

Luxulyan Valley News

Spring 2018



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Issue 75



Cover photo - Luxulyan Valley and Treffry Viaduct from Greadow Farm,
By Chris Tigg

Hello everyone

We hope you all survived 'Emma's' encounter with the 'Beast from the East', and can we all look forward to better weather ahead.

Despite Council notices informing everyone that tree work would be carried out in the valley during February, as part of the Heritage Lottery funded Valley Project, nothing to date has happened. Why? Sadly we do not know, but now fear with the bird nesting season upon us, that this work may have to be postponed for 12 months. As soon as more information is available on what will happen and when, we will let you know.

The Eds

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We are always keen to hear the views of our members, suggestions for future events or articles for our newsletter, so please get in touch.

**Please send your copy by 5th June 2018 to Chris at
folv@btinternet.com**

Forthcoming Events

Wednesday 18 April 2018 at 7.30 pm

'The Pentewan Railway and the Tea Treat Trains'.

A pictorial talk by Rob Evans on this wonderful narrow gauge railway that closed 100 years ago.

Meet: Luxulyan Village Hall, PL30 5QA

Saturday 12 May 2018 at 4.45 am

Dawn Chorus walk in the valley.

A very early start to identify our woodland birds from their morning song with Derek Spooner. Followed by breakfast and drinks back in Luxulyan Village.

Meet: Black Hill car park. Map ref: SX 059 573

Sunday 24 June 2018 at 10.30 am

Geocache walk and Geology talk.

Follow a trail of 10 geocaches around the valley. Learn about geocaching from local experts. Bring your GPS smartphone or iPhone. Followed by refreshments in Luxulyan Village, and hear interesting facts on the local geology.

Meet: Black Hill car park. Map ref: SX 059 573

Unless otherwise stated all our events are free for members and £2 for non-members

Full up-to-date information about all our events, and much more, can be found on our website: www.luxulyanvalley.co.uk

Or visit our Facebook page  Friends of Luxulyan Valley

Volunteer Dates

'The Friends', in conjunction with Cormac, try to provide opportunities for volunteers to experience some practical assistance in the management of the valley. All tools will be supplied, along with hot drinks and biscuits, but please wear old clothes and strong boots. Everyone Welcome, stay as long as you like.

We currently do not have any dates arranged, but for more information please see our website or Facebook page, or contact the Valley Ranger, Jenny Heskett, by email: jheskett@cormacltd.co.uk or call 07973 813843.

PLEASE NOTE:

As part of the HLF project we will need to record all the volunteering hours in the valley in future, so there will be a little bit of paperwork to fill in for each event in the form of feedback forms.

Daniel Gumb

Brian Oldham gave us a look at the life of Daniel Gumb, stone mason, of whom there is little written about. Daniel was born in Linkinhorne, to Richard Gumb and Dorothy Worden and lived between 1703-1776. Richard was a blacksmith and left just 20 shillings in his will.

At school, Daniel enjoyed reading and maths. He was a stone mason, working on Stowes Hill and also made gravestones. Whilst at work, he saw a large, slightly angled slab of 30ft x 12ft on the south side of the hill and chose to make this his home by hollowing out underneath it. The floor was sand with a fireplace and a chimney dug through the packed earth. There were stone sleeping platforms, table and benches. Putting in supports for the roof gave him 3 rooms. Just above the doorway, he carved a sloping gutter to collect rain water.

Daniel's first wife was Thomasine Roberts, who he married in 1735 but tragically died in their first year of marriage during childbirth. His second wife, Joan, also died during childbirth in their first year. He then married Florence Brockinshire in February 1743 and they had seven children, most of whom emigrated to America. Some however died as infants.

