



DISCOVERING LUNDY

The Bulletin of the Lundy Field Society

No. 55 January 2026



Editing and layout by: Belinda Cox (bulletin.editor@lundy.org.uk)

Contact address: Rose Cottage, 16 All Saints Lane, Clevedon BS21 6AY

Contributions in the form of news items, short articles, illustrations and photos reflecting the aims and activities of the Lundy Field Society are welcome and may be sent, preferably by email, to the editor. Telephone enquiries to 07795 303933.

Copy deadline for the January 2027 LFS Bulletin: **31 October 2026**

Copyright of the articles published in this bulletin lies jointly with the author(s) and with the Lundy Field Society. Unless otherwise stated, extracts from articles can be used in 'not-for-profit' publications providing that the source is acknowledged.

The opinions expressed in the bulletin are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Lundy Field Society.

Published January 2026

ISSN 2397-9763

Printed by: Short Run Press Ltd
www.shortrunpress.co.uk

The Lundy Field Society is a registered charity, No. 258294

www.lundy.org.uk

@DiscoverLundy

 Find us on
Facebook


Instagram

Contents

Editor's Chatterings	Bee Cox	2
An introduction	Charlotte Gardner	3
Membership fee reminder		3
Another introduction!	Chris Blackmore	4
2025 conservation breaks		
• April	Lizzie Rice	5
• May	Benjamin Keningale	9
• June	Robert Throw	12
• September	Inez Toth	15
• October	Martin Biggin	19
The Lundy Collectors' Club is alive and well	André Coutanche	22
An exciting find!	Louise Woodbridge	23
My life on Lundy – from LFS member to Assistant Ranger	Zdena Best	24
Discover the LFS publications		27
The renovation of a model of the Old Light	Alan Rowland	28
Your Society needs you to record, record, and record some more!	Amanda Yates	30
Foraging for fungi	Trevor Dobie	32
Lundy Raven	Ann Taylor	33
An alleged murder on Lundy	Richard Lowes	34
Your mission, should you choose to accept it...	Edward Jeffris	39
Lundy – a rather special customer	Stephen Cooke	41
The Dennis family on Lundy in WW1	Alan Rowland	45
My Victorian trip to Lundy	Alison Greenway	49
Inspiration, reflection and spiders	Navis Sharifi	52
Sunbathing seal!	Mandy & Martin Barrett	IBC
Some Lundy photos	Back cover	

See opposite for publishing details and copy deadline for the next issue of *Discovering Lundy*.

Cover photo: Freight box on the Jetty by Dawn Reed.



A selfie in December 2025 after a dip off the end of the Jetty with Kathy Weston, who edits the LFS Annual Report (left), and LFS member and islander, Jane Sharky (right).

Editor's Chatterings

Well, what a year it has been! As well as several visits to Lundy both to stay and as an Ambassador, I took a couple of months away at the beginning of 2025 to visit the Galápagos Islands, Peru, Argentina and Antarctica. I had a fabulous time, and saw a plethora of wildlife including six of the seven types of penguins living in Antarctica.

I was on Lundy with a fabulous team when I attended the May conservation break, and I still admire the new fence we put across Lighthouse Field every time I walk there.

I'm also delighted to report that the rhododendron seedling searches are showing fewer and fewer plants each year. What an achievement!

In my role as Chair of the LFS I have been privileged to represent the Society at the Lundy Management Forum meetings which, along with my regular catch-ups with Derek Green, have continued to build on and strengthen the relationship between the LFS, the island team, and the stakeholders responsible for the management of Lundy.

One of the big pieces of work ongoing by the trustees is the governance review, and we now have the report in hand. Massive thanks must go to trustees Chris Webster, and John Shelley, to ex trustee Tim Jones, and to two ordinary members, Andrea May and Helen Cole, all of whom have put a tremendous amount of work into the review. The trustees will be discussing the report and the recommendations over the next few months, and I'm confident that the insights it provides will help us strengthen our governance and ensure the charity is well-placed for the future. We will keep you all updated as we work through the recommendations and begin implementing any changes.

Planning continues for the Discover Lundy week in May, and it's looking like it's going to be a full, exciting and interesting schedule! At the time of writing, we have one bed for a female in a twin share, plus a reserve list for other accommodation. All the camping spaces have been taken. If you would like to attend, please email me at chair@lundy.org.uk and ask for up-to-date availability.

The AGM will be held on Tuesday 19th May in the St Helen's Centre. This is scheduled as a Bideford sailing, and if you are planning a day-trip let the Shore Office team know you're travelling to attend the AGM and you will receive a £5 discount on your *MS Oldenburg* ticket.

This bulletin is one of the three regular LFS publications, and I must thank Kathy Weston and John Hedger for their excellent work in editing the Annual Report and the Journal, respectively. Thanks must also go to everyone who has contributed to any of our publications – they simply wouldn't be possible without the time, expertise, and ideas generously shared by so many. From my perspective, this has become a bumper edition of *Discovering Lundy*, and I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I have enjoyed putting it together. Huge thanks must go to Tim Davis for his excellent help with proof-reading.

Belinda Cox – LFS Chair and Bulletin editor

CHARLOTTE GARDNER, our new Honorary Membership Secretary, introduces herself



A selfie by Charlotte.

I live in Chippenham, Wiltshire and am married to Bob. We have two children, Madeleine and Max. We first came to stay on Lundy in 1990 before we had children, then visited from when the children were very young. We have all now visited well over 25 times and as long as we're paying, our children still come with us!

I am now retired after being a dental hygienist for nearly 40 years. I love travelling, being at home, volunteering at our local food bank, visiting people who need company and help, along with the usual cooking and gardening interests. I'm always busy doing something!

I love Lundy for the peace and quiet, and the letterboxes.

A reminder...

Membership subscriptions are due on 2nd January each year. If you don't already pay by standing order, please consider setting one up; it makes it much easier to monitor the payments.

However you pay is OK! We will of course still be happy to receive a bank transfer, cheque or cash if you prefer.

Over and above. Some members choose to make a donation as well as their subscription, which is gratefully received.

If you would like to pay by bank transfer or make a donation, the Society bank details are:

Name of account: Lundy Field Society

Sort code: 56-00-63 Account number: 47393963

Donations can also be made through the LFS website here: www.lundy.org.uk/what-we-do/donations-legacies

Watch this space...

We will soon be moving to a secure online membership system called MemberMojo. This will improve efficiency for managing the membership, and mean you're able to update your own details online.

If 'online' isn't something you do, don't worry, we'll still welcome and respond to emails, phone calls and letters! More information will follow in due course.

Another introduction!

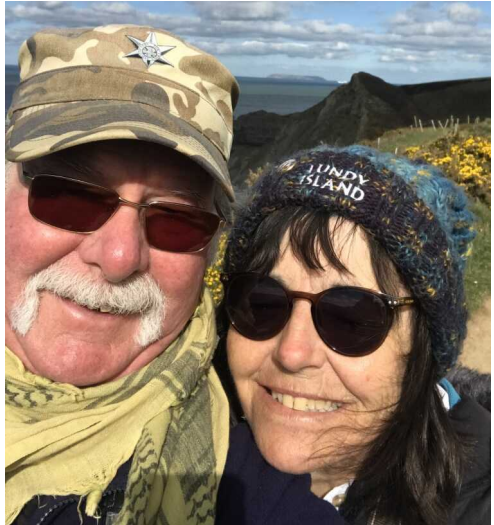
Hello, my name is **CHRIS BLACKMORE** and this year I took on the challenge of collating and reporting on the Lundy terrestrial vertebrate sightings from the LFS logbook for the LFS Annual Report.

My wife Sharron and I have been holidaying on Lundy annually since 2007. Having served 23 years in the RAF as an aircraft electronics technician, I returned to my home town of Ilfracombe with Sharron and two young sons where I started a new career as a Physio technician in the local hospital, whilst Sharron continued her career in childcare as a registered child minder as well as working in local schools and children's centres.

We began volunteering with the Sea Watch Foundation in 2005, recording and monitoring cetaceans (mainly porpoises) from Ilfracombe as well as the wider Devon and Cornwall coastline, and of course Lundy, and now we are the Sea Watch regional coordinators for North Devon. Over the years, on behalf of the various Lundy wardens' we've carried out cetacean surveys where anyone staying on or visiting the island can join us to learn about the amazing marine life. We try to book our stay on the island for the same fortnight every July to have a consistent record of sightings.

Sadly Sharron was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa 11 years ago, (a condition highlighted by the brilliant winner of *Strictly Come Dancing*, Chris McCausland) and although Sharron had initially lost peripheral vision, as the condition has worsened her central vision has become more restricted and she is now registered as Severely Sight Impaired; if you've seen us on the island in recent years, you'll have seen us out and about with her white cane. We're now restricted in some of the Lundy places we used to visit, but out on the island in good light we still get about as long as I don't walk on the outside on the cliff edges as Sharron has a tendency to bump into me! Sharron is still able to make out some of the wonderful sights on the island, including the wildlife and has developed a brilliant role educating anyone who'll listen whilst we carry out our cetacean monitoring, not only on the wonderful marine life to be seen around the island, but also the wonders of our favourite island. Sharron is still able to read books and her iPad, but being indoors in low light is a little difficult, so the tavern and church can slow us down as I try to be the good guide dog and navigate us around. If we bump into you, sorry! We work as a happy team and strive to keep doing as much as we can and will continue our Lundy adventures for years to come.

[Ed: Are you interested in a similar role? See the article about data collection by Mandy Yates on page 30]



Chris grabs a selfie of him and Sharron.

The April week was quite a saga!

LIZZIE RICE describes the fun and frolics of the first 2025 Conservation Break.

Arrival. It was 11am and the Lundy Field Society volunteers were anxiously waiting at the heliport. Some of us had just woken up from an hour's nap on the coach, while others were nervous about being up in the sky. The odd few were recovering from a few glasses of wine the night before. Despite waiting a good few hours, time flew by as we shared stories about our families and previous people on trips in the last few years. Old friends were reunited and new friends were made. All seemed well as we waited for our flights, but then disaster struck; two bags were missing! A panicked Lizzie and Brian looked around for their suitcase, worrying that someone had accidentally taken all their personal belongings. False alarm! It was missing but the helicopter crew were aware of it as they needed to move it around to balance the helicopter out.

Lizzie pretended to understand what this meant and got on the helicopter. What an experience! The blue sea glistened beneath us as we flew across the ocean. We felt as if they were in an action film, stepping off the helicopter for the first time. Dazed from the exciting flight, we stumbled into our home from home – the Barn. And what a beautiful place it is! The wooden panelling, the stone fireplace, the open-plan kitchen diner; wow! We jumped on beds calling dibs on which one we wanted. After unpacking the food and getting our bags delivered, we met Roger the Ranger (whose name isn't actually Roger but is called that because there are already two Matts on the island) and Joe the warden (who's name is still Joe.) After having tea, we all settled in for the night ready for the week ahead.

Day 1: The allotment. Waking up at the crack of dawn, a few of the group decided to drag themselves out of bed to go see some bird ringing. Feeling the cold morning air made them question if it was worth it. After watching Joe and one of the volunteers,



What a team! Photo by Lizzie Rice.

LFS Conservation Breaks 2025



*In action at the allotment.
Photo by Lizzie Rice.*

Ezra, handle the birds, they decided it was. It felt like a real privilege to be able to see these wonderful birds up close.

Once everyone was up, we waited for Roger and made our way to the allotments (except for Lizzie and Bob who were cooking that night). The unloved allotment beds needed some TLC so the we pulled together to give a forgotten area some love, with Lizzie and Bob joining the group later on. After a quick lunch we split up. Louise, Bob, Rob and Brian stayed at the allotment sorting the compost bins out, where they found a perfectly ripe orange chilling with the rotten food, and finished off the plant beds. Debi, Kevin and Stuart raked gravel and built a road whilst pointing out that the fence Mandy, Helen, Julie and Lizzie had put up was wonky. Saying goodbye to the

wonky fence, they all went home. And except for Lizzie's major injury (cutting her finger in the kitchen and not when she was sawing wood for the fence in the wind) the evening went by smoothly and we all slept well that night... but not before Monty the horse decided to try and eat Kevin's jacket.

Day 2: Gullies, beach cleans and fences. We all woke up after a lovely night's sleep ready for the day ahead. Everyone scrambled around eating breakfast and making lunches so we would be ready and outside with our shoes on by 8.30 am.

We made our way down to the Quarry, and the sun decided to greet us. It was a wonderful morning. Cleaning gullies, chopping brambles back, the sun shining, Stuart the joke master made us all laugh. Things were going well. A little too well. Before you knew it, Louise was falling over, the once delightful sunshine was scorching, and everyone was trying not to lose their shoes in the mud.

As Louise sat halfway down, surveying us all down below, the team managed to get onto the beach by climbing down a rope. When Debi asked Roger if it would snap, she was told, "Well it hasn't yet!"

Lizzie and Julie sat on the hill at the end of the chain gang of debris coming up from the beach. Helen and Lizzie were trying to haul the wood up without having to make Lizzie – who like Louise was scared to go down the rope – come down! Meanwhile Julie was sunbathing. After we trudged up the hill, we had a break and took down a fence that was once the old pig pen. The old codgers then had lunch and removed two more fences before calling it a day. Lizzie told Mandy that she felt as if she was on holiday with her grannies, which made all the ladies upstairs laugh, making it hard to sleep as nobody could stop giggling.

Day 3: Rhododendron hunt and an afternoon off. After two long days of work the group was looking forward to an easy morning and having the afternoon off. When Mandy was asked what they were doing that day she said, "We're going on a rhodi hunt!" As they passed Quarter Wall and climbed over spiky bushes, they sang the rhodi hunt song: "We're all going on a rhodi hunt, we're going to catch a big one, we're not scared!"

