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Keer *to* Kent

The Journal of the Arnside / Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust



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TRADITIONAL HEDGER

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RESTORING THE RIVER KEER

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Keer *to* Kent

The Journal of the Arnside/Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Landscape Trust

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Editorial

Well done!

A glance through the pages of this issue will give you some idea of the number of projects completed in the past year. It is amazing how much has been achieved in our AONB. With foresight, fundraising and fortitude, all these dreams have come to fruition. Not all of the projects have been Countryside Management Service led, but frequently there has been an overlap, and co-operation the key factor.

We are fortunate to have so many local people with the vision to care for our heritage and to think of the future.

Barry Ayre

Editor

Planning a Lottery Application

-Help is available in a new booklet called **'Village and Community Halls - Guidance from the National Lottery distributing bodies'.** Copies can be requested from The Sports Council Regional Office on 0191 384 9595

Greed can be seen more clearly in a landscape than on a man's face

Landscape Trust AGM

Over 50 members attended the AGM held at Warton Village Hall on May 1st, (a changed venue due to the election). Chairman, Ralph Henderson reported on another very active and successful year; membership had increased to 762. The Events Committee had been responsible for another excellent programme of lectures. The topics of bats, badgers and deer had ensured good attendances, as did the outdoor events. The Trust had celebrated its 10th anniversary, with our President, Sir Sanderson Temple cutting the celebratory cake. 'Keer to Kent' continued to be produced to a high standard (the Editor having become more computer literate!).

The main project undertaken during the year had been the purchase and opening of Trowbarrow to the public for quiet recreation. It was also a mecca for rock climbers. Much work had been carried out to tidy the quarry up and to make it safe. Ralph thanked the volunteer work force who had undertaken many tasks during the previous twelve months.

Countryside Management Officer, Ian Henderson, spoke about the many other projects that had been undertaken including work at Storth Cutting, Bankwell, Guard Hill and Greenbank - Storth, Hale Pottery, and Warton Crag.

The Management Committee were re-elected for a further term of office. Members approved minor amendments to the constitution enabling one third of the committee to retire or seek re-election each year.

The evening was rounded off with a joint slide presentation by Ian Henderson and Ralph Henderson on 'The History of Trowbarrow'.

Landscape Trust events

Coffee Morning - 12 March

With any new venture you can never predict with certainty how it will turn out. One of the Landscape Trust's new events this year was a coffee morning held at the AONB Office in Arnside. So it was, with a feeling of uncertainty, that I made my way to the office. The day was overcast and wet - not an auspicious beginning.

When I got there, preparations were in full swing, tables moved, coffee cups lined up, bric-a-brac stall assembled, waiting for the 10 o'clock start. People came, many drawn no doubt by the unusual attraction of, 'bring a tool and have it sharpened'. Roy and Mark, ensconced in the workshop, tackled a large array of tools from secateurs to shears. Back in the office, the raffle, stall, coffee and biscuits were doing brisk business. A steady influx of people renewed old acquaintances and made new friends. For some, this was their first visit to the office and they were surprised and impressed with what was on offer. By noon, the last visitors had departed, the clearing-up was well underway and monetary reckoning begun. The event made over £80 with around 45 people through the doors.

A big thank you to all the volunteers and people who attended, who made this a most successful and enjoyable event.

Christine Bennett

Dowsing and Water divining at Beetham Hall Farm

About 20 members, joined by some representatives of the Paranormal Society, arrived for the morning session. We did not know what to expect but Jim Longton immediately made it clear that we were in for a very lively and entertaining day. He extended the scope of dowsing right through the alphabet of human activity from archaeology and burglary to water and then switched to health care from arthritis to warm hands.

By then he had lined us up along an energy line inside a bronze age stone circle he identified in the field near the hall. We all had to raise our hands above our heads (in surrender?) to feel the warmth of the energy field. Fortunately the sheep that were about to lamb had been kept in the barn, well out of sight of this strange spectacle of twenty country-clad, conventionally respectable citizens in a ragged line, waving their arms in the air. New age behaviour in old age habits. I do not know how the sheep reacted as I had to leave for lunch, feeling rather...sheepish.

George Steele
Sandside

Dowsing with Jim Longton

What is dowsing all about? What can it do for us? What can it tell us? Do we believe the evidence of our eyes? What evidence?

Well, we had the opportunity to pose some of those questions in a two-session demonstration of dowsing-in-the-field given by Mr Jim Longton of Chorley on Friday the 14th of March. The first session is commented on by George Steele, and over lunch (taken in the 'solarium' at Beetham Hall Farm), Jim kept the gathering interested with anecdotal accounts of his dowsing experiences.

Various members of the group had armed themselves with 'dowsing tools' of various materials and these being supplemented with 'tailor-made' rods supplied by Jim.

The afternoon session got under way with a demonstration of looking for underground water, and Jim pointed out the locations of two wells in the vicinity, using his dowsing rod. Indeed, at ground-level there were the remains of well-heads. Others participating with their own rods also had the eerie sensation of their rods turning to indicate the location of the wells at their behest. Other lost and unseen features of the land around, from way back in history, were located and described by Jim. "Where is the route of the old Roman road?" "It's over there", said Jim. Was it? Had there been a Roman road in the locality? Just above the farm in the field an ancient church site was located and its dimensions and layout determined. Had it been there, had it been of wooden construction? And so on.

In the next pasture we found the location of a Roman villa. Five people did so, separately and independently. Or did they? And onwards to the next location... rods bravely to the fore.

Here we found the bounds of the actual Roman road (dimensionally correct). AND, Jim told us that no less than Hadrian had actually traversed that road. Or had he? Later the location of a Roman bathhouse was determined, separately and independently by five people again. Had there been one there? Logically possible as an ancillary to the 'Villa' only a bare two hundred yards away!

What is the rate of flow of the Bela at the time of the demonstration? Jim had an answer. Such a determination would be required of a dowser bringing home the bacon (sorry, the water) for a client who wanted to drill a well and be assured of a sufficient output. Clever stuff this dowsing. But, the water diviner with his hazel wand would be expected to locate a sufficiently productive source, wouldn't he?

And what about energy lines? There are good ones and bad ones! Did you know that with dowsing you can convert bad ones to good ones? The result, a much more amenable and healthy environment in which to live. You can even sleep better. Have a go at dowsing. Get a rod and enjoy the improvements that you can produce.

Much else was talked about and mulled over, but where is the proof of what we had 'found'? The proof of the pudding is in the digging. I do know that Jim Longton dowsed the location of a hoard of silver of considerable value, in a field of which he had no previous knowledge. What price dowsing, or did the fairies guide him?

On a final note, there were those who thought that there might be something in this dowsing lark. One actually demonstrated that even when the rod was isolated from his hand by leather gloves, the 'fluence' was still there. So please be prepared to be tolerant and understanding when you happen upon one of us, anorak clad and wellie shod, walking through a field chunnering and muttering at a piece of wire... or rather, at a dowsing rod. Don't, please, send for the men in white coats!

Don't knock it... there may be fairies at the bottom of the garden, or a hoard of gold or silver!

The day concluded at Beetham Hall Farm where a vote of thanks was offered along with warm appreciation of the great interest and provoking of thought that Jim had so kindly given to us.

Bill Huddleston
Slackhead

Many thanks to Tony and Mavis Gibson at Beetham Hall Farm for their hospitality and for allowing us to wander over their land.

Editor

An Arnside Village Bus?

Arnside is the largest village in the AONB both in terms of population and in the distance from its centre to the far flung outer edges. It is also well known for the steepness of its hills - a challenge which helps to keep its senior citizens fit but when they are loaded with shopping in the pouring rain it can be quite daunting.

The Village Society is working with the Parish Council to explore the possibility of commissioning a village mini-bus service which would link the edges of the village with the shops and the station. Of course there are buses to Kendal and trains to more exotic places but a recent survey of residents showed that there would be significant support for a mini-bus within the village. After all, anything which cuts down parking problems, helps the village shops and helps Arnside to keep up with Silverdale should be a good thing.

Landscape Trust events (continued)

Stream dipping

It was with some excitement that on a fine April evening, around twenty people, young and old, joined Helen Hamilton in a field just beyond Creep-i'-th'-call Bridge near Hazelslack, along with stream dipping equipment.

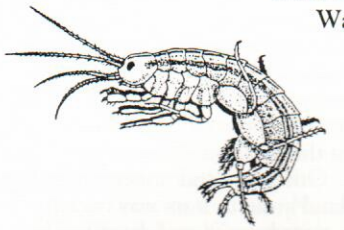
From here we followed the footpath across fresh pastures and over well maintained stiles, to cross Leighton Beck by a splendid stone slab bridge recently reconstructed by the Countryside Management Service. This beck was our objective for this evening. We spread out the dipping equipment and Helen handed out illustrated information sheets for identifying the stream macro-invertebrates which we hoped to find. These were:- Larvae of Mayfly, Blackfly, Diving Water beetles, Cranefly, Non-biting midge and Hoverfly, also Nymphs of Stonefly, Dragonfly and Damselfly, which look quite like the adult insects. There also might be Freshwater shrimps, Water boatmen, Water snails, Square-tailed worms and Freshwater hoglouse. The hoglouse crawls on the bottom of ponds or streams, eating both living and dead plant matter, and is pollution tolerant, as also are the larvae of the Cranefly, Non-biting midge and Hoverfly. The presence of these four can indicate water impurity. We also hoped to find some of the smaller macro-invertebrates, namely Water fleas 0.2 to 10mm long (small but important because they consume algae and provide food for predators in turn), Seed-shrimps only 0.2 to 7mm in size which scuttle through underwater vegetation, and Water mites 0.5 to 2mm in size, which can swim using bristles on their legs and live off other aquatic invertebrates. Helen explained that streams and ponds have fairly balanced communities, where all the animals and plants depend on each other. They are all important in the food chain.

