletters), and, in October, a Journal (in which Academic papers will be published). For a small Learned Society this will be an ambitious undertaking and an achievement to be justly proud of.

Your Editor has in front of her both the 50th and 60th Anniversary publications together with a Contents List for the 2008 Journal (see p7). Keith Hiscock, Jenny George and Robert Irving are part of the team for each of the three publications - a signal mark of the continuity of the scholarly work undertaken by the LFS on and for Lundy. And, in the best tradition of the Society, the list of the fellow contributors contains a lively mix of 'Old Stagers' and 'Young Guns'.

This 2008 Newsletter will not offer (as the Newsletter has in the past) accounts of the AGM and the speakers' papers, but it will provide an excellent opportunity for drawing your attention to the outstanding catalogue of Lundy publications by the LFS and others. There will also be the usual newspaper trawl and such personal news as your Editor has been informed of. And, as your Editor says every year, the news about people may be today's gossip, but it is unquestionably tomorrow's archive.

ATVB

### **CONGRATULATIONS**

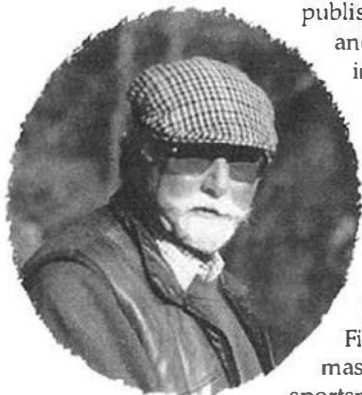
Sally Booth (née Hiscock) who spent many weeks on Lundy as a young child in the company of her marine biologist parents, gave birth to a daughter, Maisie, on 17th April 2008. No doubt the child's grandfather will introduce her to the island in the future.

## IN MEMORIAM

Roger Chapple provided the Memorials for Keith Gardner, Ken Rodley, and Les Perrin. We shall use the late Ian Linn's own words in our Memorial of him.

### Keith Gardner

Keith Gardner passed away after a short illness in January 2008. Keith will be remembered on Lundy and by society members for his archaeological work, published in 'Lundy - An Archaeological Field Guide' and papers in various annual reports, where his imposing stature enlivened many an expedition.



Andrew Smith, editor of the CBA journal wrote, 'His death represents a tremendous loss to archaeology. His enthusiasm for the subject was great and he has provided inspiration to many aspiring archaeologists.'

Elsewhere he enjoyed field sports, being Master of various packs of beagles, and was a Fine Art expert for over 25 years. He enjoyed masonic life and wrote several papers on masonic sportsmen.

### Ken Rodley 1928 - 2008 (Civil Defence Career)

Ken Rodley was an enthusiastic member of LFS working parties on the Island and a member of the Committee from 1993 to 2003. We are grateful to Roger Chapple for this account of his career.

Ken had a long career in Civil Defence after leaving the Army as a Lieutenant in the 1950s. He joined the Royal Observer Corps, with its H.Q. at R.A.F. Bentley Priory, as a full time uniformed officer and served in many parts of the United Kingdom successively as Observer Lieutenant, Obs. Commander & Obs. Captain. Even after Harold Wilson had drastically slimmed Civil Defence in the mid 1960s the R.O.C. had 25 Groups organised in 5 Sectors with many 100s of



volunteer Observers in Posts & Group Controls - those bunkers much decried by some. Ken was ideally suited to the task of organising and training volunteers with his mixture of good sense, wide technical knowledge, management skills, and great good humour. Ken was a born lecturer. He happily engaged in debate with those opposed to any preparation for defence in the case of nuclear war in the Cold War era, gaining respect if not agreement. In the early 1980s operational control of Civil Defence including its principal role of propagation of nuclear warnings to the public, switched from the uniformed R.O.C. to non-uniformed members of a small Home Office Dept. (United Kingdom Warning & Monitoring Organisation). Volunteer U.K.W.M.O. members from the local Warning Teams were appointed as Group Controllers to the 25 Group Controls and full time Home Office staff as Sector Controller to the 5 Sector Groups. When a vacancy came up, through retirement, at the Bristol Sector Group based at Lansdown, Bath, Ken was appointed to the Sector Controller post leaving his uniformed career behind. His responsibility covered a huge area - the whole of the south west of England, the southern half of Wales, and the border country nearly up to Manchester. Responsibilities included liaison with military, police and local authority organisations. Combining a deep love and interest in Lundy with his professional role was not always easy. In 1986 when almost the whole of the L.F.S., on annual excursion, were marooned on Lundy overnight due to the machinations of an east wind and the P.S. Waverley operators, Ken had something of a struggle to get to Lansdown, where he was due for the start of national Civil Defence exercise starting at 8.00 a.m. prompt. The Waverley had arrived at Ilfracombe at about 6.00 a.m. But with the help of his volunteer R.O.C. and Home Office staff at Lansdown all was serenely coped with. Ken retired from the Home Office in 1988 and was sorely missed by volunteers. Volunteer members of Civil Defence were finally stood down in 1993. Ken recruited over the years many members of the R.O.C and Home Office to the L.F.S. Together with his wife Pat, herself a former long serving R.O.C. Post Officer based at Exeter Group Control, he continued to stay in touch with his many, many long time friends in Civil Defence right up to the time of his death.



### Les Perrin

Les Perrin, the bosun of *MS Oldenburg*, passed away on 7th March 2008. He will be remembered by LFS members for his cheerful help during voyages to and from the island. In his native Ilfracombe he was held in high regard and for many years was involved with the Town Youth Band and HM Coastguard.

## Ian Linn

Ian was a long-standing and active member of the LFS who served on the Committee from 1959-1967 and 1970-1974 and was Chairman from 1975-1984. As a Vice-President since 1987, Ian contributed to Committee meetings and to the Annual meeting, including the last one in March 2006.

### 'Reminiscences of an Ancient Landlubber'

In 1949 I arrived in Devon to take up a teaching post in the University College of the South West of England (later to become the University of Exeter) under the redoubtable professor LA Harvey. At that time I was a standard laboratory scientist, while Leslie Harvey was quite the opposite. Although a true townie by origin, he believed that much useful biological knowledge was best gained by studying organisms in their natural habitat. This was a pretty bizarre idea at the time. I can remember a distinguished Cambridge don averring, with



some satisfaction, that "at Cambridge we do not study ecology". Undeterred, Leslie inaugurated a series of field courses in Devon, at which school teachers from all over the British Isles were introduced to the delights of field work in the fun activity of poring over undistinguished looking organisms in torrential rain and biting wind. Despite these drawbacks, the courses proved enormously popular, and continued in various forms for many years. Leslie was thus a true innovator, and has never, in my opinion, had his pioneering work on the concept of field studies properly acknowledged.

He also, like so many true Brits, had a great affection for small islands, with the inevitable result that he became a co-founder of the LFS, and started taking student groups to the island to savour the wind, rain, etc so freely available there. As a new boy, I was of course 'volunteered' to help with these. We all lived in the Old Light, unimproved in those days, by courtesy of the Owner, Martin Coles Harman, under fairly primitive conditions which we thoroughly enjoyed - they brought out the latent pioneering spirit. Food was still rationed, and some of the meat which reached us from the mainland had failed to survive the hazards of the journey in edible condition, and had to be sent over the cliffs to Davy Jones. A resuscitation of my boyhood skills as an amateur poacher provided a meagre supply of rabbits, but we were much more dependent upon Mr Harman's Agent, the splendid Felix Gade, who would occasionally sacrifice one of the island sheep. We would also take every opportunity to visit the North or South Light. Lundy was classed as a Rock Station, and the manned lighthouses received regular supplies via one of the Trinity House supply ships. Landing these supplies by a cable hoist was a hazardous undertaking, and provided welcome entertainment for the island's residents.

More important, however, were the copious food rations provided by Trinity House to the lighthouse keepers. Many of the keepers were skilled bakers, and would dispense hospitality most generously to visitors. In return, we were expected to warn them if we saw a Trinity House vessel on the horizon, so that they could scurry home from the island tavern, since in return for the advantages of being classed as a Rock, they were expected to eschew alcohol and all human companionship. I was told a lovely story about a cat which lived with several others at the South Light and was stone deaf as a result of having been asleep too close to one of the explosive charges which were set off in foggy weather as a warning to shipping. These cats were great hunters of the local rabbit colony, but the deaf cat could no longer hunt. Nevertheless the other cats looked after it, and would bring home a rabbit for it from time to time. If any of the keepers saw this they would appropriate the rabbit; but cats ain't stupid, and they soon learned to leave their quarry where it was, and bring the deaf cat out to share the feast.

Travel to Lundy in those days was done uncomfortably in a small fishing boat marginally converted for the purpose, and if funds were available, it was infinitely preferable to fly. This was done from Wrafton, near Barnstaple, and was an adventure in itself. The aircraft was a small high-wing monoplane of dubious vintage, nothing like the luxurious Dragon-Rapide in which Mr Harman commuted down from the Big Smoke. It was piloted by the redoubtable Maurice Looker whose undoubted skill ensured that his passengers and freight arrived safely, even when sheep had invaded the airstrip. Later trips by helicopter were perhaps more comfortable, but there was still the occasional 'dry-mouth' moment when it was necessary for the pilot to feel his way in under a low overcast which hid the exact location of the Old Light. It was on one of these helicopter trips that I had an interesting insight into haut cuisine. I had been asked to arrange for some French biologists from the Universities of Rennes and Brest to visit Lundy to look for evidence of the presence of zoonotic disease on the island. This was duly arranged, and human residents, live-stock and wild-life donated blood to the cause of science with varying degrees of willingness. But what to give these undoubted epicures for lunch? As ever, the hotel came up trumps with some excellent crab salad, which went down a treat. But what to garnish it with? Some home-made mayonnaise? Vinaigrette? No luck - all that was on offer was a bottle of Mr Heinz's best Salad Cream. This was placed on the table with some trepidation, as we all knew that the French are world-class fuss-pots in these matters. It was with great relief that the salad cream was pronounced very refreshing, entirely acceptable. Another myth demolished!

The Old Light was, of course, a complete failure as a navigation aid whenever, as is so often the case in the Bristol Channel, it was obscured by a low overcast. In clear weather, on the other hand, the view from the top, in all directions, was stunning. On one particularly fine starlit night I accompanied a young female person to the top to view the vast firmament (what else?),



taking with me a Tilly lamp to light the steps. This was apparently clearly visible from Hartland Point, and caused some puzzled toing and froing on the Coastguard radio.

These days the visitor to Lundy is lucky to catch a glimpse of the occasional *der geflugel*, the bird from which the island derives its name. Global warming, overfishing or whatever have changed the ecosystem, and if you want to see wall-to-wall puffins go to Staffa. Lunga, or one of the other Hebridean islands where they flourish. But don't abandon Lundy - it is a magical place, and will provide you with many glorious memories. as it has me.

## SOME RECENT PUBLICATIONS

The *extraordinary* range of research (made possible by the fact that Lundy is 'undeveloped') is something increasingly difficult to undertake on the mainland. On the mainland, 'Development Programmes', and the demand for houses, reduces dramatically the number of places where you may look at a prehistoric landscape, or a preserved piece of sea-bed or an unpolluted space for lichen species. The subject you might have researched is buried under concrete, or obliterated. On Lundy, thanks to Sir Jack Hayward, the National Trust and the Landmark Trust, research is still excitingly possible.

- The 50th Anniversary 'Island Studies' (below) and the 60th Anniversary Symposium Journal and the proposed contents of the October 2008 Journal (right and over) indicate the aforementioned range of research.