The team dealt with 17-18 nasty rhodis overall but not without some backlash. Poor

LFS Conservation Breaks 2025

Bob suffered the worst of it, getting a prickly bottom. Mandy and Debi made sure to get a photo before the team got Bob back on his feet. Rob and Stuart to the rescue!

As we all had a break, the ponies came over. The ponies were very cheeky, looking at the food and eyeing us up, being nosy and wondering what we were doing. Before long however, we were back on our rhodi hunt and before you knew it we were done for the day. Louise and Mandy went for a swim, watched by a couple of couples including Debi and Kevin. Lizzie fell asleep but then went in search of the Ugly letterbox, bumping into Julie along the way. After a few hours of searching, she gave up and went back to the Barn. After eating baked fajitas courtesy of Stuart and Julie we realised that the world's heaviest box of crisps was a lie! It wasn't full of crisps but instead had the missing ingredients inside. Whoops! Despite people stealing digestives beforehand, there were enough left for the biggest cheesecake you've ever seen! Julie and Stuart couldn't find the lemons which were hidden with the apples, but despite this they made a delicious dessert which we all struggled through. Biscuits were flying everywhere as the group managed to finish their cake, feeling like the boy who had to eat the cake in in Roald Dahl's *Matilda*. Helen, Julie, Mandy, Louise, Lizzie, Brian and Stuart headed to the Tavern for bird bingo, where Louise (under the influence of cider) informed Joe the warden that she takes her shags very seriously...as in the seabird called a Shag.



*Digging up those pesky rhodies!
Photo by Lizzie Rice.*

Day 4: Fences part two. Still full up from yesterday's feast, we set out for the campsite. Today's goal: take down a fence and put a new one up a metre away. We were all very serious today in full-on work-mode. People were very busy sunbathing and doing yoga. With photo proof of all the slackers we measured the new fence with Louise's boobs to make sure all the new fence posts were level, which Debi referred to as the tit-mus test.

As lunch time approached, we were fuelled with joy as we realised that the shop was open! Sweets galore. However, Mandy's postcards flew away, and she couldn't catch them. No need to worry though, Brian found them later on and saved the day! Also, poor Rob's beanie got caught in the wire and he couldn't see! Stuart tried to do all the tidying up, so some of the ladies tried to catch up. That's when they noticed that when Louise runs she looks a bit like a chicken. What a day!

Day 5: Day off. Time to rest up! Well sort of, as lots of the team walked to the North Light and back with plenty of "sit-downs" along the way. Despite being windy, the sun said hello again, so the team enjoyed the wonderful scenery around the island. Having a lovely lunch behind the wall of the Old Light and seeing the baby sheep, today was a good day to recharge our batteries, so that we could come back stronger than ever to finish the working week. Birdwatching was another thing we did, feeding birds at Milcombe steps before going to the Tavern for a lovely meal, and then calling

LFS Conservation Breaks 2025

it a night. However, Julie gave everyone a fright. As she watched the seals and spotted a very big barrel jellyfish at the North End, everyone else was checking who was and wasn't present. We considered sending a search party out but Julie made it back just in time, so we spent our night in the pub.

Day 6: Rhododendron part 2 and removing fences around trees. Today was another day in the fight against the rodi. Our soldiers were ready, forks and spades good to go. The enemy was quivering in fear. The battle against the rhodies was officially in session! And the rhodies were losing. "Rhodi!", "Rhodi!", "Rhodi!" was shouted across the field. Our volunteers were digging up every last one. Debi found her first one and so did Julie. They were on a roll! Louise didn't fall over. She came close but her fierce determination pushed her on as she didn't want the rhododendrons to win.

Despite the overall success we did have some losses. Stuart fell into the brambles, targeted by the rhodies once they realised they couldn't get Louise down. The rhodis found new allies, the Sika deer, which were hidden in the battlefield. The team accidentally scared them off, but as they leapt up and ran off it gave Bob and Lizzie a fright as well. A Snipe also seemed to have an alliance with the rhodies, startling poor Kevin. To feel better he decided to do some yoga in the middle of our search to calm down after his fright. There was a sort of fork massacre. There were no casualties but in one of the photos it looks like there was.

Before we enjoyed some of Helen's delicious flapjacks, fencing surrounding some saplings was removed now that the saplings had outgrown it. Some people had warm showers and some cold showers, but at the end of the day it was quite calm, with a



*Clearing the steps up to the Village.
Photo by Lizzie Rice.*

House Sparrow on the table next to Stuart at the Tavern. After our great success in beating the rhododendron, we celebrated with a party. Roger, Joe and Tara were invited to dinner, and we played That's Not What.

Day 7: Beach cleans, step cleaning, gullies and digging holes. Disaster strikes once again! Whilst digging a hole to help find a leak in a pipe, Kevin broke a nail. We were all really worried when we heard of this injury. Louise felt a bit blue today as Roger said the flowers on the steps needed to be pulled out. After holes were dug and steps weeded and swept, the team headed back to the Barn for a well-earned lunch, preparing for the afternoon ahead which involved a beach clean.

As we headed to the beach we cleared the gullies. Brian saved the day again; as Mandy struggled to lift a log on the beach, Brian came along and picked it up as if it weighed nothing. Louise, Lizzie, Mandy and Helen got to go back home in

LFS Conservation Breaks 2025

the back of Tara's Landrover; Tara let them tag along so they didn't have to walk up the big hill. Julie and Debi went for a swim and saw a seal which came to say hello.

Day 8: Home time. After tidying up the team were helicoptered back to the mainland and we all lived happily ever after. [*Ed: let's hope so!*]



Beach cleaning in progress. Photo by Lizzie Rice.

BENJAMIN KENINGALE falls in love with Lundy on the May week.

A wonderful reflection about a perfect week.

Our intrepid Conservation Break team met amongst the throng of Lundy day-trippers and vacationers bustling about Ilfracombe harbour on a sparkling May morning, toting backpacks bristling with walking poles, or lugging great dry-sacks full of diving gear which were hoisted along with stacks of luggage into the hold of *MS Oldenberg*. Many of the group were veteran Conservation Break members but others, like me, were Lundy initiates. Joyful greetings sang out as the veterans spotted each other across the crowd, drawing together and bringing the newbies into the fold. The *Oldenberg* set sail on Saturday May 10th in clear, calm conditions, landing on Lundy a couple of hours later and greeted by several inquisitive seals bobbing around in water surrounding the jetty.



The team!

Photo by Matt 'Roger' White.

The volunteer team, consisting of Hilary, Trevor, Ellena, Helen, Annie, Charles, David, Evie, Louise, Nigel, Ruth, Stuart, and Ben, convened at the Barn with Bee, our group leader who gave the group a

LFS Conservation Breaks 2025

rundown of what to expect for the week ahead, along with some housekeeping rules. We were then free to settle in and explore for the rest of the day, returning to the Barn for our first of many delicious meals of week; bangers and mash with onion gravy. One thing was certain; we weren't going to go hungry!

Sunday brought with it another glorious, sunny day and our first day of work: a morning spent fixing tree-guards around saplings to protect them from the resident deer, and then rhododendron hunting in the afternoon. The tree-guarding work itself wasn't difficult but traipsing up and down the steep slopes and battling through the undergrowth certainly provided a workout, and there were a few slips, trips and choice words amongst the party! *[Ed: no LFS volunteers were harmed!]* After lunch, the group went on a rhododendron hunt, scouring the island for the invasive species which had originally been introduced



*A happy David giving saplings some TLC.
Photo by Hilary Winsor.*

each discovery marked with a cry of "rhodi!" before the unwelcome plant was ripped up by its roots (leaving any part of it in the ground may allow it to regrow), fewer discoveries were made as the day wore on. Still, by the end of the afternoon, the group had found 24 rhododendron saplings; not bad going. A welcome cup of tea and some of Evie's delicious fruit cake awaited the group at the Barn, with a wholesome dinner arriving on the table a little later.

We woke bright and early on Monday to yet another glorious morning, ready for a full day of rhodi bashing. In comparison, Sunday's expedition had been a leisurely stroll. Monday's hunt was much more strenuous as we had to contend with difficult terrain in the blazing heat, but everyone got stuck in, locating and ripping out the invasive plant from some very awkward places. By the end of the day, we had hunted down 96 individual plants! The group also recorded a sighting of Kestrel, as well as several butterfly species. After work, and another few slices of Evie's

fruit cake, the evening was perfect for a stroll, a swim, and the Tavern which some of us took part in to one degree or another.

We awoke to a misty Tuesday morning, but the rising sun soon burnt this off and the day was another fine one. Our one task for the day was to help the rangers remove an old wood and wire fence and put up a new one, roughly along the same fence line. It sounded easy enough, but it was tough work that took a real team effort, ripping up the old posts, using heavy mining picks to drill pilot holes, then driving in new posts with a pile-driver. We made good progress, but the task proved too much to complete in one day, even with a full team; rocks and hard ground sometimes made driving in new posts very difficult! The fence would have to wait until after our day off. The group spent Tuesday evening very much like the previous one with pub, walks, swims and grub. A few members of the team climbed the rather precarious steps up the Old Light to watch the sunset – and what a stunning sunset it was!

LFS Conservation Breaks 2025

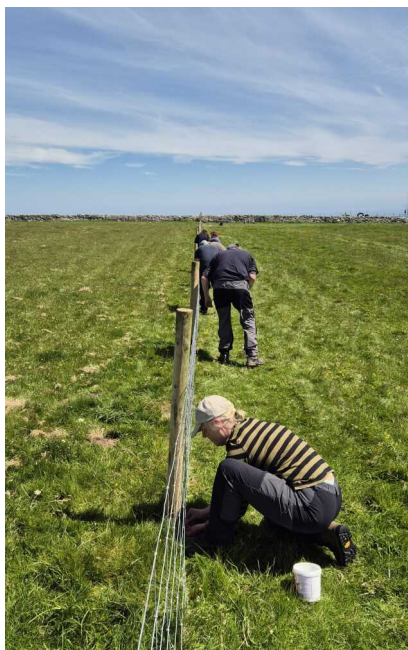
Wednesday was a well-deserved day off, although there were plenty of moans, groans, and aching muscles from the fencing the day before. Most of the group decided to spend the day exploring Lundy and hoping to spot the island's most famous resident, Puffins! There were plenty of Puffin sightings, as well as seals, and a duo of Peregrines, which may have been undertaking a feeding transfer; a behaviour where the male peregrine delivers prey mid-air to the female during the nesting season. Who needs Deliveroo?! In the evening, the team had a delicious meal together in the Tavern, along with a few pints. Afterwards, a few members of the group went Manx Shearwater spotting. It was magical evening, the sky stunningly clear and full of stars, and the shearwaters were out in force, wheeling above, blocking out the stars as they returned to land with food for their young.

Another beautiful day greeted us on Thursday, and our tasks today would see us split into two groups: one group would continue building the new fence, while the second group would conduct seal surveys. The fence building continued much as it did on the Tuesday but, with half the numbers, it was tough going. Nevertheless, by the end of the day, the fence had largely been completed, with just the gate posts needing to be set in place. As for the seal surveys, a good number were spotted, and those surveying had a great wander around the island.

Thursday night was party night, when the volunteers and the island conservation team came together in the Barn to make merry. Dinner was delicious but immense; several different lovingly cooked curries with all the sundries, plus a gorgeous bread and butter pudding for dessert. After eating, Bee put her quizmistress hat on and bamboozled the group with a series of Lundy-based questions, covering the natural and cultural history of the island.

Friday came, and with it a tinge of sadness; it would be our final working day on Lundy. It was another fine day, one that would be spent doing light duties, mainly clearing weeds from around the oil tanks and the volunteer living quarters. This worked well, letting us save energy for the main event: the volunteer versus Lundy staff skittles contest. It was a fierce contest, but the Lundy home-team went narrowly ahead, a position that they maintained over two rounds, eventually pulling away to an unassailable lead and beating the visitors! Beaten and dejected, those in the volunteer skittles team took to the Tavern to drown their sorrows.

Our trip came to an end on Saturday, where we had most of the day to pack, clean up, and relax, until a late crossing on the *Oldenberg* delivered us to Bideford. It had been the perfect trip, with perfect weather, and perfect people.



*What a wonderful straight fence!
Photo by Hilary Winsor.*

Trommelling, licking and birds

ROBERT THROW chronicles an interesting June week, undertaking some unfamiliar tasks.

We were a group of fourteen volunteers with eleven occupying the Barn and three choosing to camp. Our range of work and life experiences, past and present, were huge and diverse, and included: VSO teacher (x2); milking machine engineer; HGV1 driver; tax inspector and adviser; gardener; oil and gas exploration; full-time mum; project manager; calf-rearing farmer; metallurgical chemist; retail and catering workers; NHS investigation and inspection manager; social worker; railway projects consultant; TA combat medical technician; marine engineer; audiologist; carer, and retired.

We all arrived on a wet and windy Bideford Quay on Saturday 14th June ready to sail on *MS Oldenburg*. The crossing to Lundy was calm and uneventful, with the ship carrying a mixture of day-trippers and those planning a longer stay. Most of us had been to Lundy before, either as guests or on a conservation week, and before the Barn was available, people spent time either re-acquainting themselves with the island or exploring it for the first time. Hilary, our leader for the week, gave us a briefing before we settled in and got to know each other.

Sunday was the first day of working, and joining the group was Cressida Whitton, an archaeologist with Devon County Council; we were scheduled to work with her at different times during the week. As an introduction to the work, Cressida gave us a fascinating illustrated talk on the archaeological history of Lundy, from prehistoric to more modern times, with reference to the many scheduled monuments on the island. This was followed by a visit to the Castle and Benson's Cave just below where the group found some pottery and learned to check if it was in fact ancient pottery by licking it! The group then split into two with one group headed for a suspected ancient burial chamber close to the Rocket pole called a Kistvaen. This was overgrown, and



The June team by the Castle, with Cressida Whitton (front, second from left). Photo by Hilary Winsor.