To start the proceedings, some clear stream water was poured into several white steep-sided trays to receive our catch. Helen waded into the shallow water of the narrow stream and showed us the technique for sampling, by placing the net downstream, and treading and kicking in the water upstream of the net. She was aiming to release some of the invertebrates and plants in the mud under the stones on the bed of the stream, as well as those in the upper layers of the water.

The result, when poured into the white sample trays, excited us all. There were many of the macro-invertebrates that we had read about on our information sheets. There were the tiny Water mites swimming amongst the larger Mayfly larvae with their three-pronged tails, size 4 to 35mm, and Cranefly larvae, (being fat fleshy grubs up to 50mm long, resembling a garden leather jacket), and different again were the Water beetle and the Water snail moving around. The Caddis larva was in a case made of stones, leaves and twigs, an irregular oblong shape. The Stonefly larva had a cylindrical body, with long antennae, two tails and two pairs of wing buds. We were told that some of the larvae and nymphs are carnivorous and some are vegetarian. We used a hand lens to study the variety of size, shape, movement and habit of the creatures in the stream and gained a new insight into its life. Further samples were taken in different places along the stream with more surprising finds - even a small fish.

In such a short time, we had been transported into another world, and we were all grateful to Helen for a very enjoyable and interesting evening.

Alice Evans
Warton



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Institute of Freshwater Ecology

On Tuesday 20th May, members visited the Institute, which is situated in beautiful surroundings on the shore of Lake Windermere. A party of around twenty was given an enthusiastic welcome by the Institute Director, Professor Alan Pickering, together with three of his team of scientists, and for the next two hours we were treated to a fascinating insight into the research work in progress. The Institute is funded directly by the Natural Environment Research Council, (NERC), and in addition undertakes much research for private commercial organisations.

Alan Pickering commenced with a slide show for the whole group, dealing with a growing pollution problem on Lake Windermere from the 1970's until 1990, mainly due to increased pressure from tourism, and aggravated by the construction of a sewage treatment works on the south eastern shore of the lake. Apparently septic tanks were decidedly more eco-friendly than the treated effluent produced by the sewage farm, which discharged a high concentration of phosphorus compounds into the lake. These nutrient agents created ideal conditions to promote algae blooms and the spread of blanket weed, particularly in the southern half of the lake. These plants, on decomposition by bacterial action, caused alarming drops in oxygen levels at lower levels in the lake, threatening the fish populations, in particular the rare species of charr, which is fished commercially. North West Water, on the advice of the Institute, installed phosphorus stripping plant at the treatment works in 1991, since when a rapid recovery in oxygen levels, and char population, has been monitored up to 1995 and subsequent years. The spread of algae and blanket weed was checked almost immediately, and is no longer a serious problem.

The group was afterwards divided into three sub-groups, to be introduced to the more intimate world of the laboratory, and were shown in turn three separate aspects of the work in progress. Sue Brown gave us a glimpse of the microscopic world of microbiology, single cell organisms, some mimicking animal life and others plants. The Institute boasts a collection of 220 species of protozoa (animals) and 800 species of algae (plants) from around the world, and we were able to see samples through a powerful light microscope linked to a video camera. Sue presented a vivid and fascinating commentary on her test tube "zoo", and achieved the impossible by making this difficult subject understandable to the lay audience.

We were then invited into "Ken's Cave", the basement, housing two electron microscopes, ably supervised by Ken Clarke, who demonstrated the technical wizardry of these particular machines. The larger of the two had a magnification capability of 250,000 times, and produced a 3-D image of the specimen. Photographic enlargement allowed a total magnification of 2,500,000 times, and there were large photographs on the walls showing sections of single cell protozoa. At this scale partially digested bacteria in the stomach parts appeared about 3 inches long. I was particularly interested in the super accurate "bacon slicer", which can cut specimen sections down to a thickness of 0.00006 millimetres. This accuracy produces a thousand slices from a single cell protozoa.

Finally we came back to a human scale, to be shown several species of fish by Tom Pottinger, whose responsibility they are. Rainbow and brown trout, carp and roach are bred in separate tanks, in order to study their physiology, disease susceptibility, growth rates and other factors. As a non fishing person I learned quite a lot, and the studies here contribute much to both the leisure and commercial fishing industries.

We then re-grouped to enjoy coffee and biscuits, whilst our hosts were happy to answer questions, until it was time to rush for the last ferry across the lake as dusk fell. Altogether a most enjoyable visit, and to be heartily recommended.

Fred Robinson
Warton

Trowbarrow Local Nature Reserve

Chairman of The Landscape Trust, Ralph Henderson, welcomed guests to the official opening on the 6th of June . He explained how very satisfying it was to be able to walk around the 36 acre site of the former quarry and works, and to know that he was not trespassing any more! The obvious repair and proper maintenance of boundaries, new paths etc. were all an indication of the care that had been, and will be given to this new official Nature Reserve.

When some 18 months ago it was suggested that he and the Landscape Trust should undertake the task of securing the site for the benefit of the AONB, it seemed a daunting task. Raising the funds might have seemed to be the most obvious challenge, but the bureaucracy surrounding the search for a future caring owner, had been just as difficult a problem to resolve.

He expressed a heartfelt thankyou to all those hundreds of donors who had responded to the appeal, to the British Mountaineering Council and the Chris Brasher Trust who had given it national recognition, for the support from officials in English Partnership and Lancaster City Council, without whom the project would have failed, and finally to the City Councillors who had the vision to take on the responsibility.



Mayor of Lancaster City Council, Cllr. Mrs. Hilda Shuttleworth accompanied by her consort Mr. George Shuttleworth (right), responding to the handing over of Trowbarrow to the City Council by Chairman of the Landscape Trust, Ralph Henderson (left).

For many years it had been said that the Landscape Trust should 'do something more than the programme they currently do', and this despite the fact that they are already the best AONB support group in the country. Trowbarrow had been a very good example of how the Trust had been able to use its position in the AONB to enable the creation of this new Nature Reserve.

Cumbria Village of the Year

Awards 1997

Medium Village
701 - 1500 population.

Storth (Sandside Cutting)
Joint 2nd place £100
plus
Friends of the Lake District
award for
Environmental Innovation
£200

Richard Harwood, one of the competition judges commented:-

"The competition for Cumbria Village of the Year, emphasises the concept of the village community working together. This is essential if villages are to remain viable in the future.

Friends of the Lake District strongly endorse this concept and have awarded prizes for special environmental projects. One of these has been given to Storth for the project to clear the railway cutting and make a public footpath along the line of the old railway.

The scheme, which originated with the parish council, involved many members of the local community and has made a significant improvement to the landscape for the benefit of all. It has combined public access with conservation and the use of local skills.

It may well act as a catalyst for future projects."

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Austrian Nights re-commence in September

Letters to the Editor

Lime Kilns

I refer to the recent articles in 'Keer to Kent' on lime kilns, which reminded me of this little snippet.

I was told that lime drawers, who were the men responsible for taking the lime away from under the kiln, used to suffer quite severe burns. Although they tended to use their shovels in a gentle way, the lime dust still came into contact with sweat in the various creases in their arms and legs. The moisture and the burnt lime reacted and caused the burns.

It was however, noticed, that some of the lime drawers did not suffer as much as others. When this was analysed by the men they came to the conclusion that the sheep farmers or men who handled sheep, were the ones who suffered least. It was then discovered that the oil given off by the sheep tended to stop the burning. Thus it came about that lanolin, the fatty matter from sheep's wool, was used to great effect to stop the problem. It was eventually made readily available by the quarry owners for all workers who came into contact with burnt lime.

Gordon Clark
Arnside

Old Parson Nab

I have just seen the two references in the Spring issue of your fascinating magazine, to what would seem to be one of my predecessors, "Old Parson Nab". I find some odd discrepancies! If J. A. Barnes published/wrote "All around Arnside" in 1933, and claims that "Parson Nab" was "at Silverdale a couple of generations ago", then, at 25 years to a generation, "Nab" should have been here circa 1850. About that time our records show that three different Curates lived in the house on Cove Road, Silverdale, shown on the 1845 O.S. map as "The Parsonage", which later became "The Vicarage" and was so until 1985. None of these would seem to answer to "Nab". Thomas Smythe was here from 1837-48, then for one year we had Edward Walker, followed by Alfred Hadfield, who later became the first Vicar of Silverdale.

I venture to suppose that anybody living in that house must have had a reasonable income from the living, for, built in 1839, it had a small "Coach House" and stabling for two horses, or ponies.

However if "a couple" is taken as a rough estimate, and could mean "three", then we could put "Parson Nab" around 1825. Here I can offer some possibilities. Not "Nab" however. In 1807 there arrived a man who in due course, if not before his arrival, is said to have married the daughter of the local builder. The builder is reputed to have provided a wedding present in the form of a house, (still extant on The Row), which served as a parsonage house until the old Parsonage/Vicarage was provided. This Parson was RICHARD KNAGG, who served the "chapelry" from 1807 to 1820. I suppose the son-in-law of the builder may well have been coerced into helping in the family business by doing a little quarrying for a consideration! However I do not know how much time he might have had for quarrying, as I believe that, as his predecessors for a "couple of centuries" were also required to teach the village youngsters, so might he have been "Curate and Schoolmaster". The Schoolroom was, until the church was rebuilt in 1829, below the rear balcony of the church, but with no connecting door inside.

I would be interested to hear of any further detail your readers may be able to provide about the church and school in Silverdale in that early part of the last century; and was there another "Parson Nab" of whom we have no record? I wonder!

Richard Masheder
Vicar of Silverdale

Arnside remembered

We much enjoy 'Keer to Kent'- I was born in Arnside in 1926 in a school house belonging to Alwyn College - the house was called Kingswood on Redhills Road and the school was above on High Knott Road. My grandparents Jane and Charles Robinson lived in the house on the promenade opposite the fountain which is now the Stonegate Guest House. Charles was the organist and choirmaster at St James Church. My parents moved away in 1928 but during the war I returned for the duration to live with Jane and Charles and so I have very happy memories of Arnside. I still keep in touch with Jean Whitaker (née Nelson) of Plantation Avenue. Her father managed the District Bank.