- Robin Heath (Honorary Research Fellow at University of Wales, Lampeter) has written a biography of Alexander Thom entitled 'Cracking the Stone Age Code' (Bluestone Press, 2007) - see Ed.'s review, page 10.

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- Keith Gardner's 'An Archaeologist on Lundy' (available from Ann Gardner, Thynne House, 81, West Town Road, Backwell, North Somerset, BS48 3BH) gives a lively account of his excavations on the island, and reminds us all of his encyclopaedic knowledge of archaeology in general. The CBA (Council for British Archaeology) will miss him as much as we shall.

- Ann Allen's 'Lundy Lichens' (available from Alan Rowland, Mole Cottage, Chapel Close, Morwenstowe, Cornwall, EX23 9JR and from the Lundy shop) is a most elegant and practical field guide to this fascinating area of study.

- July 2008 should see the 'eagerly' awaited publication of 'The Lundy Granite Company - an industrial adventure' by Peter Rothwell and Myrtle Ternstrom (Westwell Publishing, 2008). Those who have already ordered a copy will have it posted to them in the very near future. (If you have not yet ordered your copy, an order form is included in this issue of the Newsletter.)

Any Learned Society that can produce sixty years' worth of scholarly Annual Reports containing a huge number of Academic Papers and covering a vast range of topics, seems to your Editor to be fulfilling its purpose admirably (...with bells on).

### LFS Symposium 2006 Complete Proceedings

Don't miss this. The complete proceedings of the Symposium held at Exeter in September of 2006 to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the founding of the LFS has now been published under the title "Lundy Studies".

For those who were unable to be present, this publication offers the complete text of all the talks given, together with the accompanying illustrations of both Black and White and colour plates. The Chairman's Introduction, summaries of the displays, and reports of questions and discussion are also included.

These represent the ongoing activities and concerns of the LFS with archaeology, history, marine and freshwater studies, work on recording fungi and the Lundy cabbage. Displays were mounted

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for the birds of Lundy, the Seabird Recovery Project, the terrestrial mammals, the recording of lichen species, the No-Take Zone, and the history of the LFS itself.

This book is a most worthy successor to *Island Studies*, that nobody with any interest in Lundy will want to be without.

While stocks last, LFS members (ONLY) are offered this 192pp paperback at the special price of £10, which represents a saving of £5 on the published price. P&P costs [Ed's note: for cost and account no. please phone Alan].

Please send your order, with your name and address printed clearly, and your cheque made payable to the Lundy Field Society Account, to: Alan Rowland, Mole Cottage, Morwenstow, EX23 9JR

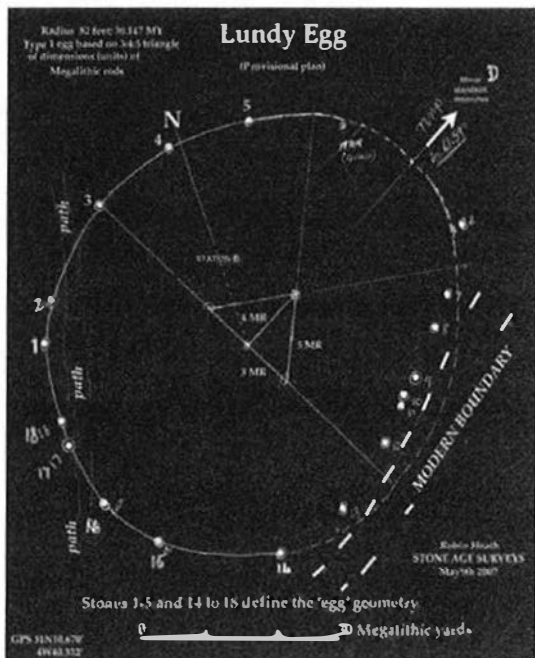
### The Lundy Egg

(from Robin Heath, Hon Research Fellow, Lampeter)

My field trip to Lundy on behalf of the SOL led to one (perhaps 2) of their members reckoning they had discovered a stone circle. Following a theodolite survey of another feature on the island, we had enough time before the lunchtime muster to undertake a preliminary (tho' accurate) radial survey of this feature. [Stone centre to centre, fibreglass tape and Wild T16 theodolite,

azimuths determined from the sun.]

Since then, my friend Robert Farrah has identified this same feature as the 'southwestern enclosure'. However, the correspondence between this feature and Thom's Type 1 egg geometry has not, I believe, been noted before, neither has the astronomy of the feature (axis to minor moonrise). Because Thom is persona non grata to most prehistorian archaeologists, it is unremarkable that no one has noted the shape previously, given its remote location.



With more time it would have been better to have undertaken a much fuller survey to stone edges, although I did get photographs of each stone. However, our arrival was delayed and our 'ferry', the

90' ketch *Keewaydin*, could not land until Friday, the SOL passengers and speakers having been dropped off in Bideford on the Wednesday prior to catching the *Oldenburg*. Even the 'Oldie' took 2 hours to land. So there was little time for other than my field trip, lecture and the Marisco Tavern meals.

### **Extract from Robin Heath's Biography of Alexander Thom**

"As this book was about to go to press, the author was involved in taking a surveying party around Lundy Island, in the Bristol Channel. Some members of the group suggested that a group of stones to the southwest of Halfway Wall was, or had been, a stone circle. A quick radial survey to the centre of every stone was undertaken in under an hour with theodolite and carbon fibre tape. Upon my return home the results were plotted and a provisional survey plan drawn up. This is given on p9 - a more thorough survey awaits. The Lundy Egg was built as a Type I egg, with its forming triangle being a 3,4,5 of units in Megalithic rods. Despite the evident damage done to the right-hand boundary of the ring, enough stones remained, precisely on the geometry of a Type I egg to confirm the intentions of the builders. The axis is aligned to the tump at the centre of the island (see *The Measure of Albion*) and to the minor moonrise in the north, around 3000 BC."

### **Your Ed's Review of Robin Heath's Biography of Alexander Thom**

I've had this Biography by me for a time - Robin Heath contacted Francis Stuart originally, and she thought I might be interested. I entered into correspondence with RH, he sent me this book and then I visited the orthostats at the West End of the Ponsbury-Punch Bowl Valley (in Nov '07), because these stones are RH's 'discovery' of a new lunar observatory on Lundy.

I'd read Thom's book (on Megalithic Lunar Observatories) when it first came out in the '60s, and I think members of the LFS might well enjoy this biography and even be moved to read AT himself. Thom was not an archaeologist, and even today his work is not part of 'establishment' archaeology. His 'absolute' megalithic yard seems to anyone working with the 'ell' an unlikely absolute and weakens, for them, his whole case. Nonetheless he has a case and you can walk round some of the evidence for it on your next trip to the North End.

Not only has AT suffered from being taken up by followers of UFOs and by New Earthers, but also from the formidable mathematical task he has set any Reader who might wish to follow his surveys of some 500 Stone Circles and Arrangements. He surveyed in Brittany too, so you could go and look at Le Grand Menhir Brisé, and point out to people that there are (rather smaller) versions of this on Lundy.

AT was an Academic Scots Scholar-Engineer, than whom no man is more unbending. And so it was rather a case of a Rock meeting a Hard Place. To the most of the Archaeological Establishment he was an upstart, though there

were those who were able to see what he saw. Clive Ruggles for example who has a book out *Skywatching in the Ancient World: New Perspectives in Cultural Astronomy* (pub. Colorado UP, 2007). RH has written a sympathetic biography, which allows you to see the man pursuing what was as much a hobby for him as an extension of his career. AT ended that distinguished academic career as Professor Thom of Brasenose College Oxford and a founder-member of the Oxford Engineering Faculty. It's not surprising, really, that his 'Boys' (that's how he thought of his Neolithic forebears) were, to him, fellow engineers and fellow intellectuals. If you catch the enthusiasm, there are still in print the most important of Professor Thom's works and your library can order them for you - mine has for me. I thought I'd like to read them again. You can buy RH's book direct from him if you want to go MLO Hunting in Punch Bowl.

### NEWSPAPER TRAWL

Abbreviations: pic = picture/photograph/image. Gaz = North Devon Gazette.  
NDJ = North Devon Journal. WMN = Western Morning News

**If there are wrong names, dates, or any other inaccuracies, these are the Editor's. Please let her know of them.**

This year the trawl has a quite high pictorial element. It also was a real Trawl for your Editor, who went back over the last three or four years' worth of Newspapers: and there are some non-newspaper sources too.



The NDJ (02/06/06) featured this pic of Eddie Spiegelhalter, who used regularly to visit the Island, in the late 50s & early 60s, with a group including Chris Price. Councillor Spiegelhalter was helping raise funds for charity, at the Conservative Fete at South Molton in 1957. He was shown escaping from a wooden box, in which he had been placed, tied up in a sack, with bound hands, & with the box then set fire to. Very high Wow factor.

History in Stamps. Your Ed is not a stamp collector but considers Lundy stamp issues part of the whole Lundy archive, and therefore calls to your attention the ongoing issues since the 1906 Montagu issue (p12), Chris Price's Bertie Hill issue (p18), an excellent architectural issue and a 50th birthday issue.

**Lundy remembers stricken battleship** (*Gaz* 07/06/06). On May 30th 1906, HMS Montagu - a 14,000 tonne Duncan Class battleship built at the cost of almost £1.1 million became 'disorientated' in fog and stranded on the South West corner of Lundy Island, off Shutter Rock. ... Last week's centenary was



*Grant Sherman pulls a pint of HMS Montague at the Marisco Tavern*

marked by a series of commemorative memorabilia including a special set of four stamps depicting the Montagu at Lundy at values of 36 puffin, 39 puffin, 50 puffin and 150 puffin - the latter being the largest denomination a Lundy stamp has ever had. ... As

well as the stamps and a special t-shirt, a limited edition commemorative ale was brewed by Simon Lacey of the Countryside Brewery at the Big Sheep, Abbotsam using the original equipment from the Lundy brewery. Derek Green, general manager of Lundy said that it was important to mark what was a big incident for the Island.



*Reg Tuffin, post master general with the Montagu's commemorative stamps*

Ed's note: The campaign to protect life under the sea is ongoing. A 'run' of comments from 2006 is offered, and shows the influence of establishments like the No Take Zone round Lundy.

**Campaign to Protect life under the sea** (WMN 03/08/06). Lundy Island, off the North Devon coast, is the only marine reserve in the UK to be protected from all human activities. Now the Marine Conservation Society (MCS) has launched a campaign to achieve a network of such protected areas in UK seas, widely backed by wildlife campaigners in the Westcountry. A Marine Bill is being discussed by MPs, but activists want it to offer more protection for creatures living in UK waters. BBC1 documentary *Seawatch*, revealed the incredible diversity of marine life around the UK. MCS provided key input in the programme and it has suggested several ways to help safeguard sea-life, from beach litter surveys to creating marine reserves. MCS director of conservation Sam Fanshawe said: "Unless the UK government commits to action to create more fully-protected areas, our marine species and habitats will never recover." According to the MCS, common and rare marine species and habitats are under threat in all but a tiny area of UK waters.

**Talk on Lundy Marine Life (North Devon Gaz. 04/10/06).** [Ed's note: this topic continues in our jellyfish pics (p25 & 26), the recent visit of the Minister to Lundy (p20-21), the Porbeagle article and the basking shark pic (p41)] The fascinating and rich marine life in the seas around Lundy Island was the subject of a talk at Braunton Countryside Centre. The talk was given by ocean expert, Dr Keith Hiscock from the Marine Biological Association in Plymouth, instrumental in establishing the Lundy Marine Nature Reserve in 1986. He was one of the first scientists to recognise the shores and seas around Lundy needed protection as they contain some of the most rare and spectacular plants and animals in Britain. His talk will not only focus on why the area just off the North Devon coast is so special, but also how it is changing.