LFS Conservation Breaks 2025

the group task was to remove the surrounding vegetation and bracken to expose the horizontal stone buried in the ground. The second group was taken by Roger the Ranger to Threequarter Wall to repair and replace a large hole in the drystone wall. It was a hot day and at the end of it some hardy souls went swimming while others went to the church for an impromptu singing session.

On Monday, the work involved a mixture of gully clearing and something called trommelling which was new to most of us but with which we became much more accustomed as the week progressed. For those new to the term, trommelling involves a large plank of wood with two long rope handles. Holding the plank on the ground with ropes in hand, the process involves using the wooden plank with your feet to flatten vegetation. In the case of bracken this snaps the stems, and over a period of time weakens the root system so that



Trommelling amongst the bracken.

Photo by Corinne Lewis.

after further trommellings the future growth of bracken will be progressively weaker. We quickly discovered that trommelling downhill was far easier and more effective than trommelling uphill. It also involved keeping your balance, and some of us learned a new term – falling base over apex, which was a much more polite form of the phrase we generally use.

During the day we also assisted Cressida in uncovering some of the scheduled monuments on the island, including Widow's Tenement; a medieval village; standing stones; and the ancient burial stones going back to Roman times in the cemetery at Beacon Hill.

The gully clearers had an excellent close-up view of around one hundred Puffins and their nesting activities on the steep grassy cliff adjacent to the path leading to the Battery.

On Tuesday, we again split into two groups. One group went with Cressida to continue clearing the ground using cutters and grass knives to make sure vegetation did not overtake various ancient monuments, including the round houses close to the Old Light; more standing stones; the Long House and adjacent well. There was also some strimming done around the medieval Widow Tenement by one of our volunteers who was qualified to strim, with Amber, the assistant ranger. The second group were occupied with more trommelling at various sites before the whole group came together in the area adjacent to Pondsbury for our first rhododendron search of the week. At the end of the day we did a straw poll to discover which parts of everyone's body were aching, and these included feet, shoulders, toes, hips, neck and back. Thankfully, we recovered after a good night's rest!

Wednesday was our day off, which allowed some rest after the previous days' physical work. People explored various parts of the island, some venturing far afield with others staying more local to the village. Again, a few hardy souls went swimming.

LFS Conservation Breaks 2025

The attention of one small group was focused by the spotting of a rare whale out to sea which stayed still for a very long time and was very difficult to spot moving with the naked eye. This rare species is also known as a rock!

On Thursday, we again split into two groups. One group went with Amber to clean the church and museum, then constructing bug hotels and making bundles of kindling. The second group went trommelling at Gannets' Combe with one group member doing a good impression of an upturned rhododendron, but no harm was done.

Throughout the week Joe, the island warden, had been describing one of his current projects which is to try to track Manx Shearwaters between their nesting sites on Lundy and their feeding grounds. On Friday we were privileged to go with him to inspect Manx Shearwater nesting boxes on the west side of the island. We watched him delicately handle and check individual birds to retrieve tracking devices. We were also given, by the wonders of WhatsApp on our phones, the calling sounds of the Storm Petrel and we spent time playing these at possible nesting sites and listening for responses to gauge whether any birds were present. We obtained five positive responses from checking 190 sites.

In the afternoon we returned to trommelling and vegetation clearance in and around Quarry Cottages and, having cut down the bracken inside the buildings, we were able to put our newly acquired trommelling skills to further flatten the bracken inside the individual rooms.



*It's not all hard work on a conservation break!
Photo by Hilary Winsor.*

LFS Conservation Breaks 2025

Such had been Hilary's skill in estimating the exact amount of food needed for cooking over the week, there was very little left over for the Friday night's cooks to work with. Instead, we all elected to go to the Marisco Tavern for a second time. Some also found time for another swim or for singing in the church.

We were blessed with clear sunny weather for most of the week, but Saturday showed just how quickly the weather can change on Lundy with mist and fog alternating with wind, rain, sunshine, and the odd clap of thunder. People spent the day waiting for the afternoon sailing, much as they had done on our rest day. Having said goodbye on the island to friends old and new, we had a smooth return journey, this time to Ilfracombe, while enjoying views of the rugged North Devon coast with its many inaccessible beaches, and before saying our final goodbyes at the harbour. We were a great harmonious group and hopefully we will meet again on the island in the future.

Poetry, rainbows, a triumph and friendship.

INEZ TOTTH shares her first visit to Lundy with us.

My name is Inez, and this September marked my first time joining an LFS conservation break. Although, it was my first time as a conservation volunteer, it was my fifth time on Lundy itself. My first time was back in 2022 with my university, which had been life altering at the time, and since then I have managed to come back every single year. If you are reading this, you are already part of the Lundy Field Society, so I do not have to tell you how incredible the island is, nor how Lundy has nestled itself into my heart from that first trip.

On this trip, we started off at Ilfracombe Quay, waiting for *MS Oldenburg* to take us to a week of (working) holiday. There, I met the team and our wonderful leader Evie, who expertly organised us from day one until the very end when we got off the *MS Oldenburg*. Our working team consisted of amazing people who deeply care about wildlife and conservation, never shying away from hard work to achieve great results.



Here we are...
Photo by Inez Toth.

They are:

Evie: our caring and lovely leader, best quiz master, and secret nights queen;

Bob G: original Lundy letterbox celebrity who makes the best focaccia ever;

Bob B: Bunty, the skittles champion;

Rob and Kevin: lovely folks from Wales with great stories, Rob a first-timer on the island convinced by Kevin, the veteran of Lundy, to join;

Samantha: who car-shared with me from 5am to reach our destination and reintroduced me to gin lemonades, thank you;

LFS Conservation Breaks 2025

David: introducing himself as Ming the Merciless from a pop culture that is lost on me – sorry;

Kristin: bird ringer and naturalist who joined us on the island from her ringing activities – so jealous;

Dave: philanthropic and kind person, we shared great conversations and bird sightings;

Izzy: the youngest on our trip who happens to be studying at my university, and I get to bump into her and hear about her wildlife and ecology project – small world;

Ed: daredevil landscaper and birder who braved the gale-force winds and nightly storms outside in a tent, all to avoid the Snore Choir;

Helen: last-minute step-in, an enthusiastic nature lover who takes incredible wildlife images. Please take me with you to see the badgers (*Ed: not on Lundy!*);

Tony: a kind and funny fellow;

Me (Inez): newly obsessed birder who wants to live on Lundy for a job (take this as my application for the partner of the warden position).

A long introduction, but the people you work with make hard days easier, and sharing laughs and delicious dinners with our team made this work week on Lundy truly memorable.

Sailing to Lundy had never been quicker; riding an easterly wind, we reached the island in just an hour-and-a-half. The only good weather. As for the rest of the week, the weather was capricious; slightly different from the picturesque June of my previous experiences.

We had the fortune to meet and work alongside Ranger Roger and Zdena for the week. They also joined us on some evening activities by the Barn, quiz night and skittles championship.

On our first working day we were clearing some gullies all the way down to Quarry Beach which was closed off due to seal pupping season – how exciting! We had a cosy lunch at the Felix Gade hut, all 16 of us huddled in to hide from the torrential rain. To our luck and entertainment, the hut happened to house a typewriter at the time, so we (Kevin) made our contribution with his LFS haiku, in memory of our rainy first day with the seals:

Autumn rain has come

Gullies cleared and brambles cut

Mama, Dada, pup.

Throughout the week we worked very hard, doing physical jobs like taking out (what felt like) decades of brambles from grazing fences, rebuilding stone fencing, putting guards on trees, clearing out 20 square metres of brambles in front of Government House, as well as freeing the tree nursery by Millcombe from its bramble jungle; and of course, the vital rhododendron search, scouring the



*The typewriter in Felix Gade Hut.
Photo by Inez Toth.*

LFS Conservation Breaks 2025



Working with rainbows overhead. Photo by Inez Toth.

plateau through thick and thin, mud and bracken, heather and gorse.

We also admired many rainbows that week. I saw at least two a day, each one a fleeting reward between bursts of rain, hail, and sunshine. Temperamental, raw, and beautiful weather, no hiding from it. If you are still wondering, let me put your mind at ease, the LFS conservation break really is about working. It was arduous yet so satisfying to see how hard we all worked and how much we achieved that week; it fills me with pride.

After each hard day of work a hearty meal awaited us, prepared by us (my favourite was the fish pie and apple tart, not made by me). There is nothing quite like the satisfaction after a physical day to have delicious meals shared on a table with all of us around, ready to talk and laugh with a full belly. Living in the Barn with 13 people has its own challenges, like the Snoring Choir (I believe the ladies have won this round), but living communally also has its benefits; much in the ways of living, it reminds me of the olden days where communities were the heart of living and a core part of one's life experience and purpose.

I must mention the great evenings too, like secrets night, quiz night, birding logs, and on our day-off we had our great skittles tournament. We reclaimed our lost trophy, the LFS party winning against the Lundy team! It was a close one but what a great game! The night before, some brave folks also swam in the cold sea whilst being filmed for a documentary, joining the warden and other Lundy folks, having a great time.

A pleasant surprise for me was to share the love of nature and birds with like-minded

LFS Conservation Breaks 2025

people from our group. Three years ago, Lundy started me off on my wildlife photography hobby and I have been looking for experiences to immerse myself in nature ever since. There were a few of us who are into birding and take regular nature walks with binoculars and camera, and we shared our experiences on the island (still jealous of some bird sightings I missed), and off the island. We even have our own group chat now, where we share the beauties of nature we encounter at home, too.

My favourite activity was the seal-watching afternoon on Thursday, where we walked the length of the east coast all the way to the North End counting all the seals (103 altogether). I shared lovely conversations with Izzy and Dave, and we walked 11 miles that day.

Towards the end of our week, we were unsure whether we would get back to the mainland as a storm was heading our way, but in the end, Saturday was a clear day. To the disappointment of some and relief of others, the boat arrived and sailed as normal, taking us back to the mainland and our regular lives.

Some of the highlights from the week with the team included meeting lovely new people with similar interests, enjoying nature together, a great sense of achievement as a team, rediscovering the island, the fun, eating together, the laughter, the banter, the work activities, and the energy we all put into Lundy and this trip.

To me, Lundy has its own presence. You travel to Lundy with a tired soul to rest and reflect. Not to do but to *be*, to enjoy the remoteness, the birds, the wind, the seals, the nature, and yourself. While we had things to do on this conservation break, the stillness and calm joy of being on Lundy and sharing Lundy remained. I am lucky to have met and worked with an amazing group of people. Thank you all!



*Inez and Izzy perusing previous Discovering Lundy's after dinner.
Photo by Evelyn Rita Northage Hicken.*

Bashing, chopping and a surprise find!

MARTIN BIGGIN reports on the successes of the October conservation week.

After an excellent meal in Ilfracombe on the Friday night, organised by Jane and Janet, we sailed to Lundy the next day in calm and sunny weather. Several of the group were already on the island, having been on the LFS field studies course the week before we arrived. In the Barn it was all excitement as we met old friends and said hello to new ones. Hilary and others from the field studies week were hugely keen about what they had learnt and expressed lots of admiration and gratitude to the people who had arranged their week and taught them so thoroughly; we all looked forward to and greatly benefited from them passing on their new knowledge.

George, on her first trip to Lundy, was so delighted that she had witnessed a Goldcrest being ringed as she was walking up from the landing stage that she said her visit to Lundy was complete already! Hilary had done a great job in organising our Conservation Break, and she, and her team, welcomed us with a very warming supper around the Barn's big table.

Sunday had us clearing brambles around Millcombe Valley. The LFS had bought new tools for Lundy, and it was a pleasure to use long-handled shears that were really sharp and cut through the dense brambles quite easily. Some of us cleared the tree nursery on what was once the lawn of Millcombe House. We just kept going through an endless jungle that was eight feet high and very dense, so much so that a gentleman and his lady came down from Millcombe House saying how they'd been watching us labouring for some time, and presented us with a tray of cups, milk and a pot of tea, for which we were duly grateful. We'd already filled twenty dumpy bags by lunch time.



The team arrive! Photo taken on Hilary Winsor's phone by unknown.

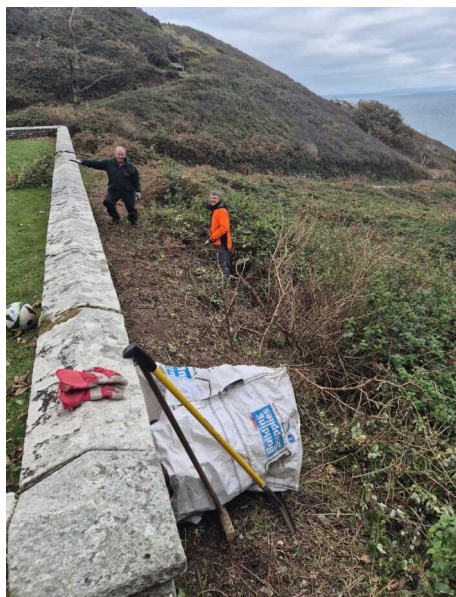
LFS Conservation Breaks 2025

Monday morning was spent searching for rhododendrons around Pondsbury over terrain which swallowed up the unwary. Janet, on her first trip to Lundy, found her first rhodi and was delighted because "it makes up for falling into so many holes". We found nine rhododendrons, less than a tenth of what was found in 2022; a big achievement! There is a great happiness in finding a rhododendron and digging it out, but also a sadness that they persist. However, due to a lot of work, Lundy is on track to becoming free of these most invasive plants in the next few years. In the afternoon it was bramble bashing.

Tuesday morning had Farmer Tom happily telling us that English Heritage had given him permission to load up a trailer of granite boulders from VC Quarry, that we were to form a long chain-gang line by Brambles Villa, and that we'd all pass the boulders along from the trailer to some gabion baskets, which were propping up a landslip. Ranger Roger balanced precariously on the gabions as rocks shot down a builder's tube to land at his feet. In the afternoon, we hacked back more brambles.

