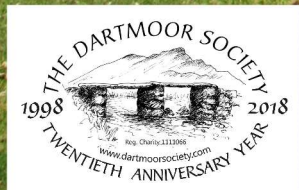


The Dartmoor Society

Newsletter No 62 June 2018





Established 1998
Registered Charity No 1111066

*'An independent voice for those who find Dartmoor
a source of livelihood or inspiration'*

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Front cover: The Long Stone and Kes Tor – *Steve Mason*

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SOCIETY NEWS

EDITORIAL

In the last Newsletter I invited comment about the new 'house style' that I had introduced and also about the content of future issues. My thanks to all those who responded – your views have been duly noted and I welcome your further opinions in times to come.

One suggestion that received much support was that of running committee member profiles to help make the Society's officials more visible and accessible. Our Hon Treasurer Tom Orchard bravely allowed himself to be 'volunteered' to go first (see page 22). In time I would like to see this feature extended to general members of the Society as I'm sure we have many fascinating folk with absorbing stories to tell of great interest to all.

Starting a letters page also curried much favour and would have the benefits of encouraging greater engagement of the membership and communication with the committee. I intend to start this in the next issue so if you have any views you would like to air on topical Dartmoor matters and/or questions to committee members, do please write in. Where appropriate we will also publish a response from the relevant committee member. Full contact details are given on the inside front cover.

As a forerunner, this issue includes a letter from our Chairman to DEFRA in response to their consultative paper concerning the future of food, farming and the environment (see page 24). This may in itself stimulate a response from members to further the debate.

An occasional feature starting in this issue is that of book launches which have a particular relevance to Society members and Dartmoor related issues in general. First is our President Peter Beacham's *Buckfast Abbey: History, Art and Architecture* celebrating the abbey's millennium (see page 3). Secondly we have the eagerly awaited *Soils in Devon IX* by Tim Harrod (see page 20). Tim was the beneficiary of grants from the Society to help with this work and he was also the Society Award recipient in 2014.

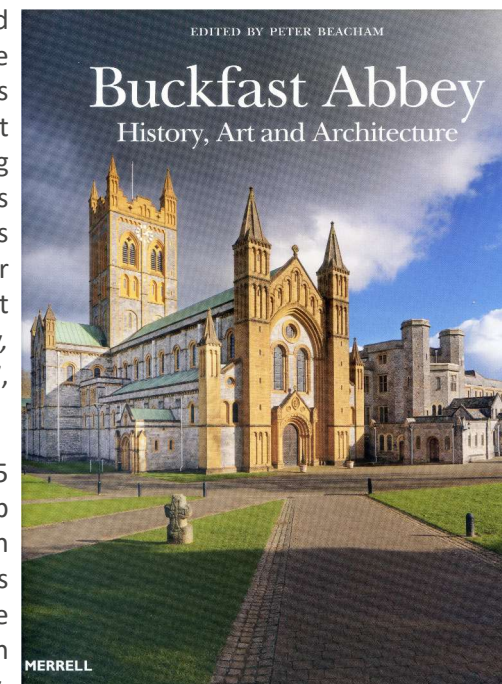
Stunning new book on Buckfast Abbey

The great abbey at Buckfast, dissolved by King Henry VIII in 1539, rose phoenix-like from meagre remnants of its original structure when rebuilt 1907-1932. This year it is celebrating the 1000th anniversary of its foundation in 1018. To mark this milestone our President, Peter Beacham, has edited a magnificent book titled *Buckfast Abbey – History, Art and Architecture* (Merrell, 2017, £60).

The book's large format (310 x 265 mm) gives scope for the many superb photographs (especially those taken by James Davies). It has 270 pages and is beautifully designed. Twelve leading specialists have written chapters on the abbey's history, archaeology, and rebuilding, and the many treasures the abbey now contains.

There is a chapter on the former abbey school and another, by Peter Beacham, on the making of the present-day complex of the abbey precinct. Beside the River Dart, this abbey has been deeply connected with Dartmoor for hundreds of years, and forms a vital part of the Dartmoor community today.