The **Autumn 2007 Landmark News** announced the death of **Sir John Smith**, and among the special memories of JS, there was a piece about the **Queen's visit (1977)** by Myrtle Ternstrom and a VG pic of Sir John, & HM on the Landing Beach.

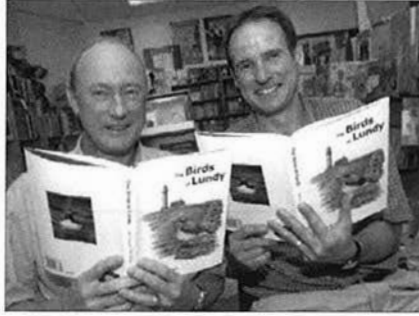
"Sir John orchestrated The Queen's Silver Jubilee visit to Lundy with the greatest care, and - I am sure - anxieties and headaches. First, the weather: if a landing would be possible, where it should be. Second, as it was to be a private visit on a rest day, the event had to be kept top secret from the hordes of trippers and media men who would inevitably have arrived had the news spread. Third, to ensure the island was tidied up, and that all the visitors would willingly agree to confine themselves to limited areas for the day to give the Queen's party the freedom of the rest of the island. All this Sir John achieved with his usual meticulous care and quiet charm. On the evening before 'The Visit' everybody assembled in the church and the plans A or possibly B or even C were laid before us. It was a great day for Lundy, for Landmark, and - one hopes, once it was completed, for him."



*The Queen with Sir John Smith  
on the Landing Beach*

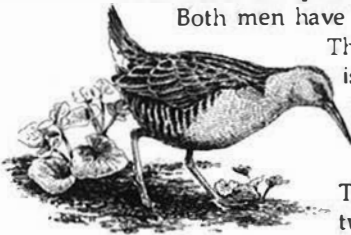
**"Chick is late arrival for new island bird book" (NDJ 04/10/07)** After spending eight years writing a book, two Berrynarbor authors saw it almost go out of date just before it went to press. Tim Davis and Tim Jones have been working on *The Birds of Lundy* since 1999. The book is the first on the island's birds in a quarter of a century and has illustrations by North Devon artist Mike Langman. It includes a description of the 317 birds recorded on the island, as well as those which breed - which up until this summer numbered 67.

However, despite the exhaustive documentation, a new chick was found on the island on August 29 - just when the two men thought the book was finally off their hands. Mr Davis said: "A visitor on the island picked up what looked like a black fluffy ball. They asked people on Lundy what it was. It turned out to be a Water rail chick - making it the 68th breeding species." The two authors hastily put together information



*Tim Jones and Tim Davis at the Book Launch*

about the bird to see if they could make the print in time. And Mr Davis, 55, of Sterridge Valley, said the bird is now included in the book. "If the bird had been discovered 10 days later we would have missed it. It would have been a great shame. This kind of book goes out of date quickly, but that would have been rather too quick."



*Water rail*

Both men have been coming to the island for over 24 years. They want to show just what a crossroads Lundy is, with birds flying in from Algeria, Senegal and Russia. They also want to explain its unique attractions for bird watchers, with its lack of roads, televisions and mobile phones. The book's launch coincides with the end of a two-year rat eradication programme on the island which benefits ground-nesting birds, like the

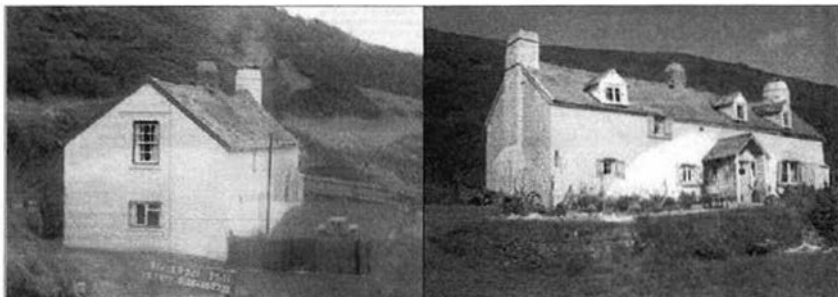
Puffin. Proceeds from sales will go towards conservation projects on Lundy, while details on how to order the book are on [www.birdsoflundy.org.uk](http://www.birdsoflundy.org.uk).

'Sense and Sensibility' (NDJ 27/12/07). The BBC's adaptation of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* (right) was partly filmed on the Hartland Abbey estate in the North Devon area of outstanding natural beauty. A lot of the action takes place at a 15th century cottage on the estate owned by Sir Hugh and Lady Angela Stucley. Lady Stucley told the Journal: "Raising the profile of Hartland Abbey is wonderful. I think also what I like so much about it is it's encouraging people to come to North Devon. We all help each other and if this helps perhaps to bring a few more people to North Devon, I'll be really happy about that."



*Sense and Sensibility at Hartland Abbey*





*The cottage at Blackpool Mill, part of Lady Stucley's estate, used as a set for the BBC's *Sense and Sensibility*. Shown before and after the set-dressing.*

[Ed's note: A much earlier Stucley, Sir Thomas, was a (possible) half-brother of Queen Elizabeth I and a notorious pirate in Lundy waters.]

The island now has a new AUSA all-terrain truck (Gaz 30/4/08). It will be used by the House-keeping team to help them travel to service the 23 properties - quite some journey on a busy change-over day.

On June 9th 2008 the AUSA will have been joined by a 4x4 Ford Ranger. It will have been handed over to the Island's Fire-fighting team by Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue. It will be taken to the island by landing craft, courtesy of the Marines from Instow. As well as this good news on the Transport Front, Derek Green told the Gazette, "we hope to raise the full £250,000 needed [for the Beach Road repairs] by June 2009. This will ensure we can finally secure access to the island for the next 100 years."



*Lundy Manager Derek Green (centre) in the new all-terrain utility vehicle*

If you have ever wondered who **Ella Trout** was (featured on a ship's lifebelt in the Tavern, your Editor thinks), well, she and her sister, in 1924, built and successfully ran an hotel in Prospect House, Hallsands, (which they also organised the building of) and it is now being converted into 16 stylish apartments, 7 of which were still recently available through Knight Frank (WMN 31/5/08). Does anyone know anything more about these enterprising women?



*The Fiennes family has a long-standing Lundy connection.*

*Joseph (left),*

*Sir Ranulph on the Eiger (right),*

*Ralph (lower left)*



Another notable member of the Fiennes family joins my 'long-running Lundy Family' - a Major Fiennes (Parliament/Puritan) received the surrender of Lundy at the close of the Civil War from Thomas Bushell (Royalist/Anglican). Joseph Fiennes is currently appearing in '2000 Feet Away' at the Bush Theatre. W12 (reviewed in *Sunday Times Culture* 22/06/2008). Your

Editor feels obliged to point out that, in her view, while the play deals thoughtfully with Puritanism, and Joseph Fiennes' performance is praised, the piece does not sound like a great night out.



*The new 4x4 fire appliance presented to Lundy by Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue*

A much sweeter experience is the account (*Gaz* 01/05/08) of Linzi Tagaki's 6' sculpted chocolate man (right). You may see him in Walker's Chocolate Emporium in Ilfracombe. Nigel Walker and Linzi Tagaki ran the Marisco Tavern during the '90s; & you can now buy the most divine chocolates from their Emporium.



**Lundy gets Fire Service (*Gaz* 11/06/08).** Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Service has formally recognised its links with one of the most remote fire stations in the country. Lundy Island has become an official fire station within the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service - station number 85. On Saturday volunteer firefighters

on the island took ownership of their first fire appliance. The new Ranger was transported to the island by Amphibious Trials and Training Squadron Royal Marines last week in 'testing' sea conditions. "The vehicle will provide a fast response on the Island should an incident occur in any of the 23 letting properties," said Lundy general manager Derek Green. "Lundy is extremely grateful to Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue for providing the new appliance and its continued support to the Island Fire Team."

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR / "LUNDY CONNECTIONS"

(Your Editor thinks highly of 'connections', even fairly far-fetched ones, and is always glad to hear of such.)

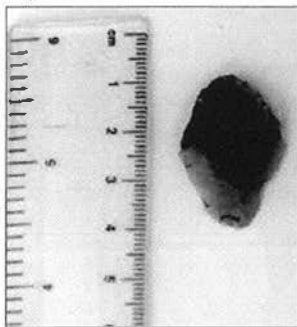


Laurence Shelley was an LFS Volunteer in 2007, and helped Chris Flower with dry stone walling, and chopped wood for the shop to sell as firewood (see the photo Laurence sent us, left). He not only did a lot of useful things for the Island, but had a great time as well.

Diana Keast, a Vice-President of the LFS, & sometime co-owner of Lundy, is also a Member of the Association for Roman Archaeology. She sent Your Editor a cutting from the ARA's Journal about Roman rabbits. Did Henry II's Royal Warren have Imperial beginnings?

"Evidence for the Introduction of the rabbit in Roman Britain (Daily Telegraph 14/05/05) New evidence that the Romans, and not the Normans, introduced the rabbit to Britannia has emerged at a dig conducted by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit at Lynford, near Thetford. Butchered bones of a rabbit were found dating from the first and second centuries AD. They are by far the oldest remains of a rabbit ever recognised in Britain. Previously it has been believed that the Normans introduced the creatures for meat and fur, but others have always claimed the likelihood that they were an earlier introduction. Marcus Terentius Varro (116-27BC) wrote that the legions brought rabbits from Spain where they were reared in walled enclosures and were considered a delicacy."

Roger & Patricia Fursdon of the Lundy Staff Team, have sent Your Editor this photograph of a flint Arrowhead that Roger turned up while digging in their garden - it's been carefully recorded by RF. That is, it was photographed beside a ruler, for scale, & with the date (Autumn 2007) & place of finding, so that it can join the body of Lundy Archaeological evidence that is slowly collecting. It is a lovely thing.

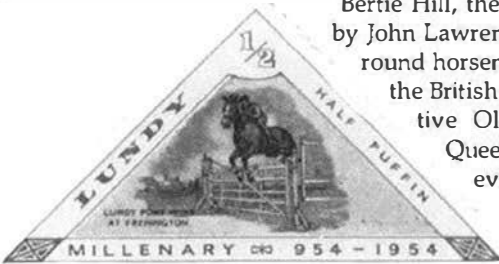


Paul and Annie Roberts (below) are offering holidays afloat in France on their newly refurbished barge *Bonheur*. LFS members who remember Paul, (Derek Green's predecessor), and Annie, might also remember Annie's sheep 'Happiness' (Bonheur). The Lazy Days Barging Holidays sound fantastic.



from Chris Price  
**'Lundy', an early winner for an Olympic champion.**

This stamp, picturing 'Lundy', a Lundy pony, was a 1/2-puffin and in the same issue of 1955, there was a 2-puffin of Lundy mares and foal at Barnstaple Market and a 4-puffin of Lundy mares and foals grazing.



Bertie Hill, the rider of the pony, was once described by John Lawrence (later Lord Oaksey) as the best all-round horseman in the world. He was a member of the British three-day event team at three consecutive Olympics and won gold on the The Queen's "Countryman" in 1956. Apart from eventing, he show-jumped, point-to-pointed (over banks as well as fences),

hurdled and steeplechased and was for 21 seasons Master of the

Dulverton West Foxhounds. He also found time to train the 1968 Olympic team in Mexico to a team gold and an individual silver.

