

## Lundy 2016:

Something special on Lundy! To celebrate fifty years since the Landmark Trust was formed to rescue special buildings and enable people to live in them for a while, five life-size statues by the artist Antony Gormley were commissioned. These are to grace five Landmark sites from May 2015 to May 2016 and Lundy is one of them. It is on the highest cliff overlooking the area where the Bristol Channel merges with the Atlantic Ocean. It should have been an easy stroll over grassy fields and paths to reach the figure.

Strong south-west winds were gusting as we assembled at the heliport on Monday morning which delayed the flights by about an hour and a half. Those who dislike the flights had eyes tightly closed as the helicopter bumped its way over the cliff edges and across to the island. Because we were late there was just enough time to settle into properties and buy supplies before attending the Warden's Lecture. She updated us on the flourishing re-colonisation by Manx Shearwaters and Puffins, and even Storm Petrels have been spotted. Seals and Lundy Cabbage are also doing well.

However, the bells were not in good shape. They hadn't been rung since Christmas and the ropes were absolutely saturated. They were put in the dryer overnight, but as the electricity is off between midnight and 6 am, it had little effect. Next day they were completely unmanageable and had to be again left in the dryer. On the last day they were just about dry enough to ring safely.

In bright sunshine on Tuesday morning several of us set off to find the statue. Getting there was fairly easy but breezy, but getting close was impossible. Although the gusts of wind were blowing inland, they were so powerful you had no control and cliff edges were perilously close. I don't think any of us actually touched 'him/her/it' that day. One person left viewing the figure until Thursday afternoon when sadly fog rolled in, and made it invisible.

There was one more chance for him to see it from the homeward helicopter, but it flew right over the top and he didn't manage a glimpse at all! We all met for breakfast in the Marisco Tavern on Wednesday morning – easier than cooking it ourselves! Evening prayers in Government House led by Sandra Chantry and Margaret Jacques were held daily, together with a lovely Communion service on Thursday evening. The Jenga set had been replenished so a tournament was held one evening, and the next night a special 'Knit-In' took place in the Tavern when about twenty of us including Jim Andrews knit squares for the local hospice. Erica and Dianne Stewart sported special puffin hats – it would be interesting to see them being worn in Melbourne and Canterbury! The Kingtons, King and Webster took the prize for the quiz this year but Jim definitely won the entertainment trophy for his Lundy ditty.

Sadly Thursday's fog cleared overnight so the helicopters appeared on time Friday morning. According to my e-mails the following week, another trip next year would be welcomed!

***Ruth Smith***