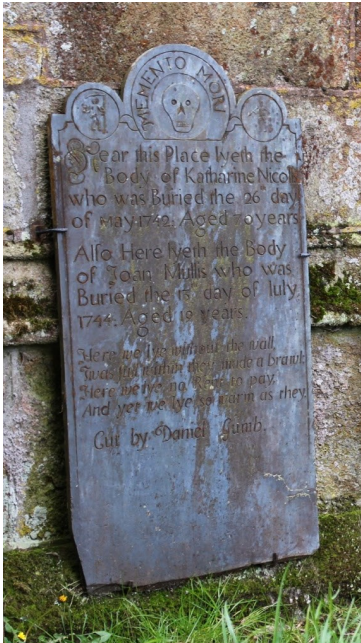
With good views from his elevated home, Daniel studied the stars. On the roof of his dwelling, he carved Pythagoras' theorem and Euclid's theorem, whilst solving mathematical problems. William Cookworthy of Plymouth, let him browse among astronomical books and taught him the use of astronomical instruments. He was also commissioned to draw some estate maps – one of these was Tredis in 1746. In 1761, he was paid one guinea to erect a sundial at Trelaske mill and also drew the first coloured estate map for here. In July 1763, he was tasked to draw plans for Twelve Mens Moor (a charter from Launceston Priory gave 12 men, parcels of land here).



Daniel Gumb (cont.)

Daniel also carved his name and date, 1735, beside what was his door (maybe to commemorate his first marriage). At Cheesewring Cottages, there are other carvings which are a rougher sort – perhaps Daniel was teaching his children his skills.

Daniel's first child born was John (1744-1826) – he married Jenifer and lived in Stoke Climsland. Most of the descendants are from John – there are few records of spouses of his siblings.



One of his sons, John, was a mine Captain at Phoenix mine near Cheesewring quarry and East Sharptor and Darley mines. Another grandson, Edward Daniel Gumb (Edwin), also was good at school and came top in 3,000 pupils.

The famous Reverend Hawken (of North Cornwall), read some journals of Daniel Gumb and claimed to have seen a ghost whilst studying the notes.

In the mid 1800s, the Cheesewring Quarry started and Daniel's home was removed to the outskirts of the quarry, where it was used as a shelter for blasting. It is now an often visited

monument to a unique, intelligent man.

Recently, a 6th generation grandson of Daniel Gumb, had a daughter who lived in Birmingham and was getting married. She wanted to get married in Upton Cross, but thought her Father wouldn't want to make the journey – that was when he told her that her own ancestors lived 2 miles away! The wedding certainly did go ahead as planned.

Tracy Elliott

Prospecting for Tin in Luxulyan Valley

In the Luxulyan Valley for some time past Mr. William Thomas, Lamorrick, Lanivet, has been prospecting for tin on Mr. N. Kendall's property and samples giving 8 lbs. of tin to the ton have been assayed.

Mr. Thomas was first interested in the site about 27 years ago, when he was asked by the late Sir William Serjeant, CB., of St. Benet's Abbey, if he would take charge of a number of men and explore the possibilities of the mine.

"In November last," he said to a Press representative, "I took a twelve months' licence to prospect there, and have found quantities of tin. There is apparently a lode there about half a mile in length. I sent away two samples, which contained 8 lb. and 5 lb. to the ton respectively.

"My idea now is to get a company to put out a little money and explore the thing in a proper manner. I am a poor man and cannot go very far with the mine."

Cornish Guardian, 1937

I wonder what became of his venture!

Saving Wisley's Ancient Woods

Highways England says it is confident that an agreement can be found to avoid felling trees at RHS Garden, Wisley, as it seeks to improve traffic flow on the M25 and A3.

Among trees under threat is a redwood planted by the Queen in 1977, her Silver Jubilee year. As the Royal Horticultural Society rallied supporters to oppose the proposal, a Highways spokesman said "we fully expect to deliver these improvements in a way that doesn't have anything like the impact that has been predicted. It's too early to say for sure but I would be amazed if we were to require these trees to be cut down as part of the scheme".

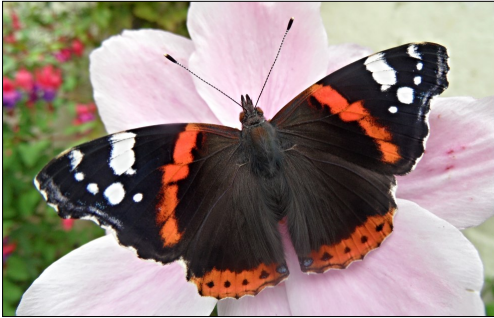
Sue Biggs, Director General of the RHS, says Highways England's plans for a new entrance to Wisley could add seven miles to visitor's journeys. "We urge Highways England to meet the important need to widen the A3 through our suggested alternative plan, which avoids cutting down any of these century-old trees and also provides much simpler access to the garden".