My husband and I often call on our way to Grange to visit relatives and he loves the area also.

I used to travel each day to Ulverston Grammar School as opposed to Kendal High School - my father thought a co-educational school would be better for me! There were many distractions but I survived!!

Congratulations on all your efforts for the AONB.

Joan Cutts (née King)
Chapel-en-le-Frith
High Peak

Elisabeth Brockbank

In the last edition of 'Keer to Kent' I read about Elisabeth Brockbank. My mother was a quaker and as a child of four in 1932 I visited the studios in Yealand with my parents. She was to paint a portrait of my mother and myself, so we went for several sittings and she took photographs to help her paint when we were not available.

I have the portrait at home (not a miniature). My mother had the portrait re-framed to suit her personal taste, but Miss Brockbank was very cross because she said that it made it unsuitable for exhibition purposes!

Keep up the good work with 'Keer to Kent' which we thoroughly enjoy!

Florence Cook
Wilpshire
Blackburn

New path

A new path is being built by the National Trust on Townfields beside the Cove Road, Silverdale. I have measured it with a trundle wheel. It is 62 metres long and 1.5 metres wide. It is a permissive path, not a right of way. National Trust volunteers and a local resident have spent 450 hours digging post holes 1 metre deep into the rock, digging the path and laying limestone chippings. A waller has repaired 10 metres of wall and a fencing contractor is putting up 60 metres of fence and a new field gate. Then a hedge of hawthorn, ash and hazel will be planted.

Amelia Harvey (age 8)
Silverdale

Arnside Ramblers held a charity fund-raising walk on 28th June across the Leven Estuary from Ulverston via Chapel Island to Flookburgh. The beneficiaries this year will be The Trowbarrow Appeal and The Woodland Trust. More about Arnside Ramblers in the next issue.

How do you set a sundial to read the correct time?

First, the plate must be perfectly horizontal and the gnomen, the bit that casts the shadow, set at the correct angle for your latitude.

For example York/Lancaster, 54 deg., Newcastle/Carlisle, 55 deg.

Then set your watch to solar time on the day you set the sundial. This is Greenwich Mean Time, plus or minus the equation given in a nautical almanac, available in your local library.

At noon on your adjusted watch, set the dial so the shadow falls on the XII mark.

So now you know - easy isn't it!

Even more limekilns

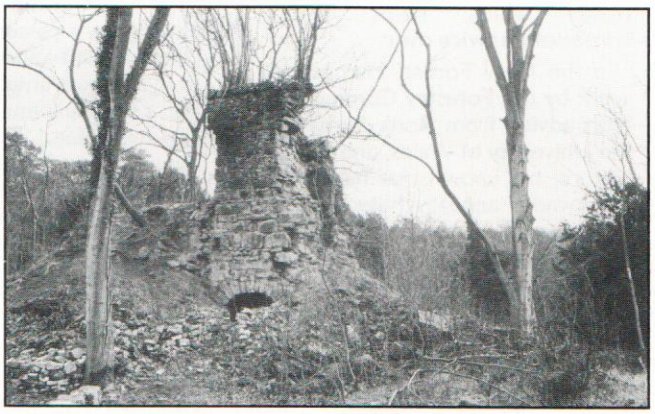
Further to the recent articles on limekilns in 'Keer to Kent' by Louise Whitehead and Paul Barker, I would like to draw readers' attention to the survey of the AONB undertaken by the Lancaster University Archaeological Unit in 1993.

Additional limekiln sites do exist in a more ruinous condition, and others recorded on early OS maps may be well preserved but the Unit was unable to visit them because of access restriction. As Louise Whitehead intimated they are worthy of conservation because they are an important feature of the AONB's industrial history.

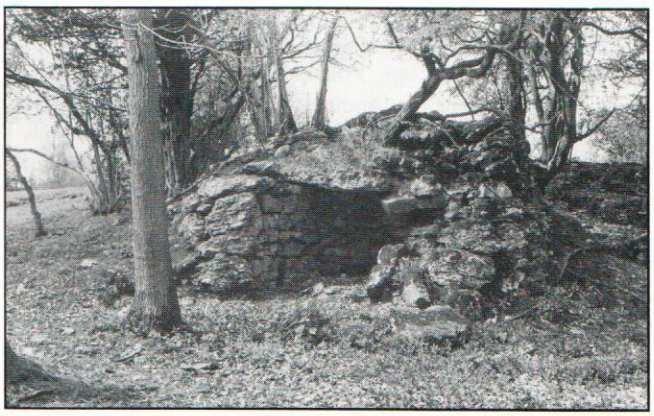
Dr Richard Newman
Lancaster University

Photographs courtesy of John Fielding









Top right
Coldwell Lime Works
SD 4759 7795

Middle right
Peter Lane,
Yealand Conyers
SD 500 739

Bottom right
Coldwell Lane,
Near Gait Barrows
SD 481 778

Bottom left
Scout Crag,
New Road, Warton
SD 483 726

Please note:-
Some lime kilns are on private land.

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Use bracken, for peat's sake

Bracken is being turned from enemy to friend...

Landowners suffering from an invasion of bracken can at last strike back at the much-disliked fern - and produce a potentially lucrative result which helps nature conservation twice over.

In the New Forest, Hampshire, work by the Forestry Commission, with advice from Rona Pitman of the University of Wales, and English Nature, has shown that harvesting the invader annually helps clear it permanently from an area. Subsequent composting of the cuttings is providing an effective substitute for peat, so easing the pressure on this scarce habitat.

Bracken covers an area of Britain almost the size of Yorkshire and is advancing at the rate of one to three per cent a year, according to the Bracken Advisory Commission, based near Marlborough, Wiltshire.

It spreads by extending its underground rhizome network and by releasing spores. Its dense cover and thick die-off litter make it impossible for other plants to grow. "Left unchecked, bracken destroys the Forest's common grazing land and chokes our internationally important heathland," says Neil Hill, English Nature Conservation Officer for the New Forest, Hampshire.

Work in the New Forest has involved cutting and collecting 40 hectares of green bracken and bracken litter by forage harvester. Doing this over two or three years weakens bracken growth and the plants can then be eradicated by spraying.

Composting is done in large mounds which are turned several times. The heat generated destroys bracken spores and produces a compost (about 1,000 cubic metres this year) that is bought by the trailer load by local people and a nursery.

"It's been a successful conservation management ploy and, of course, an effective substitute for peat," says Dick Mihalop, District Forester, Forestry Management and Planning, with the Forestry Commission in the New Forest.

Ticks and what to do about them

As a person who creeps about the undergrowth stalking deer on the Arnside and Silverdale peninsular, I get a lot of ticks on myself, particularly on my calves. On occasions I have had to remove as many as 40-50 from each leg, and nearly as many from the dogs.

The most important thing to say is 'do not worry' because cases of Lyme disease are **extremely rare.** There are a number of ways to remove ticks. The castor bean tick, the one usually encountered, has a complicated life cycle, but at two stages, the larval and the adult, it tries to suck blood from a passing host. To do this it climbs a plant and waits to be brushed off onto a passing animal. It injects with the bite a small amount of anti-coagulant and anti-histamine. The simplest method of removal is to brush them off before the tick manages to bury its head in one's skin, or to comb them from the dogs' fur. If the tick has already buried its head, then the quickest way is simply to grip the tick between the nails of two fingers and to give it an **anti-clockwise** twist and pull. I do not know why it should be a "widdershins" twist and pull, but it works. Alternatively spirit can be applied (externally unfortunately), but from a small glass inverted a number of times over the tick until it releases its grip, when the remainder of the contents can be applied (internally) as medicine. The very tiny (usually black) larval ticks can often simply be rubbed off. I do mine in the bath, the time for all such close inspections! The important thing is to try not to leave the tick's head in one's skin which increases the risk of an infection. If this does happen just apply some ordinary anti-septic cream. After removal the bite may itch for a short period so apply some anti-histamine if desired.

If, and only if, a spreading red ring appears around the bite site, analogous to a ringworm, you should go to a doctor straight away and say you suspect you have Lyme disease from a tick bite. There will be inflammation in a joint (usually the nearest) to the bite site, and other 'flu-like' symptoms. It is treatable with a cocktail of antibiotics.

Nigel Pickering

Member of The British Deer Society

Who baas wins!

Sheep looking for the greener grass on the other side of the fence are using Commando techniques to get over cattle grids in a village in the New Forest. Apparently they elect one of their number to lie on the cattle grid while others scramble over her and into lusher pastures.

Money for jam (or marmalade)!

As a result of an appeal in the Autumn issue of 'Keer to Kent', Wendy Grayburn of Silverdale received nearly 400 jam jars and the Landscape Trust received 4p per jar in return. Wendy is still in need of clean 1lb jars to keep her home made marmalade production line going. You can leave your jars at the Arnside office



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(ON THE ULTRAFLEX ESTATE, FROM LANCASTER ON CATON ROAD, LEFT TURN AFTER THE SHELL GARAGE)

History of local postcards

by Mike Moon

Picture postcards came about and evolved as a means of communication, and eventually as a collectable item, as a result of the coming together of a number of factors. Principally these were the timely arrival of an inexpensive postal service, the development of photographic images and, in the North, the famous "Wakes Weeks".

