

LUNDY ISLAND



Lundy is an island in the Bristol Channel and is a two hour boat trip from either Ilfracombe or Bideford in North Devon.



The island has an extensive history; indeed, pottery shards indicate habitation of at least three thousand years. It is thought that from the 8th Century Lundy, having a sheltered bay, provided a good base when the Vikings raided Britain. Although there is no evidence that the Vikings occupied the island, the name 'Lund-ey' is Norse for 'Puffin Island'.

From 1834 a Gloucestershire businessman, William Hudson Heaven, purchased Lundy for £9,870 and during the family's 85 years of ownership St Helen's Church and Millcombe House were built.

Later, Martin Coles Harman purchased the island for just over £25,000 and introduced many animals, the private postal system and the single issue of Puffin coinage. Later, in 1968, the island was put up for sale with the proviso "Whoever takes over Lundy must love it as we do".

These days Lundy is owned by the National Trust and managed by the Landmark Trust. Visitors will find spectacular coastal walking, bird and wildlife watching, and activities such as diving, fishing and climbing.

The island is three miles long and half a mile wide, unspoiled and a peaceful and tranquil destination. However, a visit to the island sailing on the MS Oldenburg (itself a vessel with an interesting history and built on traditional lines but thoroughly modernised) can only proceed if the weather is favourable.

Ever optimistic, the Outings Committee is hoping to cheat the inclement weather this year and offer a three-day trip to Ilfracombe, visiting Lundy Island on the middle day.

Wendy Higgins

u3a in Bath - Outings Committee