Nearly 130,000 people have signed the 'Save the RHS Garden Wisley' online petition. Go to **bit.ly/Save-RHS-Wisley**

Gardeners' World magazine

Butterfly Bonanza

Red Admiral numbers soared last summer by 75 per cent compared with 2016, according to the Big Butterfly Count. Over 73,000 were seen in the three-week count, the world's largest butterfly survey. Despite the washout summer affecting some species, others have flourished because of the warm spring. The common blue rose by 109 per cent compared with 2016, the comma by 90 per cent and the small copper by 62 per cent.



Butterfly Conservation said a mild winter and warm spring meant some species emerged earlier than usual, while others had peaked by the time of the count.

Gardeners' World magazine

Otter Spotters Needed

It is with regret that I must inform members that the quarterly otter spotting surveys are in danger. Over recent months a number of our regular spotters have had to cease their involvement due to ill health. We desperately need more volunteers if the surveys are to continue.

The leats and river are divided up into sections. Your commitment would be no more than two and half hours, four times a year. There is no guarantee you will see an otter, but you will see where they have been. If you are interested please contact Ed Harradence on 01726 851158.

Otter Spotting

Next Survey dates:

4 - 7 May 2018

13 - 16 July 2018

Please contact Ed Harradence on 01726 851158 for details or if you want to get involved



A Meeting of Two Halves

The January meeting turned out to be a meeting of two halves, when Gill Butler led 11 eager members through making a clay pot without a wheel. After a short demonstration, with the group sitting around a large table, everyone dug in with their hands and started fashioning their own pot by hand from the large piece of clay in front of them, enjoying the creativity. Undeterred by those watching everyone in the group in a relatively short space of time had managed to produce a recognizable pot; the shapes were varied, also the manner in which they had been decorated. Arrangements had been made for Gill to take the pots away at the end of the session and fire them; they will be returned to their owners at the next meeting in March, the cost being borne by 'The Friends'.

Those not involved in pot making sat and chatted and decided that half-time was a good opportunity for teas and coffees to be served, whilst those with mucky hands cleaned up, after which Tracy was on hand to show some of the wood carving and wood turning articles produced by her mother, Margaret Elliott.



Margaret started without any formal tuition apart from reading a few books and later went to classes. We were shown how from a simple drawing on a piece of paper, two cut-out pieces were produced showing front and back of the animal. This

was then transferred as a line drawing onto a block of wood, all before the cutting commenced. Her work was varied, some examples were shown on the table, but there were also many more projected onto the screen, ranging from a small wren, hedgehog, dormouse and goldfinch to a Highland cow, bear and cub, and a wolf; complete with fur or feather markings as appropriate. At times, small pieces of bone had been inserted for decoration in finer details, such as the teeth of the wolf.

A Meeting of Two Halves (cont.)



The type of woods used was also very varied, including lime, apple, ash, laburnum and opepe, an African tropical hardwood. Not only was there a marked difference in the colours between the woods, but where emphasis was needed, Margaret had used various wood polishes to change the colour.

Unfortunately over the years constantly banging away with chisel and hammer, Margaret had found there was wear and tear to her arm, so changed to wood turning, again producing some varied and beautiful pieces, included one with wood rings trapped within the shape, which must have taken a world of patience and time. These were really tactile and most people in the room at one time or another had handled them, just to feel the smoothness and also to marvel at the changes of colour within the one piece of wood.

Margaret had attended several shows over the years with like-minded people, sometimes to sit demonstrating her art, on others just to have the creations on display. Anyone with a further interest would do well to look out for such a show (or part of a show) being advertised and go along and see the tremendous work that is being done.