Bertie first hunted with the Devon and Somerset Staghounds when he was four and all through his schooldays performed at gymkhanas. He took on "Lundy" when the pony was seven, still largely unbroken and particularly wild, hare-brained and factious. As became his wont, Bertie set about him and soon had him upgraded from nothing to a Grade A showjumper. His sister, Ivy, then took him on and won many prizes with him including at the Royal. He was then sold and continued to be a prolific winner at all the top shows including at Richmond.

As a footnote, Bertie rode from their neighbouring homes to school at West Buckland with Gordon Coward who became the Lundy vet, and who made a splendid film of Lundy in the early 1950s. (Ed's note, still available.)

## from Stan and Joan Rendell Two Lundy Weddings

When socialising in the Lundy Tavern we made friends with Barbara Bignell and her daughter Zoe - who has since joined the regular staff. Barbara was very anxious to find out more about a wedding photograph taken by her late husband, when he was a Petty Officer on *HMS Fawn*, a Navy survey ship operating in the Lundy area.

Apart from the photograph of his Captain and fellow officers forming a guard of honour on the steps of St Helena's, there was a service sheet with the date Wednesday 28th September 1977. From this we saw that the marriage between Joanna and Gordon started at 11.30 am and included three hymns: *Lead us, Heavenly Father, lead us; Morning has broken; and The Lord's my Shepherd.*

The questions were: Why was the Naval guard of honour there? Did one of the officers have some connection with the charmingly dressed bride, or the groom? and who were Joanna and Gordon? We thought the Officiant probably would have been the Revd Donald Peyton Jones, who with his Missions to Seaman (now Seafarers) connections might have organised the Naval guard of honour - but why? None of the islanders could help, so on our return from Lundy we turned to the obvious source of information - Myrtle Ternstrom.

Back came the information as quickly as Royal Mail could deliver it! The



*The Naval Guard of Honour at the 1977 Lundy wedding of Joanna Stafford-Tolley and Gordon Bloor*

bride was Joanna Stafford-Tolley, aged 24, and the groom Gordon Bloor, aged 35, of London, described as a surveyor. Myrtle had met him briefly on Lundy when he was working for the Manifold Trust, a charity investment trust set up by (Sir) John and Christian Smith.

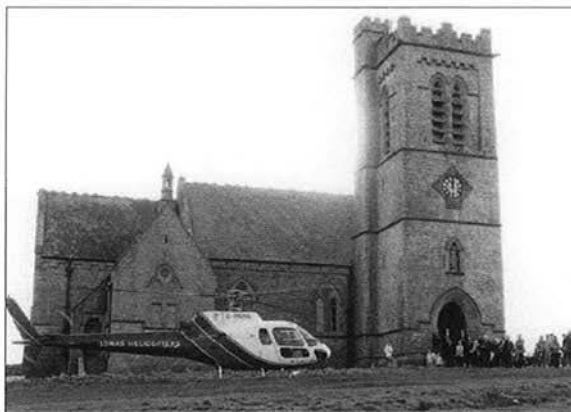
Answers to the other questions remain surmise. Was it 'PJ' who took the service? It would have been just before he left Appledore - or was it Andrew Edwards, who officially succeeded him in 1978? Did the ship's crew happen to be ashore, either at Ilfracombe or on Lundy, to be invited by the Padre to add colour and pageantry to the wedding? There seems to be no direct Navy connection with the couple.

Jim Bignell was fond of recalling that they had to wade ashore, and that after a good session in the Tavern, he left his cap on the piano and forgot to retrieve it. The officers had whatever accommodation was available, while the rest of the crew spent the night in the Church. Typical memories of Lundy in those days!

Moving on 28 years, we were drawn into another wedding, on 8th October 2005. Apart from the Tavern, there are no better places to socialise that the hour spent more or less patiently waiting on a chilly Bideford Quay - and the following two hours while *Oldenburg* sails majestically across the waves to Lundy.

A friendly wedding party of 50 braved steady rain as we landed, and some went straight to the church to decorate it, not with flowers, but beautiful orange silk drapes. The weather cleared in the afternoon, with a strong breeze drying the grass, and the guests, (jeans and anoraks of the morning discarded for elegant costumes and suits), started to gather at St Helena's church. Just before 4.30 pm the bride and groom arrived - with some confusion about exactly where Jack Lomas would land them. To the surprise of everyone, he

ignored the normal H area, and gently set the bride and groom down right outside the church porch - causing a scurry of re-positioning by the waiting guests! Two hymns *Amazing Grace* and *Make me a Chancel of Your Peace* were sung for this marriage of Caroline Mary Louise Absalom and Richard Kenneth Brook. The reception was at



*The 2005 Lundy wedding of Caroline Absalom and Richard Brook*

Millcombe House and during the following days a programme of entertainment including a quiz and treasure hunt was organised before the guests gradually dispersed via fishing boat, helicopter or the next *Oldenburg* sailing.

from Keith Hiscock

The UK Fisheries Minister Jonathan Shaw MP visited the Lundy Marine Nature Reserve on 20th June 2008. The following notes are taken from commentary and interviews broadcast on BBC Spotlight where it could be seen that the Minister visited Lundy on the charter boat *Obsession* and was accompanied by Chris Davis of Natural England (NE) and, at Lundy, by Derek Green, Island Manager.

The commentator reported that tough conservation measures had been in place at Lundy for 5 years and were working [referring to the No-Take Zone off the east coast]. He reported that the Minister had said that a string of marine protected areas would be fully in place by 2012. He observed that the Minister saw Lundy at its most spectacular with sightings of dolphins, seals and 'even' puffins. On being asked whether other parts of England will have the same level of protection, the Minister replied "We'll have a network of Marine Conservation Zones but they will not all be NTZ's in the way that Lundy is. Some will have a whole variety of activities in them. We'll have to take account of social and economic needs as well". Chris Davis



*UK Fisheries Minister  
Jonathan Shaw MP*

(Marine Policy Officer in NE) observed: "Today we're celebrating the 5th anniversary of the No-Take Zone; it's been a huge success and we've seen considerable improvements in the marine environment around Lundy in that period. What we would like to see now is the lessons learned at Lundy extended to implement the network [of MCZs] across the whole of England".

A further quotation from the Minister on the Western Morning News Web site runs: "These zones don't just help the marine life, but other socio-economic aspects. Lundy attracts a lot of business from people wanting to dive among the coral and of course that brings income to the region. We are not looking to extend the no-take zone around Lundy. But we are looking to introduce more around Britain's waters."

from Jeff Evans

### The LFS Trip, June 1988: 'deserted' by the Waverley

Many thanks for the Lundy Newsletter received this morning, Always nice to get it. The back cover photo of the Woolacombe Bay Hotel sent me off into nostalgic thoughts. I worked there in the summer of 1960 as hall porter before going off to university. The proprietor then was Bertie Johnson, the old scroat! and the hotel badly in need of some modernisation, but happy days, lots of golf and barbecues in the sand dunes. . .

The fundamental reason for us being left behind was the dreaded east wind combined with a high tide. We all have our personal memories of the event, depending on where we were when events unfolded. The account given in the Lundy Newsletter of 1989 by StC.M.L.A. Hubbard is a fair description. I recollect the worried look on Peter Cole's face outside the Tavern standing by the chalked notice of the news that the *Waverley* would return for us - eventually! I have the photo somewhere with others of the event. I spent a happy night in the bunkhouse with friends by a log fire drinking lots of beer and Southern Comfort, & singing along to a guitar. I can't vouch for events in the

bar, and Lisa Cole probably did lead the singing, but she wasn't Warden then. It wasn't even Andrew Gibson, it was Neil Wilcox. I doubt if the rope around the prop made any difference to events. I think any Captain would have made the same decision and headed for Ilfracombe and the arranged Victorian Evening excursion. The hiatus between the Lundy Company and Waverley Excursions was soon over. Like many Lundyites I keep lots of apparently useless bits and pieces. In the 1991 Waverley Excursions leaflet regular visits were again being detailed. I don't have the 1990 leaflet, but in the 1989 leaflet it says under the heading Lundy Island - At the time of printing it is still hoped that agreement may be reached to allow landing on Lundy Island on Sunday June 4 for the Annual Church Service and on Mondays in July and August. Changes in the timetable for these days will be advertised if landing on Lundy is to take place. If it didn't happen in 1989 then it probably did by 1990.



*Passengers disembarking from the Waverley on the day of no return.*

*[Ed's note: We were queuing to disembark in '88 on the South Light's path from the South Light across Lametry and we had to stay there and queue. When we couldn't disembark we obeyed the order to turn round and walk back up the beach path. What a Day.*

*The Islanders were all Marvellous.]*

**from: Jeff & Francis Jenkins, Herne Bay, Kent**  
**The Longest Day - Another Account of the LFS Trip, June 1988**

The 11th June 2008 marks the 20th anniversary of an event in Lundy's history and the events of the day still hold a place in the memory - which personally we will always remember.

We made our first trip to Lundy on a day trip aboard the *Balmoral* in June 1979, and made a promise that one day we would return. For innumerable reasons that wasn't possible, however in Autumn 1987, *Hammers* was chosen and booked for June 11th-18th 1988.

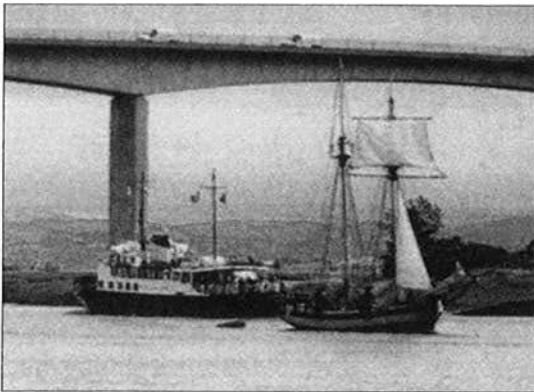
A long trip down to Bideford the day before and an overnight stay in The Royal Hotel began our first ever staying trip to Lundy, well I say overnight



stay, this isn't strictly true as we were awoken at 3.30 am with the night porter knocking very loudly on the door. Upon opening it, he was holding a breakfast tray which if you'd attempted to eat the contents of you would have still been eating it at midday! The reason for this 'early morning call' was because the *Oldenburg* was departing at 5.30 am. (Anyone remember those early morning sailings?)

As this was our first time, we were obviously over keen and arrived at the quayside, well over an hour before she was due to sail. Under weigh on time and a millpond crossing followed before coming to a stop in the Landing Bay, and the rhododendrons looked amazing from the sea at that time of the day on a sunny June morning.

The *Wendy* was already there to meet us with John Alford at the helm, and it wasn't too long before we set foot on Lundy again for the first time in nine years.



'Sail before Steam'.  
The *Oldenburg* and The *Pickle*  
under the new bridge, Bideford

A walk to the shop followed, but went the long way via Peeping Corner, past Brambles and St Helena's, and found the shop, which was in the Tavern in those days of course. Decided on breakfast, so a seat was found in the Tavern directly opposite the monastery gate and a bacon and eggs breakfast followed.

After breakfast, the windows were wide open that lead onto the bench

overlooking the old tennis court and we considered not staying, thinking that Lundy perhaps wasn't for us along with an increasing tiredness and feeling of being up for half the day and it still wasn't nine o'clock! Also a feeling of 'have we done the right thing' because this is nothing like anything that we've done before. Made the right choice, by buying some provisions and then making our way over to Hammers. Not knowing the way, we walked all the way back to Peeping Corner, with the shopping, before walking up the steep path that leads to Hammers and ultimately the castle.

