

LUNDY FIELD SOCIETY

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EDITORIAL

(NDJH = North Devon Journal Herald: WMN = Western Morning News)

Members will be sad to hear of Professor Harvey's death last year, especially those of us who had the great pleasure of hearing him (at the AGM) talk about the founding of the LFS. We extend our sympathy to Mrs Harvey.

David Lea & Hugh Boyd, the very first Wardens, also spoke at what was a truly vintage AGM. We heard that Sir Jack Hayward, who bought Lundy for the nation, is our new President.

We wish Tony & Jennifer Langham joy of their new daughter Joanna. (AFL is one of your Vice-Presidents.)

Your Ed. does wish a few more members would send interesting gossip. Did you know for example that the Duchess of Oldenburg is 100th in line to the throne? ("The Times") And that the greys that drew Prince Andrew's carriage at the Royal Wedding were Oldenburgers. The Viking raid on Lundy in August not only publicized the need to keep a lifeboat at Clovelly, but also raised £2000 for the RNLI. Your Ed. can have an Appledore Gansey knitted for you (there isn't a Lundy pattern - anyone like to invent one?) for between £45 & £60 depending on size. This compares favourably with the "Times" Shetlands offer at the same prices but machine knitted.

Copies of your Newsletter & the most excellent accompanying Bird Notes, are, by special request, now lodged at these libraries; the Bodleian/Oxford: the University Library/Cambridge: the National Library of Scotland/Edinburgh: the library of Trinity College Dublin: the National Library of Wales. There's glory for you. Anyone who watched (25/8/78) the aircraft carrier Hermes magnificently steaming up the Bristol Channel to pick up her chopper pilot(s) from the water off Lametry, & knows of her redoubtable career in the Falklands, will be glad to hear she is not being scrapped. After her nearly completed re-fit at Devonport, she joins the Indian Navy.

The WMN (8/9/86) reported that Michael Thexton survived the Karachi Aeroplane Hi-Jack. When I contacted him to see if he was one of the family I used to meet on Lundy, & he was, he also told me that his father is now retired: his mother is still doctoring: Penny is a houseman at Guy's, having qualified in '86: Vicky is doing her 1st year clinical at London hospital, having come down from Cambridge in '86: Michael himself is lecturing in Accountancy in London.

May 18th Lundy featured in a question (about bird sanctuaries in the G.K. Section) in "Mastermind". On Dec. 14th Paul Munton (who observed Hoats on Lundy & is now a conservation officer), was in his turn observed in the TV programme "Did You See". He was part of an experiment to see how people (he was one of them) who did not watch TV reacted to sets in the house, & how those who did watch reacted to having their sets removed. Radio Devon reported that the Exeter Univ./Rennes Univ. Twinning is still going strong: Professor Ian Linn's article on France-Britain research into Lundy rabbit fleas (newsletter '83), was part of that twinning. Also on the Radio was a West Country journey made by Tom Salmon which included visiting Lundy, & a splendid interview with Denver Scoins on navigating the Torridge to Bideford.

Vol. 2. No. 1 (1984) of the "Lundy Chronicle" contains an article on Kittiwakes which includes the phrase "selfish gene", unacknowledged. It looks as if Richard Dawkins has given a phrase to the language. He is the nephew of LFS Vice President Colyear Dawkins, & author of "The Selfish Gene". I have brought other books with Lundy Connections to your notice elsewhere in the newsletter, but shall have to save up for next year Adrian Cole's SF "The Sleep of Giants", which is, in part, set on Lundy, which he told me how he came to write.

The weather this year has been fairly awful. No one was able to attend the AGM from the island because they were stormbound, so we missed John Puddy's report on Lundy's year. And John Dyke was threatened by snow storms so he couldn't come either. The LFS trip on the "Balmoral" (which was welcomed back to service in April) was very wet and windy and we were lucky to land. (It is rumoured that it will be the "Waverley" this year, and glorious weather is "forecast.") August saw the tail end of hurricane Charlie. A small party (your Secy.P.Cole, Barbara Cole, Ann & Christopher Betts, Tony Walker, Sue & Paul Metcalfe) went down to the Battery to observe Charlie. The following is S & P.M.'s description. At 10.30am the party left New House. There were "Lundy butterflies" on the old hotel lawn, but the full wind force was first noticed at the sheep-gate leading to the Tavern - gusting force 11. Going up High Street was fairly sheltered, but there was a wind funnel between the gate to Pigs' Paradise and the Barn. From there to the High Street gate and over to Acland's Moor was head down, struggling all the way, and got worse the further west the party went. It did not rain, though grey and threatening, but the sea-spray on Acland's made wellics and waterproofs salt-encrusted, and it was soaking wet underfoot, with a swamp by the "reservoir". There were "Lundy butterflies" everywhere all the time, and salt-trickles down one's face. The wind took one's breath away (literally) & one could barely hold one's eyes open. The gusts stopped one in one's tracks. It was very exciting. The party went diagonally over Acland's from the "reservoir" to the highest point, for such shelter as there was, and so down to the Battery "marker". From the high point downwards it felt as if the sea were all around you, and a roaring always in the ears. One's whole attention was given to holding one's body in balance against the wind, to prevent being blown over. Without the Battery path & wall as guide & support the walk would have been impossible. There was no shelter from the full Atlantic gale. The worst part was the steps past the old Armoury - an absolute wind-funnel. The rock-face on one's left was the only support. Looking North from the Battery towards Dead Cow point was a huge surging mass of rollers, because waves couldn't form: crashing white edged the island for 200 yards or more. Surface water was coming off the edge of the plateau & being blown back, not waterfalls - more like a sort of Catherine-wheel. People's checks were flapping as in a G-force. You couldn't speak until you turned your back into the wind. The ascent was rapid, because you were funnelled up, but it was still dangerous. There was continual noise & continual battering, but it was exciting & awesome. There are so few opportunities for "civilized" man actually to meet the elements. The November assault on the Rhododendrons north of Tibbetts had to be cancelled because the Oldenburg couldn't sail. Even if she had, the island was water-logged & the attack on the advancing rhodo army would have been impossible. The extreme weather (13.1.87) brought a report on BBC TV that the Lundy water supply was frozen, but on Jan.14th John Puddy (on RT) told the reporter that although the Oldenburg had not sailed for a week, because of the NE winds, the island was well supplied & better used to ill-weather than the mainland (BBC "Spotlight").

In November, not only was Beaujolais Nouveau landed by parachute on the island, but Lundy became Britain's first Marine Reserve, as the "Times" (Aug.14th) had surmised it would. William Waldegrave, the Minister of the environment opened the Reserve on Nov.22nd, but could not land, though there were pics. of himself & John Puddy offshore (BBC "Spotlight"). Luckily all the New Year celebrants got on & off, & had a great time: there were 70 of them.

Do please keep writing about anything. Your Ed. may not necessarily agree, but if "editing" cuts are made, it is space that governs them! A.T.V.B.

AN HEROIC TREASURE HUNT (as described by Richard Howé of Radio Devon to the Editor)

This Treasure Hunt would never have taken place but for the resourcefulness of the islanders. Days before Wed. June 11th '86 Craig Rich had been forecasting Easterlies, & when the day came the wind was indeed easterly force 4/5, with a heavy swell into the Landing Beach. However, the resourceful islanders used every available vessel to ferry the 250 "Oldenburg" passengers to the Divers' Beach. It was the first ever full "Oldenburg". The heroism of all passengers, & they were all ages & one weak heart (but only physically), was tremendous. They leapt off the island "ferries" on to the Divers' Beach & not one failed to reach the top of the island. Even outside Broadcast

LUNDY ISLAND.

Ed's note. This piece was written by Charles Ellis (who with Sue Metcalfe won the '85 Golf Championship, as reported in last year's Newsletter). He tells me he wrote it in 1953 as part of A-level preparation for Geography. He also tells me that No texts were consulted so that it is a work of observation.

Those of you who read J.A. Willby's piece in last year's Newsletter will find the two most interestingly complementary, though Willby was a lot older when he wrote his account.

Your Ed. has now knowledge of several early papers on Lundy. Patrick Penny of Crediton wrote a piece on BUSHELL and another on the sea-currents round the island, (he is currently on your committee). Colyear Dawkins (one of your Vice-Presidents) still has early note books kept when he visited in the 30s. Christopher White of Barnstaple also wrote a project when he was at Blundells in the late 70s. Are there any others lurking? Please let your Ed. know for posterity.

I have marked (with numbers) the places where I feel reference to another writer might help the reader.