On the old lawn below Millcombe House, hidden in the tree nursery surrounded by jungle, we found a lot of young oaks, which will now thrive and be transplanted in a few years' time. Steve even left our picnic lunch early to clear a space, well outside our allotted area, just to save an elderberry he'd found.

Roger wanted the stone wall in front of Millcombe House to be exposed from the brambles. Phil and his group (and his duck-taped-up boots), bravely worked on a very steep slope to clear them all away. Others worked all around the paths leading to and from the Ugly, clearing brambles and making walking there much easier and safer. Rob cleared away a patch by the house and discovered a hidden wall, bird table and sitting area that had been completely overgrown. At the end of it all, Millcombe and its valley looked a lot neater. That night, as ever, we ate very well.



*Clearing brambles below Millcombe.
Photo by Hilary Winsor.*

Wednesday was our day off and most people enjoyed a wander around the island, exploring old favourite places and finding new ones. Some of us had a full English breakfast in the Tavern, a beer at lunch time, and put our feet up. In the evening there was lots of talk about the fungi and other wildlife discovered that day. Jess found Lundy was excellent work experience as she was studying towards her degree in Environmental Science with an emphasis on conservation; she even managed to put in a few evening-hours essay writing while the rest of us were flopping in chairs.

Thursday morning was rhodi bashing and we only found six; a great result, and because the day was sunny and the terrain mostly low scrub, it was a beautiful few hours. Roger and Dina demonstrated

LFS Conservation Breaks 2025

their skills in organising things, not least in keeping four inquisitive and determined ponies away from our picnic lunch out on the plateau. After that, it was more brambles, this time clearing the LFS Steps (previously the Steps of Doom).

Friday was chain-gang time again, Tom was especially happy that he'd managed to get twice as many granite boulders than last time onto his trailer. For the afternoon, we thought that hacking back brambles might be fun, and finally, we aerated the grass path from the Tavern to Millcombe with forks, which was a bit strange. Nevertheless it had been a wonderful week and we took great pride in the fact that Roger's new tools were now blunt.

On our last evening, we had a bit of a party with disco Steve, and Jess read out a poem, which nicely captures the week...

*There once was an LFS party,
whose meals were delicious and hearty.
They chopped brambles in 5th gear,
and dug up rhodies with a cheer,
and proved themselves immensely hardy.*

An easterly wind was picking up, so on the Saturday we had a splash-and-dash. Hilary was staying for a few more days as a treat and a well-deserved rest. Down on the landing stage we hugged and said goodbye to all the work we'd done, the fun we'd had, the food and drink we'd enjoyed, to friends old and new, and not least, a fond farewell to the beauty of Lundy.



*Rhododendron searching on the plateau in the gorgeous Lundy sunshine.
Photo by Hilary Winsor.*

The Lundy Collectors' Club is alive and well!

ANDRÉ COUTANCHE has been wearing another Lundy hat.

The LFS is coming up to its 80th birthday. The 'other' Lundy society – the Lundy Collectors Club – can't match us for seniority; it will soon be 49 years old. But its origins are a bit more exotic. Founded in Chicago in 1977, it was for many years an American organisation with a substantial minority of UK members (and a scattering from many other countries as well). In the 1990s the balance shifted and the Club became a UK-based organisation with a significant North American membership.

As is often the way, for several decades the Club depended on one person to keep it going, as Secretary, Treasurer and editor of *The New Puffin Journal*. James Thomas recently took a very well earned retirement, but not before recruiting a new team to keep the show on the road. As part of that team, I volunteered to develop and expand the LCC website.

It's not just stamps!

The LFS started out focused on bird-ringing but has expanded into the multi-disciplinary and multi-talented organisation of today. Similarly, the LCC started as a specialist club for collectors of Lundy stamps but – such is the lure of Lundy! – members early on became fascinated by all aspects of the lump of rock the stamps came from. So the LCC is for anyone interested in collecting *anything* connected with Lundy – postcards, books, ephemera, artwork and artefacts. The Club's publications have always had a non-philatelic element, going back to the earliest editions of the *Lundy Collectors Club Philatelic Quarterly* in 1979 and continuing to the latest edition of *The New Puffin Journal* in autumn 2025.

As an important part of the revamp of the LCC website, all those past publications have been digitised and made available as searchable PDFs. Being more frequent than the old LFS Newsletters, they can contain information about news and developments on Lundy which isn't easily available elsewhere. We hope they will become a useful resource for all aspects of Lundy studies, philatelic and otherwise.

The new management team are organising Club meetings, including carrying on the tradition of a five-day visit to Lundy every other Spring. The next meeting will be in February 2026.

To learn more, visit the LCC website at <https://www.lundyclollectorsclub.org.uk>. Enjoy rummaging around the old publications, and let me have your comments on the website, please – we want it to be useful for as many people as possible. Contact details are on the website.



An exciting find!

LOUISE WOODBRIDGE tells us about her surprise discovery.

In the early hours in June 2025, on a wild, blustery and noisy night, I discovered a small creature tucked behind a green grocery crate outside the door of my property. It wasn't moving, and I was unsure whether it was alive.

I pondered about disturbing it and decided to slightly move the crate. I was pleased to see that the creature, a dark coloured bird, moved slightly. I didn't want to alarm it, so left it protected by the crate, and put some water nearby.

I was due to be out of my property by 10am, but decided to stay until the housekeeping team arrived, to let them know and ensure a good outcome. At around 11am a member of staff came over the horizon from the Hammers direction.

We identified the bird as a Manx Shearwater and Warden Joe was alerted and arrived shortly afterwards.



Hidden behind the crate.

Photo by Louise Woodbridge.



Joe, with the bird in hand.

Photo by Louise Woodbridge.

He took measurements and weighed the bird, confirming that it was an adult. The bird was ringed and taken to a place of safety to be released at nighttime.

A couple of years earlier, I'd gone with about thirty other visitors one night to watch Joe and others catching and ringing Manx Shearwaters. It was a truly memorable experience as they dropped out of the sky to land on the cliffs before being detailed and ringed.

[Ed: on dark nights during the breeding season there are sometimes warden-led walks to see Manx Shearwaters. It's worth asking about if you're on the island! I attended one a couple of years ago, and would love to do another one. Note: you won't be allowed to join the walk if you've been drinking!]

My life on Lundy: from LFS member to Assistant Ranger

What a summer ZDENA BEST had on Lundy! She tells us about it here.

I've been coming to Lundy since September 2022. My partner (now wife) Annie decided to book a short break for us after scrolling through her phone during a lull in a family get-together. I had heard her talking about her trips to Lundy a few times, but I was none the wiser about it. I didn't even know where it was, the size, the weather, the infrastructure, who lived there or what it was all about.

Annie's theory was that if I didn't like it then I could endure three nights and get on with it! So off we went on Saturday 17 September from Ilfracombe on *MS Oldenburg* on a pleasant and calm sunny morning. An hour-and-a-half later, the island in the middle of the Bristol Channel came into view. It looked glorious and green in the sunshine as I caught my first ever glimpses of the east side, the castle on top of the hill and eventually the beach road and jetty.

Once landed, we made the uphill climb along the Beach Road and then up the path past Millcombe House, emerging at the top with the view of the church, the Marisco Tavern and Square Cottage in front of us and Government House to our left. I was sold – as quickly as that! Annie always says that she looked at me as we came through the gate and knew that I instantly loved it and that three nights here were never going to be enough; how right she was.

On our return home we immediately became members of the LFS and looked at booking our next trip. We have since made several trips and been involved in several LFS Conservation Breaks.

Fast forward three years; June 2025 to be exact. We had just returned home from a LFS Conservation Break when Annie was scrolling through her phone (this was how her trouble originally started!) when she came across a job being advertised on Lundy for a volunteer Assistant Ranger. The previous ranger had left, and Lundy needed a replacement.

"Why don't you apply for this job?" says Annie. "They won't want me" I said. "They'll be looking for some young enthusiastic university graduate who is going to save the world."

"It's right up your street" came the reply – "And if you don't try you won't get it and then you will regret not trying." That was me told. I dutifully filled out the application form and sent it off. There was a two-week application window so I wasn't expecting a quick reply, and the reply I was expecting was "Thank you for your interest but....."

I nearly fell off my chair as I opened an email from Roger, the Lundy Ranger, on the 12th July saying, "We want you! When can you get here?" I was so shocked! It seems that I had the advantage of experience of Lundy and the type of work they wanted me to do.



On Tuesday 22nd July I waved a tearful goodbye to Annie from Ilfracombe and landed on the jetty for my three-month volunteer stint nearly two hours later. I was met by Tara, the Assistant Warden, taken up to collect my Lundy blues and shown my new home in the Lodge. All the staff were very welcoming, and no introductions were really needed.

Wednesday was day one of work. Pete (cargo) had to take me to the airfield to check on my quad bike ability. All went well with quad handling until the trailer was hitched to the back – whereby he had to endure watching me trying to reverse between two sets of poles with an errant trailer with a mind of its own. Finally success, and with a mower attached to the back of my quad and a crudely drawn map on a scrap of card from Farmer Tom, off I went to mow the airfield and aeroplane parking areas ready for the impending fly-in by light aircraft in two weeks' time. Unfortunately, due to pea soup weather, the fly-in was postponed for two weeks and then two weeks later was cancelled again due to strong gusting winds.

Day two, and for the next few days I had a roller attached to the quad and set about rolling the bracken in Middle Park, Ackland's Moor and then Tibbetts Hill. My right hand had settled in the position of the quad control with my thumb sticking out as if I was still holding the accelerator. I had difficulty in tying my bootlaces and holding my knife at mealtimes, and there was no way I could even hold a pen, let alone sign my own name on my tavern meal tickets!

The following days and weeks involved hours and acres of strimming grass, bracken and brambles, particularly around Milcombe Valley, with a request from Trevor Dobie for the Upper East Side Path to be cleared as he had encountered “archways” of bracken while he been visiting early on in my stay. I dutifully obliged and sent him the before and after pictures as proof. Other Millcombe paths were strimmed, chopped and cleared in the blazing sunshine, with me having to carry my strimmer, safety equipment and other gardening implements up and down the steps into the valley whilst avoiding colliding with day-trippers and stayers who seemed to appear whenever I started up the strimmer.



*That darned mower!
Photo by Zdena Best.*

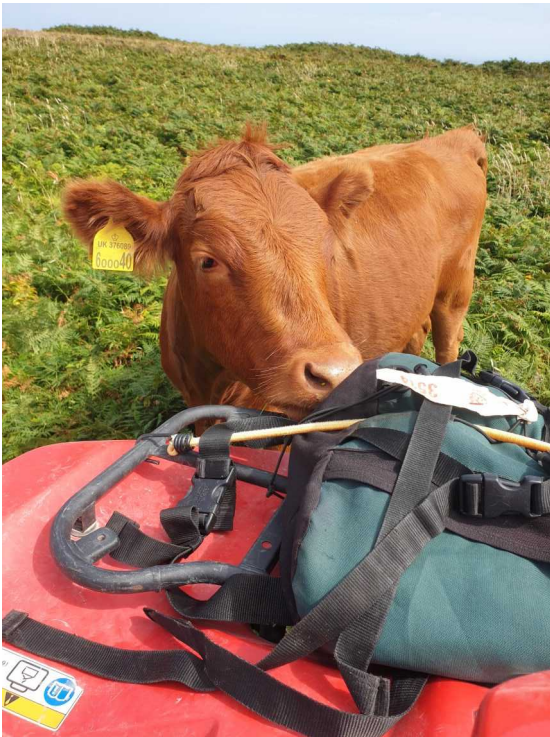
Other tasks involved rebuilding of stone walls, re-hanging gates, ditch and gully clearances, and filling gabion baskets down near Brambles Villas. This task was certainly a test of fitness and strength; as I stood in the quad trailer with a heap of big lumps of stone I had to pick them up and haul them upwards into the builder's chute to land below in the valley where Roger arranged them neatly into the baskets – all done of course in blazing heat without the hint of a cocktail.

On boat days, I was regularly drafted in to help with cargo. This was a 9am scatter to outgoing properties delivering clean laundry and collecting luggage, filling Lundy crates with the collected luggage and any other items due to be sent off island, and then loading the crates onto the trailer ready to take

down to the Jetty for the arrival of the *Oldenburg*.

As many are aware, the travel days aren't always as straightforward as imagined. Weather and mechanics play a big part in sailing or not sailing, and a few storms and easterly winds played their part at various times. Cancellations and rescheduling to a different day have a major impact, especially involving staff work rotas, and of course island stores. Stores all arrive by boat in the famous crates, and after being unpacked they are dutifully delivered by hand to the Tavern or driven up to the shop where they are passed in a human chain up the stairs to the shop "warehouse". Participants are rewarded with an ice-cream for their time and effort.

Talking of staff, there are 28 full-time members, who live permanently on the island and their numbers are boosted by volunteers who stay in the Lodge. The volunteers assist with bird surveys, seal surveys and butterfly surveys and can often be found roaming the island carrying out their various tasks, identifying, counting, and



One of the Dexters, new to the island this year, checking out Zdena's lunch!
Photo by Zdena Best.

recording their various subjects. The Lundy staff are a close-knit community and all are involved in some way, shape or form during travel days, whether it be down to see the boat in or out, cleaning vacated properties ready for the next staying visitors, serving food and drink in the Tavern or working in the shop. Of course, there are cargo and stores to be dealt with, collection of dirty laundry, recycling and rubbish and interacting with the visitors at reception, guided walks and the warden's talk in the evening. After a hard day's work on boat days, many of the staff gather together at the end of the day to wind down with a drink and chat, either outside during warm weather or in the Tavern during not so good days. It shows the level of team spirit and camaraderie that exist on the island.