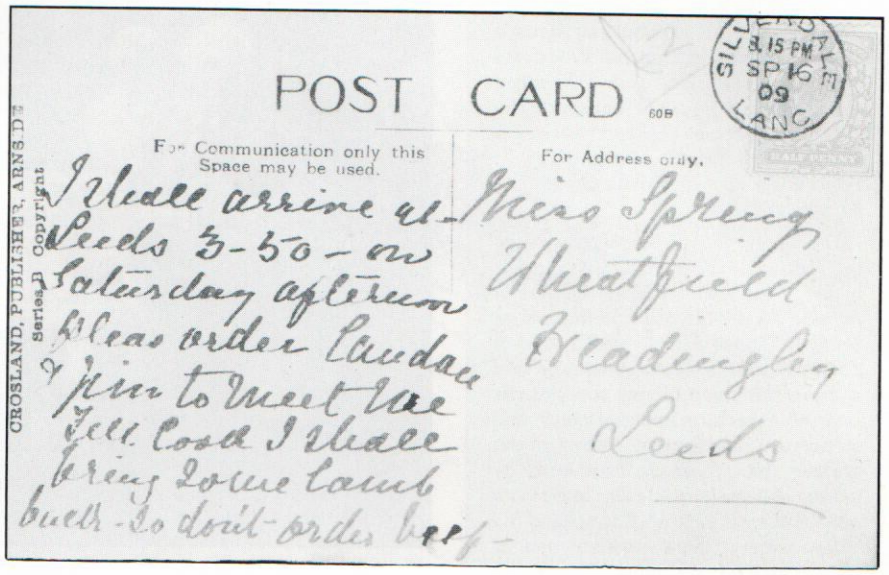
Postal history goes back to well before 1635, but this year saw the first public service established by Royal Proclamation. The Post Office came into being in 1657 and mail coaches started running in 1784. The first stamp, the penny black, arrived during 1840. Because of the massive increase in use, services were rapidly extended. Post-boxes arrived in 1855 and postcards in 1870, but not quite as we know them now.

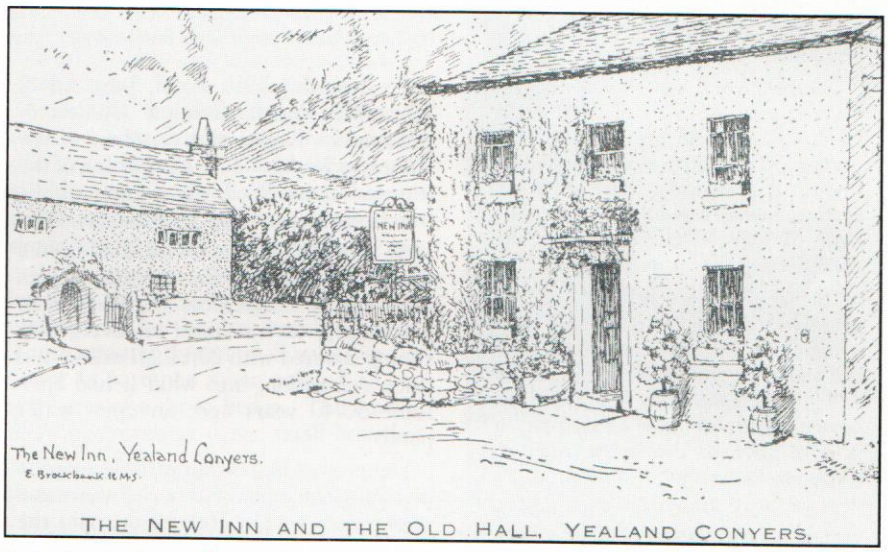
Postcards are cards, with space for a written message, that can be sent through the post without an envelope.

The inventor of postcards was Emmanuel Hermann of Vienna who in 1869 proposed a "postal telegram" sent at a lower fee than a normal letter within an envelope. The first picture postcard was produced in 1894. Early cards had the picture and a short message on the back with the front reserved for the address. However from 1902, picture postcards were allowed with the picture on the front, obviously a much more suitable shape and format for photographs, with the address and message on the reverse. At half an old penny for postage they became very popular. In 1908/09 860 million postcards passed through the post, and the business was still expanding. Besides this there were all the unused cards that went straight into collectors' albums. All this continued until 1918 when the cost of the stamp was doubled to a penny thus heralding the end of the postcard era. Postcards remained popular but not in the same quantities. Besides, by now the motor car and the telephone were well established.

Photography

In 1838 Niepce and Daguerre produced the first Daguerreotype camera photograph. However this was a single image process not capable of further reproduction. In 1841 Fox-Talbot invented the process that allowed a negative and a positive image, thus heralding the arrival of photographs almost as we know them today. In 1879 the photogravure printing process was established and in 1880 photographs were reproduced by a newspaper in New York. Developments in camera and film technology came thick and fast leading to significantly reduced exposure times. The Kodak No 1 camera came on the scene in 1889.





Yealand artist Elisabeth Brockbank produced a series of local postcards in the 1930's including the above, which were published by J.W. Lambert of Settle

Colour was already around in basic form by the turn of the century. The first 35 mm camera, the Leica, was launched in 1924 and colour film became readily available in 1942.

Thus it became possible to send to Leeds or Bradford, a pretty picture postcard of Silverdale, with the following message. "Will be coming home from holiday on the 3-45pm from Silverdale today. Please meet me at the station." This card was posted and franked in Silverdale at 7-45am, counter stamped at Bradford at 3-15pm and presumably delivered at about 5.00pm.

Local Photographers circa 1900 to 1940

Many early cards are by F. Crosland from Arnside. He is not mentioned in Bulmers Gazette of 1912. James D. Wilson also of Arnside was the postmaster (c 1908) and famous for his Lilyland numbered series. Other early local photographers were Josiah Simcoe (1855-1928) from Kendal and Sutcliffe from Burton-in-Kendal. Mr. J. E. Lacey, Silverdale Post Office, appeared on the scene about 1915, though early cards seem rare. Publishers such as Matthews from Bradford, who produced some excellent work, were on the scene in the 1920's as were Atkinson & Pollitt from Kendal. Other publishers of post cards worked out of Lancaster, Morecambe and Skipton but as the years went by they came from all over the place, notably F. Frith and Co. Reigate, Surrey, not forgetting famous firms like Tucks and Judges.

If you have any more information to add to the above, it would be most gratefully received. Any dates would in particular be most useful. ❑

Dobshall Wood and Meadow

Following the Woodland Trust's recent purchase of Dobshall Wood and Meadow at Arnside, over a hundred members of the public accepted the Trust's invitation to a guided walk round it on 22nd May, followed by a celebration drink afterwards at the Arnside W I Hall.

The purchase was made possible by the success of a local fundraising appeal by the Trust with the active support of Arnside Parish Council and the Village Society. The appeal yielded a total of £37,000 - sufficient to purchase the land and provide some money towards the cost of necessary improvements and subsequent maintenance. Although the greater part was contributed by individual Arnside residents, (aside from donations by the Parish Council and the Village Society), there were a number of donations from residents living in the other villages in the AONB, as well as one from the Landscape Trust, and some from much further afield.

Dobshall Wood and Meadow covers 4.1 hectares, and is situated off Knott Lane, which is the main access road leading from Redhills Road to Arnside Knott. It provides a most attractive landscape when viewed from the public right of way which runs along the northern edge of the meadow.

The wood is protected by a tree preservation order but there have been a number of planning applications over the years for the development of the site. Its acquisition by the Trust will ensure that it will never be built on. It is now open to the public and will remain so for all time.

The whole area has been heavily grazed but the animals have now been removed for the time being to enable the ground flora, which is very diverse, to develop and be recorded.

The woodland appears to have been actively managed in the past, probably for centuries, as hazel coppice with oak standards but including some ash, sycamore, holly, hawthorn, and two magnificent wild cherries. Numerous silver birches have grown from seed when the wood was last coppiced. There are many tree seedlings but, due to the heavy grazing pressure, these have not been able to develop to eventually replace the existing matured trees.

All the common plants associated with an old woodland site in this area are present and the show of primroses in early May is almost certainly the finest in the AONB.

The difficult long term management challenge will be to retain the show of primroses and other flowers and at the same time allow the tree regeneration to develop. ❑

Bank Well restoration completed



Ian Henderson, Countryside Management Officer, presenting a commemorative picture of Bank Well to John Eden, Silverdale Parish Council Chairman. Also pictured are Jim Bolton, Joanne Hayhurst (Rural Action), Cyril Beckford and Harry Hall (Clerk to the Parish Council).

On Saturday 19th April, John Eden, Silverdale Parish Council Chairman, welcomed villagers and members of the volunteer workforce to the opening of the restored Bank Well, an ancient public watering place on The Row at Silverdale.

He recalled that the project had been a wonderful enterprise starting with an idea from Parish Councillors (Jim Bolton in particular), to transform an overgrown swamp covered with 20ft high willow and thick vegetation, into what it had been some 30/40 years ago, an open water pond.

The project had begun in 1994 under a phased scheme planned over 3 years and undertaken by Ian Henderson, and the Countryside Management Service

All the work would not have been possible without funding from Rural Action and a bequest from the Landscape Trust. But the essential element had been Ian Henderson and his band of volunteers led by Tony Riden, who had expended so much energy on this and other tasks within the AONB.

Local residents from The Row had also been involved. As part of a Duke of Edinburgh Scheme, Laurel Truscott and Roz Wilson had laid some 70 metres of footpath, by wheelbarrowing tons of limestone scalpings to spread where needed.

He felt sure that all those who visited this lovely tranquil area would be grateful for the transformation that had been carried out to restore this ancient watering place and woodland owned by the Silverdale Parish Council. ❑

That winter of 1947

In the last issue of Keer to Kent I asked if readers could recall details of the winter of 1947. The following account appeared in the Westmorland Gazette.
Editor

50 years ago - March 22 1947

'Sunday saw the start of the great thaw which, continuing throughout this week, has brought to an end one of the longest and most severe wintry spells ever known in Westmorland.

Heavy rain since last weekend and a rise in temperature have caused fields to be revealed in their natural colour for the first time in many weeks and this came as a welcome change to an unending panorama of snow.