1. Try A.F. & M. Langham's "Lundy Island".
2. Try F.W. Gade's. "My Life on Lundy".
3. Try both the above, or ask Mary Gade.
4. Try LFS 30th Annual Report 1985. P.A. Smith's article on Rats.
5. Try Geology Chapter in Langham
6. Try F.W. Gade's "Lundy Island"
7. Try "the Atlas of British Flora" or Mary Gade or John Ogilvie.
8. & 9 Try Langham's "Lundy"

Seven miles out to sea from Hartland Point on the North Devon coast lies the little known island of Lundy. Owned by a London financier, it has had an interesting history. Often it has been a hideout for marauding sailors, Spaniards, Moors, Frenchmen. All have used Lundy as a base since very early times. Since the time when a son of King Stephen called De Marisco lived there in the 12th Century, to the present day, the island has changed little. Its open, rough pastures have been crossed with dry walls and small fields have been cultivated. Its sheltered cliffs have been planted with flowering shrubs that blossom beautifully in the spring. Wild life has been introduced. Japanese deer are commonly found amongst the deep, luscious bracken on the eastern slopes. Pheasants are increasing and peacocks have been successfully introduced. A large herd of Merino sheep have been reared and more live wild on the cliffs.² At intervals they are shot and their meat eaten by the islanders. You may say that if all these things have come to the island then indeed it must have changed but it has not. The old dry track up the cliff is the same as it always was. The rugged cliffs still bear the weight of the wild Atlantic breaking at their feet. The seagulls still skim and cry, their haunting note carried away by the gust of wind and roar of wave. The stillness of the island still remains untouched. In the cool evenings, the last birds clucking in the bushes as they find their roosts and the deer nervously cropping the grass, there is a great beauty that may be felt, seen and heard. It is this that always appeals to the visitor and it is this that makes him wonder when he will next be able to return to this happy little island

But to break away from this rather colourful description allow me to mention some relevant facts. It lies 7 miles N.W. of Hartland Point, 15 miles West of Bull Point and about 20 miles from Bideford. It lies about 45 miles S.W. of Swansea. It will be seen from this that it lies on direct shipping routes of most of the S Wales ports and also of Bristol. This has given it a natural importance which is proved by the fact that it has nearly always been inhabited by soldiers or sailors and nowadays has two lighthouses on it. In the centre of the island at the highest point there was built in 1851 a lighthouse 100 feet high. From the top of this building which is now out of use. One may see the whole of the island laid out at one's feet. It is interesting to note the reason why this "lighthouse" is now out of use. The light is actually about 550 feet above sea level. At this height it is easily affected by cloud at low altitudes, the present "lighthouses" are on the actual rocks about 150 feet above sea level.

The geological structure of the island is simple and yet interesting. The whole of the island except for the southern tip, which is slate is granite. The granite forms a rugged line of cliffs which is slow to be eroded. It is of Volcanic origin: proof of this may be seen at the northern end where the rock is round and smooth and shows how it must have bubbled up from the centre of the earth and hardened in layers and sheets. The southern end which is slate has a much broken down coastline and it can be seen to be breaking up practically before ones eyes. The slate supports very few plants of any size. A few Scots Pine trees grow on the slopes, but it is mainly short grass and heather. It is interesting that at this end of the island is situated another small island called "Rat Island". It is no more than a large rock really but on it live the old breed of rats that were once common to the British Isles, the Black Rat. This animal actually lives all over the island eating the eggs and young of the sea birds in summer and infesting the farms in winter.

Nature is nearly supreme on Lundy, as I have already suggested, so to understand this better I will examine the climate. It of course has a strictly oceanic climate. The westerly winds are dominant and generally blow with considerable force. The rain is heaviest in the winter months and generally moderate fine weather is experienced during the summer. Unfortunately figures are not available but at a rough guess I should say that the island experiences 50-60 inches of rain a year. The temperature rarely falls low enough for frost to be experienced. The equable climate however is made up for by the great force of the winds. They have been known to blow the roofs off the houses and it is not advisable to approach too close to the edge of the cliffs when these strong winds are blowing for obvious reasons. The interesting phenomenon of the island is that if one walks along the centre of the island or that side of the island which is away from the wind, not even the slightest breeze may be noticed. But if one goes to that part of the island facing the wind, the wind is almost bound to be found blowing briskly. This may be explained easily enough; the air strikes the side of the island and rises, forming a Wind Shadow Area or an area that is unaffected by the winds.

As this climate is so mild, temperatures ranging from 40°F to 70°F normally, so it has a mild effect on the people. This is particularly noticeable on the people living there for a short time. The mild S.W. winds are very pleasant but they are not invigorating. It is easy to lapse into a somnolent dream and forget about the outside world. It is significant to note that the population does this in many ways. Firstly it does not recognise the Police Force, (the Police have recently been made to ask permission formally before landing there). The islanders do not vote and neither do they pay income taxes, although of course they pay taxes for the things that they buy. Another sign of the islanders individualism is that they have their own stamp, without which no letter or card may leave the island. This may all seem rather remote from pure Geography but the insularity and character is of supreme importance if one is to understand it.

The depth of soil is not great. It is most at the southern end of the island where the land is cultivated, it is about three feet deep in the best places but as one moves towards the northern end outcrops of the dark red granite become more common. During the war an enemy fighter crash-landed at this end of the island and there being nobody near the pilot had time to climb out of his aeroplane and burn it. This had disastrous consequences because all the heather and grass was very dry. It caught light and burnt for days, In the end one third of the islands plateau was left not only without any vegetation but without any earth. The "earth" had consisted of dead grass and heather and had all burnt away. Now the grass and heather is slowly returning but it will not be the same for hundreds of years. Scattered over the plateau there are several pools of water, the largest of these is called Pondsbury. Growing round it are all the usual plants associated with marshy land. On it grows lilies and various water weeds. No trees grow in the open except for a few stunted thorn bushes in the graveyard. The plateau provides rough pasture for the Merino sheep and for a herd of about twenty to thirty ponies who graze in the unfenced in land. The island is divided into four parts by dry stone walls, which were built in the 18th century, by an unscrupulous man who was told to take fifty convicts out of the country, they went as far as Lundy instead of N.America. These walls run across the tops of the island from east to west and are still useful as landmarks.

I have already mentioned that the Southern half of the island is under cultivation. Let me describe man's efforts on this rather bleak rock as far as agriculture is concerned. The naturally rough grassland is merely refined into a now lush green grass. A large area of the fields are devoted to hay in summer. Two crops are gathered. Several fields are devoted to the growing of rye and oats which is consumed on the island. These last two crops are harvested in late August. There is usually one large field devoted to the growing of vegetables, these will be both summer crops and also root crops in preparation for the coming winter. The fields not devoted to any of these are used for the feeding of numerous dairy and beef cattle. Their milk is used on the island and from it butter is made. The cattle also live partly on the rough grazing, their meat is eaten on the island and may even be exported to pay for many of the things with which the island is unable to provide itself.

Pigs are kept and they provide the community with bacon and ham, some is also exported. Many chickens, geese, ducks and turkeys are bred on the farm. During the winter they are sold on the mainland and fetch good prices. These things all help to balance the budget of Lundy. The Merino Sheep that live on the island do not require any care but are allowed to live completely wild until one of them is required to be eaten. This is the same in the case of the goats and the deer, which however, are eaten less often.

The thing that strangers to Lundy always ask is, "how many people are living there?" It is impossible to answer the question accurately because it is constantly changing. There are a certain number of people who do live there permanently. Both lighthouses have about two men in each, that is four. There is an agent, his wife and daughter, a warden of the Lundy Field Society and about two men living on, and working at the farm. There is a man who does the odd jobs and keeps the bar. When the hotel was open there were numerous maids. There are in fact about ten people doing useful jobs, the lighthouse men, the agent looking after the whole island, his wife running his house and looking after the men, his daughter and two farmers working somewhere on the farm, the warden looking after the natural life of the island.

The only one whose presence might be questioned is the man looking after the lobster pots. Unfortunately the coast is a breeding ground of the Grey Seal, not only do they disturb the fish but also they rob the lobster pots of the bait. Naturally if there is no bait, no lobsters are caught. It was for this reason that a retired army officer gave up the lobster business several years ago.