Besides work, there have been opportunities to get involved in other activities. These include attending Manx Shearwater and Storm petrel bird-ringing

sessions at North End or Brazen Ward, checking nesting boxes for chicks, and an introduction by Warden Joe to ringing birds. I have noticed an improvement in my own knowledge of identifying birds, butterflies, fungi and seals. I have walked most of the island numerous times, run a substantial number of miles, and sat at Jenny's Cove and whiled away a few hours doing absolutely nothing. There was even a staff duck race which took place on Rocket Pole Pond with a quantity of bath ducks set

loose from one end of the pond to reach the other (no ducks were harmed in this exercise!).

I have been involved in helping with two LFS working parties during my stay. Some familiar faces arriving and being surprised that I am here, but also knowing that I have done LFS work and I am and have been involved in similar work during my stay. The main difference for me, being that there are none of the dreaded rhododendron searches.

Finally just a big **Thank You** to everyone who has been supportive of me during my time here, and all the great staff that I've had the pleasure to work with especially Roger, Joe, Tara, Rob, Matt and Pete, my fellow vollies Kathleen, Ezra, Mya, Angus and Kirsty, all the other Lundy staff, the LFS and, most of all, THANK YOU, ANNIE.



*Duck race line up.
Photo by Zdena Best.*

Discover the LFS publications!

Whether you're new to the LFS or a long-time supporter, the publications page on our website is the perfect place to discover books covering a wealth of information about the island. Explore titles on archaeology, history, natural history, shipwrecks, letterboxing, and much more.

You'll also find a digital archive of the regular publications: the Annual Report, Journal and of course, the Discovering Lundy Bulletin.

Stay informed. Be inspired!

<https://www.lundy.org.uk/publications/books>



LUNDY FIELD SOCIETY

For the study and conservation of a unique island

Home

- What we do
- About Lundy
- Publications
- Reproductions
- Records
- Contact us

Books

The LFS has been involved in publishing and contributing to many publications over the years. Below are some of the books that have been produced recently.

The Island King: A biography of Martin Coles Harman, Overlord of Lundy
by A P Langhams

After considerable research, the last work by Tony Langham has been found and published by the LFS with the consent of Tony's widow, Jennie. It is a 46-page black and white illustrated booklet with a preface by MCF's daughter Diana Keast and introduction by Tony's biographer, Roger Allen.

The second printing is now available...

Price: £5.00 plus postage (to a UK address) of £2.50
Available from [LFS Sales](#) or purchase using PayPal

[Buy Now](#)

The Island King
A Biography of Martin Coles Harman
Overlord of Lundy



EXTERNAL LINKS

- The Lundy Trust
- Lundy Breeze website
- Lundy Field Society
- Lundy Island
- Lundybank Lundy
- Highway Authority - LUNDY AIRFIELD AREA
- Lundy Animal Conservation
- Lundy Charitable

Lundy: Shipwreck and Rescue
by Robert Carl Smith

This book has been written by Robert Carl Smith who has researched Lundy's shipwrecks from the 18th century to the end of the 20th century.

As a granite mass set across what was one of the world's busiest shipping routes, Lundy has a long history of shipwrecks. This book tells the stories not just of the ships and how they came to grief on and near the island's shores, but also of the rescue efforts to save vessels and crews.

Price: £6 plus postage (to a UK address) of £2.50
Available from [The Old Lundy Press](#)



My Life on Lundy
by Felle Gade



ALAN ROWLAND recounts the renovation of a model of The Old Light.

I was aware that Derek Green had rescued a model of the Old Light from deteriorating at the Landmark headquarters at Shottesbrooke. When he showed it to me, it was in quite a pitiful state, dusty, damaged, and missing some parts.



*The before...
Photo by Alan Rowland.*

When, in 2024, the Lundy Island Facebook group was made aware of the impending publication of plans for a model of the *Oldenburg*, in *Model Boats* issue January 2025, I put two and two together.

With Derek's agreement I contacted Ray Wood to ask if he, as an obviously competent model-maker, would be prepared to restore the model of the Old Light.

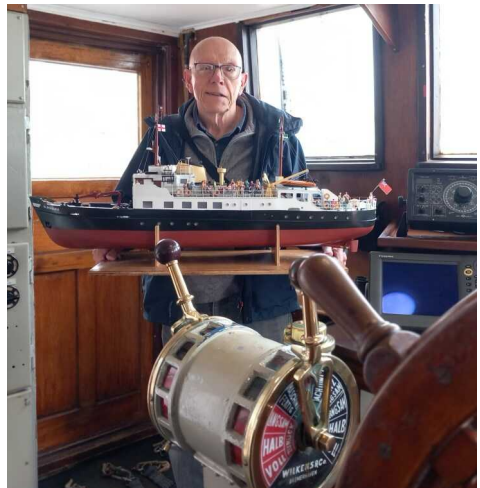
Ray was very positive about the possibility but highlighted the distance he was from Lundy as he lives in Kent. However, he suggested a model-making friend Peter Parkes who lives much nearer.

Peter had also made a model of the *Oldenburg* some time before

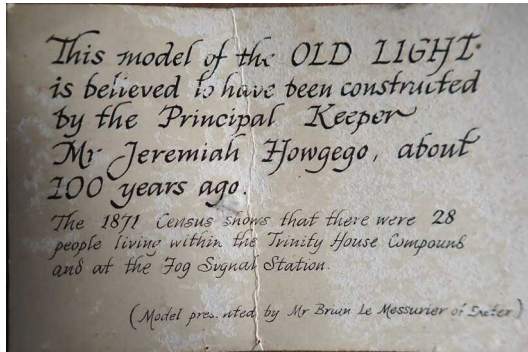
Ray's plans were published and was open to discussing the project.

We met up in the Lundy Shore office (thank you Lyndsey) in March. I took the Old Light model for assessment by Peter and he brought his model of the *Oldenburg*. Peter was thrilled to be pictured with his model on the bridge of the full-sized *Oldenburg* and agreed to take the Old Light model away with a view to renewing and refurbishing it.

The model of the Old Light was made by Principal Keeper (PK) Jeremiah Howgego. He was PK on Lundy from 1867 to 1874 and presented it to PK McCarthy on his retirement from the Old Light on Lundy in the 1890s. PK McCarthy arrived on Lundy with his wife and 6 children in 1884 and a further child, Augustus, was born on Lundy. The family left in 1893.



*Peter Parkes with his Oldenburg model.
Photo by Alan Rowland.*



John Dyke's museum notice. Photo by Alan Rowland.

The model passed down through McCarthy's family to his great grandson Brian Le Messurier of Exeter (who died in 2022). He in turn donated it to the proposed Lundy Museum in the early 1970s.

Since the museum project never came to fruition, it passed to Landmark and eventually to Derek Green, the Lundy Company Manager.



... and the after. Photo by Alan Rowland.

[Ed: the model now resides in the window of the reception area of the Tavern, and can be viewed by standing next to the Lundy postbox.]

Your Society needs you to record, record and record some more!

AMANDA YATES reminds us about the importance of data recording on the island.

Lundy is a unique island which has been studied by the Lundy Field Society for almost 80 years. Although we have LFS expert contacts who are responsible for conducting surveys and collating the data for the Annual Report, they can't visit the island as often as they might like to, so the Society needs as many people as possible collecting and recording data.

Any data that you can record while you are on the island will be invaluable.

Some species categories do not have LFS expert contacts dedicated to them, and these categories need filling. Additionally, as the years pass, the expert contacts may retire, and the Society will need people to carry on their excellent work.

Data from and around Lundy can be recorded by:

- attending the wildlife recording sessions in the Tavern at 8pm;
- entering data into the LFS logbook in section 3 – please give the four essential details (see below);
- sending a message and or a photograph to the appropriate LFS expert contact;
- for seals, please see below;
- entering data into the iRecord App or iRecord Website, but please, whenever possible, also add to our logbook so that others on the island can be aware of what has been seen.

Archaeology

If you have been trained to conduct archaeology condition surveys, there is a separate logbook and a folder plus a scale stick in the locked LFS library in the Tavern. Just ask the staff in the Tavern for the key, stating that you are a member of the LFS. Please use the logbook to record which Scheduled Monument you are surveying and use the recording forms and information in the folder to carry out the archaeological condition survey. You can use the scale stick when you take photographs of the monument.

Photographs of the completed forms and photographs of the monuments should be sent to Charlotte Russell by email at charlotte.russell@historicengland.org.uk.



The Logbook!

Photo by Tara McEvoy-Wilding

Contacts

Contact information for the LFS expert contacts can be found here: www.lundy.org.uk/contact-us.

If you have a particular area of expertise in natural history or archaeology, please make get in touch if you wish to offer your services.

The minimum four essential details required for the logbook are:-

1. What – the species you saw or a photograph or description if you don't know or are unsure;
2. Who – your name, and email or telephone contact details;
3. When – the date;
4. Where – a location; the default is Lundy but a rough area in which you saw it is useful.

You can find a list of all species already recorded on the island at www.lundy.org.uk/resources/species-lists. If your species is not on this list, please submit a photograph or full description to the relevant species expert to determine if this is a species new to Lundy.

What to study

Usually, people have some knowledge in certain areas that interest them, and this is a good place to start. If you are looking for a new area to study and need inspiration, look at the LFS annual reports or take up one of the categories below.

- **Birds** – bird sightings, especially those outside the Lundy Bird Observatory census route – see web page lundybirdobs.org.uk/index.php/what-we-do/daily-bird-census for the route. Large flocks or unusual occurrences in the census route are always welcome too.
- **Dragonflies and Damselflies** (Odonata) – more records needed, especially repeated or specific surveys.
- **Seals** – seal counts and observations of their behaviour are helpful and can be recorded in the logbook in section 3. If you can photograph seals well enough to see the patterns on their fur (without disturbing the seals) send your photos (including notes of the locations where they were taken) by email to warden@lundyisland.co.uk who will collate them and forward them to the Seal Research Trust.
- **Flies** (Diptera) – very few recordings in 2024.
- **Freshwater Fish** – very few recordings and counts in 2024.
- **Grasshoppers and Crickets** (Orthoptera) – very few recordings in 2024.
- **Mosses, Liverworts and Hornworts** (Bryophytes) – none recorded in 2024.
- **Centipedes and Millipedes** (Myriapoda) – very few recordings in 2024.
- **Woodlice** (Isopoda) – very few recordings in 2024.
- **Rabbits** – recordings needed to monitor recovery of the population from viral outbreaks.
- **Bats** – very few recordings in 2024.
- **Reptiles** – help to monitor species that are relatively new finds on Lundy.

What happens to the data in the LFS logbook?

At the end of the year the logbook is scanned, and electronic copies are sent to the LFS. The LFS expert contacts then receive electronic copies of the relevant pages together with spreadsheets of information downloaded from iRecord so they can compile their section of the Annual Report. Additionally, the LFS experts enter the data from the logbook onto spreadsheets that will be uploaded to iRecord.

Once data is in iRecord it can be viewed and used by people across the world. Finally, all records for the year are uploaded to the LFS webpage; you can view them by clicking on “Records” on the home page of the LFS website.

Research

If you wish to carry out research work on the island, you can apply for a small grant from the LFS. Information and requirements to make an application can be found here www.lundy.org.uk/what-we-do/grants.

Any active research on the island may need the approval of the Warden and consent from Natural England, especially if it involves collecting specimens within the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). But in any case, it is common courtesy to advise the Warden of any research you may wish to undertake even if consent or a licence is not required.

The SSSI on Lundy covers the majority of the island's landmass, including its rocky cliffs, heathlands, waters and the surrounding marine areas.

Thank you to Alan Rowland, Chris Dee and John Hedger for their help with this article.

TREVOR DOBIE goes foraging for fungi

During our wonderful stay in Square Cottage in early November, we were very lucky that our holiday coincided with a visit to Lundy by Prof. John Hedger. He had organised a ‘Fungal Foray’ to which anyone on the island was welcome. Around 20 people met John in front of the Tavern, on a sunny, crisp morning. The foray took us across Lighthouse Field to South West Field, and ended on the Airfield. A total of 45 species of fungi were noted and expertly identified by John. Everyone was thrilled to be part of the group that discovered a new species for Lundy in South West Field – Moss Navel (*Arrhenia rickenii*).



The proud fungi foragers.
Photo by Liz Crow on John Hedger's phone.



Arrhenia rickenii.
Photo by John Hedger.

LUNDY RAVEN

Ann Taylor

Soaring high
Over stormy seas and granite cliffs.
Swooping low
Over wind-sculpt gorse and swathes of
thrift,
With a mischievous dive at a crow.
Garrulous croak
To welcome a mate,
For a twisting, turning, acrobatic duet
Embracing the wind.

Rock-based sentinel,
Egg thief,
Fledgling doom.
Heavy beaked
Black-cloaked,
Ominous shadow,
The Raven.

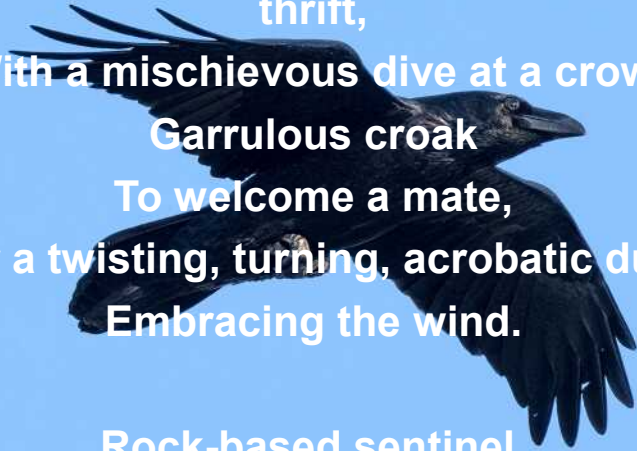


Photo by Richard Campey.

An alleged murder on Lundy

RICHARD LOWES investigates.