We were still considering going back on the *Oldenburg*, and looking out the window at the ship when the door opened and a couple walked in. They proceeded to tell us how much they had enjoyed their week in the Blue Bung and told us that we would love it. Never did get their names, but that was enough, we decided we were staying! Unpacked and got ourselves straight and decided on exploring around the South End.

By now though the *Waverley* had arrived and had brought a boat full of day-trippers, who had come especially as it was an 'open day' on the island. Wandered as far as the Rocket Pole and then headed up the West Side Field to the Old Light. Coming back, decided on a long sit in the sun by the boundary wall that runs from the cemetery to Benjamin's Chair.

Although the sun was out it was growing increasingly windy, and it was whistling through the dry stone wall. By the time we'd arrived back at Hammers the sky had greyed over a little and the *Wendy* was beginning to shuttle the day-trippers back to the *Oldenburg*. With this done, the *Oldenburg* closed her doors and was off, roughly on time at 12.30, rolling from side to side in that way that we all know (and love !!!!)

By the time it came for the *Waverley* to leave, it was now decidedly windy. Having decided that it would have been impossible to use the tractor hauled landing stage from the beach, a decision had obviously been taken to try and get the passengers off from the old slipway. With no road in those days this could only be done by walking the several hundred passengers in single file up and over Lametor and past the South Light. The *Wendy* was filled and pulled clear of the slipway and was soon pitching in all directions. John Alford, only in shirtsleeves, was standing in the boat and it took a while before she reached the *Waverley*. Despite the best efforts of the paddle-steamer's crew they couldn't get the rope to the *Wendy* to tie her up alongside and the angle of the access doors behind the paddles didn't help. An attempt was made to jump onto the ship by one gentleman but as he reached out for the *Waverley*, both boats moved in opposite directions and he nearly plunged into the water.

Several more attempts at trying to trans-ship the *Wendy's* passengers followed, but all to no avail. She was still bobbing about in the Landing Bay when suddenly and seemingly without warning, in the space of five minutes, the *Waverley* shut her doors and steamed off in the direction of Ilfracombe.

The *Wendy's* passengers were brought back to the slipway and unloaded. You could see various discussions taking place even though it was now getting quite dark and the wind was very strong. All the people on the path now turned round and walked back down Lametor's path coming back towards us. This was no mean feat considering the strength now of the wind.

As this was our first night on the island, and in those days unaware of Lundy's contingency plans, we stayed in



*Jerry Waller, skipper of The Oldenburg*  
Photo courtesy WMN.

Hammers waiting for a knock on the door asking us if we would take somebody in. It was soon very dark, as the lights weren't very bright and were flickering constantly. The long day had caught up with us and so, very tired, fell into bed.

The next morning was bright and sunny without a cloud in the sky though the wind was still blowing slightly. We had decided on a walk to The Battery, and ventured out expecting to see a great big huddle of people waiting for the *Waverley*. There was nobody anywhere! By the time we'd got to the Tavern, we still hadn't seen anybody, but propped against the Tavern wall was the blackboard with the words 'WAVERLEY RETURNING AT 3.00 am'. written upon it. So, obviously the *Waverley* had gone and come back when the wind had abated, but quite how the islanders had got that many people off the island at three in the morning in pitch dark with a fresh Easterly blowing, I'm sorry readers I can't tell you as we were dead to the World, but what an achievement it must have been.

However, I do remember hearing that the reason the *Waverley* left was because of a 'prior engagement' (it was booked for a 21st birthday, I believe) and the debate then raged as to whether she should have stayed and attended to her passengers on her day trip, all of which were totally unequipped to spend a stormy night on a remote and windswept island, or whether it was right for her to attend another booking.

All I know is the *Waverley* was banned from Lundy for the near future and it was many years before we saw her again.

The above incident is recounted in Mike Tedstone's excellent book 'Lundy Packets', but we can truthfully say we were there. What a way to spend your first night on Lundy! We realised there and then that the place was different and a bit special and remains so, and of course we all hope, always will be.



*Both the Lion's Mane Jellyfish (left) and the Portuguese Man of War (see p26) have been seen off Lundy in past years. Yr Ed has seen the Lion's Mane off the East Side and it is much more impressive than its photograph.*

### **From Nicola Saunders - Lundy Warden**

from ND Gaz. 06/02/08

January: the quietest month of the year on Lundy! Two and a half weeks of shut down with no visitors. However, it's all but quiet for the maintenance team - it is one of the busiest times, with all the outstanding jobs to be done and the occasional big project.

This year it was Millcombe House. Millcombe dates from 1838 when Hudson Heaven owned the island and built the mansion as his stately home. It was a grand statement and to this day stands proudly in the sheltered wooded valley at the top of the beach road; in fact it is one of the few buildings that can be spotted from the mainland on a clear sunny day; look for the bold white spot tucked in on the south east corner. Despite its grandeur, age takes its toll and it was time for some electrical work, so the whole house has been required and repainted - no small feat for a seven-bedroom mansion. And I'm pleased to say she is starting to look pristine and ready for the coming season.

Wildlife on Lundy continues to astound me and despite being only January, the island wildlife is signalling that spring is on its way. The first goat kids of the year have arrived, twins were spotted with a proud mum in the last week of January. We have around 50 feral goats on the island and that number is set to increase as I expect many more will be born in the next couple of weeks. The soay sheep lamb a little later in the year, but some of the ewes are obviously heavily pregnant and the first lambs should arrive in March. Daffodil leaves are sprouting and the first of the bulbs are starting to bud. Soon the island will be awash with the pinks of foxgloves and campion and the yellow of daffs and primroses and they will be closely followed by many beautiful wildflowers. But most exciting of all is the beginnings of the seabird season.

With the exception of the Shags (a coastal cormorant species) and a couple of gull species, all our seabirds are seasonal visitors. The breeding season begins in April but, from December, guillemots start to visit their nesting cliffs. In the last few weeks many have been seen at Jenny's cove, and other nest sites along the west coast.

Lesser black-backed gulls have started to return, as have fulmars and razorbills. Kittiwakes have been seen and, while they'll not come ashore for some months, at least 900 were feeding just off shore for most of a day.

A great northern diver has been here for a while. These birds spend summer months in Iceland and North America and are scarce winter visitors to UK. This individual seems at home fishing in the landing bay where he can be seen most days. It is quite possible that he (or she) will remain until its return home for the breeding season. Many of you may be familiar with the call of the great northern diver, without realising - its voice is heard in many films where it has been used as an 'atmospheric' to heighten suspense.



*The deadly Portuguese Man of War Jellyfish which has been spotted off the North Westcountry Coast*

Check the RSPB website to see if you recognise it - they have detailed descriptions, including pictures and calls of many different bird species at [www.rspb.org.uk](http://www.rspb.org.uk).

Our first volunteer group of 2008 spent a week working extremely hard cutting down the rhododendron on the eastern sidelands. In fantastic weather, we managed to clear a large area of the invasive shrub.

All in all there has been a lot going on during this 'quiet' January.

from ND Gaz. 19/03/08

A surprisingly warm start to the year on Lundy has resulted in early signs of life popping up all over the island; not only wildflowers and blossom buds but the first spring lambs of the year - and they are twins! Kevin the farmer will now be spending many days and nights for the next month nursing his flock to make sure our next generation of Lundy lambs enters the world safe and sound.

Our supply ship the MS Oldenburg is also gearing up for spring in anticipation of the start of the sailing season; however, this year is a special year as she will be sailing into her 50th year! To mark this occasion we are issuing a new Lundy stamp and special birthday celebrations are being planned for later in the year. As would be expected the old girl has weathered a bit over the years; however, she should be looking her best for the start of this season as she has spent the past couple of months being serviced and painted and we look forward to welcoming her back to the island at the end of March.

Another significant anniversary is upon us, also of a marine nature. Lundy's No-Take Zone which stretches almost the entire length of the East side of the island is five years old this year. No-Take Zones are areas where no fishing is allowed at all and, since its designation in 2003, it has proved very successful in helping to protect the marine life in the waters on the east side of the island while increasing the lobster stocks in this area significantly. Not only lobsters but many creatures have benefitted from this completely protected area and we hope to see more areas like this designated around the UK to help protect our seas and marine wildlife for future generations.



*Male Wheatear on Lundy  
Photo courtesy WMN.*

Bird sightings on the island are a little thin on the ground at the moment, with the usual suspects like starlings, house sparrows, blackbirds, robins and wrens about the village and out on the island, skylarks, meadow pipits, peregrine,

kestrels, crows and ravens can be seen patrolling the island. Seabird sightings are on the up and we are seeing more and more razorbills and guillemots staking their claim to nesting spots on the cliffs. Fulmars, kittiwakes, lesser black back gulls, herring and greater black backed gulls also look like they are gearing up for the breeding season - the fulmars are sitting at nest site and the gulls are casually displaying to one another. We are eagerly awaiting the arrival of puffins back to Lundy from the end of March onwards - we're keeping our fingers crossed that we might see a few more back on the island this year.

It's nearly Easter and I can almost taste the chocolate! Tradition on Lundy is to have an Easter egg hunt on Easter Sunday for visitors staying on the island. Every year we set clues that lead visitors (and some islanders) around the village - the final clue rewarding them with lots of chocolatey treats. It's a lovely fun way to spend Easter - the task is not to make the clues too easy!



*The Lundy Windmill looked nothing like this - it would have been a fraction of this size and more like a small domestic modern Mediterranean mill. (Yr Ed doubts that there was ever a windmill on the 'windmill site')*

### **The Light On Top**

(by Harold Taylor - Trawled by Roger Chapple)

Harold Taylor joined Trinity House as a Lighthouse Keeper on 31st December, 1956. He was 30 years of age and had just had a period of illness which had kept him off work for about three months. Previous to that Harold had served just over eight and a half years in the Police. This had been quite successful, and he had received three Chief Constable's Commendations for exceptional work. Here he reminisces about his early experiences in the Lighthouse Service at Hartland, and the lighthouses on Lundy. We have extracted material relevant to island life on Lundy from a much longer article. Harold was to serve Trinity House, the lighthouse service for England and Wales, in a career spanning thirty years.

### **Lundy South Lighthouse**

I was home for about 5 weeks before I had any further word from Trinity. My guess at dates would be complete fantasy, but when I was instructed to



*Cargo Hoist, Lundy South*

report to Swansea for duty it was near Easter time. I had been measured for uniform at Harwich, but no issue was forthcoming and I hoped it would be at the depot ready for me. I was wrong. The weather was not very good and I was forced to purchase for myself a raincoat from an appropriately named shop 'Y. B. Wet' which I derisively re-named in dialect as 'Ol. B. Wet'.

I was directed as to where I should buy my food, only to find later that everyone else went elsewhere, which was cheaper. There was a tendency to keep everyone hanging about the depot for this or that unimportant thing, rather than let them get their gear stowed and away. The ship was not sailing till somewhere about midnight.

I got back to the boat late, having again walked from town. I went aboard and settled down in my bunk, only to be disturbed later by all the drunks returning. I cannot remember now if we sailed at night or early the next morning but our first point of call was to Flathoim Lighthouse where the relief was carried out. We then went down to the Breaksea LV and carried out that relief. Moving on, we arrived off Lundy Island where we unloaded some more keepers. Then we moved down to the south end of the island where I was deposited on the beach with another keeper who would be acting as KIC [Keeper in Charge]. An engineer from the House was also to be landed, Lewis, by name. From the beach there was a fairly long walk up to the lighthouse along a shale slope. Our gear was to be taken up by winch, an ingenious device whereby one end of a cable was anchored to a rock in the sea and the other end on land. Down this cable a traveller block was hauled backward and forward by a steam engine. From the traveller block was suspended a box which was let down to water level. A launch from the ship would come up to the box and deposit in it our stores to be hauled up. And so the relief was completed.