Hazel Harradence
Photos by Tracy

AGM Chairman's Report, 7 March 2018

2017 will certainly be remembered as a year of celebration. In the first place it was the year in which we learned that the Heritage Lottery bid had been successful. Secondly, our 20th Anniversary was celebrated in grand style thanks to the inspired efforts of our Events Secretary, Tracy Elliot. In addition to this, Tracy organised four other outdoor events and seven talks. She has already prepared the programme for the coming year and beyond, which you should receive with your next newsletter. Tracy also looks after our Facebook page where you can find up-to-date information on events and Volunteer days, including events with other likeminded groups.

Concerning the Heritage Lottery award, we are not entirely “out of the woods” as there are still a few obstacles to be overcome. It was expected that work would commence soon. However, it now seems unlikely that the “Tree Work” around the viaduct, will take place as we move into the nesting season. It should be emphasised that this is one of the few properties that Cornwall Heritage Trust owns, and they have contributed a substantial sum of money in support of the scheme.

Jenny Heskett continues to do sterling work in the valley, and provides opportunities for our membership to assist on “Volunteer Days”. Unfortunately, she is no longer assisted by Josh Davis, as he has left for pastures new.

Ed Harradence has overseen four Otter Surveys throughout the year, with another planned for May. These help the Cornwall Wildlife Trust to gather information about these creatures. The number of spotters has dwindled over years, so Ed would be welcome any new members. Ed also chairs the Valley Partnership which has met five times in the past year. Recent meetings of the Partnership have been taken up with discussion about the development at Rock Mill. Thanks to Cllr. Sue Perry, who has spent much time on this case, I can report favourable developments in which the owner will have to radically rethink his plans.

Chris Tigg continues to edit our new A5 format newsletter, and we are sure you will find it to be an excellent production. Pegasus Printers continue to print the new format. Until such times as our website is updated as part of the HLF award, Chris Tigg, Joan Farmer and I will continue to look after it. We are indebted to Matt Connelly of Iteracy who was able to restore it after it failed during the year, when our host upgraded their system. The website

AGM Chairman's Report, 7 March 2018 (cont.)

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upgrade will be undertaken along with the purchase of a lap-top and projector to assist us with presentations. Chris is also the first point of contact for any website enquiries and we thank him for this work.

After many years as our Treasurer, John Wright is stepping down and we thank him for carrying out this unenviable task. Fortunately Peter Wilkes has offered to take over this post.

Sara Kettle has moved away from the area and we thank her for being our Vice Chairman over the past year. Thanks must go to Stephen Austin our Archivist, Harriet Nott our Membership Secretary, and Roger Smith, our very competent minute secretary, who saves us a small fortune by hand delivering newsletters and AGM notices. Thanks also to Joan Farmer who has completed her first year as Secretary, having taken over from Roger James who stepped down last year.

You will note that the post of Vice Chairman is vacant, but I am hoping that we may be able to fill it when we come to the election of officers and Trustees. There is one other vacancy on the Board.

As we come to the end of our 20th year, can I thank you all for your support as we look forward to the next 20 years.

Jim Cleare

Following the Chairman's and Treasurer's (see pages 12 and 13) Reports, and the election of Officers and Board members, Mandy Case was elected unopposed as Vice-Chairman. We thank her and welcome her enthusiasm to get involved. Should anyone else wish to join our Board of Trustees we still have a vacancy. If you would like to know more, please contact any of the committee for further details.

Pots Await Collection

We would like to remind those that took advantage of demonstrating their creative flair in January, by creating their very own pot (see page 8), that their masterpieces, not collected at our AGM, await collection. Please contact our secretary, Joan Farmer on 01726 852603, to arrange collection. Thank you.

Treasurer's Report, 7 March 2018

Accounts for Year Ending 31 December 2017

Good evening everyone. Tonight I am again able to provide a healthy balance sheet and pass on a sound financial situation to my successor. Unfortunately I have not been able to get our 2017 accounts to our auditor prior to this meeting as some receipts for payments made have only recently reached me. If they are amended in any way I will advise members in the summer newsletter.

As can be seen from the information on the reverse of the balance sheet, membership income is higher than last year. This is almost entirely due to two new life memberships. Otherwise, membership levels are much as before. As we have increased most annual subscriptions for the current year we would hope for this increase to defray our increasing costs. Following our 20th anniversary event we have not had any new members as we did following our 10th anniversary and the Valley becoming part of a World Heritage site. Perhaps the successful completion of the HLF bid for the Valley might encourage membership to pick up again. I would think this unlikely to happen for a couple of years yet. Donations have increased, largely due to one particular member's generosity.