Tom Greeves



Christmas cards

In our October Newsletter we requested our members to submit digital photographs that would be suitable for our 2018 Christmas Cards and we are delighted to show you the results. Out of a choice of 21 excellent images these two were unanimously selected by our Executive Committee. They are nicely packaged in packs of ten cards with envelopes, five of each image, and will be priced the same as last year at £3.50p per pack. Our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in this initiative.

The Dartmoor Society – AGM

Belstone Village Hall, Saturday 14 April 2018

Before the formal business of the AGM, Chairman Dr Tom Greeves gave an illustrated talk which is reproduced in full below. The President, Peter Beacham OBE, gave a very warm vote of thanks to him afterwards.

Still an Independent Voice – A Review of our First 20 Years

Twenty years is a respectable period of time. 1998, the year of creation of The Dartmoor Society, was also the year Google was founded, and it was still six years before the appearance of Facebook and eight years before Twitter!

At the start of the 1990s there were only two voices that could be said to be 'representing' Dartmoor – that of Dartmoor National Park Authority, bound by statute, and that of the Dartmoor Preservation Association. The latter was still in aggressive mode towards the military, clayworking, forestry, access etc. Equally worrying was their apparent support for commercialisation of Burrator Reservoir. The radical notion of creating an entirely new voice for Dartmoor was floated – Elisabeth Stanbrook, then Editor of *Dartmoor Magazine*, was one of the first to suggest this.



Black-a-Tor Copse walk (Sep 2004) Tom Greeves

Our formal launch was on 4 April 1998 in Moretonhampstead. In our first Newsletter (of February 1998), we stated 'At the turn of the millennium Dartmoor is facing a remarkable range of challenges, both tangible and philosophical. The future of hillfarming is a critical issue, and linked to it are key questions about other uses of Dartmoor's land – its stone and timber, for example – as well about facilities and services in rural communities.' These words have a familiar ring.

Regarding Burrator Reservoir, we worked closely and successfully with Graham Ledger and others who had formed Action to Protect Burrator.

One of the other key concerns early in the society's history, was the 40mph speed limit, which we demonstrated was meaningless on 75 miles of the 90

miles of road where it had been designated, as either the roads were already fenced/walled and thus had no grazing animals wandering onto them, or it was impossible to drive at 40mph owing to the nature of the roads themselves. Despite the Road Safety Division of the DETR (Dept of Environment, Transport & the Regions) recommending in October 1999 to the County Engineer that the speed limit should be rescinded, as speeds on Dartmoor were so low within the designated area, and despite our own meetings with the County Engineer and DNPA, the speed limit and



40mph roundels at Widecombe Tom Greeves

associated paraphernalia, has remained in place, and animal accidents (which it was intended to reduce) are as bad as ever. Our original arguments still hold good – the challenge is how to ensure people drive in a manner appropriate to the particular conditions on unfenced roads on Dartmoor – at night, in fog, in rain, and always conscience of animals. 40mph can be far too fast. Between 1999 and 2012 we kept and published a record of livestock deaths and injuries on certain open moorland roads within the 40mph limit zone. This role has been taken over and extended very efficiently by the Livestock Protection Officer of the Dartmoor Livestock Protection Society, Karla McKechnie.

Drawing on the content of our remarkable sixty-one Newsletters (the first colour cover appeared in February 2009) as a source, we have in twenty years organised well over 100 visits to places of interest, besides 16 visits to working farms, have held 17 public debates on Dartmoor topics, 10 public research lectures, 6 miscellaneous talks by specialists, and have hosted a wide range of speakers at our 20 AGMs.

Our visits have always been intended to give opportunities for our members to see places (especially those not usually accessible to the general public) and people who contribute to the community fabric of Dartmoor in its widest sense. The visits have been wondrously diverse – to cider manufacturers, to hydro and windpower sites, to woollen mills and wool producers, to a paper mill, to a restored corn mill, to an edgetool mill, to quarries, to a sculptor's studio and to a sculpture garden, to mires, to waterworks and reservoirs, to a pony stud, to diverse woodlands, to a walk with llamas, to clayworks, to a deer farm, to an ancient tenement and tinworking trail, to DartCom and Powdermills, to Kelly



Glaciation walk (Jun 2013)

Tom Greeves

Mine, to villages, to gardens, to the PCWW boundstones, to Buckfast caves, to archaeological and nature conservation sites (bats, haymeadows and fungi especially), to churches and abbeys, to historic houses and farms, to the Commando Training Centre at Lymington, to military training areas, to a tile producer, to the Exeter & Teign

Valley Railway, to North Wyke grassland research institute, to a soil study day, to the North Tawton creamery, to Steward Community Woodland, to Rippon Tor rifle range, to Dartmoor Prison and Farm, to forestry operations, to record offices and archives, to orchards, to glaciation sites, to a poet's memorial and to Merripit Roundhouse, and more.