It has probably occurred to you that this subsistence agriculture is not enough to support this small community. It is not but it is overcome by encouraging a certain amount of tourist traffic. Tourists, if they are going to land ^{dry} both for the privilege of setting foot on dry land and for coming ashore in one of the island's boats. The tourist buys drinks at the top of the steep cliff and a meal after a brisk walk. He buys souvenirs and eventually when he departs in the evening has probably done the island a great deal of good.

At the moment Lundy does not appear to be prosperous. Until very recently it was able to run a comfortable hotel where one could eat very well but that is now closed down. This naturally means that the income of the island is lessened considerably. The difficulty and expense encountered in bringing supplies over from the mainland are a very heavy burden on the island. So it is not surprising if the island sometimes looks a little derelict but there is no reason why prosperity should not return. During the 19th century the Heaven family owned Lundy and quarried the granite which was exported and proved very valuable. It may still be seen in the Victoria Embankment.⁹ It was at this time that the larger houses were built together with the church.

But Lundy is spoilt when one only thinks about her economic difficulties. I prefer to think of it as something looming up in front of me out of the swirling mist; the breakers thundering round its base and wind howling overhead, the scream of the gulls and the deep green sea surrounding. The whole thing always seems far too beautiful to even think of despoiling it justly.

Dear Editor

During a most enjoyable informal celebration at the New House recently (Aug.86) I came upon a deckchair which rang a bell from the past. It is not a common or garden deckchair but a genuine seagoing specimen with a collapsible hardwood frame and a tapestry seat emblazoned with the fleur de lys and the initials L. & N.W.S.S.C.

I am sure the chair belonged to the Liverpool and North Wales Steam Ship Company, whose vessels the "St.Tudno" and the "St.Seiriol" plied for many years between Liverpool and Menai Bridge, stopping en route at Llandudno. If I remember correctly the fare in about 1950 was five shillings, and certainly the voyage was no more expensive than the train journey. The smaller ship, the "St.Seiriol", was used for evening cruises from Menai Bridge and as a student at Bangor I remember, hazily, one of these expeditions. Our hall of residence was regulated by a Reverend Warden (known to many as Benny Dicoms whose demise was solemnly recorded in "The Times"), who was driven to inveigh publicly against the horrors of the "hellship". It seems to me unlikely that even such robust furniture as the deckchair would have survived for long the excitement of life on the "St.Seiriol", so it is more probable that the chair came from the larger and more dignified "St.Tudno".

The "St.Tudno" was constrained to follow a narrow channel in the Menai Straits without hesitation or deviation. The regular appearance of this dea ex machina in the middle of the fleet during a "Straits Fortnight" sailing regatta caused entirely justified consternation and even terror among the yachtsmen, mixed in some cases with impotent fury and in others with astonished delight. The perverse and unexpected results of many races were ascribed to her intervention. I wonder whether the occupants of the deckchairs were in the least conscious of the maledictions hurled at the ship as she wrecked the performances of so many leading helmsmen. I doubt it. The chairs were not so large or as comfortable as those on, say, the "Queen Mary", and to my recollections there were no blue blankets or cups of soup, but they provided a modest touch of luxury and their occupants were usually asleep or comatose, insulated from the world for much of the three or four hour passage.

P.S. It occurred to me that I should have mentioned a connection with the other puffin island. St.Seiriol is believed to have lived on Puffin Island (Ynys Seiriol) off the eastern corner of Anglesey: St.Tudno is the patron saint of Llandudno.

 THE STORY OF "MR GADE'S BOOK" - "MY LIFE ON LUNDY" by Myrtle Ternstrom

Mr Gade had been writing his Memoirs over a number of years, but by 1976, when he was 85 years old, work had been at a halt for some time; with his increasing difficulty with sight and hearing, he was disinclined to continue - unless he had somebody to help him. So I went to Lundy for two weeks at Easter and spent the time sitting with him, writing down in longhand as he dictated to me - jogging his memory with his diaries, or the reminder of some event. Although by this time his marvellous memory was in decline, he was still a wonderful raconteur when some amusing or interesting happening acted as a trigger. He was bothered if he couldn't get things right, and needed a lot of reassurance that the task was worthwhile and that people really would want to read what was written. During the course of this fortnight we did succeed in completing the narrative up to the point where he retired as agent - beyond that he had no wish to go. When he had reached this point, he went off to rummage in a cupboard in his room, and returned with a huge pile of MSS, which he put into my arms, saying, "There you are!"

There I was. And it was obvious that nothing could be done with the MSS as it was - It was just a whole mass of pages, some typed, some handwritten, and there were three different versions. I took the whole lot home with me, and was then closer than at anytime to giving up the project altogether. It would be necessary to edit the whole lot, re-type it, shape it into chapters, find some illustrations provide an index, before anyone could think of printing, and the three separate versions would have to be cross-indexed before I could start. This was where my friend Tony Walker, came into the picture and retrieved my daunted enthusiasm with practical help. He did the cross-index, and, with this to guide us we set to work with paper, pens, typewriters,

scissors, and glue...and a bottle of sherry or two... or more. Without Tony's help, I would not have been able to complete the work, and, if I had, it would not have been done nearly so well.

For over a year Tony and I, and often with Alex helping with the typing, spent every possible Sunday working all day long, and my whole family were very forbearing. As the edited pages were completed, I sent them, a few at a time, to Mr Gade, who read them and sent them back with any corrections or comments that he wanted to make, although I think he found this very onerous. As the editing was nearing completion in 1977, I started to consider ways and means of publication. I got lots of well-meaning advice of all kinds, but I felt that it was not really a commercial proposition, and I was also concerned above all that the printing should not take too long, because Mr Gade was visibly failing in health, and I did want him to have the enormous satisfaction of holding the finished volume in his hands. I did not want to upset him by shortening it more than we already had done, and eventually I decided to go ahead myself by borrowing the capital to print the book privately - again. Tony fully supported me in this.

I wrote to Jack Hayward, telling him what I wanted to do and how much it would cost, and without hesitation he agreed to make an interest-free loan of as much as was needed for as long as necessary.

Next I asked Pam Darlaston if she would act as production manager, which she did, without charge, and in the autumn of 1977 the manuscript was delivered to her. Without her generous expertise and kindness, and the interest she took in the project, the book could never have been what it finally was, and the costs were kept to an absolute minimum as a result of her knowledgeability. Meanwhile, I had been back to Lundy a couple of times to sort out photos for the illustrations with Mr Gade, and do all the other tasks that were necessary. We both enjoyed the bit with the photos, which he had all in a heap in a big suitcase, and he was very amusing with anecdotes about all the people whose photos we found.

Four other people were involved in helping during these stages: Mary Gade and Peter Harman Jones both read through the manuscript and they helped with putting many things right. John Dyke, with characteristic interest and generosity, provided the design for the dust wrapper and one of the illustrations. Colin Taylor suggested and executed a map of the village, and provided everything that was necessary for the printing of the map of Lundy - again with interest and generosity. I don't think I ever asked anybody for any kind of help that was not freely given, and willingly given, and I think that this goodwill was a great tribute to Mr Gade himself.

To keep the costs down, I decided to distribute the books myself, so I duplicated an order form which I sent to everyone I could think of who might be interested. Publication was promised for June 1978, so I allowed for delays and arranged to go to Lundy for two weeks in July to deal with the copies delivered there, having dispatched some of the copies delivered at home before I left. But of course they didn't arrive until the day before I was due to leave for Lundy. No time to do anything but take six copies with me, which was all I could carry travelling alone. I carried these six heavy books up to Mr Gade's house as soon as I landed, and at long last I was able to put the book in his hands. There was a silence; and then he said, "Oh! It's a real book!" which, in fact, proved to be a fairly common reaction. I prefer to pass over the harrassments of the next two weeks. My gallant husband manhandled the rest of the books to Lundy, and patiently helped me to extricate myself from the muddle I had got into with numbering the copies, recording the sales, the money and the postage and so on. It was interesting to see how the thrill of published authorship gradually took hold of Mr Gade; he had seemed bemused at first, and anxious that people should approve of it. As it became plain that people did approve of it, he began to enjoy himself more and more, and nearly always when he was alone he would be reading it. He enjoyed signing copies and writing dedications, and it gave him a great deal of pleasure to receive kind letters and compliments from his friends. We had a party and a sing-song to celebrate, and my last abiding memory is of his singing "Goodnight Sweetheart" at the top of his voice when everyone had gone home and he was getting ready for bed.

In the autumn he was taken ill, and he died on Lundy on Oct.28th. He used to say that he had had "A good innings".

P.S. These books are now sought-after!

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"Lundy in a bluebell sea Rings ever Lundy bells for me."