I had arrived on station with Fred Jones a Birmingham man, who claimed to be an Irishman. He was quite obese and a slovenly character. The other keeper on station was Nat Ilston who lived in Wales, although I am not sure of his claims. These two men did not like each other. Nat's objections were firstly against Fred's filthy habits and secondly because Fred was KIC. Nat had more recently been KIC but left the Service and had not long rejoined. He had been able to pick up his length of service for pension consideration, but not his seniority. This hurt. The keepers going ashore had been PK Jim Tilley and AK

Dennis Cotterel. The former I think lived in or near Swansea whereas the other was also a Midlands lad. There were to be stories about the both of them later.

I am, as I have said not sure of exact dates, but I believe that the first weekend was to be Easter. For this the owners of the island, the Harman family came over from the mainland. The main house of the island was run as a hotel, but not very profitably. Albion Harman was among other things described as a mining engineer. I understand that in fashionable London they also owned a night club known as "The Tattie Bogle" They were a pleasant family with apparently no side, which could not be said for the Steward of the island, Mr Gade, and especially his wife.

There were a lot of visitors for that week on the island, who travelled to the place in the island boat, the Lundy Gannet, which was kept at Bideford. I had, in the short time of my residence become friendly with the farm bailiff, Bob Benyon and his wife. They lived in a corrugated iron chalet just below the hotel on the road up. Later at the same house I was to meet Mary Livey-Noble who was staying there over the holiday.

I may be wrong and Easter may have been the week following my arrival, for before the holiday there had been the round up of sheep and the shearing. In this we all took part and it created a bit of exercise and fun. The keepers from the North Lighthouse, with some of the farm staff and other people would start the drive south, while we and others drove the sheep north into a holding area. The sheep were then confined in the Shippings where the lambs and the wild Soay sheep were separated out. The dipping also took place and the 'drenching'. This was to push down their throat by means of a metal probe a large tablet for the purpose of 'worming' the animals. This was one of the duties left in my hands.

On the island was a large herd of domestic sheep and also a large number of wild Soay sheep which it is said was left from the days of pirates and smugglers. There were also a large number of goats that had gone wild and moved about in herds. The farm had a herd of milking and beef animals and there were a large number of wild ponies. There was also several herds of deer, I think of three species. Because of the desire to farm more profitably a decision had been taken to reduce the numbers of wild animals and an Australian had



*Guillemots on the West Side*



been employed to shoot the deer, wild sheep and goats to leave only six of each breed. The man apparently was not as good as his intentions and had made a mess of the job leaving a lot of wounded animals to die and bringing in few dead ones, so the operation had temporarily ceased.

One operation that did go ahead though was the rounding up of the wild ponies. These were herded into the shippings also and three pony dealers came over from Devon to supervise the transporting of them back for the sales. I got roped in for this job also, which required us to get a halter round the



*Luring the pony into the water*

ponies neck and break them down till they could be quietened enough to be led down to the boat which was to take them back. That side of the action was not too bad. The bad part was the shipping of them back. I did observe some of this from the beach, but I also remember watching a lot of it from the lighthouse, so perhaps I had been obliged to

go back for watch keeping. The Gannet was unable to come in close enough for the animals to be driven on board, so they had to swim out to the boat. This

entailed one man holding the ponies head at the rear of the rowing boat while two others rowed out. Once there, a sling was passed underneath the animal and the boat's derrick hoisted it aboard and placed the animals in the hold. Most of the operation went well. But eventually an animal drowned on the outward journey, then later one of the stallions broke loose and swam away up channel,



*Swimming the pony to The Gannet*

before it eventually came ashore and was recaptured. Then later they had difficulty with another animal. I cannot now recall if it died or whether it was brought back before it did. This put an end to that particular operation.

Friday night was Music Night at the Marisco Tavern, which was part of the main house. Normally, other than lunchtime, Friday night was the only time that the bar opened, but due to the holiday the bar was open most of the time. I went up for the jollifications and met a keeper from the North Lighthouse, Dave Mapp and we were having a happy social evening together, meeting many who were over for the holiday. I believe a dart competition was going on and I joined in.

During the evening Dave expressed that he was not feeling well and decided to leave, I was due to be on watch at 4 a.m. so decided to leave also. There was a girl we had been in conversation with decided to leave at the same time. She was staying at the old lighthouse, which was used by the birdwatchers. As we left, one of the 'horse thieves' was returning from the outside toilets. The three of us made homeward tracks, walking up through the village. Having gone through the gate that gave access to the moor of the island, Dave headed north to his station.

I offered to walk Gillian to the Old Light, as she was nervous of coming across any of the animals in the dark. Having started out on this bit of chivalry, this was the last I knew of it. Several hours later I came to. Gillian was there, apparently I had been unconscious for about two hours, and felt dreadful and as weak as a kitten I did not feel sick, just as if I had taken some heavy punishment in my stomach. After a while and I had recovered my equilibrium I escorted the girl to her lodgings although by this time she was insisting on seeing me to mine. When I left her, still in a very dazed state I commenced my journey. After I had been walking a while I realised that I had a wall on my right that should not have been there. It eventually dawned on me that I was walking northwards instead of the opposite direction. I retraced my steps and got on the road back past the pub and headed for the beach and then the lighthouse arriving in the small hours. Fred was on duty and I went to bed for the short period before I was needed on watch. I later learned that the girls from the Old Light bird observatory had been known to play foolish tricks on people by pouring preserving alcohol into the drinks of unsuspecting strangers. I guess this is what happened and I gather there was some foundation in this from conversation others had heard. Dave had been closely connected with a girl who was not present but had been cook at the observatory.

When I got up I sat as usual with the off-going keeper and had my rising pot of tea. During which time I started to make a batch of bread which I knew I needed. My guts were in a terrible state. I was as weak as a kitten and had stomach cramps which left me with no strength at all. After Fred had gone to bed it was time to go to the tower and wind up. The clock here was one of the early chain winds and was a very heavy wind. In my weakened condition it was so heavy that I could only make half a turn at a time and I had to get down on my knees to find the strength to do that. I do not remember the character of the light but it was one of the early Fresnel lenses, which was before the



*Lundy South, 2005*

mercury bath type. This consisted of a polished steel base. There were rollers fixed to the bottom of the lens which rolled round on this base. I think the lens took something like eight minutes for each revolution and there were twelve faces, giving something like one flash every forty-five seconds. The clock when fully wound ran for about one hour and

a quarter. The mechanism was so delicate that you could put a fag paper down on the race and stop the rotation

My bread making was not a success, the yeast would not rise and the whole effort was disaster, but I persevered and baked my creation, which came out like a couple of building bricks. When I remarked upon it later when the others were up, Fred said he was not surprised as I had poured boiling water onto my yeast. That is the nature of most keepers. If they saw you do something wrong, instead of being helpful and telling you, they will keep their own counsel, and see what sort of a fist, or mess you make, then comment upon it later. They are a queer bunch, I must have been a breath of fresh air to the service, ever helpful and passing on my knowledge and experience where ever possible. I suppose I should bear in mind that I was to discover that many of the people in the service were totally ignorant and unlikely to be able to hold down a job in any other field. Learning within the job all that they needed to know and nothing more.

There was one little job I was pleased to do at the south end. There were no engines apart from the steam winch for the hoist. There was not a radio telephone; all communication was done via the hotel R/T. The result of this was that on each relief a fully charged Low Tension accumulator was landed for use with the domestic radio. Once that had been exhausted, one either went without the radio for the rest of the month or one walked to the North end lighthouse to get it charged. This was a round trip of seven miles. It was usually left to be done on a Sunday, a work free day. If the keepers were a lazy lot, the trip was not made. I was prepared to make the trip so set out on my second Sunday and enjoyed the walk, half of which was new territory to me. I had already explored some of the island out of curiosity and to view birds as there was a bird observatory at the Old Light.

I arrived at the North Light about mid morning and met the keepers, who were Cecil Trecize, PK, Bert Tromans, KIC, and Dave Mapp, AK. They were a very friendly bunch and invited me to stay for dinner. I spent more time with them in the afternoon, going round looking for gull eggs and bird watching in general with Dave. There were some notable colonies of sea birds at that end of the island. I am not sure which keeper it was, but one accompanied me back as far as the hotel.

### Lundy North Lighthouse

My second month on the island was to be spent at the North end, and once the relief was carried out I was left to walk the relief, although later on in the



*This image of Stoney Croft and the Lundy Windmill shows you how dominant a windmill can be, even a modern one.*

*Drawing by Peter Rothwell*

day the farm tractor brought my gear along. Cecil had gone ashore and I was to make the third hand. Also arrived on station was a couple of mechanics. One was Len Hawkins and the other was Clem Leggat who was doing his first tour of duty with Trinity. He had been a ships engineer and we had a little in common because he had been

with the B.I. Steam Navigation, a company I had sailed with once, and we had some common acquaintances and ships which we both knew. These additional men made it interesting as we could make a four at cards and often pursue games that could take us all. The crew was a much happier band of people.

There was more to do at the North end. First of all they had a compressed air Fog signal with similar engines to Hartland Point, the only difference being that these were three cylinder engines and had the controlled starting. There were also small lighting engines for the charging of batteries for the Radio Beacon. These were single cylinder Crossleys. The main light however was still paraffin vapour. Although we still had to put up with wick lamps for the bedrooms, somewhere in time someone had fitted up an electric light in the kitchen and living room, which were powered by the radio beacon batteries. I gather that this was an overhang from the war. Lighthouses did not function normally in those days, but signals would be sent out at specific times for the light to be exhibited to suit convoys and movement of shipping. With the Electric lighthouses this was quite simple, but the paraffin ones were quite different, because the light had to be relit each time, which took about twenty

minutes. Therefore it could not be done for an emergency. In some cases there was a dustbin type of arrangement that was lowered over the light similar to the system adopted for an occulting light. However here on Lundy they had adopted the principal of installing an electric light worked from the beacon batteries. It had remained unofficially in use.

Another little chore one became engaged in was the milking of the goat, Susie was a half wild goat, and would often wander off for days, then come back smelling strongly of Billy. She was almost dry, and one had a job to get a pint from her, but whatever we got was useful. She was a kid of Moira, the goat from South end which I believe was a pure bred beast, but they all relied upon a visit to or from the wild goats on the island.

During my stay there I discovered that Harry was a sick man, he was a boozier ashore, and was suffering from stomach trouble, but would not go ashore for treatment. I discovered that one of the frequent visitors to the island was a doctor, married to Albion Harman's sister [Ed's note: Yr Ed is not sure who is meant by this]. On one of my visits I made him



*Susie & Moira's kid*

acquainted with Harry's symptoms and he sent me back with some tablets for him and later came and visited him and diagnosed Duodenal Ulcer. I think Harry resigned next time ashore. Despite Harry officially being in charge Dave was really the kingpin on this station. He was a qualified carpenter. Many years later he also resigned and went into shipbuilding, where he was engaged in the building of one of the replica vessels of old. I cannot remember now if it was the Nonsuch or the Golden Hind

During one of the conversations which took place at the lighthouse when the observatory girls were visiting, it came up that I did a bit of athletics, and that they had had a person on the station before who had run the distance from the North Light to the Old light in a time of something like twenty one or two minutes, which I said did not seem fast. The outset of it was that I was to do it one day, but I would walk as that was my sport. The day was set and after lunch I left the kitchen, and the keepers telephoned the Old Light, to say I was on my way. I had to climb the steps to the top of the island first before starting the route that would take me along the west side of the island. I made good time but I knew when I got to the Old Light that I was about a minute slower than the alleged record. My disappointment was more when I discov-

ered that the effort had not been taken seriously and was not timed. The three girls at the Observatory, were all named Barbara. Whittaker was in charge and Morrison was a research student, Bizzel was the cook. It was Fred, who had told me of the bizarre habit they had of lacing peoples drink.