Headon china clay visit (May 2009)

Tom Greeves

The debates have covered archaeological heritage, ponies, the military (for which we got mentioned in *Hansard* on 15 October 2003), renewable energy (which led to a hydropower survey), china clay, orchards, vegetation, villages, woodlands, rewilding, the national park, the 40mph speed limit, tourism, buildings 1850-1950, water, churches and chapels, and railways.

Special events have included the first ever Festival of Dartmoor Literature over 3 days in 2008, a Harold Fox Memorial Event, a Lydford Arts Day, the Dartmoor Explorer Railway Excursion (a very significant fundraiser), an Archaeological Finds Day, a Morrish Art Exhibition and a Cryptic Moorland Walk.

Each year we have given an award plate to a person or persons who we consider to have made a special contribution to Dartmoor. Two archaeologists – Jeremy Butler and Andrew Fleming – have been recipients, but we have also recognised photographers of wildlife and people (Geoffrey Weymouth and Chris Chapman), a playwright (Mark Beeson), a protagonist for livestock welfare (Marion Saunders), a farmer and author (Colin Pearse), an editor (Elisabeth Stanbrook), musicians of various sorts (Wren Music, Bill Murray, Nigel Shaw and Carolyn Hillyer), the inimitable Tony Beard 'for his wisdom, empathy and wit', protectors

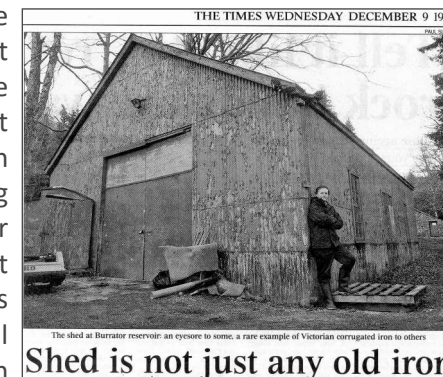
of an historic building (Michael and Swana Hardy), a shopkeeper (Eric Webber), a defender of hill ponies (Charlotte Faulkner), the Kelly Mine Preservation Society, a youth worker (Fred Barlow), a soil scientist (Tim Harrod), a meteorologist (Will Hand), and the creators of the wonderful hydro scheme at Old Walls (Miles and Gail Fursdon). Not only have these largely unsung heroes been recognised, but the local craftsmanship that has gone into the creation of each year's award plate has been more than special – Penny Simpson's ceramic skills combined with Susanne Haines's calligraphy have been a delight to support.

Occasionally we have branched out into specific conservation work such as the restoration of the memorial to William Crossing at Ducks' Pool, the re-erection of the 'Two Miles Stone' on the Zeal Tor tramway, and the consolidation and uprighting of some 20 boundary stones (mostly PCWW) defining the MoD training area at Cramber Tor between South Hessary Tor and the Scout Hut near Gutter Tor, 2012-2016. We also achieved the formal listing of Burrator Lodge and dam.

In general, despite our best efforts, we have not yet persuaded DNPA that unlisted buildings, especially those of the 19th and 20th centuries, are as important in understanding Dartmoor as those with formal designations, and we are still losing significant structures without record or proper pause. However, one of the most unexpected and conspicuous success stories, for which we can take almost all the credit, has been the saving of the Iron

Store of 1901 at Burrator, condemned by so many including, initially, both South West Water and DNPA. But eventually it was impressively restored and opened as a Discovery Centre in July 2014. We argued from the very earliest days that this was an interesting building of corrugated iron, worthy of conservation as a marker for all those who worked on the reservoir and its surrounding estate from soon after its completion. We even had a photograph and item in *The Times* of 9 December 1998.