This couplet is the final one of a sonnet called "Lundy Bells" by Doril Gilbert, who has very kindly allowed your Ed. to include two seal poems in this Newsletter. Miss Gilbert is hoping to publish her Lundy poems, so L.F.S members are given a pre-view. (B.t.w John Gilbert, an L.F.S member, was John Harman's C.O.)

SEAL LURE 18.8.84

Only now can I understand
 How the ancient mariner lured to land
 By the singing of seals suddenly found,
 All too late, his ship aground.
 There on the rocks the seaweed swirls
 Like a beauteous maiden's chestnut curls;
 But the living forms that swim and play
 Are brown eyed seals with coats of grey.
 The sailor tired from his days at sea
 Also blinded by lookout might easily be
 A prey to the shapes of swirling mist
 Imaging the maids who do not exist.
 But the song is there and the song is real
 The melodious cry of the Lundy Seal

"Archaeology is Alive & Well, & Residing in the West Country". by Ann Westcott

These are not my words but James Kildren's in NFMN (10/1/87). He is referring to two prize winning West-Country archaeological works, one by Charles Thomas, whose partnership with Keith Gardner in digging the cemetery on Lundy may well be already known to LFS members. ("Exploration of a Drowned Landscape" by C.T. is about the Scillies). I have just finished C.T.'s "Celtic Britain" (Thomas & Hudson), which I found most interesting & exciting in spite of the scholar's caution with which he approaches this twilight Arthurian realm; or because of that caution your Editor's tendency is to the high Romantic, and to have that tendency disciplined by the careful analysis of evidence and by a formidable bibliography, and yet still to be allowed the existence of a Celtic entity, is deeply satisfactory. There is use made of the Lundy excavation material in the chapter on the Celtic Church and early Christian memorials. There are beautiful and helpful illustrations, and anyone who wants to know about his past, (& Lundy's connection with it) would enjoy the book.

While I was reading the chapter on the Celtic Church I was struck by a comment, "... in S.W. Britain there is virtually no evidence of popular Christianity before the 6th C.. Here given the proximity, through Brittany to Christian Gaul, a measure of European influence is geographically likely & historically supportable" (p.123).

I wondered if this Breton connection might account for the Oratory of St. Anne (p.45) or St. Ann (p.97) (both page refs. to Chanter's "Lundy"). Risdon's "Survey of Devon" (1811, re-published Percupines, Pilton Street, Barnstaple 1970) does not mention such a chapel on Lundy, but he does speak (p.339) of St. Ann's Chapel "very near the sea, yet doubts not drowning, so much as swallowing up of the sands, driven by drifts of the North West winds.... Hereby is the union of ... Touridge (Sic) & Taw." He clearly refers to Saunton, which was Santon (S) in Domesday Book 1086, Santon in the Assize Rolls 1249 and Sampton in the Calendar of Inquisitions post mortem 1505. (Place names of Devon 1931 Vol.I p.33).

"Santon" in french, is the little Saint or figure in a crib scene at Christmas time. Perhaps neither at Saunton nor on Lundy are we observing a dedication to St. Ann. Perhaps both places commemorate an early missionary who built a cell and an oratory on

Lundy, of the kind described by CT in ~~Lundy~~ ~~on the Celtic Church~~, and another on the mainland not far from Lundy.

If Saunton was Sampton in 1505, perhaps the Saint/Missionary was Sampson (fl.550) who is firmly described by the Concise Dictionary of National Biography as a British Saint. He was educated at a monastic school in Llantwit Major, ordained by Dubricius, established a community on the banks of the Severn, but he was also abbot of the monastery of Germanus (presumably at Auxerre though my edition of the DNB does not say), and he built the monastery of Dol in Brittany where he died. (Germanus Dubricius & Samson are all mentioned by CT in his chapter on the Celtic church). Germanus had been several things before his conversion, perhaps Sampson too became a missionary later, and was educated late in the area he was already evangelizing. Any LFS member is at entire liberty to demolish the whole theory.

In CT's bibliography (under the heading "North Britons") is Nikolai Tolstoy's "The Quest for Merlin" (London 1985). Your Editor can strongly recommend this too. It is a piece of deliberate speculation, and it is fascinating whether you agree with a single word or not. You really need to read the book to see what it is about, the mixture is too rich to tell you of. I think it would be fair to say it attempts to establish a factual existence for a man called Merlin, or a man whose function was as the Merlin, the tribal Shaman. The attempt uses Celtic folklore and history and geography.

I wrote to Count Tolstoy about a reference to Lundy in his book, and received the following reply: "The reference to Lundy as a Celtic Otherworld is given in a footnote to my book. I can't find it now, but as I recall it comes from Sir John Rhys's "Celtic Folklore".

The conception was of Lundy itself as the Otherworld, thoughts precisely what that entailed is hard to specify. There is however a secularised account of existence on the comparable Otherworld island of Grassholm, preserved in the Welsh tale "Branwen daughter of Llyr".

I am hard at work at present writing in novel form the "autobiography" of Merlin. As my parents first met on Lundy, perhaps I too can claim an Otherworld association!
Yours sincerely, Nikolai Tolstoy."

Volume 118 of the Devonshire Association transactions is now out and contains "Myrtle Langham's delightfully informative essay on the Heaven Family of Lundy (1836-1916)" the only owners of the island who actually made it their home, "(James Mildren WMN 10/1/87.) Copies can be obtained, I am sure you would like to know, price £6 from the Devonshire Association, 7 The Close, Exeter EX1 1EZ.

We may not think of the Heaven Occupation as leaving "archaeological remains", but all remains eventually are archaeological, and Lundy is an exceptional site, showing occupation almost continuously from at least the Mesolithic period. Ask Keith Gardner!

LUNDY IS NO HANDICAP

Jim Somerfield's first assault on Lundy took place in September 1979 on one of Bob Britton's bird watching holidays. Jim had visited the North Devon coast for many years and seeing Lundy in the distance had resulted in his interest being aroused.

We were all on the Pier at Ilfracombe that September day when Jim arrived on crutches! Yes, there was an element of surprise and apprehension among the party! However, he managed to transfer from "B.almoral" to the Landing Beach without too much difficulty.

As his first week's visit progressed, he became more ambitious and headed for North End. The first problem arose when he decided to visit Pondsbury, heading West from the main track. Soon his elbow crutches had sunk into the bog and as he withdrew them he left the rubbers buried in the bog. Nothing for it but to burrow into the bog with his bare hands to retrieve them. From Pondsbury he proceeded to the stile in Halfway Wall which proved to be quite an obstacle. After several fruitless

attempts to get over the only alternative was to wriggle under. Taking a deep breath he did accomplish this but almost left his trousers behind. Later during that same week he was observed crawling around the perimeter of the Devil's Limekiln. He confesses to not having been there since and has no plans for a return visit.

Pondsbury was also the scene of another escapade several years later. A Buff Breasted Sandpiper was responsible. As Jim approached to get a better view of the bird he was oblivious to the fact that he had sunk almost up to his waist in the bog. This time three schoolboys laid planks to facilitate his extraction! When he returned to Big St. Johns he really did smell like a sewage farm. Because of that incident he acquired the name of "Swamp Wallower".

Once when we were staying at Little St. John's, Jim was an hour late arriving for dinner. Now Jim has always shown a very marked reluctance to leave the Tavern so we were not too alarmed, and when he eventually arrived he explained that he had got himself trapped down on the rhododendron path. I also recall that Jim had decided to collect the horns from a dead Soay which had expired and come to rest some way down the sideland near the Battery. He set off armed with a hacksaw to perform this gruesome task and having accomplished same, in his own words "had great difficulty in scrambling back up again without donating self, crutches horns and hacksaw to the foaming sea below."

He is a keen taxidermist and on the way to Ilfracombe to stay on Lundy; he came across a freshly dead badger by the roadside. Quick as a flash he was out of the car, removed the badger's head for his taxidermy and deposited same in the boot of his car. When he returned to the car on Ilfracombe Pier after staying on Lundy for a week the smell was unimaginable.

In spite of and because of, all these things Jim is a great character and his cheerfulness is an example to those of us who are able-bodied and sometimes complain about what are really trivial things. Long may he return to Lundy to inspire us.

D M Kestell

MIRD TRIP TO LUNDY - SAT. 5th - 12th OCT. 1985 compiled by B.H. Bailey

The second trip to Lundy for 1985 commenced at 5.30am on Saturday 5th October when two cars containing five members of the group and two others left Stonehouse. Concern over the weather meant that contingency plans had been made so as to travel on the "Polar Bear" from Bideford if the "Islander" could not convey us from Clovelly. As it turned out, this indeed was the case so the one hour's journey by Motor Launch was exchanged for five rather choppy ones on the steamer.