Excluding our 20th anniversary, events income is very low, indicating that hardly any non-members are currently attending. I hope the programme for the next 12 months receives better support. Expenditure on events has increased, even allowing for the costs for Luxulyan Village Hall hire for 2016 being included now that we have finally had a bill. I have shown the 20th Anniversary income and expenditure separately on the balance sheet so that members can see how we benefitted financially from all the hard work put in by Tracy Elliot and all who worked so hard and supported it. Well done and many thanks.

Insurance continues at the lower rate as work parties, etc., are covered under the insurance of Cornwall Council. This is a benefit but we must not overlook this situation in the future.

Newsletter costs are up due to external printing, as forecast in last years report. Without a significant number being distributed electronically and Roger Smith, who has continued to hand deliver a large quantity, this would be greater. Roger's efforts currently save us in the region of £150 a year on postage. Many thanks to all who contribute to and produce the newsletter.

Treasurer's Report, 7 March 2018 (cont.)

We have had unexpected Website costs, mostly to enable maintenance work and up-upgrades to be carried out. We expect to require a major review of the website once we engage with our involvement in the HLF Project but hope the majority of costs for this will come from that grant. We do not have details yet but hope to later this year. Perhaps we will also receive the £200 we spent on Valley Maps for Cornwall Council, when they could not find the funding last year!

In summary, while we have plenty of funds awaiting a suitable project, our annual running costs are still increasing due to the changes noted above. These accounts do not include the cost of the meeting room used by your committee as this bill has not yet been provided to me. If any members who were unable to come to the AGM would like a copy of the balance sheet please contact your committee and one can be sent with your summer newsletter.

Finally, as most will know, I have relinquished my post as treasurer after a long stint that started in 2001, and I have also stood down from the Board of Trustees. I think only Ed Harradence and Roger James have done a longer 'stretch'. I chose this time as I believe a fresh face will benefit The Friends as they take on the challenges that the future indicates. I hope members do not think I have left without reasonable notice as you were only advised in the Winter newsletter but I actually gave notice back in May 2017. I have enjoyed my time as an officer of The Friends and I wish everyone well for the future.

John Wright



Many thanks to our dedicated Volunteers, seen here clearing vegetation from Lady Rashleigh Mine and the Trevanney Dry areas on a wet February day.

Cornwall's Special Marine Life

This was the title of the talk given after the AGM at the March meeting, and truly lived up to its billing. Dr Keith Hiscock is an Associate Fellow at the Marine Biological Association, Plymouth, and has been looking at marine life since he was a child growing up in Ilfracombe. In his adult life, he has spent the past 50 years looking under sea water and recording all the varied life to be found there.

'Special' in Keith's eyes does not only relate to rare and endangered species, but to those that are different, as in colourful, fascinating or interesting. To investigate under water these days, he reckoned that to buy essential equipment would set you back about £3,000 to buy secondhand, so I for one decided I would make do with what he could show us. Marine life surveys cover all the coastline of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and that includes covering the island of Rockall right out in the Atlantic Ocean. Today, many of the current surveys are done in conjunction with recreational divers, who have local knowledge and are a lot cheaper than a professional team. Cornwall Wildlife Trust and its volunteers also form an important part of these surveys.

Seagrass habitats are important areas, found between St Michael's Mount and the mainland, and between Looe Island and the shore, brown forking weed is also found at Marazion, but normally only in Portugal, and species such as Bull Huss and their egg cases.

Encouraging children to explore rock pools is a good way to gain their interest and where they can find crabs, snakelock anemones, blenny fish and rainbow wrack (which is a south-west species). Various stalked jellyfish can be found at low tide attached to seaweed in the west of the county, they are only finger-nail size, and there is a great fluctuation in the size of population.

Looking under boulders can also uncover a wealth of marine life, but be careful how you replace them. Honeycomb worm reefs (at Duckpool, near Bude) tend to get smashed up in winter storms, but regenerate themselves afterwards – proof that nature can often look after itself.