The severity of the weather since New Year's Day, however, has cost farmers scores of thousands of pounds in sheep and cattle losses and through the hold-up in work on the land, while a heavy bill for snow clearance over this long period will have to be met by local authorities.

Last weekend, County Council roadmen and hundreds of German prisoners of war faced their biggest task - to clear miles of huge drifts on Shap Fells caused by the last heavy snowfall of Thursday. The workers succeeded in opening up a single track by Tuesday, thus ending the most serious traffic dislocation ever experienced on this section of road.'

The traditional hedger



This article was compiled some thirty years ago by 'Artifex'.

The hedger on a nineteenth century farm tended to be more of a specialist than he is today in the planting and management of live hedges but must not be regarded as plying a trade divorced from the general run of farming skills.

History

For thousands of years, man often surrounded his isolated dwellings or villages with defensive hedges and they have existed for nearly as long, as well trimmed ornaments to large houses or pleasure gardens within a civilised context. The practice of using hedges as field boundaries or for the sheltering of livestock seems to have existed in a small way in medieval England and Europe. The application of these ideas developed very slowly until the advent of the widespread enclosure schemes of the eighteenth century. Enclosure provided the necessary stimulus for the emergence of the hedger as a seasonal worker; the fruit of his labours soon covered large parts of our lowlands with a close mosaic of hedgerows.

Today there is an understandable reluctance among many farmers to devote much time to the long term cultivation of hedges. The availability of relatively cheap temporary fencing materials and the need to enlarge old field boundaries so that machines can work economically, have reduced the activities of the hedger. High quality, manual hedgework is still done on some modern farms but it is mainly confined to the trimming and laying of old hedges plus the scouring of associated ditches.

Materials

Yew, whin, beech, hornbeam, holly, privet, and myrtle, sometimes in combination with each other have all been used for hedges from time to time. The plant best suited to the job and indeed the one most used is the common hawthorn.

The hedger obtains his raw materials from the hedge he is trimming and cuts extra light stakes of hazel and willow wands from any convenient source.

Tools

There is no completely standardised set of hedging tools and there is a considerable variation of shape and usage within some of the commonly distinguished generic groups. The precise functions of a hedge cutting tool are not always apparent as instances occur where similar cutting heads may exist under two or three names, the only differences between the tools being either weight, method of hafting or handle length. These apparently trivial features are of major importance when related to the attributes of a thorn hedge. The cutting of its light springy twigs, small branches and strong stems at a close, medium or long range, requires tools which do not always fit into clearly definable type groups. The most commonly used tools include:- axe, besom, billhook, breasting knife, brushing hook, hedging bill, hedging hook, hedging spade, maul, pitchfork, pruning saw, slasher, switching bill, burning fork, hedging fork and crookstick.

Clothing

The protective clothing favoured by the old style hedger comprised leggings, a leather apron and gloves. The right hand glove was often made of leather thin enough not to impair the sureness of handgrip on tool handles. Some workers even preferred to go without a glove on that hand. ❑

Hedgerow maintenance

A set of practical tips on hedgerow maintenance shows how farmers and other land managers can benefit wildlife and the landscape while saving money and keeping their hedges stock-proof.

The advice from the Devon Hedge Group centres on leaving some hedges uncut each year. Most hedgerow trees and shrubs produce flowers, nuts and berries on year-old twigs. Cutting hedges annually means they provide little food for butterflies, birds and mammals like the dormouse. It also degrades them as nesting sites for many farmland birds which prefer thick, bushy growth.

Cut back heavily

"Cutting a hedge with three years' growth may leave it looking badly damaged, but in fact it will rapidly heal. It is better for a hedge to be cut back heavily occasionally than to trim it every year," says the Group in a new, free leaflet produced with help from English Nature and Devon County Council. The Group comprises representatives from a range of organisations including the National Farmers Union, the Country Landowners' Association and English Nature.



The leaflet recommends rotational cutting of hedges wherever possible on a two, or preferably three, year cycle. Annual cutting should only be done for road safety, or where the hedge is made up of fast-growing trees like ash, sycamore or willow, it says.

Costings within the leaflet are based on an economic analysis carried out for the Group by Silsoe College, Bedfordshire. These show that if labour and machinery costs are considered, savings of up to 59% can be made by adopting a three-year maintenance regime. The practical management principles in the leaflet can be applied across the country. ❑

Copies of the leaflet are available from the Devon Hedge Group, c/o Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group, Government Buildings, Alphington Road, Exeter EX2 8NQ, Tel 01392 428983. Details of the Silsoe economic analysis are available from English Nature, 37 North Street, Okehampton, Devon EX20 1AR.

Yealand's Quaker founder

Richard Hubberthorne (1628-1662) a remarkable man, one of the founders of the Quaker movement, was born locally of yeoman stock. In his short life he fought for Parliament and later pleaded his case to it, but in vain. He spent much of his life fighting, travelling and preaching, was many times imprisoned and perished in Newgate at the age of 34 years.

Richard was born to John and Jane Hubberthorne in a farmhouse near the Westmorland - Lancashire border in 1628. We do not know exactly where, but his birth was registered at Warton Parish Church. The Hubberthornes were farmers, tenants of Sir George Middleton of Leighton Hall. Leighton Hall at that time was a timbered mansion surrounded by the well wooded Leighton Hall Park. The area prospered on farming and the wool trade based on Kendal. None of the present houses in the Yealands existed at that time and there was no church. The better farms and houses were of stone but most dwellings were of wattle and daub, the roofs thatched with straw or bracken - little more than mud huts without even chimneys, the latter regarded at the time as a dubious novelty. Peat from the mosses was used for heating. The building of the Yealands as we now know them, started when confidence grew after the Restoration, from about 1670, an early example of the 'feel-good factor'.

There being no school in the Yealands, Richard attended the Free Grammar School at Warton where he excelled in the usual curriculum of the time - Latin, English, logic and mathematics. He was not a robust child but sought to build up his strength in anticipation perhaps of the trials he was to face later in his short life.

Religious ferment

In order to understand the qualities of this man we must know something of England at that time. An ancient Chinese curse has it - 'May you live in interesting times'. These times were interesting indeed. Hubberthorne was born three years after the accession of Charles I and lived through civil war, religious persecution and military rule; he died two years after the restoration of Charles II.

Dr Carey now chides us that religion is regarded by many as a 'private hobby'. It was not so in Hubberthorne's time: religion was the obsession of the people for which they would kill or die. Religious divisions in those days were not based on the tribal hatreds we now see in Northern Ireland and the Balkans. People argued and fought over points of doctrine and forms of service. The printing of King James bible in 1611 brought the scriptures for the first time into the hands of the common man and fuelled the religious ferment. Memories of the past caused the Catholics to be hated. The clergy of the established Anglican Church were suspected of popery and hated for the cruel imposition of tithes, known as the Priests' Robbery. The Puritans, when in the ascendancy, persecuted everyone else. No-one had any time for religious toleration - religion was too serious a matter for that.

Civil War

Shortly after Hubberthorne was born Charles I dissolved Parliament and ruled without it for eleven years. When Richard was 14 the Civil War broke out. Following the King's defeat at Naseby in 1645 he turned to the Scots for help. They needed little encouragement to march south, sack Kendal and in 1648 they occupied this part of northern England. Hubberthorne, now 20, joined the Parliamentary army under Fairfax and quickly rose to the rank of Captain. He fought in the Scottish campaign ending in victory at Dunbar and continued to serve until the final defeat of the Royalists at Worcester in 1651. He then returned home.

George Fox and the Quakers

In this time of uncertain faith, religious sects proliferated. The forerunners of the Quakers or Friends called themselves Seekers - after truth - and met together in their houses. Hubberthorne attended a meeting at Preston Patrick and it was here that he met George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends. At this time he suffered some kind of breakdown and came near to death. He was helped through it by Fox and fully recovered to become one of his closest colleagues. Hubberthorne decided to leave the farm to his elderly parents and to take to the road, preaching the Quaker message throughout England. By the time he met Hubberthorne, George Fox had been long on the road. He taught that all men and women were equal in the sight of God. There was no need for clergy; his religion was based on personal experience, washed clean of superstition and magic. Hubberthorne set off to spread this message.

What do we know of Richard Hubberthorne himself? Not a large man, not a strong man, a man of peace. Despite these qualities he served as we have seen, with distinction as a soldier. A good companion, we are told who 'knew his season, when to speak and when to be silent'. In 1653, when he set off on his nine years of travelling and preaching, Hubberthorne was 25 years old. At that time, under the Protectorate, travellers were treated as vagrants especially if they preached against established religion and stirred up the people. During his great journey he was thrown into many gaols up and down the land. He settled finally in London and observed that 'the wickedness of this city is so great it is past expression'. He spent his time in preaching and writing.

Military Rule

During the later years of Cromwell's rule and following his death in 1658, the country suffered increasingly under military rule. In 1660 General Monk marched on London and restored the monarchy to general rejoicing. Charles II was inclined to religious toleration and sought out the farmer's son from Yealand to debate points of doctrine. A little later, however, riots swept London and in the ensuing confusion large numbers of Quakers were imprisoned for treason. In 1661 Hubberthorne and some fellow Quakers pleaded for toleration to a Committee of Parliament - but to little effect. The Bill requiring the taking of the Oath of Allegiance, to which Quakers dissented, was duly passed.

Prison and Death

In June 1662 Hubberthorne was seized, arraigned before the hostile Lord Mayor and committed to Newgate. In the dreadful conditions of this prison he died of fever in August of the same year.

The Meeting House Richard Hubberthorne established at Yealand Conyers burned down in 1737 and was rebuilt in the form we still see. His way of life admitted no possibility of comfort or family life. Like his Master he seems to have been an inattentive son; after a life of travelling and teaching he died at much the same age. ❑

My thanks to Joe Smith of Arnside for his help with this fascinating potted biography of Richard Hubberthorne taken from 'Richard Hubberthorne of Yealand' by Elisabeth Brockbank, published by the Friends Book Centre in 1929.