At long last we arrived some of us a little worse for the trip, but in good heart. Perhaps now is a good time to perform roll-call - ladies first. Miss J Bailey (Free-loader), Mary Delves, Sue Stevens, Maurice Durham, Roy Bircher, Brian Bailey, and most important of all, if only because he had the tickets and the week's supply (sorry $\frac{1}{2}$ week's supply) of wine, Andy Stevens.

Now if you can, imagine this diverse assembly around the table in our holiday cottage partaking in their first meal for some hours, when in came two excited bird watchers. "We have what we think is a red eyed vireo and a scarlet rosefinch"!! All the 'Birders' in our party moved as one for their coats and glasses - "where?" said someone, then, as if by magic, like a conjurer pulling them out of a hat, the two birds appeared in his hand. We learnt later that this gentleman was in fact a trainee ringer who, though not connected with the previous party ringing the week before, had helped them by working the heligoland trap every time he passed it. Knowing we had arrived on the steamer that afternoon, he had done the same for us with considerable success. The birds were then duly ringed and recorded with all the respect and deliberation they deserved, reference being made many times to a phrase in Bill Oddie's little black book which I hope the ladies amongst us did not understand, and which shall go down here as a C.M.F., we proceeded to add eight birds to the total ringed that day, and retired to our respective sleeping quarters tired but happy.

Sunday. If yesterday had been the highlight of the week, today must surely have been the low. Rain and strong winds persisted constantly all daylight hours and into the night. The kitchen was turned into a drying room, resembling a chinese laundry with all manner of strange garments festooned in the most odd places, and, in fact, by the end of the week anyone with a pair of matching socks considered themselves very lucky. One bird was added to the ringing list today, nets not being opened at all. The Swallow, for that is what it was, came from the Heligoland trap when inspected last thing at dusk. It would seem that Hirundines have greater difficulty than passerines escaping from this type of trap, due to the fact that left to themselves, they always fly to the top thereby encountering the baffle fitted for the purpose of preventing escape, whereas passerines tend to work out lower down in the bushes. It is therefore good practice to visit these traps first thing in the morning and last thing at night, as well as making regular visits, so as to release any birds caught in this way when set.

Monday. Today is Maurice's birthday - Happy birthday Maurice. We have been away many times it would seem on this date, but have yet to ascertain his age. Still windy today, but we can open nets in the sheltered valley of Millcombe and by splitting into pairs can watch them continuously. Good numbers of Goldcrests, about ten ringed, but alas Maurice did not manage his Firecrest. (But he has managed to get it since on Scilly in November). Shouts of "Hippolais" from Roy and Andy around lunch-time had us all congregated in no time at all for excellent views of an Icterine Warbler working its way to a 60' net, over the top to sit on a wall 2' away, around another 30' net and disappeared not to be seen again until it turned up caught in the bottom garden net. Slowing down mid-afternoon, off-duty members tramped on the top parts of the island, but the wind, still s.w. and force 5/6, was very unpleasant and not a bird in sight. Returned to base via the ledges and jungle paths. Good views of Raven on east side. 60 birds ringed, log to be written up and species' sheets filled in.

Tuesday. Some members of our party are still a little the worse for wear this morning, but nevertheless nets were open on time, and the good passage of Swallows that started yesterday continued. Roy set up a flick net over the pond at Millcombe and managed to catch 36, the second highest total for any single species in one day, and indeed this turned out to be our best day with 73 birds ringed.

Wednesday. The morning started very slow with only five birds ringed in the first five hours. This, in fact, was to be the pattern for the whole day, 23 new birds being the grand total. After lunch Roy and Andy disappeared along the east side jungle path returning some two hours later with tales of a small brown warbler. I then spent the next three quarters of an hour in the same spot and saw not one bird. I have my suspicions that they had a crafty 'kip' after last night's festivities.

Thursday. On waking this morning we all had the feeling a change was on the way, although the wind is still from the s.w. it continued to decrease all morning and by mid-day was down to force 2/3 and very misty. Swallows came through again today, 32 ringed after their absence yesterday, but with a total of 42 new birds ringed, this reflects the status of other species today.

Friday. Today I cannot do better than to leave to Roy as it was he who found the "goody" so here in full is his account from the daily log. "Quite an understatement, it was bloody marvellous, wind s.w. with fog to start then veering e.s.c. middle of the day. With the change came the birds. I was summoned by Maurice and Brian to have a look at a bird caught in the terrace trap. Expecting goodness knows what I opened the bag with great care, and glory, glory, they had kept for me my boggy bird - a superb Yellow-Browed Warbler. Maurice at great personal expense offered it to me to ring and process. I gratefully accepted and the beautiful bird was duly recorded, the fifth ringed on Lundy. Good trapping on the terraces by M.E.D. That was the start of it, just before the Yellow Browed, 55 Chaffinches fell out of the fog into the trees at Millcombe, and moved swiftly towards the top of the island. Shortly afterwards a red breasted Flycatcher appeared, and then a snipe from above Millcombe, then a Nightingale - which we would dearly have like to turn into a Thrush Nightingale. As the evening progressed more and more passage continued. Swallows, House Martins,

Meadow Pipits and Chaffinches. I inspected the net above the boat house which had caught about six birds all the week, in the second-shelf was a bird which I thought at first, because of its streaked breast was a Pipit, but as soon as I picked it out, it was obvious that it was a bird I did not recognise, Olive Backed Pipit or what! A quick check through Svenson confirmed that it was not a Pipit. Opening the American guide there was a Grey-cheeked thrush just like ours - wow!!!!!! A second C.M.F. for the week. After Maurice's gesture with the yellow browed, I could only reciprocate - what courtesy."

Footnote All in all a superb week - it will be a long time, if ever, before we shall have such good birding again.

290 birds ringed and 75 retraps. We hope to publish a full description of all goodies caught in a later bulletin.
(The description of "goodies" is in the bird notes - Ed.)

Your Ed. is still working on the de Mariscos. Here is an extraordinary outcrop of the name brought to my attention by Peter Christie. The nearest the dictionary of National Biography reaches to Suffolk, is Adam de Marisco (d.1257?), adviser and friend of Robert de Grossteste, Archdeacon of Northampton and Lincoln and Bishop of Lincoln: a tenuous link. Can any reader do better?

From Peter Christie, 30 Lime Grove, Bideford, Devon

In one of his idiosyncratic introductions to a volume in the Suffolk Green Books' series S.H.A. Hervey mentions an interesting record he had come across in transcribing and printing the parish registers of Little Saxham. He noted the marriage on 2 October 1623 of a Robert Winter and a Muroisca Romana. He writes of Muroisca (also spelt Mariscoe) "There is no mistaking the race to which she belonged (i.e.gypsy), Christian name and surname both proclaim it, and probably, if we could see her, something else would proclaim it too."

He charts her married life and the birth of her five children, one of whom, Robert, had a daughter baptised Muroisco after her grandmother who had died in 1657. Hervey thought that the grandchildren had moved to nearby Bury St.Edmunds, a supposition that was substantiated when he came to transcribe and publish the parish registers of St.James in Bury. On p. xvii of the volume of marriages he writes of "Muroisco Romana, the Gipsy Girl" saying of the unusual Christian name "By marriage the name was carried into the Forster or Foster family of Bury. In 1710 was baptized Marisco Forster who married (1) Frank Fuller in 1737, (2) Samuel Wright of Chevington in 1758. I do not see the name after that."

I had noticed these entries when using the two volumes and thus was very interested when I came across this unusual Christian name as a later date than Hervey had found. The human story, however, is not very edifying although from a genealogical point of view the continuations of a 'family' name is fascinating.

On 26 January 1758 Frank Fuller was buried in the churchyard of St.James, Bury and a month later his will was proved in which he left all his property to his wife Murrisker (sic). This Frank was an innkeeper and his widow remarried, by licence, only four months after his death, one Samuel Wright of Chevington, another innkeeper.

Of the first marriage there were apparently 4 children with another, Thomas, possibly resulting from the second marriage. This Thomas married, for the second time, in 1777 at St.Mary's, Bury, one Susan Hunt of that parish. On Christmas Day 1778 the couple went to the church where they had been married and baptised their daughter Murrisker. A note in the register adds that the child was born on 6 October 1771 i.e. six years before the parents had married! This daughter was their only child as far as I can see which is just as well considering the life she led.