Lundy has a long, dark history as a refuge for pirates, outlaws, and other miscreants. And Hangman's Hill, reputedly once the site of a gibbet, serves as persuasive evidence for the execution (quite literally) of summary justice on the island.

Like me, you may have envisioned Lundy as the ideal backdrop for a murder mystery – a more remote and windswept version of St Mary Mead. Indeed, in 1926, playwright Winifred Ashton (aka Clemence Dane) had similar thoughts, releasing her acclaimed play, "Granite," set on the island in the early nineteenth century. Eventually adapted for the big screen in 1958, the tale includes two Lundy murders.

However, over the last couple of centuries, deaths on Lundy have resulted from tragic accidents, natural causes, or suicide (the latter during the days of the Lundy Granite Company) rather than from foul play. The sole mention of "murder" appears just once, following the death of George Tippett. Succumbing at Ilfracombe on Saturday 16th December 1871, Tippett's death was the result of a shotgun wound sustained on the island in contentious circumstances the previous afternoon. Although long predating his time as agent, Felix Gade references the incident in his memoir:

"It is difficult to believe that Mr. Heaven should have made this appeal for police, whilst his son, the Rev. H. G. Heaven, when Charles Treleven [sic] was accused of murder some ten or twelve years later, should deny the right of police to land and arrest the alleged murderer. He told police that he would arrest the man and hand him over on board the vessel which the police had chartered to bring them from Ilfracombe to Lundy."

Understandably, the events surrounding Tippett's death received extensive coverage. However, much of the initial reporting was highly speculative, and some of the more sensationalist accounts following the inquest conveniently overlook the numerous uncontroversial facts of the case.

In piecing together the events of that day, we are greatly aided by the few newspapers that carried detailed accounts of the witness evidence presented at the inquest held at the White Hart Inn on the Quay, Ilfracombe, before Mr Deputy Coroner Toller and a jury the following Monday.

Background

For centuries, the village of Pill at the mouth of the River Avon was renowned for its skilled pilots. These men assisted ships in navigating the treacherous waters of the Bristol Channel and guided them safely inland along the Avon to the Port of Bristol. They were a tough and often unruly group, and despite being neighbours, competition for work was fierce, with the first pilot to board a ship securing the pilotage rights.

Sailing cutters, designed for speed, were manned by a pilot, a boatman (known as a Westernman), and a boy. Once the pilot boarded a ship, the cutter followed, ready to retrieve the pilot at the destination. Crews would navigate down the Bristol Channel in search of inbound vessels, and it was not unusual for them to ultimately find themselves in Lundy Roads.

George Tippett's father, Joseph, was one such pilot. On the morning of Wednesday, 13th December 1871, Joseph departed from Pill in his cutter, accompanied by his son George (20), George Harris (24), and William Smith (15). Around 9:00 pm on Thursday, they anchored off Lundy, where they lay overnight.

Events of Friday 15th December 1871

At around 10:00 am on Friday, all except Smith went ashore. The younger Tippett and George Harris left Joseph and made their way to the lighthouse (the Old Light) “to see whether there were any ships about,” reuniting with Joseph approximately half-an-hour later. It appears their search for ships was in vain, as all three then retired “into the store and had some beer.” The “store” refers to the original part of the current Marisco Tavern before the modern knock-through into Marisco Cottage. Several others, including pilots, boatmen, and Lundy residents, were present in the store at various times. At one point, the island bailiff, Charles Treleaven, was there but likely not drinking. Joseph’s statement to the jury that “during the time that we were drinking, nothing took place between any of us to cause any excitement” seems uncontroversial.



Pilots, Westernmen and boys outside the Waterloo Pub, Pill in 1880. Despite an exhaustive search, it has not proved possible to identify the source of this image.

After about-an-hour, Joseph and George Tippett left the store to return to the cutter “to get some dinner.” However, George was evidently not as enthusiastic about this idea as his father, soon turning back to rejoin Harris in the store, while Joseph made his way back to the boat. They stayed in the store for around another half an hour, and upon leaving, according to Harris, the two of them “were the worse for liquor.” They made their way to the castle, which at the time housed three cottages, two of which were occupied. Harris said that on arriving there:

“We went in and whilst there [Tippett] fell against a table and broke two or three of the cups. There was a woman there who refused to supply us with any beer because she had run out... After leaving the Castle we walked away by the store and went into a house and asked to light our pipes. Two men came out with picks and attempted to strike me. I then broke the window. Tippett was with me all the time. We then left them and went towards the beach. As we were going down, two men came out the back way and went towards Mr. Heaven’s house. On their way they fell in with the man that had the gun. I don’t know the man’s name; I believe he was called Treleaven. When these three men came up we had a bit of a bother. Treleaven had a gun. I know what the affair commenced about. Tippett was shot, and then he was about four or six feet from Treleaven. The latter did not threaten to shoot Tippett. He carried the gun in his hand by his side. Treleaven did not point the gun at Tippett. When the gun went off I was distant from the deceased about fifteen or twenty yards. If the gun had been placed to the shoulder I should have observed it. After the gun went off Treleaven said ‘Take that!’ – (Sensation).”

This testimony is typical of an inquest’s inquisitorial style, with much of Harris’s

evidence likely recorded here as paraphrased versions of his responses to the Coroner's questions. Understandably, he may have been less eloquent than other witnesses and more intimidated by the occasion.

The Reverend Hudson Heaven told the inquest that at around 3.00 pm, he and his father, William (72), had just finished dinner at the Villa (Millcombe) when a maid requested their presence at the store where men were causing a disturbance and breaking windows. He stated that as they walked through the kitchen towards the back door, the bailiff, Charles Treleaven, was having his dinner. "He said 'Shall I come also?' I said 'Yes, the more the better.' He inquired 'Shall I take a gun?' and I replied 'Yes, if you like, it may intimidate them if they see it.' He then took a double-barrelled gun from the rack over the kitchen fire place. The gun was loaded in both barrels, and had been for several days, and the locks were both at half cock."

Hudson Heaven then described leading the trio up the path behind the Villa towards the village, with Treleaven close behind him and the elderly William a few paces back. "Treleaven carried the gun under his left arm with the muzzle towards the ground." Around halfway up the hill, he spotted Tippett and Harris, who must have presented an almost comical sight, "struggling together – they had hold of each other... They fell one over the other, and then rose to a sitting position on the grass side by side."

Heaven said that he and Treleaven walked "to a gateway a little higher up", where Joseph Dart, the island carpenter, and Obediah Johns, a labourer, joined them. Upon reaching the others, William Heaven continued past them towards Tippett and Harris, who "rose and began to speak very loudly and gesticulating, throwing their arms about them." According to Heaven, the group – now joined by a man named Walters – then moved towards William Heaven, Tippett, and Harris.

"Treleaven was then carrying the gun as before. When we came up to them we stopped, and Harris became very violent. He stripped off his jersey, tied up his sleeves, and offered to fight Johns or anyone. He took out a shilling. Johns stood with his hands in his pocket, and said 'You may strike if you like.' Not one of our party said anything to irritate them. Harris and Tippett appeared to have got sight of Treleaven with the gun still under his arm a few feet off them. Tippett rushed forward towards Treleaven and said, 'I'll cut thee heart out.' He got to within arms length of Treleaven. Tippett's back was towards me, and Treleaven was before me. I could see that the stock of the gun was not moved from its original position under the arm. Tippett's body hid the barrel of the gun from my view. I heard the report of a gun directly after, when Tippett fell, exclaiming, 'I'm shot; I shall die; send for a doctor.'"

One of the more significant differences between the evidence of George Harris and Hudson Heaven is that Harris reports the presence of only three island men, including Treleaven, not six. Of course, Harris was, by his admission, "the worse for liquor" and, by all accounts, considerably so. We shall never know to what extent that impeded his accurate recollection of events. Nevertheless, his condition had a profound effect on his evidence. On Treleaven's subsequent appearance before the Ilfracombe bench the day after the inquest, magistrate Nathaniel Vye stated, "It appears at the time this man Harris was not sober, so that I cannot give any credence to his evidence."

But, if correct, might Harris's account suggest that it was possibly Joseph Dart and Obediah Johns who "fell in" with Treleaven? [Remember, he said, "As we were going down, two men came out the back way and went towards Mr. Heaven's house. On their way, they fell in with the man that had the gun."] It does not sound as though he is describing Hudson and William Heaven. Does that raise the question of whether

the Heavens and Walters were even present when the gun discharged? Yet, Hudson Heaven's evidence contains considerable detail, even mentioning that he and his father donned their hats before leaving the house! And at no time is it reported that Harris questioned Hudson Heaven's presence at the scene.

Crucially, George Harris concurs with Hudson Heaven that Treleven always held the gun at his side, facing downwards. He also recounts an earlier encounter with Treleven: "We had 'had words' with Treleven at the Castle; he had no gun with him then."

The inquest heard from P.C. Howard, who spoke to the ailing George Tippet upon his arrival at Ilfracombe. He recounted Tippet's account that Treleven's actions were deliberate, and "He had his gun by his side, and when he fired he said, 'Take that.'"

Hudson Heaven denied that Treleven had made any such statement. "Harris said to Treleven, 'One is shot – you had better shoot me and then there will be two.' Treleven said, 'No, I shall not; there is enough mischief done already. I am very sorry; I could not help it. He caused it himself. Let us see if we can do anything for the poor fellow.' Treleven did not say in my hearing, 'Take that.' I was close enough to have heard him if he had. I heard no such words as 'If that will not do I will give you the second barrel.'" This latter comment presumably rebutted otherwise unreported testimony by Harris, or Tippet via Howard. "There was a rush when the accident occurred, and the gun went off immediately. Tippet had not a knife in his hand when he said 'I'll cut thee heart out.'"

One of the attending doctors in Ilfracombe, Dr Gardiner, informed the inquest that based on the small size of the entry wound, he inferred that the gun was "not a foot from the body when fired." The hole was "just beneath the eighth or ninth rib, from which was protruding part of the momentum [sic]."

Following these events, George Tippet was transported by cart to the landing beach and then onto his father's cutter. Joseph headed to Ilfracombe, "as the nearest port", in search of a doctor. In the guise of Drs Gardiner and Stoneham, the local medical profession was quick to pronounce the case "a hopeless one", and Tippet was administered a presumably generous dose of laudanum "to alleviate his sufferings."

THE ALLEGED MURDER AT LUNDY ISLAND.

The man Trevelyan, suspected of shooting Typhett, on Lundy Island, has given himself up to the police. He states that the shot was fired accidentally in a scuffle. Trevelyan had been in the habit of carrying a pistol in his pocket, and during a fight which Harris, Typhett, and Trevelyan had together, the latter was thrown down, when the pistol exploded, and the shot passed through his clothes, and entered Typhett. An inquest will be held at once.

Taken from The Sun and Central Press, London, 19th December 1871, this represents one of many highly inaccurate reports of the incident in the press.

Tragically, he was pronounced dead in the early hours of Saturday morning.

The *Western Times* reported the findings of the inquest as follows:

“The Jury retired about a quarter of an hour, and on returning, the foreman announced that they had decided on the following verdict: – ‘That the deceased, George Tippett, came by his death accidentally in the attempt to pull and drag a gun from under the arm of Charles Walter Treleaven.’ The verdict was received with acclamation.”

Remember, there was no suggestion in any of the reported witness testimony of Tippett attempting “to pull and drag” the gun from Treleaven!

Charles Treleaven had been in custody since his arrival at Ilfracombe on Saturday, charged with “feloniously killing and slaying one George Tippett.” On Tuesday, he was brought before the Ilfracombe bench, and after reviewing the evidence presented at the inquest the previous day, magistrate Nathaniel Vye discharged him.

Comment

It is easy, but often unfair, to criticise the legal proceedings of earlier times. With Tippett, Harris and Heaven all putting the gun at Treleaven’s side, facing down, throughout the encounter, a verdict of accidental death is perhaps understandable, despite the jury’s unfortunate leap of imagination regarding Tippett attempting “to pull and drag the gun from Treleaven.” Today, a more likely verdict based on the evidence presented is ‘death by misadventure’, an outcome better suiting a scenario where the deceased voluntarily takes a risk leading to their untimely end. However, that does not mean we cannot examine and question the evidence.

Including Treleaven, on Hudson Heaven’s account, six islanders witnessed the final showdown. Yet, it seems that only he provided evidence. Yes, there is a need for speed in holding an inquest, and likely, four of the five were still on Lundy; however, a considerable body of evidence went unheard.

There is little doubt that the Victorian jury would have held considerable respect for the well-educated reverend gentleman before them, placing significant weight on his testimony. Undoubtedly, his performance was polished in comparison to young George Harris. However, they never had the opportunity to hear what might have been the less well-polished and possibly contradictory accounts of other islanders. Was this a consideration for Hudson Heaven in travelling alone with Treleaven to Ilfracombe?

Harris reports the presence of three islanders, not six. Yes, he was drunk, but was he so intoxicated that he was seeing double? Is it more likely that the three men he described were Treleaven, Dart and Johns? Yet, crucially, he does not challenge Hudson Heaven’s presence.

There are wildly contradictory accounts of what was said by Treleaven, Tippett, and Harris immediately before and after the gun discharged. However, the evidence provided by the fatally wounded Tippett via P.C. Howard perfectly corroborates Harris’s account of Treleaven’s exclamation at the moment of the gun’s discharge – “Take that!”. Additionally, there’s mention of “If that will not do I will give you the second barrel.” Hudson Heaven vehemently denies that Treleaven uttered either comment.

However, if Tippett and Harris were correct, would that shed any light on Treleaven’s actions or state of mind at the critical moment? Might he have pulled the trigger in a fit of pique, without intending to kill or even harm Tippett, merely seeking to frighten

him? Treleaven was a young man of a similar age to the visitors, and this was not his first uncomfortable encounter with them that day. Presumably, at the very least, he was feeling somewhat wound up!