Editor

Songbird decline

Attitudes, as well as the balance of nature are changing in suburban gardens. Latest figures suggest that magpie numbers have increased by 131% and carrion crows by 151% in the last 25 years.

"These birds are being turned into complete menaces; their liking of eggs and young is helping to decimate the songbird population," Robin Page, the farmer, broadcaster and conservationist, said when the figures were published.

Warning bells for Arnside siren

The current controversy over the sounding of the Arnside warning siren prompts some interest in its historical aspect. Whilst the sounding of the siren was a post-war innovation it has to be recognised that a simpler warning system had existed since at least the beginning of the century. I refer to the bell on the roof of the Albion. This was used to warn visitors, fishermen, boatmen and others of the imminent incoming tides.

The Albion, originally the private residence of local mariner Captain Greenwood from the early 19th century, was in the hands of families associated with boats on the estuary for at least a century up to 1924. Before the railway, relatively large cargo sailing boats used to pass up the estuary to Milnthorpe and Sandside. Some of these were certainly owned by Captain Greenwood and his partners. It is quite feasible that the bell was installed on the top of his house for signalling purposes.

Captain Greenwood died just before the viaduct was completed, preventing navigation up the estuary. The business and house passed to his daughter and son-in-law, Robert Bush a mariner and junior partner in the shipping business. Despite the building of the compensation pier at Arnside, the coastal shipping trade of the estuary collapsed. Greenwood House was turned into Bush's Albion Hotel. The family maritime connection from now on, was to be the hire of boats for fishing and the provision of small boat trips around the bay. If Captain Greenwood did not install the bell then surely it could have been Robert Bush's doing. A tide warning, and the onset of the bore, must have made an audible warning imperative. Visual warning was almost certainly provided on the various shore-line flagstaffs which are known to have existed in mid-century.

Records indicate that, although Arnside was somewhat isolated, it was a popular visiting spot for parties in small boats and yachts from the quays at Milnthorpe. Boat regattas were held, organised by the proprietor of the Fighting Cocks Inn. It would be surprising if he, too, did not have some sort of warning system to alert his visitors one way or another. Although today an apparently unlikely spot, Arnside seems to have had its quota of bathing machines in early Victorian times following promotion of sea bathing at Brighton and Bognor. Again tide warnings must also have been an essential feature of this new health regime.

The heyday of visitors to Arnside and Grange was in the period from 1910 to 1939. It is no less important today that for the personal safety of visiting paddlers, fishermen and small boat users warning is given. Many people do not appreciate the dangers of the approaching wall of water provided by the bore and the following rapid increase in water depth of at least 7 metres at the low tide mark on the 'sands'. It is surprising, in this time of modern electrical and electronic marvels, that no cheap and simple solution has been found to meet the problem.

Dennis Bradbury
Arnside

Found any good fossils lately?

For many people, fossil collecting is a fascinating pastime that provides an insight to the natural world.

Unfortunately, irresponsible collecting means that important specimens and valuable information is being lost, as well as some important fossil sites being damaged. To encourage responsible collection, English Nature have issued a code of practice as part of a new policy document.

The 'golden rules' of responsible fossil collection are:

*Seek agreement over access to sites and over the ownership of any fossils you collect.

*Collect only a few representative specimens.

*Record precisely where and when fossils are found.

*Involve specialists where needed and place important specimens in museums or other appropriate collections.

*Avoid disturbance to wildlife and do not leave the site in an untidy or dangerous condition.

For more information, contact English Nature, Northminster House, Peterborough PE1 1UA. Tel 01733 318 253.

Silver collection

A village hall in Shropshire, on finding all its teaspoons had eventually disappeared, held a coffee morning - 'Admission by Teaspoon'. They received more than enough spoons including some silver ones which they sold to help funds!

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Restoring the River Keer

by Stewart Lowther



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Before 1959 the River Keer was a small, meandering river with all the features associated with a river channel in its natural state. Meanders, pools, gravel bars and slowly eroding earth banks were interspersed by stony riffles, and the river bed provided spawning grounds for sea trout. The size of the flood channel was smaller than at present, enabling the river to actively erode and deposit material along its course, creating a variety of natural features which supported a diversity of wildlife.

In the late 1950s the River Keer below the Capernwray Viaduct, was extensively modified by land drainage works. The works involved the straightening of the river by removing meanders, changes to the slopes of the banks, deepening of the channel and the removal of 24 pools. Although in engineering terms the lower parts of the river are now more efficient and simple to manage, their attractiveness has been severely reduced for recreation and wildlife.

Improving habitats

Recently, concerns have been voiced over the numbers of trout in the river, which have fallen dramatically in latter years. In response, the Environment Agency has carried out an investigation into the possibility that some of the changes made in the 1950s could be reversed. The Agency commissioned independent experts from SGS Environment to examine the opportunities for improving the habitats of the lower Keer for fish and other wildlife while, at the same time, increasing the recreational value of the river. The results of this work have recently been presented to the Environment Agency in the report "River Keer Restoration Feasibility Study".

The first stage of the study involved gathering as much information about the river as possible from local sources and from field visits. The SGS Environment team, together with an engineer from Roughtons in Kendal, carried out detailed surveys of the present ecological condition of the river, and of recent changes in water flows and fish populations. In addition, the landscape character of the whole valley was examined so that any changes to the river could be designed in such a way as to be sympathetic to the appearance of the broader area.

History of the area

In recognition that the cultural heritage of the area could affect any plans that might be made to alter the river channel, an archaeologist from the University of Lancaster was commissioned to walk the course of the river and to consult the Sites and Monuments Record held by Lancashire County Council. The survey provided a fascinating insight into the history of the area, highlighting structures such as the medieval mill at Capernwray and the site close to the Keer Bridge where, in 1931, fifteen human skeletons of unknown origin were discovered during the widening of the A6. Fortunately, however, none of the archaeological features identified was sufficiently close to the river to affect the Keer restoration project, and the study was able to proceed to the next stage.

Riverside habitats

In considering which measures would best improve the recreation and wildlife conservation value of the river, the project team needed to bear in mind two complementary aims. The first was that the existing features of interest should be maintained, and the second was that the remaining areas be improved so as to match the landscape and ecological character of the wider area.



Thus, the few remaining pools in which migrating fish are able to rest should be preserved, and more pools are required at intervals elsewhere in the river channel. This could best be done by creating bends and meanders in the low water channel. These may be created either by direct excavation or through the installation of channel deflectors which direct the flow of water towards one of the river banks. Once these works are established, the river will form natural features on its own, deepening pools and creating overhanging banks on the outsides of bends, and depositing gravel bars on the insides. These features automatically provide a richer range of aquatic and riverside habitats for plants, insects, birds and mammals, which could be further enhanced by tree and shrub planting.

Existing trees, shrubs and hedges are seen as a valuable but dwindling resource for birds and insects. These have therefore been marked for preservation, and additional planting is proposed in order to restore hedges and extend tree cover. By planting tree and shrub species to overhang the river, it will be possible not only to improve wildlife habitats, but also to provide shade and shelter for fish and, at the same time, improve the appearance of the river.

Recreational activity

While the River Keer represents a valuable resource for nature conservation, it also holds the potential to become an important site for recreational walking and angling. At present, however, public access along the river between Carnforth and Capernwray is made difficult by the absence of a right of way between the A6 trunk road and the A601(M). Further upstream, the footpath departs from the river and crosses agricultural land, and there is potential for conflict between the aims of farmers and any increases in recreational activity in this area. Recognising these problems, the project team have recommended ways in which they might be overcome. Suggestions include the provision of an additional footpath between the A6 and the A6/A601(M) roundabout and the realignment of the existing path at the Capernwray viaduct so that it follows the riverside. Improvements to fencing, stiles and signposting throughout have also been suggested.

It is not intended that all the changes proposed by SGS Environment should take place overnight, but over a number of years. A high priority has been given to action below the M6, where improvements are most needed. It is hoped that, over a period of some years, the river will once again become a site of high value to wildlife and an attractive focus for informal recreation and angling.

If you would like to know more about the River Keer Restoration Study, please contact Ed Mycock, Environment Agency, Lutra House, Dodd Way, Sandlee Road, Walton Summit, Bamber Bridge, Preston PR5 8BX or Stewart Lowther, SGS Environment, Yorkshire House, Chapel Street, Liverpool L3 9AG ❑

Do you know these named wells?

by Tony Noble

Henry Taylor the architect and antiquarian listed eight wells in what is now the Arnside and Silverdale AONB, when his article about the Lonsdale Hundred of Lancashire was published in 1903.

A search of the old plans, ordnance survey sheets, (old and present day), and various printed sources, shows the location of 17 named wells within the 29 square miles of our AONB. Within the remainder of the Lonsdale Hundred the occurrence of named wells is unusual, although the site of a well is frequently known at many habitations whether isolated farms or villages.

Before the introduction of piped water, the only sources of water for all purposes would be from streams and the collection of rainwater, apart from when an underground source could be found close to habitation resulting in the construction of a well. With the scarcity of streams due to the geology of the area, wells and springs from the fissures in the limestone beds of the AONB would be a prime water source, particularly when such water as could be collected from rainfall would be very limited. It seems obvious that where there was a concentration of springs/wells within easy reach of the inhabitants of a village, each source would be named to give identity. Probably the late arrival of mains water in 1938 has resulted in these names being kept in memory rather than being lost with the passage of time after they ceased to have any day to day use.

Apart from several notable exceptions, the present condition of the named wells in the AONB is one of neglect with a number already lost due to infilling. Most of those which still carry water have become watering places for animal stock, and some have dried up naturally.