In January 1793 aged 22 she was arrested for loitering whilst a suspicious nine months later she gave birth to a female child. In May 1794 she appeared before the Bury magistrates and alleged that John Roberts, a local watchmaker was the father of her

bastard child. The birth had taken place at the house of Thomas Catton alias Cadney - Bury's most notorious brothel-keeper of the time. The child was baptised Susan in 1798 at St. Mary's.

In 1796 Murrisker again appeared in court - this time to name Thomas Mash as the father of a child as then unborn. She still gave herself the status of single-woman. I have found no further trace of this child so can only presume it miscarried or died very soon after birth.

In December 1802 the St. Mary registers record the marriage of one Morisca Wright spinster and John Watson of Dullingham, Cambs. widower. Married life, however, didn't appear to suit this lady. In February 1806 she gave birth to a male child at Bury Workhouse and later named John Brand of Bury, a whitesmith, as the father. In the court papers she appears as Marisca Wright alias Watson.

The last glimpse I have so far caught of Marisca/Murrisker is in January 1812 when her daughter Susan is accused of attempting to murder her mother - and one is tempted to ask who can blame her? In this case Marisca styles herself widow though whether this was true or not I do not know.

As I said at the beginning - not an edifying story but its interest lies in three directions. Firstly the continuation of an unusual family Christian name over nearly 200 years at least, secondly, the possible complexities of family descents where 'immorality' was common, and thirdly, the use of both maiden and married names one being termed an 'alias'. Bearing in mind that Marisca appears to have had at least 4 named lovers and had children by 3 of them as well as using various surnames fairly casually one can see that such a woman would be a family historian's nightmare.

The foregoing is only a very brief resume of my findings on the family - the name Marisca is spelt in many ways even being abbreviated to Murray several times and once being rendered as Margrate. At least seven women bear the name and it was carried into various Suffolk families. My researches are still continuing and I would be pleased to hear from anyone coming across the name in order to complete the family tree as far as possible.

LUNDY by Jackie Hetherington

Everybody knows that Lundy is very good for rock climbing, great for bird watchers and how quite remarkable for divers but is there anything for ordinary families to do? The answer from all of us is a most definite yes. We actually ran out of time and hope to return next year ('87).

The first thing we did, as the wind wasn't too strong was to go down and peer over the top of the Devils Limekiln. It was a long way down to where the sea washed in and out at the bottom and my young son took some convincing that it was the same sea as that outside the hole because it looked so much lower.

Our next expedition was down to Montague Steps. We were very proud of the achievement particularly those of us who travelled some of the way on our backsides. We were also well rewarded by finding a seal bobbing around in the waves at the bottom.

A trip to the lighthouse is a must, the younger ones enjoyed the climb and being able to stand where the light used to be, not to mention the echoes. We older ones enjoyed the magnificent view of the whole island and tried to shut our ears to the noise from the others. We also visited the church and tower. If you forget a torch, as we did, it can be quite spooky going up the stone steps past the belfry to the roof.

My son loved exploring the battery with its cannons and ruined houses and we all marvelled at the chasms in the Earthquakes.

Apart from all the walking, we spent quite a bit of time sitting reading or just watching the sea. It was so peaceful and such a pleasure not being a taxi service here, there and everywhere. We also fed the fish in Rocket Pole Pool. We'd never heard or seen

anything like it before but it didn't impress us as much as Jaws in Quarry Pond with his big ugly vacuum cleaner mouth rising from the depths. We loved watching the rabbits particularly at dusk when they all came out of their burrows. If you disturb them its quite a sight seeing white bobtails scattering all over the place.

We joined the warden on a seashore walk one afternoon and crossed Hell's Gate into the Devils Kitchen. Two seals came along to watch us clamber over the rocks learning all about the different types of seaweed, sea anemones shells and crabs, not to mention sponges and coral. We also went through the cave right under Rat Island. We came back via South Light and were very grateful for the new ropes and steps.

The ropes also helped us to get down to Pilots Quay which to us was quite a challenge, like Devils Slide to a proper climber. I think its true to say that we all did more than we thought we could and I'm sure its due to the totally relaxed way of living on the Island. We just can't wait to get back and explore some more.

1886 on LUNDY Myrtle Ternstrom

1886 was quite a busy year on Lundy. Mr Wright, the new tenant, installed himself at the Dig House (south wing of the farmhouse) in the care of his housekeeper, Miss Fulshaw, and among his innovations was the construction of a tennis court on the front lawn for the use of his daughters and their friends, including the Heaven ladies. In March Mr & Mrs Drimscombe arrived to take up their duties, he as groundsman/gardener, and she to work in the house. A Mr Catford visited the island, and took photographs, including some of the horses: the Heavens had two new ones called Sultan & Renee.

The new little church was in use at the top of Millcombe, and in May the new Schoolhouse was finished nearby: it was inaugurated with a grand concert, and the harmonium was taken there for the occasion. The next month Mr Wright reached an agreement with the Post Office that a mail service should be established and that the post office would be in the Store. The room behind the Store was another place where concerts took place from time to time.

Tourists were not always made to feel particularly welcome, and one group who were forced to stay overnight on the island because of sudden bad weather were not at all pleased to be accommodated in the haybarn with not much to eat. One of them, a Mr Podmore, afterwards published a little pamphlet describing their unfortunate experiences, which he entitled "A Night on Lundy Island". A group of 400 excursionists who came on the steamer brought their own band with them to the island, but their presence was not appreciated as they indulged in too much to drink.

In July the Water Lily came to fetch the islanders to take them to the mainland to exercise their vote, and that same month the Bishop came for the confirmation of candidates, the first time that this had been done on Lundy; formerly it had been necessary to cross to the mainland.

The Schoolhouse appears to have been an adjunct to the church, and used for Sunday School and Lay Readings, and there was no kitchen annexe, which is a later addition. The everyday lessons for the island children were carried on in one of the cottages at "Sea View" (Barton Cottages), which was referred to as "The Minerva Academy", supervised by Milly Heaven, Cousin Annie and Marion Heaven.

The Gentlemen of the Ordinance Survey were out over the island surveying, while Walter Heaven was preparing to build himself a boat, and the painters from Trinity House were busy on the lighthouse. There was a landslip on the Beach Road in October, adding just one more problem to the existing financial difficulties. A very modern idea was the installation of a washing machine at The Villa. Potatoes were planted in the Heaven preserve at St. John's Valley, but the rats ate all the peas in the kitchen garden; the killing of a pig was an occasion of some festivity, oddly enough, seeing that it was "rather gruesome all through the dark passage from pig to pork". Cousin Annie picked wild roses on Lamatry, and a swarm of bees was taken.

On the 17th November Walter celebrated his 21st birthday with a party, where there was

supper, dancing, and bagatelle: it seems that Walter was a moving spirit for the concerts and entertainments. On Christmas morning the island children were presented with presents before morning service, and then there was a "fly round lively" to serve dinner, which was followed by a second service, a tea party with Mr Wright and Miss Fulshaw as guests, dinner, and visitations to the lighthouse and castle. The usual staff supper was held on 29th, and the men were presented with a piece of beef each, as they were used to get every year.

Ed's Note: The old school house is still known to many as Blue Bung, short for Blue Bungalow. There was a wild rose on the old South light steps in the early '70s.

SEAL CALL from LUNDY by Doril Gilbert 31.3.85

They are calling me back
I must go again
To the swirling mists
and the driving rain,
To the sunbathed earth
and the brilliant skies.
A "Far-a-way" look
has assailed my eyes.
At the contemplation
my heart will leap
Like the frolicking lambs
Of the island sheep!
On memory's wind
A melody sweet
Is born from the rocks
At the Islands feet
Enchanting & haunting;
I listen - and yearn:
T'is the Song of the Seals -
I must return!

BRAETOR LUNDY PONY PRESERVATION SOCIETY by Mary Martindale (Hon.Sec.)

There were no horses or ponies, except for draft animals, on Lundy before 1928; but in that year Martin Coles Harman decided to introduce a small herd of mares and foals taken from the New Forest to see how they would fare on the island.

The first stallion that was introduced to the island was a 16 hand thoroughbred and he proved too tall for the small New Forest Mares: the second, an ex-champion Welsh pony, proved in the short time he was on Lundy that he was a prolific sire and it is his descendants that interbred, thus cresting the Lundy type.