As I said before, the stations were not equipped with Radio Telephone. All radio communication was done via the hotel, which contacted the Hartland Point Coast Guard station. There was a telephone service on the island. This was maintained by the Lighthouse Keepers and paid for by the telephone authorities. It was really installed for emergency purposes and was an open line arrangement. This meant that anyone could listen in to anyone else having a conversation. There were five phones, one at the hotel, at each lighthouse and one at an old Coast guard lookout point, now used as a private residence. This was known as Tibbets, but more affectionately referred to as Spinky's, the man who lived there. Should the telephone lines break down for any reason, it was the job of the keepers to go out and repair them. This could often happen after a big blow. If they did not break, an excuse was sometimes made to earn a few bob. It usually meant two keepers setting out, one from each end, carrying a ladder and following the posts till the break was found.

The business of no R/T was annoying especially for those at the south end, because they were expected to listen out on their domestic set to scheduled calling times for the District Tender, in case there was a message to the effect that the ship would call to land stores. This of course ran the battery down, with the result that economy was exercised and it prohibited us from using the set for pleasure other than for one hour a day at lunch time. The origin of these sets is worth recording. The first set was donated to the Needles Lighthouse, by the Lympington Flower Society around 1928. In subsequent years various



*Does anyone know  
what this is?  
Please let Yr Ed have  
any information.*

other lighthouses had sets donated to them. By this time Trinity House became embarrassed by these generous gifts to their establishments that they thought they should do something about it and provided the remaining lights with a set. Having done so and taken on the provision of batteries they considered that they had the right to dictate their use. They therefore had the wave band altered so that the ship to shore radio band could be picked up. In those days it was on the medium range about 5 metres below that of the usual domestic set. They also specified the times the set was to be used for their purposes.

The Ornithology notes for this period were interesting. It was my first encounter with Manx Shearwaters and that came the first night I was going up from South end to the pub, when these birds came flopping into me as I walked up the path. At the time I thought they were guillemots. I was later to learn more about these interesting animals that only come this way to breed and then are not seen again until they return again the next breeding season. I was also introduced to gull egg collecting. This had been severely restricted by Albion's father during the war, as he took advantage of the shortage of eggs to make money. The keepers were forbidden to stray from the paths across the island except for egg collecting and then they had to hand over something like 75% of what they collected. Fortunately Albion was not so despotic. Gulls can only count up to three, so will carry on laying eggs until there are three in the nest, or perhaps they just like the pattern. It is therefore no use taking eggs from a nest that has got three, as the bird is probably sitting. Therefore you only take eggs from nests with two, marking the egg you leave so that you know that the eggs you subsequently take will be fresh. It is said that the birds will lay up to nine eggs.

Another story worth relating, it concerns the occupation of my time on Lundy. I was to say the least pecuniarily embarrassed, therefore when I found that there was an opportunity to work on the island, I took it. They played on their situation and only offered 2/6d per hour. I spent a lot of my spare time hoeing cabbage fields that were so dry and parched that I could not see that my efforts would be worth while. The first day I had performed this task I went into the hotel kitchen to report my task completed, and was invited to sit down to a meal with the rest. This I thought to be very generous. I accepted this invitation on several days, until I drew my pay for the work carried out. It being considerably less than I anticipated questioned the fact. Where upon it was pointed out that I had been deducted for meals that I had consumed at the hotel. I ceased to accept their 'generosity' after that.

This article has been adapted from the CD 'The Light on Top' by Harold Taylor. The book covers other lighthouses that Harold worked on during his service with Trinity House, as well as photographs.

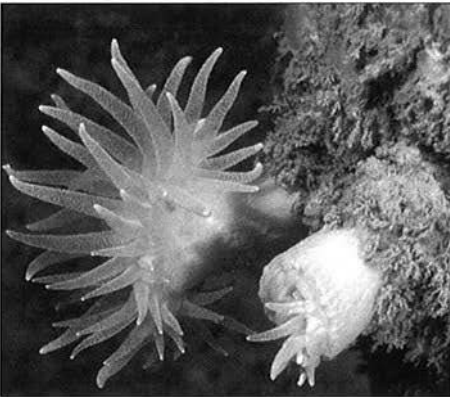
CD Book available from the Association of Lighthouse Keepers, 23 Aldis Road, Acle, Norwich NR13 3BN. Price £10.

## Finding the Sunset Coral at Lundy

Keith Hiscock

It was the 'icing on the cake'. My first dives on Lundy were in July and August 1969 and the last one was to be on the Knoll Pins. At the time, the diving concession around the island was granted to Bristol Channel Divers and I had negotiated a price, if I remember correctly, of £11 with Don Shiers for three days diving. The last dive was on the Knoll Pins, and that is where I found a coral not previously recorded in Britain, and a very spectacular one at that.

Having been exploring shores at Ilfracombe as a schoolboy, I was familiar with two of the three known species of shallow water coral and, as an undergraduate, was undertaking a project on the biology of the Devonshire cup coral. So, it was inevitable that I was going to learn to dive and Lundy was a logical place both to pursue my fascination with marine life and the study of corals. Diving was an expensive hobby but subsidised training at the University of London students union helped. Nevertheless, a lot of gear was



*Sunset coral.*

*The body of the coral is the size of a thimble.*

*Photo, Keith Hiscock*

homemade. My wetsuit was cut out of sheets of rubber on the sitting room floor at home to a dubious pattern and stuck together complete with the obligatory yellow tape down the seams. My weights were melted-down pieces of lead pipe cast in a home-made mould and the cylinder harness was made of central heating pipes and army surplus webbing. My first dives were in 1968 and, by 1969, I could even afford a contents gauge for my air cylinder and no longer had to rely on feeling the air supply 'tighten' to know it was time to ascend.

So, with Howard Wills and Richard Millner as diving buddies, we left for Lundy on 30th July. The diving facility on Lundy was based in a concrete hut above the old jetty and was well-equipped including with a very solid-looking locked 'bunker' that held the explosives for extracting non-ferrous metal especially from HMS Montagu which was part-owned by Don Shiers. We were taken by inflatable boat to Brazen Ward, Gannets Rock and, finally, to the Knoll Pins.

I still have my scientific log books (who knows, one day someone might find them interesting) and the following is how I recorded finding the sunset coral on 4th August 1969:



"Dived off Zodiac on inner Knoll Pin. Reached sandy bottom at 50' then stayed on rockface. . . at 60' level. Similar fauna to other places dived. No *Eunicella* [sea fans] observed until reached outer Knoll Pin E. side, then zone of very large pieces. Under slight overhang on E. side Outer Knoll Pin at 60' (c. 55' below chart datum) found brilliant orange & yellow coral not *B. regia* [scarlet & gold star coral] in a colony. . . and no others seen afterwards. Sample of coral was taken and photographs were taken." A more precise account of the numbers and density was included in correspondence where I noted: ". . . a group of about 300 was observed at a depth of 17m under a slight overhang, the density of the coral was about 80 per m<sup>2</sup>".

So, armed with samples and images, I set about trying to discover what the species was. It certainly was not in the only reference available at the time on British corals: P.H. Gosse's *Actinologia Britannica* dated 1860! And, for the younger readers especially, do bear in mind that species identification keys and guides were few and far between in 1969. My first and most obvious contact was with the Natural History Museum in London and, on 11<sup>th</sup> August, I sent specimens to Mary Rowe in the relevant department there. Unfortunately she had to admit that "we have no expert working on coral and I have very little experience in this field". So, the mystery had to wait until I spotted some recently published papers on Mediterranean corals by Maya Wijsman-Best of the Zoological Museum in Amsterdam. Dr Best was very helpful and, with the specimens and images that I sent her, was able to identify the coral as *Leptopsammia pruvoti* Lacaze-Duthiers 1896, a species common in cave habitats in the Mediterranean but only known from Roscoff outside of the Mediterranean. I duly notified the Natural History Museum and the specimens that I had sent them became Number 1970-7-29-1-4. Of course, I should have published an account of the find in a scientific journal but wasn't then and still am not very 'publication savvy'.

Only a few days after the Lundy find, on 7<sup>th</sup> August, I located a group of 12 individuals of the sunset coral at a depth of 8m at Smallmouth Cove in North Devon (although it has not been found there in recent years) and showing images to colleagues it was declared as having been seen in the Isles of Scilly. Lundy remains the first location where the sunset coral was first positively identified in Britain and is one of only six known locations around our shores making it a 'nationally rare' species.

As for the 'sunset' name, well, that was the invention of Ric Oldfield who came over to Lundy in the 1970s on various expeditions to take photographs. Ric was not a biologist and so struggled with some of our gobbledegook.

The sunset coral remains a 'special' feature of Lundy. Numbers have declined in recent years but it is still a spectacular 'surprise' for a diver coming around the corner on the Knoll Pins or down the cliff at Gannets Rock Pinnacle.

## Sharks around Lundy?

Keith Hiscock

Last summer, the press was full of stories of shark sightings in south-west England with the usual speculation about great white sharks - and there were shark stories from off Lundy. The list of fish from around Lundy published in the 28th Annual Report for 1977 notes thirteen species of sharks and rays from around the island - but, expectedly, not the great white.

Small spotted catshark (aka dogfish) and tope are sharks divers may see.

The only large shark that you are likely to see - and it's a great sight - is the basking shark. Baskers usually turn-up in July, feeding on tiny planktonic crustaceans and are the second largest fish in the world reaching 10 m in length. Some may come very close to the shore like the one in the picture at Hells Gates (p41). Basking sharks have most likely visited Lundy waters for hundreds of years, if not millennia - what else could the beast that Neptune is riding on in the drawing from Drayton's *Polyolbion* (1612) be?

[Ed's note: Yr Ed finds it extremely difficult to believe that Neptune is riding on a basking shark notwithstanding the evidence produced for her that the presence of gills is a clue to basking sharks. There is however evidence in Classical Mythology that dolphins have been ridden, notably by Arion.]

There are porbeagles to the west of Lundy that were commercially caught on long-lines and made the press for an alarming reason. In 2007, it was reported that 60 had been caught to the west of Lundy in one trip. Porbeagles are 'critically endangered' according to the IUCN Red List. Now there is a 'Total Allowable Catch' in British waters of 3 tons a year, amounting to a by-catch landing allowance. There are also blue sharks and I am reported in the LFS fish list of 1977 as seeing one in Rattles Anchorage. In 1999, 1 photographed what were the unwanted parts of blue sharks washed-up at Cheyne Beach in Ilfracombe and doubtless discarded somewhere in the Outer Bristol Channel.

If you see sharks at Lundy, do take photographs and do report your observations through



Detail from Drayton's *Polyolbion*, 1612



*Basking shark at Hells Gates*

[www.marlin.ac.uk/recording](http://www.marlin.ac.uk/recording) (or phone 01752 255026). You can find out more about sharks and their protection on [www.sharktrust.org](http://www.sharktrust.org). A great white would be a famous find but you will need good quality images to be taken seriously.

