

LUNDY GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

It is with great sadness that I begin my report with the sad news of the passing of Reg Tuffin (pictured right in the Tavern). Reg had worked on the island for over 20 years, most notably running the island's postal service as Postmaster General. He will be sorely missed by all.



© Grant Sherman

On a brighter note, MS *Oldenburg* had a good summer season, with only nine cancellations from 101 scheduled sailings to Lundy. She transported 15,518 passengers over the year, an increase of some 5.5% on 2015. As well as her scheduled service, *Oldenburg* completed four river cruises, three private charters to Lundy and six relocation cruises from Bideford to Ilfracombe. The winter helicopter service had a reasonable year, flying 1,385 passengers to Lundy in Castle Air's new Augusta Power helicopter over 35 scheduled flying days. Fog caused delays on two occasions. Total attendance by both ship and helicopter for the year tallied at 17,034, an increase of 6% on 2015. Approximately 2,000 visitors arrived by other means.

Property occupancy for the 23 Landmarks hit a record high of 87%, an increase of 7% over 2015 which kept the housekeeping and maintenance teams busy!

As usual, *Oldenburg* visited Sharpness for her annual dry-docking, but on arrival faced a delay in entering the dock due a ship overrunning its stay. This extended our stay by several weeks and caused some anxiety for the Christmas supply run to Lundy. Amongst a long list of repairs, extensive work was carried out to the crane and capstan, large sections of the upper bow were replaced and a new generator was fitted to the engine room. On leaving Sharpness she sailed direct to Lundy with vital supplies, making it just in time for Christmas.

We welcomed back MV *Balmoral* during the year and had visits from both the *Waverley* and the cruise liner *Ocean Nova*, the latter on a very atmospheric misty summer morning.

On board *Oldenburg* we welcomed some new faces to the bridge, with Captain Jason Mugford taking over the wheel, supported by First Officer Vernon Hocking. The new bridge crew demonstrated their skills during a particularly heavy sea on 7 April en route from Ilfracombe to Lundy.

The island suffered water shortages during the year, with both a lack of rainfall and failure of the water treatment plant. As a result staff and visitors alike were required to use bottled water throughout the season, which proved a challenge both logistically and financially.

Several notable events took place over the year. In February I had the honour to represent Lundy at a reception hosted by Prince Charles at St James's Palace marking the 50th Anniversary of the Landmark Trust. In March the Lundy Collectors Club paid us a visit and a series of events were held, including a memorable visit to the North End in the island's long-wheelbase white Landrover, which was to be one of its last trips. The Landrover had served us well and was replaced in June by two iconic ex-military Landrovers.

We said farewell in May to *Daze IV*, Antony Gormley's sculpture which had adorned South West Point for 12 months in celebration of the Landmark Trust's 50th Anniversary. We understand it has since been resurrected permanently at Cambridge University.

May also brought an exciting week's filming with the cast and crew from Robson Green's *Tales from the Coast*. Robson spent several days on the island, snorkelling, climbing and exploring the island's rich history and culture. The programme aired in January to excellent reviews and was watched by some three million viewers.

In a busy summer schedule, Lundy hosted a wedding in August, the lambing shed receiving a makeover for the occasion, presenting a fantastic venue for the evening wedding reception. This was followed by the annual fly-in which was well attended, one casualty unfortunately losing a propeller on departure. September was equally busy, with the world's first Cinderella Stamp Congress in London, at which Lundy was represented by our long-standing Swedish stamp advisor Lars Liwendahl, along with a special cancellation stamp that was produced to mark the occasion.

Back on Lundy the Trustees and management board of the Landmark paid us a visit and were treated to a grand tour of the island's properties, infrastructure, ship and helicopter service, as well as meeting all the team.

The Trustees' tour was immediately followed by the Lundy Field Society arriving in numbers to celebrate the Society's 70th anniversary with a variety of activities during the 'Discover Lundy' week. To mark the occasion the island's postbox was repainted in Trafalgar blue by Jimmy Campbell (pictured right), an impressive memorial plaque was installed in the Old Light and the Tavern hosted a memorable evening of fine dining, speeches from Keith Hiscock and myself, a quiz and an auction.



© Derek Green

October saw islanders Grant and Shelley Sherman (pictured below) married in St Helen's Church by the Reverend Shirley Henderson, followed by a wedding breakfast and lively ceilidh in the Tavern.

In December staff from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency visited to provide training for the island's emergency service team. We were fortunate also to enjoy a visit from the Newquay Search and Rescue Helicopter Service, which joined in the exercise.



© Rachel Threlkeld

The island's maintenance team had a busy year with the shop enjoying a change of livery and transformation to the new 'Lundy General Stores'. Work commenced on the consolidation of The Battery after we received a generous grant from Historic England at short notice in October. Due to a tight weather window, work commenced almost immediately and ran into November. The project presented some challenging logistics which, in true island style, were overcome and included many wheelbarrow runs up and down the steps!

Further works were carried out to the Old Light with the installation of new downpipes to the lower Lantern Room and the installation of safety railings to the upper Lantern Room. At Tibbetts a new track was laid from the main road to the property using crushed granite, both to provide a better surface for the island's vehicles and to allow the old grass track to recover.



The Newquay Search and Rescue Helicopter Service joins in a training session run by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency for the island's emergency service team. © CG Agency

Around the rental properties we completed the roll-out of duvets, LED lighting now features across the island, the public toilets had a major refurbishment and a number of buildings had new electrical wiring installed.

Back on the mainland the shore offices were busy with high bookings and trying to find scarce property availability for visitors. The marketing team represented Lundy at a number of events and at the end of a busy season the shore office team enjoyed a well-deserved break letter-boxing on Lundy!

During the year work continued on the fundraising appeal for St Helen's Church and repointing the outside of the building was completed thanks to a further generous donation by Steve and Andrea Worley. At the time of writing, we are eagerly anticipating a positive decision from the Heritage Lottery Fund on our application for major funding.

At the end of the year we said goodbye to two key members of the island's conservation team: Warden Beccy MacDonald left at the end of the season and ranger Steve Pratt left in January. We wish them both well for their future careers and thank them for the tremendous contribution they both made to the island.

I'd like to finish by thanking the LFS for its ongoing support, expert advice and financial assistance with part-funding the position of the Lundy Warden.

All the very best.

DEREK GREEN
April 2017