The ponies were culled from time to time resulting in the best stallions being kept to sire the new generations of foals. The aim was to breed light coloured ponies, so mainly duns and roans were kept.

Those that were shipped from Lundy were sold at Barnstaple Market, most went for meat, but several went into private homes, two of note being Lundy owned by Bertie Hill and Betty Brown owned by Lady Slade, both were great prizewinners, Betty Brown having over two hundred trophies. Several mares went to Lydford to become the foundation stock of the Braetor herd.

Mrs Peggy Garvey who is the founder of the Braetor Lundy Pony Preservation Society, and who was a regular visitor to Lundy at one time, had seen and admired a pony being sold at market and upon finding out he came from Lundy vowed she would own one. In fact, after acquiring her mares she was later able to purchase Midnight, the stallion who had been in charge since the cull of 1944. He had been shipped after many unsuccessful attempts to capture him and came to Lydford in the early 1960s. He ran with the Braetor herd for several years until old age caught up with him.

Mrs Garvey maintained her association with those on Lundy, loaning her stallion Legend of Braetor for a season, and taking and rehoming the Connemara Rosenaharley Peadar. She also helped to get the National Pony Society interested in the ponies and indeed they did administer the welfare of them from 1972 to 1980.

The Braetor herd is now very depreciated in number, but still has three daughters of Midnight, Braetor Lass, Braetor Lindy Lou and Braetor Pooh. Lundy Siskin is a daughter of Rosenaharley Peadar, who ran with the mares several years after Midnight left, Braetor Tigger is a daughter of Legend and Braetor Curlew is a daughter of the Society's second stallion Mozart who was born on Lundy and is a son of Peadar. The stallion presently running with the herd is a grandson of Midnight. All the mares and stallions mentioned breed good tempered, typy foals, which often show the characteristics of Midnight, who had a marvellous temperament and tremendous jumping ability. The latest filly foal to be born is the society's hope for the future as it is hoped that she will be joined by others in the near future and a second herd can be formed.

The Braetor Society has now assumed responsibility for keeping a record of all the Lundy ponies and for registering individuals if owners desire. They are also striving to keep alive the original strain of pony, but it is not easy. Although the herd has been given a home at Collingford Lake Park Complex on Bodmin Moor, Cornwall, the society still has to finance their keep and that is paid for purely by fund raising and public donations. It has also been realised that expert advice will have to be sought about future breeding policy so as to avoid the dangers of in-breeding whilst at the same time keeping the type correct. There is a long way to go before the future of the Lundy pony can be considered safe, but it is the fervent wish of the Society that this can be achieved.

Ed.'s note. There was a report on the Society and its work in the WMN in September, including the interesting comment that in a couple of year's time the Lundy Pony will be eligible for recognition by the Rare Breed Society as the strain will have been in existence for 60 years.

Mrs Martindale has sent me the first two newsletters, which have a delightful cover picture of Elsie and Pipit on Lundy in 1972, by John Dyke. Mrs Garvey, who started the Society, writes on how she first saw a Lundy pony in 1952, at an Okehampton sale, and went over to Lundy to see the ponies. She bought the stallion Midnight in 1962. (Mr Gade tells (p.432/33) how Midnight left the island in "My Life on Lundy" and that Mrs Garvey bought him for 40 guineas).

In September a special Lundy Horse Show was organized in Launceston to raise funds, and an "Adopt a Lundy Pony" Scheme started - the ponies are those of the Braetor herd.

If anyone wants to know more about the Society and the herd, Mrs Martindale's address is Firtrees, Drakewalls, Gunnislake, Cornwall.

SOME OF THE SOUTH END, by A.J.B.Walker

Let's do a fairly leisurely walk this time, with exercise for anyone who is interested. First, the Castle. Just head south from the church along the main path, across Castle Hill. The Castle is actually mostly seventeenth century or later, but there are (I am told) one or two stones that could have been cut in the thirteenth. It is worth looking at the cottages in the Keep, then a brief glance at the excavation beyond the Castle, then go fairly carefully rightwards (West), and then South again down a rough path. Some way short of the edge you will get to Benson's Cave. This has been referred to as a mine adit, but is more interesting. It goes back about thirty feet towards the Castle, and is surprisingly high and wide. There are graffiti cut into the jagged shale walls from the eighteenth century, possibly by Benson's convicts. Apart from the deep earth (or mud) on the floor, the only reason to get excited about this is the view over Lametry and Rat Island from outside the cave.

Head back westwards and past the castle wall, along the South side, climb over the

stile by the Incinerator, and there are a couple of deep excavations, possibly an old quarry. Just past there the path goes back down to Benjamin's Chair. This is a wide flat grassy ledge fifteen feet down from the top. It's beautifully sheltered from North and East winds, so watch out for sunburn. Someone, probably a Heaven built up below the path (and at one point below the chair) with dry stone walling - this was partly for safety, partly to make the space wider. A good place for a rest and refreshment, but if there are any children along, watch out for them.

When you've sat about long enough, head north and west across the Lighthouse Field. A few hundred yards North of the Shutter, a couple of headlands beyond Montague Steps, you get to Pilot's Quay. Last year a working party of LFS members put a rope down to the sea. The proper path goes down on the North side of the headland, then back southwards, & that's a good place for the less energetic members of your party to stop. Otherwise, look about for a loose earth path downwards. This is where the rope starts. At the bottom of the rope you are on granite, and most of the steps, cemented in place for the British Channel pilots in the nineteenth century, are still there and seem to be safe. Good rough granite for sitting about on, taking pictures of waves, and so on. You will find the way up much longer than you think, but it's easier than the descent.

Ed.'s note. If you want to know more about Benson, the Castle and Montague Steps, or the Heaven family, A.F. & M. Langham's "Lundy Island" will tell you.

All these scrambles should be undertaken with due care and attention. Wet grass, roller-ball granite pebbles, and strong winds are all additional hazards.

PARENTHOOD & LUNDY by Maggie & Julian Bowden and Susan & David Beavers

'Aha', said our neighbour, deciding on spotting us in the garden that here was a good excuse to break from mowing the lawn. Pleasantries followed, and inevitably (because he'd just booked two weeks on a Mediterranean beach) the conversation turned to holidays. 'Suppose you'll be going elsewhere now', he mused, eyeing the newly born in our arms - 'can't take little precious over there'.

'And why not?', we retorted. He listed some objections as he saw them: bleak spot, stormy sea-crossing, lack of basic amenities such as bidets and video recorders, no relaxed pubbing, air-sea rescue for the doctor, and added what is there for the kids to do there anyhow. 'We've booked already, and our friends have too,' we spluttered, and fortunately with junior now awake and hungry an escape was possible.

Of course, he had a point (just). Lundy with babes or young children is not for the extreme faint-hearted, although anyone in that category would not be contemplating Lundy anyhow. In many ways, though, we have found the island to be an ideal place for holidays with young children.

On the other hand, it would be apt not to recognise some difficulties, but going anywhere with young ones presents special problems. There will be the hanging around on a long car journey, perhaps a lengthy flight, demands for drinks when miles from the next services, potty stops, why aren't we there now. All this and more will try the patience of the coolest adults.

Forgetting for the moment the sea-crossing over to the island, the question is what advantages does Lundy have; is it possible to have a week or longer there and then face the neighbour with a genuine 'Yes, we did enjoy that'.

For several recent spring bank holiday weeks we have taken two or three infants aged between three months and four years to the Old Light. (There must be something fertile in the Lundy air as numbers keep increasing).

Take the last visit. As requested in the letter sent to the island shop beforehand ordering food and other things, a travel cot and high-chair were ready for us in the lighthouse, as was an enormous box of the correct size and brand of disposable nappies.

The gas fridge was on and a bag of coal for the fire. With the provisions we had brought with us, including a few packets of favourite munchy yummys, the important first meal was a success, and then it was off outside to take advantage of the good weather.

At this young age children lack the sophistication they will pretend to later on. Simple things like watching the island's many animals provide almost inexhaustible entertainment. On this first walk from the Old Light round the southern end of the island we met the small group of horses, one or two of which were approachable. Squeals of delight from child on shoulders - 'that one eat my welly'. Near this encounter was the fish pond, where fish could be persuaded to rise for stale bread. The sheep were also concentrated in this area between the castle and the church, but frustratingly they did not wish to be stroked by young fingers - 'silly sheep run away! ... that one doing wee-wee!'

On other days the sheep-shearers were excellent theatre for an hour or two, the children finding the transformation of woolly sheep into mere shadows of their former selves as amazing as a genie appearing from a lamp. On other occasions, bullocks galloped across one of the middle fields to see us, (and only us!).