St Piran's crab (named via the Countryfile TV programme) had been missing from our shores, not found between 1986-2016, it made a comeback in Cornwall so was given a Cornish name. The photograph was great for this – something you would recognize if you came across it, but the Celtic sea slug was less memorable. In the winter it hides in cracks and crevices, but basks in the summer sun, again mainly in Cornwall.

Cornwall's Special Marine Life (cont.)

Gooseneck barnacles, harvested from rocks in heavy surf in Portugal, have been found in Cornish waters; thought to have been carried here on driftwood and ocean currents, but proving that local waters are becoming warm enough for such species to survive.

Near Lands End, round the Runnel Stone, fish just wait for the strong currents to wash plankton to them without any effort on their part. The stone is also home to many species and colours of anemones, that also enjoy strong currents and wait for the plankton. It is a popular site for divers. Another such place is Hatt Rock, about 12 miles of the coast at Looe. Again with strong currents, and plenty of anemone species, but also where the Northern Cushion Star can be found, although that needs the much colder water to be found here and may disappear if the water gets warmer.

Sea fingers, carpet coral, scarlet and gold star corals, black-faced blenny – all nationally scarce species, can all be found at Drawna Rocks, Porthkerris, along with the trumpet anemone.

There are at least five nationally rare sponges to be found off the Isles of Scilly. For larger species Keith suggested going to sea with Marine Discovery – a company which operates out of Penzance Harbour and will always find something to see – Basking sharks, dolphins, porpoises, Minke whales, even leather-backed turtles. I have been on a similar trip, but in a RIB out of Falmouth, and can thoroughly recommend the experience.

Keith re-iterated Cornwall Wildlife Trust's involvement in 'Seasearch' and their events along the seashore of Cornwall, both for the information they collect, and the importance of their educational value. There were over 8,500 species of marine life around the coasts of Britain, but now with research using DNA, some of the variations have been found to be entirely new species, so the number will increase as new information comes to light, and this does not include the 90 non-native species that are known to have now established themselves in our waters.

There was a great deal of information to be absorbed during the evening, but even the little I was able to collect for this article shows what a wealth we have here in Cornwall, and how important it is to record, educate and preserve. For more information about this fascinating and 'special' underwater world, see Keith Hiscock's book, 'Exploring Britain's Hidden World'

Hazel Harradence

The Friends of Luxulyan Valley Membership

If you are not already a member of the Friends of Luxulyan Valley, then why not join us? If you are a member, thank you, but have you ever considered giving a gift of a years Membership to a relative or friend?

Membership runs from April to March and allows you to attend most activities free of charge (there may be a charge for those activities which require an entrance fee, or incur some other cost), and provides you with a quarterly newsletter. In addition, it will give you the satisfaction of participating in the preservation of our beautiful valley.

The current Annual Membership rates are:

<i>Individual.....£8</i>	<i>Junior (under 16).....£1</i>
<i>Joint.....£10</i>	<i>Family.....£12</i>
<i>Corporate.....£25</i>	<i>Individual Life Membership.....£75</i>

Application forms are available on our website, or contact our Membership Secretary:

Ms Harriet Nott, 75 Stannary Road, Stenalees, St. Austell, Cornwall, PL26 8SW.

Telephone: 01726 850735

Email: harri@ygorow.plus.com

Full details about all our events, and much more, can be found on our website:

www.luxulyanvalley.co.uk

We're also on facebook



Friends of Luxulyan Valley

We want to hear from you

Please supply your articles, letters and/or photographs by 5 June 2018 to

Chris at: folv@btinternet.com

Committee Contacts

Jim Cleare, <i>Chairman</i> -	01726 850553	
Mandy Case, <i>Deputy Chair</i> -	07779 358120	
Peter Wilkes, <i>Treasurer</i> -	01726 64693	
Joan Farmer, <i>Secretary</i> -	01726 852603	joanfarmer38@gmail.com
Harriet Nott, <i>Membership Sec.</i> -	01726 850735	
Tracy Elliott, <i>Events Secretary</i> -	01208 831961	
Sales -	01726 850553	