The following wells seem to have disappeared without trace: Dub Meadow which was on the left hand side of the road between Silverdale level crossing and Slack Wood Farm, Isaac's just to the east of Hazelwood Farm in Hollins Lane, Stankelt, close to the turning to Woodwell in Stankelt Road, and Elmslack thought to be located at the site of a litter bin at the west end of Inman's Road. In this category can also be placed Cove Well and Crystal Well, both of which seem to have dried up, the former being sited on the shore at the end of Cove Road, the latter some 200 yds south of Crag Foot and on the left hand side of the main road towards Carnforth.

Turning now to those wells/springs of which some visible evidence remains. Perhaps the most interesting are Senset and Saint Catherine's. The latter is in the east grounds of Leighton Hall and located by a low mound of limestone pieces, the water supply having ceased, except in abnormal rainfall, at the same time that the pond in Deepdale Wood dried up, (thought to have been due to alterations in the limestone beds triggered by the massive explosion at White Lund munitions factory during the First World War). Senset Well lies on the track eastwards from Warton towards the A6 and, judging by the width of the approach, must have been of considerable importance to the villagers in earlier times. The historian John Lucas (1684-1750), under the heading St Oswald's Well in his History of Warton, explains the name Senset as follows; 'About a quarter of a mile east of the town is a large, profluent perennial spring, which the inhabitants commonly call Senset, or by those that would seem to speak more properly, Sentussus Well, which is nothing else, but a contraction of St Oswald's Well'.

Of the surviving well sites, perhaps the most discreet is Bard's Well on the shore car park at the end of Shore Road, marked only by a ring of stones placed by the Parish Council in 1980, the original well having been covered some fifty years earlier to provide the parking area. Dogslack Well some 200 yds along the footpath leading off The Row opposite Bank Well, could also be overlooked were it not for part of the old pump mechanism still protruding from a surround of limestones. On the eastern side of the railway at the side of the access road to Middlebarrow Quarry, Kellet's Well is in a similar condition covered with corrugated sheets to prevent animal access.

Water still flows from Lake View Well, situated at the wall side some 100 yds on the left of Red Bridge Lane, just east of the turning to Waterslack. A well is also at the left hand side of the farm buildings at Waterslack, although now covered. Cold Well at the rear of the house of the same name is still used to supply the property.

Probably the best known of the AONB wells are Bank, Burton and Woodwell, which have all been restored by local conservation groups and also promoted as a subject of local and visitor interest by a guide leaflet produced by the Countryside Management Service in March 1996.

It seems likely that there are other named wells/springs within the AONB which have not been covered by this review. Details of any such, or corrections and additional information about those detailed previously, would be appreciated not least because, if the threatened water scarcity arises, future generations may be glad to know where to rediscover these ancient prime sources. ❑

Well	O.S. Grid Ref.
Dub Meadow	SD 475 745
Cove	SD 457 755
Woodwell	SD 465 744
Elmslack	SD 462 759
Bard's	SD 458 749
Cold	SD 480 780
Bank	SD 472 754
Dogslack	SD 473 755
Burton	SD 471 751
Senset	SD 505 722
St Catherine's	SD 495 743
Isaac's	SD 467 746
Lake View	SD 473 759
Kellett's	SD 470 769
Waterslack	SD 471 764
Stankelt	SD 465 748
Crystal	SD 480 735

Sources

H. Taylor, 'The Ancient Crosses of Lancashire. The Hundred of Lonsdale' T.L.C. A.S. XXI, 1903, pp 109, 110.

J. Lucas, 'History of Warton', p 31.

D. Peter, 'In and around Silverdale', (Carnforth 1984), pp 23-26.

M. D. Wright, 'The History of Silverdale Water Supply' (Diploma in Local



Personal Viewpoint

My place in the country

by Bob Smithies



A side-effect of being a television presenter was that viewers would assume I had a high degree of expertise in the subjects I brought to their attention. Believe me, I am no countryman. I was brought up in the byssinosis belt of South Lancashire where the off-white blossom on the soot encrusted trees of the Jubilee Park was cotton-waste. I must have been in my forties before being finally persuaded that all the black cows were not bulls. None of which had any effect on Granada's Mr Big. He strong-armed me into presenting a countryside programme which ran for ten years ("Well, you look like a farmer so get on with it"), and because of which I became regarded as a rural pundit.

Even farmers thought so. We were filming at Cartmel Show when I was hailed by a worried looking chap holding on to some sort of sheep. "What does tha make of this Bob? It's not right well is it?" I thought fast, exhaled decisively and looked as confident as only we con artists can. "If I were you, I'd let the show vet have a look at it". The man sighed with relief. "By 'eck, Bob, I just knew that you'd know what to do." Yes, well; and now your poor deluded Editor has sought my view of the AONB.

There were two original reasons for my domicile in Arnside: the first was that sanity ruled out Lancaster, where I had been sent to run GTV's northern outpost and where visually challenged Visigoths have created a traffic blighted environment worse than downtown Ouagadougou's. The other was that the Blessed Margaret's house-price boom had yet to reach here. I got a bargain.

That was eleven years ago. I ran with my pension from Granada in 1994, and I am still here. Why? You know why don't you?

Enchantment

The Arnside and Silverdale AONB and the people who live and work in it have cast the spell that enchants all of us off-comers. I have yet to encounter anyone here in a bad temper. I put it down to our surroundings. People smile and greet me, even when the rain dampens the walk to the shops and mist covers the vista of the Lakeland fells.

The local workforce appear to enjoy their occupations. I know that Summer is on its way when the first tidal siren of the year is sounded by the indefatigable Tony Spedding. I try to look knowledgeable and learn happily from Fred Ingham's enthusiastic chat of sheep-dog trialling as he weighs my beef at the butcher's. I delight too in the gravelly tones of Jack Bernfeld recounting sagas of piloting the bay and victories over the despoilers who would still ruin our patch if they got half the chance.

There is solitude too to be found here when needed, and to be treasured. There are places in this Arcady where one can be alone and at peace even when the tourists arrive from the cities for their essential refreshment. They may well value the mass of excellent literature that is provided for their guidance. I prefer to rely on serendipity, to wander the AONB making those happy discoveries of flora, fauna and archaeology that are chanced upon more easily by those who are blessed with permanence here.

So should it all be "managed"? Do we really need a force of officers and volunteers to coppice and prune, to rebuild and replace, to protect and preserve what is, after all, an area of outstanding **natural** beauty? That is an argument that I have illustrated elsewhere, in my programmes. In some parts of the Mersey Basin such management seems to me to have produced only sterility, but I see nothing barren here.

On Warton Crag and Heald Brow I see that nature has sometimes been given a helping hand, and that at Trowbarrow, Bank Well and Woodwell it has been proffered with a great deal of expertise, understanding and hard graft. So I have sent off my ten quid to become a member of the Landscape Trust. Just one thing, you won't ask me to volunteer for anything heavy, will you? Only I've got this dodgy back. ❑

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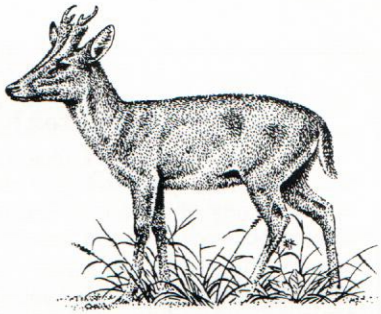
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Muntjac deer on the rampage

by Simon Courtald



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What came from China, eats our flowers and trees, and barks? Answer: the muntjac deer which, since it was introduced to Britain by the Duke of Bedford 100 years ago, has become a pest.

Hordes of these strange little animals, which number at least 50,000, are spreading across the country at an alarming rate, wreaking havoc everywhere.

Their profile resembles a young wild pig, they have a gruff dog's bark and they stand about 18 inches to the shoulder. They have a voracious appetite for garden shrubs and flowers, and in woodland they are partial to young trees, coppice regrowth and wild flowers such as orchids and bluebells.

Muntjac breed every seven months, and the population is rising at least 10 per cent a year. Their distribution is increasing across most of England and Wales, but their range often takes them across main roads and into urban areas and they are causing an increasing number of road accidents.

Drastic measures are needed. It is government policy to double the area of woodlands in England, which covers 7 per cent of the country, but if the new plantations are not to be decimated these little beasts need to be controlled immediately.

Of the six species of deer in Britain, only two, red and roe deer, are truly indigenous. However, the fallow, which was introduced by the Romans and later by the Normans, could be said to have acquired what lawyers call a prescriptive right to be classified as native. Of the others, sika, which came from Japan, are mainly confined to Scotland, Dorset and North East Lancashire, and Chinese water deer are found in small numbers in East Anglia.

The total populations of roe and fallow deer may be about 250,000, but as native, or almost native, animals they live in harmony with their environment. The muntjac threatens to displace our native roe. It should be classified with the grey squirrel, which has all but displaced the smaller red squirrel in Britain, and the coypu, a South American rodent which undermined the riverbanks of East Anglia, having escaped from captivity in the 1930s. The coypu was eradicated about 10 years ago.

The trouble is that, like the grey squirrel, the muntjac is considered to be "a sweet little thing". It has something of the look of Bambi, and to those unfamiliar with its habits, any thinning of its numbers would be tantamount to murder. But Bambi is on the rampage: if we want to enjoy our gardens, woodlands and those "community forests" which we are promised, muntjac management is essential.

Muntjac have no natural predators other than, occasionally, a fox or dog. But they have also been known to turn on dogs, using their particularly sharp little tusks. The arguments are surely strong enough to persuade all but the most sentimental and irrational animal lovers and animal rights campaigners, that something must be done: deer control cannot just be abandoned to indiscriminate poaching and road traffic accidents.

The Deer Initiative, a group composed of various bodies from the Forestry Commission to the RSPCA is now trying to agree a co-ordinated approach to deer management.

Alternatives to shooting, such as contraceptive pills, are unrealistic and currently prohibitively expensive. A control policy will have to be adopted by landowners, including local authorities responsible for managing community forests.