Some minor disappointments there were too. Only we quick-eyed parents spotted the deer darting into the bushes near the rhododendron path. Bird watching also is far from easy with the young troupe in tow. Puffins swam unobligingly far out at sea, and little eyes could not cope with the binoculars. Nor could strong adults with a young child on the shoulders playing with the host's hair and ears!

Apart from the perils of cliffs, the wide open spaces of Lundy meant the children could run to their hearts content (and then drop exhausted into bed with any luck). There is the bonus too of no traffic to consider, apart from the odd tractor.

For slightly older ones, the island has many sets for imaginative games. Pirates and prisoners fought long and hard around Benson's cave. The Thomas the Tank Engine puffed merrily up and down to the North Light, and Trolls romped and caught the unwary near the footbridge at the top of the cliffs again near the North Light. Also the children were ever ready to play shopping in the decayed buildings at the Battery.

In earlier holidays, bath times were improvised in washing-up bowls. Today with many of the refurbished cottages having baths this is not so much of a problem, assuming of course there is no water shortage.

With young ones a small drawback is the difficulty of going out for the whole day on long walks. The north end, for instance, is a major expedition. The track is not suitable for pushchairs despite the deceptively smooth looking fields, and poor parents can end up carrying tired children for several miles. In our ignorance one year we tried a pushchair - it met its end near three-quarter wall when a wheel buckled and fell off. Back-packs are much more sensible.

Although it is a pity the island has no sandy beach, the rock pools round the landing beach and towards Rat Island provide a true box of delights.

To sum up, our lot have always revelled in the island's wide-open spaces, lack of formality and relative safety. For tired parents, if baby-sitting rules out the pub, the pub can always come to you while feet are rested by the burning stove. Also, the pub can be a kind of community centre, especially on bad days when it is an alternative shelter to the confines of a cottage. Above all, the island's staff are always helpful and sympathetic - special praise to them.

Now back to that sea-crossing. We had to leave Bideford at six in the morning, and the return trip arrived back at midnight. If you don't live locally, and how many Lundy visitors do, these times are no joke. All right, one could stay overnight in Bideford, but that means extra expense and the upheaval of unpacking just for a night. On a calm day the voyage is refreshing, but on a rougher day.....Please bring back the helicopter!!!

Some advice. Take lots of crayons and paper and games for the likely rainy day, and also twice as many clothes as the number you first thought of. Be prepared for both sweating or teeshirt days and freezing thick jumper ones. Check with the shop what supplies/baby foods they can provide: stocks have been limited in the past. Also the shop does not stock nappies. A kind islander gave us some in an emergency one year.

As for the neighbour, we discovered on our return his flight was delayed two hours, he burnt his backside in the sun and caught something nasty from swimming near a raw sewerage outlet. And he missed the lesser spotted white fronted cgress. (Sic.Ed.)

Maggie & Julian Bowden

Susan & David Beavers

January 1982

Eds. note. This is the Julian Bowden who was mentioned in 1985's newsletter for his classy pics. of the Island in the Daily Telegraph - now we know it's his Experience of the Island that produces them!

We dig, dig, dig...LFS working party, May 1985 by Nan Davies

In May 1985 I eventually fulfilled my ambition to take part in an archaeological dig. The National Trust were organising a month's survey on the Castle Parade ground on Lundy, the workforce being primarily made up of Acorn campers. Although supposedly young NT members, this particular 'camp' appeared to consist of all age groups. The Lundy Field Society also volunteered some muscle, and I and 2 other members were present for the second of the 4 weeks' digging.

It was a fine Saturday afternoon when we all congregated at Clovelly from whence we were to sail. Departure was delayed slightly whilst Stirling and John Alford took their lunch in the pub, and we ate ice creams on the quay. The 45 minute journey was spent basking in the sun and spray created as the 'Islander' bounced along. It was not an unpleasant experience in the light wind, in fact the majority of us found it quite invigorating! Our arrival was impeccably timed, allowing the more athletic amongst us to reach the Tavern just before 1st orders. Needless to say, the Johnny O's was much appreciated after such a hasty ascent of the beach road. After this short burst of activity the pace slowed for the rest of the day which was spent unpacking and settling in. The Acorn campers were staying, appropriately enough, in Pig's Paradise whilst the LFS were inhabiting Little St. Johns.

We were all at the castle at 9am promptly on Sunday, eager to begin work. David Thackray (Archaeological Secretary of the National Trust) gave us a guided tour of the site together with a precis of the historical background. Everyone was then armed with a bucket, a trowel and a stiff brush. The experienced diggers (some of the NT were digging for their 2nd consecutive week) also obtained kneelers and were mocked for doing so. However, since most of the work consisted of kneeling on rough stone whilst removing surface soil by the trowelful, it was not long before we all wanted one! Everybody was assigned a patch to work on and anything of interest (bones, pottery, clay pipes by the hundred) were placed into the 'finds' tray. These treasures were later cleaned, pieced together and dated. The rest of the soil was placed into buckets which were regularly emptied into strategically located wheelbarrows. It was the unenviable task of the person filling the barrow to the brim to wheel it up a plank of wood precariously balanced against the side of a tractor trailer.

Mid-morning and afternoon breaks were taken on the grass at the back of Signal Cottages. For most of us these breaks were the only opportunity we had of exposing our faces to the sun. After 2 or 3 days of impeccable weather all of us were suffering from sunburn and/or heat rashes in the most unusual places (the backs of our legs, hands and necks!) However, my lasting impression of the week will be of a stiff back, blistered hands and bruised knees, and of never ceasing hunger. A combination of hard work and fresh air had a definite effect on the appetite. We were allowed 1 hour for lunch and certainly for the LFS party, this entire time, (excluding the 10 minute required to walk over Castle Hill to and from Little St John) was spent eating.

During the day, we received regular visits from David, who was always very complimentary about our respective territories. He also appeared to be very houseproud. The last half hour of each day was spent sweeping up!

Work finished at 5pm every day, which allowed just enough time to stagger home for showers and prepare supper before congregating in the Tavern for medicinal refreshments whilst comparing aches and pains. The fittest amongst us managed to trudge back again for post supper entertainments (card and dart tournaments).

The week passed by very quickly and by our calculations we shifted approximately 20 tons of surface soil. Everybody was very reluctant to leave their territories, but for those of us lucky enough to re-visit it after another 2 weeks work had been carried out, were pleased with the progress which had been made. Work is continuing on the site even now. Although all the excavations have been completed, the Manpower Services Commission workers are renovating the curtain walls.

Friday night was party night, the LFS being guests of the rest of the diggers at Quarters. A superb 3 course meal had been prepared, with assistance from most of the group plus home made pasties provided by the tavern kitchen. Once we had demolished the mountain of food, and a reasonable amount of wine we adjourned to the tavern from where we were reluctant to move, even after the lights went out. I think that several group members were very grateful for the calm crossing back to Clovelly the following day. It was very satisfying to look back at the castle from the boat, as we sailed out of the bay, and feel that we had been able to contribute something by all our hard work. I can thoroughly recommend LFS working parties.

cont. from p.2

Engineers, loaded with equipment, leapt safely to land, & negotiated the rocks to the landing beach. The courage & stamina of Radio Devon listeners was only equalled by the efficiency of the islanders in getting them shore. And all the while the South Light was sounding.

It was a glorious day in every way & John & Wendy Puddy & John Alford are particularly to be thanked for making it possible. Everyone had a great time lunching in the Tavern, before Lundy's first ever live Outside Broadcast. This high spot of the day came from the Greensward outside the Tavern, & was part of Douglas Mounce's "County Sound". As many islanders as possible were talked to including John & Wendy Puddy, John Alford, John Ogilvie & Mary Gado; and many Radio Devon listeners who were on the trip, Coaches full of them had come to Ilfracombe from all over the county - some to renew old acquaintance & some to see Lundy for the first time.

The logistics of 200 Treasure Hunters all hunting at the same time made it necessary to reduce the clues to 2 difficult ones. One directed the hunter to the wall round the Old Light, where a Radio Devon mug, with 10 £2 pieces in it was hidden. The other pointed to the old propeller by the old forge, & was a mug with 5 £2 pieces. The 1st mug was found in 5 minutes & the 2nd in 20 minutes, leaving time for exploring Lundy.

No one saw a puffin, but everyone had a great day, & sang all the way home led by a folk group called the "KELLY QUARRY BLASTERS."