We can speculate endlessly. Ultimately, with the inquest concluded, it fell to Joseph, George Harris, and William to load George Tippet's coffin into the cutter at Ilfracombe Harbour for his final journey home to Pill.

Yet, one final mystery remains. Charles Walter Treleaven appears to vanish from UK records. However, in 1882, a Charles Walter Treleaven married Mary Alice Vine in Falmouth, Jamaica. If this is indeed the same person, might there have been concern that Charles had become a marked man among the formidable men of Pill – still regular visitors to Lundy? It is certainly intriguing to note the Heaven family's well-known Jamaican connections. Interestingly, Charles and Mary's eldest son bore the highly unusual middle name of "Gossett", which is almost identical to Hudson Heaven's middle name of "Grossett". Might this have been in honour of a respected former employer who had helped Charles start anew?

Bibliography

The Lundy Companion, Michael A Williams (2001), p.29

Granite, Winifred Ashton (1926)

My Life on Lundy, Felix Gade (1978), p.40

The North Devon Journal of 31 March 1864

'Pill Pilots', unaccredited article published by the *Bristol Radical History Group* (2012)

Western Times of Monday 18 December 1871 and Friday 22 December 1871

Western Daily Press of Monday 18 December 1871

The Globe of Monday 18 December 1871

Your mission, should you choose to accept it...

EDWARD JEFFRIS (AKA Rat Boy) recounts his letterboxing trip.

Lundy's rat history is hardly harmonious, but that didn't deter a visit from Rat Boy and his right-hand man, Si of Relief. Their desire? Not scrummy bird eggs; Lundy Letterboxes!

You may wonder: Why leave the mainland for letterboxes where there are far more doors? Not that kind of letterbox – letterbox letterboxes! True treasure, precious planted prizes, a secret stash found only by those with the drive and tenacity to crack clues.

Letterboxing is a game, no, a *tradition* that began on Dartmoor in 1854, when James Perrott, a moorland guide from Chagford, planted a container in a cairn at Cranmere Pool, the boggy heart of high Dartmoor, to attract Victorian walkers to deposit postcards for the next to return – hence the name letterboxing. Except, the game has since evolved to include stamps, which finders take an impression of before hiding back in place for the next person to find.

Rat boy has a special interest in Dartmoor letterboxing and spends any free second decoding clues all over the moor. He also makes the odd video about aspects of the hobby to capture its current era, to inform newcomers and help maintain the heritage of the hobby, which risks being lost if not recorded.

Though hardly a household name, Letterboxing has expanded beyond the bounds of Dartmoor, with cells popping up around the UK and wider world, and with the minds

of treasure hunting letterboxers being naturally inquisitive, Rat Boy and Si of Relief decided to plan a trip to a different letterboxing scene. One big question, though – where?

Some research uncovered scenes in other national parks, but each seemed to lack order and community. This didn't instil much confidence, as they worried they'd waste time hunting boxes that no longer existed – every boxer's nightmare! Thankfully they soon discovered the Lundy letterboxing scene, which was not just well managed, maintained, and made easy with clear-cut clues, but refined by nearly four decades of activity, creating a unique culture of collecting to explore, compare and absorb. An irresistible prospect for the stamp mad.

Imagine winning the lottery, then multiply that to understand Rat Boy's joy when discovering the book, *Lundy Letterboxes*, by Alan Rowland, which faithfully encapsulates the history and essence of the game on Lundy, as well as offering bonus information for boxes – a must have for any Lundy Letterboxer. Once read, there was no changing their minds; the inky invasion was on and the *Oldenburg* had two fewer spaces one sunny day in June.

The mission: Find all the Lundy letterboxes and gain the certificate to prove it.

Their resolve: Unwavering, at first, but, increasingly distracted by the magic of Lun... “Look! PUFFINS!!!”, “Over there, more seals!”, “How'd those deer get 'ere?”, “Anuva pint'a Oi' Light? Ain't four enough?”, “Do you think they sell Lundy Cabbage coleslaw in the store?”, “I heard the island staff's pumpkin competition is getting a bit feisty”, “Did they clear the rats with a boatload of Jack Russells?” etc.

It took the seasoned boxers four days to find all 27 boxes, plus the bunny – the bonus stamp moved between boxes by finders, meaning its collecting is never guaranteed, inflicting disturbed sleep on all it evades.

Despite a minor tent explosion one galey night, the Dartmoor duo had an unforgettable adventure hunting the Lundy letterboxes and felt they'd slipped out of reality during their time there. A strange but freeing feeling amplified by the crash back down to earth when rejoining the mainland. They won't summarise their thoughts



*Another one logged!
Photo by Edward Jeffris.*

on the Lundy Letterboxing scene in this article. Instead, they'd encourage you to find this in their video of the trip, which can be found on YouTube by searching Lundy Letterboxing.

On an ending note, the letterboxing on Lundy is no mere novelty, but an experience recommendable to all and a great reason to visit Lundy in its own merit. Time in unparalleled natural beauty with the added thrill of the hunt and reward when solving a riddle to find your prize elicits a feeling of joy money cannot buy. One will acquire greater knowledge of the island, a pleasant ache from a day well walked, and any

refreshments later swigged in the Marisco Tavern will taste that extra bit sweeter.

Prepare a personal stamp, book your boat, hunt the stamps and thank me later. Best of luck!

Link to the video is: <https://youtu.be/7LHuBA1DSzE?feature=shared>



Relaxing amongst the North End thrift.

Photo by Edward Jeffris.

Lundy – a rather special customer.

A fascinating journey through the years is recounted by STEPHEN COOKE.

My family have, for many years, been associated with Lundy. My grandfather, Ernest Harold Cooke, had an ironmongery business; H. Mortimer and Son, in Boutport Street, Barnstaple, and supplied ironmongery and bee-keeping equipment to Lundy in the 1930's.

One of his employees, Bill Gubb, a plumber, claimed that he played cricket for England when he went to Lundy and played against the islanders.

With the retirement of my grandfather in 1955, my father; Wallace (Wally) Cooke started our family business; Alco Engineering Co. (Sheet Metal) Ltd. Originally based in Barnstaple, it later moving to Torrington, where two of my sons run the business today.

In 1975, my wife Rosemarie and I had a three-day camping holiday on Lundy. We travelled on the *Lundy Gannet* and in glorious weather spent our time exploring the island and quickly appreciating its uniqueness.

My business association with Lundy, started in 1980 when we (Alco Engineering) won a contract to refurbish the Old Light. My father and one of our employees, Mr. Ernie Quick, spent the best part of two years, living in the Keeper's Cottage.

The lighthouse had been scaffolded on the inside from ground level to the lantern and externally from the balcony upwards prior to their arrival. They renewed and repaired the internal handrail and stanchions from ground level to the lantern. The stanchions were badly corroded from sea water, and many were like stalagmites and stalactites.



Old Light with scaffold.

Photo from Stephen Cooke's collection.

Many of the vertical cast iron tie rods securing the lantern to the granite tower were badly corroded and needed replacing with stainless steel.

The external cast-iron hand railing on the balcony had been badly corroded with salt spray and was missing in places. The cast-iron stanchions were in good order, so we replaced the handrail with stainless steel. We made and fitted a new door for accessing the balcony from inside the lantern.

In conjunction with RGB Building Supplies of Barnstaple, we re-glazed the lantern. This involved removing the C-shaped copper capping strips that secured the glass and removing the glass and fitting new glass with new stainless steel capping strips secured with stainless steel cheese-head screws. I remember my father saying, how he was removing a pane of glass in the lee side of the lantern. As he moved a short way around the balcony, a gust of wind took it out of his hands like a leaf; it was reduced to shards on the ground 90 feet below.

We patched the copper roof of the lantern and removed the ball and weathervane for renovating in our workshop at Torrington. The copper dome at the rear of the ball was missing and had to be made anew by one of our craftsmen, Jim Mosedale, skilled in beaten copper work. He also made new copper ventilaters replacing those that were missing or damaged.

The weathervane was renovated and the gold leaf was completed by a signwriter at Combe Martin.

The final part of the restoration was to remove the scaffolding by cutting it with oxyacetylene torches and lowering it to the ground in pieces.

Please take note of the aerial photograph of the lighthouse and Keepers Cottage (page 44), sitting on the roof are two individuals. On the left is my father and to the right, Ernie Quick, replacing lead ridging. They made new or repaired and fitted lead gutters, down pipes, and ridge.

Whilst my father and Ernie worked on



Jim Mosedale with the new copper dome.

Photo from Stephen Cooke's collection.

Lundy in approximately two-week stints, I was at the factory preparing materials, getting them to the *Polar Bear* and later the *Oldenburg* for transport to Lundy.

In addition to work on the Old Light, we did lead work on the castle roof and made stainless steel opening sashes to fit oak frames for one of the barn refurbishments.

In about 1985, when Lundy bought the *Oldenburg*, we made a stainless-steel sink unit complete with waste bins and shelves for the crew's galley and fitted an extraction canopy and ducting venting up through the funnel. We also carried out strengthening of the steel work to support the stairs down into the passenger lounge.

My father made the *Oldenburg's* horn; it was copper, painted white and edged with brass (see page 44).

In 1993 we supplied and fitted an extraction canopy in the Marisco Tavern.

In the early 2000's, Rosemarie and I had a boat that we sailed to Lundy on numerous occasions, often for a day-trip, only stopping for a few hours; up to the Marisco Tavern for a pint, followed by a brisk walk around the island, before returning to Instow on the evening tide. Occasionally we would anchor in the bay and stay the night. On one memorable night we had settled down, when, at around midnight, the

wind veered around to the northeast, and the boat started rolling from side to side, making us feel ill. I was aware of an anchorage at the Rattles on the south end, but not having been there before, did not feel confident to up anchor and move there in the dark. So, we opted for going ashore in our inflatable dinghy. As we beached the dinghy, we were swamped by the rising swell and were wet from the waist down. We then spent a very uncomfortable night in the cave. Fortunately, the anchor held and we returned home the following evening.



*Weather vane in place.
Photo from Stephen Cooke's collection.*



*Crew's galley for MS Oldenburg.
Photo from Stephen Cooke's collection.*

As you can see, we have long been associated with Lundy; and in particular my parents, not just to work there but for holidays and breaks on numerous occasions. They knew John Hinshellwood, Col. Bob Gilliatt and John Puddy.

In recent years I have done numerous jobs for John Puddy on the SS *Freshspring*.

When you sit back and reminisce over your working life, there are many contracts, some large, some small. Some you enjoyed doing and gave you pleasure and a few that you would rather not have had. But Lundy was in a class of its own. It was often challenging, with limited resources; however it was never boring and my father and



Ernie enjoyed every minute, from the time they boarded the *Oldenburg* at Bideford until the moment they arrived back. They got to know all the people on the Island, and integrated and felt at one with them. Sadly, my father and Ernie are no longer with us, however I do know that Lundy remained close to their hearts until the end.

*Horn for the MS Oldenburg.
Photo from Stephen Cooke's collection.*



*Aerial view of Old Light and Keepers Cottage.
Photo from Stephen Cooke's collection.*

The Dennis family on Lundy in WW1

An absorbing piece of research by ALAN ROWLAND.

The online acquisition of a child's WW1 ration book set me following a long and intriguing trail. Although I was aware that there was rationing during the Second World War, I had no idea that there was rationing in the Great War, let alone that ration books were issued to residents of Lundy.

Due to heavy shipping losses to German U-boats, food supplies had been severely hit and in January 1918 rationing of meat, butter and sugar was introduced with additional restrictions on sales of bread.

The ration book I acquired was for Olive Marjorie Dennis living at the Manor House on Lundy. I knew that there was some reference to a person named Dennis at the time but knew little more than the name.

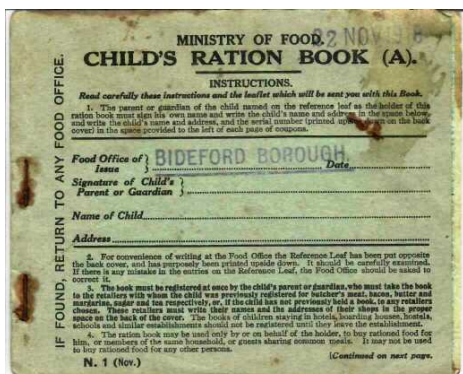


Fig 1: Ration book cover dated 22 November 1918.

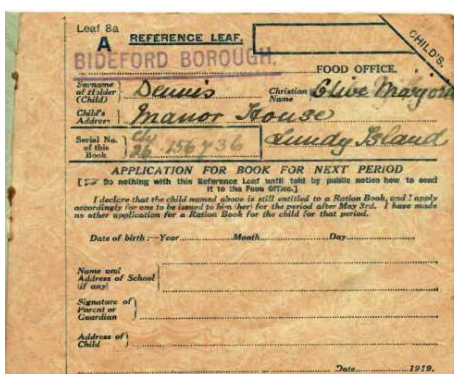


Fig 2: Olive Marjorie Dennis, Manor House, Lundy Island.

Researching what little records there are for that period, I found, in Myrtle Ternstrom's thesis (Ternstrom 1999), that "S.T. Dennis was bailiff on Lundy in 1918 and was later appointed a Special Constable.

Ternstrom further stated that, according to National Trust Archives, Dennis and his wife were contracted at a salary of £125 pa with bonus on profits and free housing, butter, eggs, coal and travel to Lundy.

Research shows that S.T. Dennis was in fact Sidney Thomas Dennis. He was a butcher/farmer from Marwood in North Devon. In 1911 he is recorded living at Morthoe with his new wife, Lily Carlotta Chugg, where both worked as butchers.

In 1921 they had returned from Lundy to 2 The Terrace, Morthoe, where Stanley was now a farmer, and they had two children, Arthur John aged 8 born in Morthoe and Olive Marjorie age 2 born in Ilfracombe. Their eldest child did not survive infancy and died aged 6 months in 1911. A further daughter, Barbara Mary, was born at Marwood in 1922.