### **Colony of vulnerable porbeagle sharks at risk after fisherman lands 60 in single day**

From Simon de Bruxelles, Sea Anglers Conservation Network - [www.sactn-online.org](http://www.sactn-online.org)

Conservationists are investigating reports of a vast catch of more than 60 rare sharks by a long-line fisherman operating from a port in North Devon. If confirmed, the haul would be one of the largest on record and a devastating blow for the population of porbeagle sharks off the isle of Lundy in the Bristol Channel where numbers had been increasing in recent years, having been fished near to extinction in the 1970s.

The catch has coincided with the first substantial study of porbeagle sharks in British waters, which included fitting several with satellite-tracking devices.

The porbeagle can grow up to 12ft and is closely related to the infamous great white. It is one of the largest predatory sharks in British waters and is hunted for its meat, which is particularly popular in France. The porbeagle's white belly may have led to it being mistaken for a great white, sparking last week's shark scare off the Cornish coast.

The porbeagle is listed as "vulnerable" by the European Union but has no official protection, unlike the basking shark. Richard Peirce, chairman of the Shark Trust, which is campaigning for porbeagle sharks to be given protected status, said: "We know they form large schools and gather together by sex, so a catch of this size may well have wiped out almost all the breeding females in this particular population. It is a devastating blow.

"The boat was sailing from Bideford and we know they had caught 26 by 11am. That day we believe they took a total of 60 using a long line and went back and caught more the following day. Once you have located the school they are an easy fish to catch. They were probably on a refrigerated lorry bound for France within hours of being landed."

French wholesalers will have paid about £1.50 per kg for the sharks, which can average 200kg each. The day's catch of 60 porbeagles would have been worth in the region of £18,000. Porbeagle steaks were selling at the Seafood Cafe in St Ives, scene of last week's "great white" sighting, for £12.95 each.

Although the barrel-chested porbeagle has been fished commercially for decades, its numbers have declined dramatically in recent years. Norwegian

fishermen managed to virtually wipe out the population in the North Sea. Commercial fishing of porbeagles off the north coast of Devon and Cornwall was also hit by declining numbers.

Long-line fishing boats use lines with hundreds of baited hooks to catch predatory fish such as shark.

The tags fitted to four porbeagles in Bude Bay, close to Bideford, last week will help to answer some of the mysteries surrounding the fish, such as how far they travel and whether they migrate across the Atlantic, as some suspect.

The tracking is being conducted by Nick Parde, a PhD student at Aberdeen University. The tags are timed to float to the surface at intervals of 30, 90 and 120 days when they will transmit data to a satellite.

Besides the depth, distance and direction taken by the sharks, scientists are trying to find out more about the connections between shark populations by studying DNA samples taken during the tagging.

Mr Peirce said: "Just because one boat was able to catch 60 porbeagles in a single day doesn't mean there are large numbers of them out there, just that they had congregated together."

The trust wants all sharks protected from their only serious predator, human beings. Demand for shark's fin soup from the Far East has meant that even species like the blue shark, which are otherwise inedible, are also in danger of being fished to extinction.

In June, the Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species rejected calls for a ban on the catching of porbeagles and their smaller cousin the dog fish under pressure from fishing nations.

Cliona O'Brien, of the World Wild-life Fund, said that porbeagles in the North Atlantic had declined by 90 per cent since the 1960s.

She said: "We are seeing massive global shark declines primarily due to current unsustainable levels of fishing, and international trade is a major contributing factor. The failure to list spiny dogfish and porbeagle is a shameful triumph of politics over conservation."

### **Lundy - dowsing on an island for all weathers**

Nigel Twinn. Tamar Dowsers February 2004  
<http://www.tamar-dowsers.co.uk/articles/lundy.htm>

When it came to choosing where to spend her special birthday, I thought my wife, Ros, would probably pick somewhere warm. I had assumed that I would awake in some mild Mediterranean village or even on an exotic eastern adventure. So it was a bit of surprise to find myself in an English January, on a windswept island in the Bristol Channel.

To add to the sense of surreality, Ros chose to fulfil a lifetime's ambition of living in a lighthouse - albeit just for a few days. However, the unseen forces were with us throughout, and what could have been a highly disturbed break in the Island's major focal landmark, turned out to be just the two of us in a two-flat, nine-berth, Trinity House-built private gite.

Despite the age of the Old Light and its, no doubt, varied clientele over the decades, I found no negative energy there at all. Just two benign earth energy lines wandering through the accommodation - one being constantly reactivated as it passed through the open fire and, bizarrely, also two modern storage radiators. Does earth energy interact with central heating? - but I digress ...

For the dowser, there was the added advantage that the lighthouse is located next to the island's graveyard - always a good place to start. This ancient cemetery contains four remarkable inscribed standing stones, which dowsed to having been former megalithic standing stones, subsequently 'Christianised' sometime before the 10th Century. I came up with a date rather later than that given in the guide book, but in the interests of not wishing to damage the ethical tourism of Lundy, I will freely accept that accurate dating of such things has never been one of my strong points.

The guide book also implies that the stones have probably been moved. My own dowsing answers indicated that two of the stones (including one not inscribed but standing close by) are in fact still in their original positions. Another one was formerly the marker of an important grave, around which the cemetery and possibly the original chapel of St Elen, grew up [Ed's note: Elen was a Welsh Princess, wife of the Emperor Maximus]- and the remaining two were relocated standing stones from a series indicating a strong energy path traversing the island from north to south.

The path is still very clear today and in addition to those in the graveyard, there are another three rather weather-damaged and/or fallen menhirs still in their original places in the open fields - and a further one embedded, and perhaps tooled to shape, in the cemetery retaining wall.

We had an object lesson in the use of such way-markers on our return from the Island's pub late one evening, in the pitch dark and thick fog. Lundy is like a little bit of Dartmoor, cast off in the open sea and surrounded by steep cliffs. A few false steps in the days before farm walls and you could be in Davy Jones's Locker in very short order. What seemed a casual ten minute stroll across open grassland on the way out, turned into a much longer expedition across half a mile of featureless grey landscape coming back, to the ghostly accompaniment of the South Light fog siren. I didn't quite have to resort to my own rods, but you could see how someone without a modern torch, and



*The Lundy Window in St Mary's church, Appledore. A memorial to Arthur Manley-Tucker who believed St Elen was St Helena, a major saint. AMT's ashes went down with his boat, as he had wished, off the West Coast of Lundy*

relying on an internal sense of unseen energies, could make their way over seriously inhospitable terrain, with the use of some strategically placed marker stones, acting both as a psychological reassurance and as intuitive rechargers.

Ros felt the stones in the cemetery seemed like a row of 'people', and they certainly had distinctive auras. I could trace at least three bands, radiating outwards. The largest of the stones - and one of those apparently still in situ - had such a strong aura, that I asked if it was in fact located there as some kind of energy-based protection. I got the sort of positive reply which implied I had asked a dozy question, but it was a definite 'yes'.

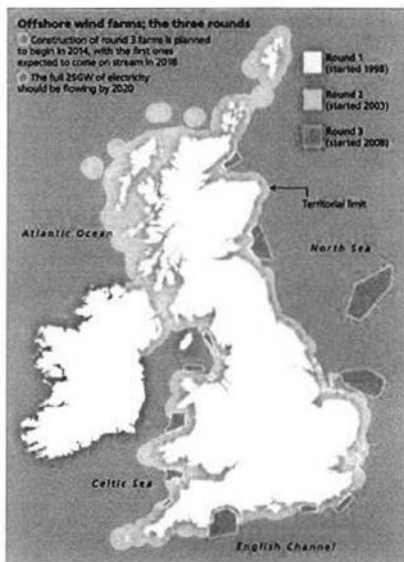
By way of comparison, we also strolled (no-one moves quickly on Lundy) down to the Victorian church of St Helena. Clearly, a dowser would not expect much from a post-reformation church, and superficially that was the case. Just one earth energy line wanders across the aisle, with no reference to the architecture. However, after a decade of rod-waving, I have come to expect the unexpected. The modern, and presumably rarely used, font is almost at the centre of the confluence of the only two water lines in the building - and it is thus marked with a huge blue spiral which even St Elen might have admired.

On the last day, while Ros was paying a final visit to the tower of 'her' lighthouse. I went back to the cemetery to carry on the research, but got a surprising 'no' to 'May I dowse here today?'

Oh well, after a week of interesting wildlife, refreshing walks, a welcoming pub with a choice of real ales, a 'village' store that sells lots of organic treats, friendly locals, mixed - but very acceptable - January weather and some good dowsing thrown in, I couldn't really complain!

Lundy is highly recommended - take your rods - and it was so much more exciting than a few days of unseasonal sunshine.

**STOP PRESS.** Ed's note: LFS members should keep their eyes peeled for any news of the replacement of inefficient huge and numerous Windmills off Lundy by a Barrage across the River Severn. 'Green Experts' tell Yr Ed that the Barrage, in the long term, will not only be very much more efficient than wind but less damaging visually than Windmills. There is also a view that Wave Power has been under researched, and could be a very good idea.





# LUNDY LAMB

A Healthy Product...  
...From a Natural Environment

Lundy is recognised as an ecologically sensitive area of outstanding beauty and conservation areas. As a result of this we apply a very sensitive and sympathetic approach to our island farm and livestock. Our domestic lambs grow naturally with no promoters or artificial additives, and because the flock has been established for many years and the lambs are born on the island there is complete traceability. We can therefore guarantee they are indeed Lundy Lambs.

Lundy Shore Office, The Quay,

Bideford, N Devon

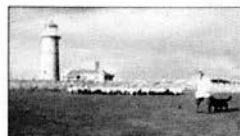
Tel: 01237 423233

Fax: 01237 477779

e-mail: [sales@lundyfarm.co.uk](mailto:sales@lundyfarm.co.uk)



Our delicious lamb can be delivered direct to your door and is ready jointed with each piece labelled individually. It is then chilled and packed in insulated boxes to ensure freshness when you receive it.



## Suggested menu ideas for Lundy lamb, as per the Hart Inn - Hartland

Braised 1/2 shoulder of Lundy lamb  
served with boiled new potatoes and a pea & mint sauce

Best end of Lundy Lamb marinated in rosemary, garlic and mint;  
Wrapped in filo pastry and oven roasted served with caramelised chantenay carrots,  
pomme anna potatoes and a red currant jus

Grilled best end of lamb topped with a mustard and herb crust;  
served on a bed of colcannon mash, green beans and a spiced red wine jus

Moroccan lamb tagine; slow cooked hunks of Lundy lamb in a  
north African spiced root vegetable and tomato casserole served with an  
apricot and lemon couscous served topped with a fresh harrissa and flaked almonds

Rack of Lundy lamb (served pink) served with dauphinoise potatoes,  
spiced red cabbage and a red wine jus

Slow cooked Lamb shank served on a bed of sweet potato mash  
with a pacific hot and sour sauce and topped with an asian gremolata

Roasted Butterflied leg of lamb on a bed of cannellini bean mash topped with  
confit of cherry tomatoes with kalamotta olives and a persillade

Leg of lamb roasted on the bone and served with goose fat, garlic and rosemary roast  
potatoes, green beans and glazed carrots topped with a red currant and red wine gravy

Medallions of lamb loin stuffed with foie Bras and shaved summer truffle,  
wrapped in a rosti potato crust and served with a morel mushroom sauce and  
poached asparagus spears



*Happy 50th  
Birthday to  
The Oldenburg  
1958-2008*



The Lundy Field Society wishes to thank the John Grimes Partnership for their generous sponsorship of this newsletter and for their excellent engineering work on the Jetty and the Beach Road