In suburban areas neither the councils nor their taxpayers will easily accept that war must be declared against Bambi. There will be resistance and there may be uproar.

For the sake of the trees and flowers, however, not to mention the council tax bill, there is no alternative. ❑

Reproduced in part from the Weekend section of the Daily Telegraph

Local member of The British Deer Society, Nigel Pickering, echoes the sentiments expressed in the above article.

If you consider grey squirrels or roe deer to be a problem, you have been warned!

Editor

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Tickets cost just £3 for adults and £1.50 for children which includes entrance into the exquisite grounds of Dallam Tower (by kind permission of Brigadier Tryon-Wilson), free parking, strawberries and tea. All money raised on the day will help **Cumbria Wildlife Trust** to protect the local wildlife and wild places in the county.

Tickets available from Sylvia Argles on 015395 63323 or Sydney Clare on 015395 61594 or alternatively at the gate from 2pm on the day.

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Enquiries to:

Martha Bates Tel 01524 62967

or

John Jenkinson

Tel 01524 701420

Out in all weathers with The Countryside Management Service and the Volunteers

by Tony Riden



The springtime weather has generally been kind to us with an early mild and sunny period bringing on the early spring flowers. Heavy rainfall in February saturated the ground (at last!) and gave a timely watering when we planted hedgerow and orchard trees.

Initial work at Trowbarrow has now been completed after a couple of months of frantic work by contractors and volunteers. The site was officially opened by the Mayor of Lancaster on 6th June 1997.

The coming summer months will see the volunteers busy continuing the rounds of footpath vegetation trimming and seasonal pond management work in the autumn. So let's hope that the present summer sun continues to shine as we continue to work 'out and about in all weathers'.

Under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949, the public have the legal right to use:

- Public rights of way. These include footpaths, bridleways, byways and roads.
- Land where there are access agreements between owners and the authorities.
- Land subject to access orders made by local authorities.
- Land to which the public has been granted access by special Acts of Parliament.
- Land where access has been permitted by the owner - such as the National Trust or the Forestry Commission

A member of the public found on any other land is trespassing and may be asked to leave by the owner. If they refuse, they can be removed with the use of "reasonable force". They may also be liable to damages in a civil court.

The National Trust

by

Alan Ferguson

I wonder if anybody adds up the total amount of access improvements and wildlife management that take place within the AONB? I know that the National Trust areas alone have seen a tremendous amount of work completed over the last ten years. Shrub/grassland management amounted to 700 voluntary hours in 1966 resulting in 2 hectares of grassland managed, plus 1 hectare of neglected hazel coppice re-cut and protected from deer. These are just two vital wildlife management jobs which enhance the open access N.T. land. Access work of a different sort is the provision of a new path across the northern end of Townsfield in Silverdale. This will ensure that this section of the road is safer for pedestrians. The 5 foot wide path will be bordered by a hedge and stock-proof fence, thus giving the opportunity to avoid having gates at each end, making it easier for pushchair and wheelchair access. The total cost of this work is likely to be in the region of £2,500.

Each summer brings new challenges and new expectations. We are already seeing the benefits of the enlarged rabbit exclosure on Heathwaite; cowslips are blooming across the whole of the field named after them for the first time in many years.

This improvement to grazing management also has a direct benefit to access, with many gates in the mostly hidden new fence line leaving the open grassland free for people to enjoy. If the difference inside and outside the fence is as dramatic after a few years as the previous (smaller) area showed, then all the hours that volunteers have spent on the work will be greatly repaid. The costs of the work have been met by sponsorship from Gales Honey who are assisting management work for flower-rich meadows on eight National Trust areas throughout the country.

For the past few years school groups visiting Arnside Knott have learnt about insect life by experimenting with the food preferences of wood ants. They have followed the amazing 'ant motorways' to discover their wild food and then tried them out on our food. It's funny that five different nests close together had totally different tastes. None were too bothered about sugar, two preferred peanuts, one wanted bread, one showed most interest in banana, and one liked cheddar as opposed to brie! ❑

Leighton Moss by John Wilson

Well, it worked! Remember in the last edition I mentioned the trial of bearded tit nest boxes, an idea imported from France which we modified. We called them wigwams because they are made of reed around a central pole. To date 18 out of 48 have been occupied mainly in the really wet areas of reed. The interesting thing is that most of them have nested under the nest box, taking advantage of the roof and sides provided by the design but resting their nests on the reeds bent over when we positioned the box. This is the first time this rare and restricted species has been tempted to use a nest box in Britain, so another first for Leighton Moss! Breeding success has been good. We seem to have approx 40-50 pairs again this year which is about 10% of the British population.

After the very cold spell in winter our bitterns are down to 3 booming males (down one). They seem to have declined everywhere this year, but three marsh harriers returned to nest and are putting on an excellent show. The other excitement has been the successful hatching of three young Mediterranean gulls. They nested once before in 1990 but the eggs were taken by a heron! This year's pair is the only one nesting in the north west and the total British population is only approx 30 pairs. The female is ringed and was hatched in the Netherlands in 1993, but since then it has been seen in many parts of Britain from Donegal to Dungeness and finally decided to set up home in Lancashire!

Most other summer visitors are present in good numbers, although cuckoos have been rather thin; up to three pairs of gargeney is excellent. Most resident species got off to an early start helped by the mild weather in March and already many have young broods. This time of year we spend a lot of time surveying birds, plants and invertebrates. Butterflies were quick off the mark too, with good numbers of peacock, brimstone and orange tips.

There have been several surges of passage birds, the highlight being a record count of 75 black terns in early May, blown westward on their journey from Africa to Europe, and up to 95 black-tailed godwit around the same time, another reserve record. There have been several osprey records and even an avocet visited in late May, but only one spoonbill, rather a comedown from the 4-5 at the same time last year. ❑

Gait Barrows Nature Reserve by Rob Petley-Jones

Last year I wrote about the recent use of Margaret Mackintosh's Exmoor ponies on the pastures of Gait Barrows NNR. It has been a delight this spring to see just how well the ponies and Bill Grayson's cattle have improved the pasture sward for wild flowers.

I cannot remember seeing the fields on the reserve so full of common wild flowers such as yellow rattle and clovers. Although the pastures will never rival the best limestone grassland, they are certainly far more interesting now than when English Nature took them over in the late 1970's. Then the fields produced heavy hay cuts, and wild herbs did not really get a look-in. Now there is no need to cut for hay, the less vigorous grasses can be easily maintained purely by grazing, and there is plenty of opportunity for herbs to flourish. As an added bonus, the sward is now also alive with a fascinating insect life.

These pastures have been the first experience for me to manage grasslands in a way that is productive for wildlife. The more I work with grasslands the more fascinated I become with their potential to become valuable and vibrant elements in our landscape. At home I have a small field which has returned to life after years of intense sheep grazing. I have been experimenting on different management techniques and watching the amazing changes as its wildlife regenerates. As I write, the field is a mass of lady's smock, and is almost shimmering with orange-tip butterflies. Linnets and goldfinch have taken up residence in the hedges, attracted by the abundance of food that is now available in the living grass.

Beyond my boundary at home lies the vast green grass desert that so typifies the landscape in this part of the country. Even now the first cut of silage is being taken, accompanied by the mournful cries of curlews whose nests have just been destroyed. To me it seems a huge waste that more cannot be made of such grassland, in the AONB and beyond. I wonder just what sort of living landscape might be achieved if alternative approaches used on nature reserves were applied more widely. ❑

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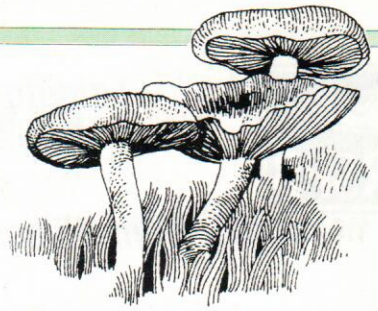
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Dates for your Diary



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July

***Tuesday 8th:** Guided Walk around Trowbarrow with Ian Henderson looking at management; Jennifer Newton looking at botany; Colin Patrick looking at geology and hydrology. Meet at 7.30 pm at Storrs Lane entrance, Grid Ref. SD 481 755.

***Saturday 12th:** Cross Bay Walk with Cedric Robinson. Meet at 10.30 am on Arnside Promenade. Sponsorship forms can be obtained from the AONB office at Arnside. Unsponsored walkers will be asked to pay £3 each (children £1).

August

***Tuesday 12th:** A walk along Sandside Cutting with the Countryside Management Service. Meet at 7.30 pm in the Ship Inn car park.

September

***Tuesday 16th:** "Conservation, Access and Recreation" by Peter Guy from North West Water. Meet at 7.45 pm in Yealand Village Hall. Admission £1.

October

***Tuesday, 14th:** "Bank Well from Snow to Sun" by Mike Moon from Silverdale. Meet at 7.45 pm in Yealand Village Hall. Admission £1.

***Saturday, 25th:** The Trust's Annual Coffee Morning in the Gaskell Hall, Silverdale. From 10.00 am to 12 noon. Stalls, raffle and games. Admission 40p.

November

***Tuesday, 11th:** "Management of the Cockle and Mussel Fisheries in Morecambe Bay" by Bill Cook, North Western and North Wales Sea Fisheries Committee. Meet at 7.45 pm in Yealand Village Hall. Admission £1.

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***I have completed the standing order authority opposite (delete if not applicable)**

Address.....

.....

Postcode.....**Telephone**.....

Signed..... **Date**.....

This subscription brings you a copy of "Keer to Kent" three times a year and keeps you informed of our activities and plans for the future. Your money will help to support the conservation work of the Countryside Management Service. Please cut out and send this form to: **The Membership Secretary, Arnside/Silverdale AONB Landscape Trust, Old Station Building, Arnside, Carnforth, Lancs. LA5 OHG**

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Please pay **Halifax Building Society**, Highgate, Kendal.
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Account No. .....

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