In 1916, Mr Herbert W. Court of Parracombe held a sale at Bideford market of livestock recently landed from Lundy for Walter Heaven. The stock comprised 240 sheep and lambs, 10 cattle, horses and pigs. A Mr Dennis is recorded as having

bought four heifer yearlings and a 10-year-old mare (Burrows 1916).

It is possible that the connection with Christie, who bought the island in 1917, and Mr Dennis was made at this sale, as in March 1918 ST Dennis was employed as Bailiff on Lundy.

He would have gone to Lundy with his wife and his son, Arthur John, born 2nd March 1913 so aged about five years old. Later that year Carlotta would have left the island for the mainland to give birth to their second child, Olive Marjorie, on 14th October 1918 at Ilfracombe, before returning to the island.

When their father ST Dennis died in 1957 his obituary records: "In 1917 he farmed at Lundy for the late Mr A.L. Christie of Tapeley Park, and then returned to his native parish – Marwood."

Another unique event happened that year. A general election was called for 12th December and, as special constable, Sydney Dennis was presiding officer. This was the first and last time a polling station was established on Lundy adjacent to the castle in what is now Castle Cottage. As the first election after the Representation of the Peoples Act 1918, it was the first poll in which women over the age of 30 (with some property qualification) and all men over the age of 21 could vote. In the event, there were 10 electors who had cast their ballots within 10 minutes of opening, although the polling station had to remain open all day.



Fig 3: Olive. Marjorie Dennis.



Fig 4: Sydney Dennis (centre) with two German Prisoners of War in Jungle Field, on Shirwell road just past the turning to Muddiford.

The electoral roll (Table 1) gives us an insight into who was on the island at that date, although obviously not all residents were either able or registered to vote.

Although the 1918 electoral roll does not appear to have survived, the 1920 roll, reproduced below, may be identical.

Name	Abode	Notes
Frederick Chapman	1 Coastguard Cottages	
Herbert William Neville	2 Coastguard Cottages	
Sarah Jane Neville	2 Coastguard Cottages	
Edgar G Bertram	3 Coastguard Cottages	
Harry Wentworth Jukes	4 Coastguard Station	Produced an account of his time on Lundy with photographs.
Charles Hill	Manor House	Became bailiff in 1919
Frederick William Allday	Sideland Cottage (Hanmers)	Postmaster and long-time resident
Hannah Elizabeth Allday	Sideland Cottage	His wife
William Henry Lang	The Villa (Millcombe)	He was on Lundy in 1921 with his wife employed as Mr May's gardener
Sarah Georgina Margaret Lang	The Villa (Millcombe)	1921 Census Lundy – Domestic duties

Table 1 – 1920 Electoral Roll for Lundy

Olive Marjorie Dennis went on to marry John Yeo Gould in 1941 and lived a long life in Barnstaple until her death in 2009.

Arthur John Dennis remained involved with Lundy. He is listed as one of the founder members of the Lundy Field Society in the first Annual Report of 1947. He became an articled Rural District Surveyor in Tiverton and later Barnstaple. This made him eminently suitable to be appointed Maintenance Officer for the Lundy Field Society from 1954 to 1958.

The LFS Annual Report for 1954 states in the Secretary's report, "your committee was faced almost from the first with the consequence of having appointed a Maintenance Officer. Mr Dennis took an early opportunity to visit Lundy in the spring of 1955, and while there he inspected the fabric of the Old Light. The result was alarming. He found the roof timbers of the eastern gable to be badly decayed and requiring replacement." He remained a member of the LFS until at least 1959.

Arthur John Dennis wrote of his childhood memories on Lundy as early as the 1950s when events were still fresh in his mind. He recalled a ship on fire in October 1917 (Dennis 1957), the first aeroplane to land on Lundy, albeit upside-down in 1918 (Dennis 1958) and a suite of recollections of the years 1917 to 1919 entitled "I Remember" (Dennis 1959). He was also interviewed by the late Stan and Joan Rendell about the plane crash for their book, *Lundy Air* (Rendell 1999).

He later wrote of all these events in a piece for the *Bideford Gazette* (Dennis 1993).

These latter two articles relate everyday details of life in a small community in Lundy at the end of the Great War, recounting tales of visiting sailors from minesweepers as well as those wrecked, trying to feed everyone as well as evenings in the tavern, collecting gulls' eggs, and the visit of the Bishop of Exeter.

Although the family's stay on Lundy was short, and Arthur was between the ages of 4 and 6, their time there was filled with unique events.

I must acknowledge the wider Dennis family for allowing me access to their family photographs and memories, namely John and Elizabeth Dennis, Angela Manning and Richard Gould.



Fig 5: Arthur John in pilot's gear.

References

- Burrows C, *Lundy in Hartland Chronicle* No 240, October 1916, Hartland.
- Dennis AJ, *My island playground*, 1993 *Bideford Gazette*.
- Dennis, AJ, *The first plane to land on Lundy*, *Lundy Review* No 3 Winter 1958, Stanley Smith, Lundy.
- Dennis, AJ, *The Mystery Ship*, *Lundy Review*, Spring 1957 Stanley Smith, Marisco Tavern.
- Dennis, AJ, *I remember* *Lundy Review* No 5, Spring/Summer 1959, Stanley Smith, Blacksmiths Arms, Bideford
- Rendell, S & J, *Lundy by Air*. 1999, Weston–super–Mare
- Ternstrom, MS, *Lundy: An Analysis and Comparative Study of Factors Affecting the Development of the Island from 1577 to 1969, with a Gazetteer of Sites and Monuments*. 1999 PhD thesis, University of Gloucestershire.

My Victorian Trip to Lundy

ALISON GREENWAY investigates the origins of where lantern slides bought at a local emporium.

One late August afternoon my husband Jim and I found ourselves filling time at Clevedon Emporium before collecting our son from work. It is one of those wonderful vintage shops where you could spend hours browsing. My husband spends hours talking to other people in there too, so whilst I waited for him to finish his many conversations, I found myself attracted to an open box of lantern glass photograph slides.

I love old photographs, so I was instantly charmed by them and only needed to pick out a few to realise how special they were. They seemed to be candid shots from what appeared to be the Victorian era, just like you were looking at photos on your phone today.

Before I could ask the price, Jim jumped in and said he would buy them. On asking him why he purchased something that wouldn't normally interest him, he said it would make a good addition to his haul he planned to sell at the next vintage flea market. I knew I would have fun looking at the slides before he sold them, and the owner believed the slides were of our local area of Portishead, which was a bonus.

There were about 50 slides in the box and although they were wonderful to look at, I didn't recognise any of the locations as being in my local area. Having satisfied my curiosity, I went to close the box to give to Jim for his flea market sale. Luckily, just before I did, I discovered a handwritten contents sheet stuck to the inside of the box lid with a description of each slide. The names "White Beach", "Brazen Ward", "Gates" and "Benson's Cave" were places I didn't recognise but I was excited to find out where they were and luckily the internet held the answers.



"Shipwrecked Crew".

Photo of Lantern Slide by Richard Breese.

I soon realised the slides were of a family visit to Lundy in the late Victorian period. A family consisting of three small children were featured regularly. The contents sheet included the initials JCH and the names Leon and Eileen which related to the father and two of his children.

I know very little about Lundy – I've heard about the Puffins and day excursions, but that was about the extent of my knowledge. However, one thing I do love doing is looking at old family photographs and learning about the people and their locations. As I started to research, I was able to start matching the slides to present day locations and date them through the descriptions on the box. It became clear they were taken in the 1890s. The children were different ages in many of the slides, so I realised they were taken on separate

occasions and visits to the island.

As I spent time pinpointing locations, I grew increasingly intrigued about this family who were making me smile with their funny posed portraits and their candid, unfiltered moments. Who were they? With very little to go on I resigned myself to never knowing and continued researching the various locations in the photographs instead.

A lot of the slides are of the Lundy landscape, the beaches and the cliff edges, some with the family and some without. A few of them showed the upstairs of a house and the children having tea in a room with a family portrait behind. There were also slides of an older gentleman who was entitled "The Squire".



"The Villa" – recognisable as the top of the stairs at Millcombe House.

Photo of Lantern Slide by Richard Breese.

Through online videos I discovered this was Millcombe House or "The Villa" as it was known in the 1890s. I also learned that in the 1890s a Reverend Hudson Grossett Heaven owned the island and lived at The Villa. Could this be the older gentleman in the slides? I read that privacy was important and that only family and friends were allowed to enter the grounds of The Villa – gates were installed to keep the general public from entering.

I started to wonder how this family was allowed to visit the house. How were they able to take tea let alone go upstairs to take photographs? Were they family or maybe friends? At the same time I discovered that an Eileen Heaven had once donated a painting and helped fund repairs to the church on the island. Could this be the same Eileen who was in the photographs as a small child? Could this family of five be relatives of the Reverend Hudson Grossett Heaven?

I looked on the genealogy site I belong to, searching to see if there was a Heaven family that included a gentleman with the initial JCH and three children, including the names Leon and Eileen.

To my delight there was! And the children's ages in the 1901 census correlated to those in the mid to latter part of the 1890s. John Cooksley Heaven (JCH), his wife Marion Cecelia Horley Heaven and their three children Sylvia, Leonard and Eileen, who lived in Clifton, Bristol. Leonard was referred to in later records as Leon.

I then needed to find out if this Heaven family were related to the Reverend Hudson Grossett Heaven to establish if they were indeed the family in the photographs.

I discovered Marion's maiden name was Heaven too and that John was a cousin of hers. I learned that she was the niece of the Reverend Hudson Grossett Heaven and the grandchild of William Hudson Heaven. I was fascinated to learn she had lived with her grandfather at The Villa on Lundy for 20 years until she married John Cooksley Heaven in 1888 and then visited the island frequently with her family. It all made sense, and I was so pleased to finally understand who the family were.

Having learned more about the beautiful and unique island of Lundy, and knowing there were not many photographs left from this era, I knew the slides were of historical importance. However, the discovery that these could be an unseen set of Heaven family photographs added a totally different significance. I knew they were too precious to sell at the next flea market and needed to be donated to the right organisation, but first I had to persuade Jim not to take them.

Luckily Jim is a history lover like me and immediately agreed that we needed to find the correct home for the slides. I contacted the Lundy Field Society who agreed they were an important discovery, so I happily donated the slides into their safe hands.

On a personal note, whilst I was researching John and his family through the newspaper archives to develop my understanding of their connection to Lundy, I discovered that John came from my home town of Portishead and, sometime after he died, Marion and Eileen moved to "Lundy Lodge" on Nore Road in Portishead, the very same road I lived on during my own childhood.

I am a sentimental person and believe things happen for a reason so with the Portishead connection, paired with my interest in family history, maybe it was meant to be that I picked up those slides that day. I never felt the slides really belonged to me, just that I was in the right place at the right time to ensure they went to their correct home. It was nice to realise that although the slides were not of Portishead after all there was still a historic connection to my home town.



*"Landing Bay" likely 1896. Note the absence of the South Light, with builders cottages in front.
Photo of Lantern Slide by Richard Breese.*

Inspiration, reflection and spiders...

NAVID SHARIFI (MRes Anthrozoology student at Hartpury University) shares his thoughts with us.



Navpd's spider. ID'd by Mark West as a black lace weaver (Amaurobius ferox).

Photo by Navid Sharifi.

I come from Iran, where I studied veterinary medicine and worked as a vet tech for five years. However, life had a different plan for me; I developed a severe allergy to animals, making it impossible to continue working in veterinary hospitals. Faced with this challenge, I chose to start over entirely. Instead of treating animals I decided to study their behaviour, which led me to the UK.

A defining moment in this journey was meeting Dr. Chris Pawson, my supervisor and, more importantly, a source of inspiration for me. During one of the most difficult periods of my life, he gave me the opportunity to visit Lundy Island, a place that would profoundly shape my perspective. One night, for instance, we had a conversation about my passion for questioning and analysing the world around me, something that had often been overlooked or discouraged throughout my life. But unlike everyone else, Chris truly saw my curiosity as a

strength and encouraged me to embrace it like a young scientist.

The next day, an encounter with a Great Black-Backed Gull ignited my desire to study them further, possibly even as part of a PhD. But my experience on Lundy was more than just academic, it was a journey of self-discovery. I promised myself to stay open to everything without judgment, allowing life to unfold naturally, because from the moment I was on the boat approaching Lundy, I could feel that this place had something special for me.

Ironically, on my first day, I told Chris about my fear and dislike of insects, especially spiders! Yet, I remained open, and that decision led to a surprising moment. One day, I made a fire in the Timekeeper's Hut, fully immersed in the warmth and the thoughts occupying my mind. Then, on the wall by my fire, I noticed two spiders, unlike any I had ever seen before. Their unfamiliar form and presence sparked my curiosity, and I decided to capture them in a photo. It became a symbol of transformation, marking my name on the island in a way I never expected. The most unexpected creatures had given me the chance to leave my mark on Lundy.

In my diary, I later referred to my time on the island as 'Golden Week.' That week taught me a lesson I now carry forward: be open and ready to embrace everything. The moment we label things – whether as 'good' or 'bad' – we limit our ability to truly observe, learn, understand, and, most importantly, enjoy them. It reminds me of Krishnamurti's words, "The day you teach the child the name of the bird, the child will never see that bird again."



Navid and Chris on the south end. Photo by Navid Sharifi.

Sunbathing seal!



MANDY & MARTIN BARRETT woke to a huge surprise while moored off Lundy in their yacht *Cleave Petrel* in July 2025. Martin wrote, 'It was a lovely thing to wake up to. He stayed there all morning and managed to fall out once. Very cleverly he moved the dinghy around until it was against the boat and then jumped back in!'



A wet Punchbowl Valley.
Photo by James
Humphries.

Moon over the Tavern.
Photo by Trevor Dobie.



Gannets' Rock in
the mist.
Photo by Bee Cox.