The dominant issue since 2010 has undoubtedly been the Mires Project which, despite our reasoned arguments, often based on hard data, and despite considerable support for us among the hill graziers, proceeded without proper intellectual and scientific scrutiny or rigour. Our views are recorded extensively





Winneys Down - machine with natural revegetation in foreground (Sep 2012)
Tom Greeves

in our Newsletters, and we have made every effort to provide opportunities for members to visit the areas where so-called 'restoration' has taken place.

Our Research Fund was initiated in April 2006, and funds from it have been used for an archaeological audit of railway features on open moorland (2015/16), and an ecological survey of Gidleigh Common and part Chagford Common in 2016. In 2010, in partnership with Plymouth University, we initiated a study of Small Dwellings on Dartmoor but, sadly, this was never completed owing to illness of the student and some other issues.

We have always included social events in the annual calendar of events – we began with some summer picnics at Blackingstone Quarry and Ducks' Pool. These developed into regular barbecues at the Scout Hut near Gutter Tor and then at Haytor, Leusdon, Sourton and South Zeal. A winter revel has been held most years, most successfully in Chagford, with Footloose, Wren Music and the Dartmoor Pixie Band variously involved, often with Bill Murray, but also in South Zeal and Moretonhampstead. In 2016 a highly successful winter quiz was held at the Warren House Inn.

We have done our best to comment on Dartmoor National Park Authority's Local Plans, Management Plans, Core Strategy, Development Management Document, the Design Guide, besides the Biodiversity Action Plan, Governance Arrangements for National Parks, Protected Landscapes (Natural England) the Dartmoor Training Area Integrated Rural Management Plan, and the Burrator Management Plan, and this is all recorded in our Newsletters. We consistently argued against the spurious claimed visitor numbers of 10 million or more annually which are now officially recognised to much more realistically be 2.3m (DNPA Management Plan 2013-2018).

We have raised our profile through press releases, letters and articles in the media.

We have always tried to be as generous as our relatively limited funds allowed, in support of good causes – thus we have given a grant to the Dartmoor Folk

Festival every year since 2002. We have made modest contributions towards the publication of various books: *Wild Goose & Riddon*, *Dartmoor Engraved*, *Silence at Ramscliffe*, *The Whitefaced Drift of Dartmoor's 'Prapper' Sheep*, *Dartmoor's Peatland Heritage - A Bibliography* and also Tim Harrod's *Soil Map* and accompanying *Memoir*, the film *Wild River Cold Stone*, to a Baring-Gould study day, to the Throwleigh Festival, to a Dartmoor Tinworking Conference, towards the digitising of Baring-Gould manuscripts, to St Michael's (Princetown) Project, to a plaque for Eden Phillpotts, and to the restoration of the grave of Samuel Rowe in Crediton.

Membership numbers began with 300, rose to over 500 and are now at about 425. We have had a very loyal membership with many of our original members still with us – how youthful we all were in 1998! Individual and family membership subscriptions were, from our launch, £7 and £10, raised in 2008 to £10 and £14 and since 2014 to £14 and £21. We became a Registered Charity in August 2005.

Our first website was created by Gerry Sargent but since 2008 has been managed by Chris Wright, and now serves as a remarkable archive in its own right. A facility for online payments was introduced in 2011.

In 1999 we introduced Christmas cards and have expanded into calendars, mousemats, pens and fridge magnets.

How have we done generally? Have we made a difference? I would like to think that we have, and hope you will agree.

Our first Newsletter, dated February 1998 (2 months before our official launch) claimed we were 'new and refreshing'. At our 5th anniversary in 2003 I said in my Chairman's report (NL 17) that 'We determined from the start to be an independent voice, unafraid to speak on behalf of causes and people' and that 'Much of our influence will be subtle and slowly incremental'. I commented 'how easily inappropriate measures, dressed in environmentally-friendly language, can be introduced if they attract substantial sums of money, and how difficult it is to undo bad decisions' – this was long before the Mires Project!



Peek Hill Farm visit (Aug 2010)

Tom Greeves

On our 10th anniversary at our AGM in 2008, I stated that we had maintained 'a high level of quality, consistency and integrity' and had been 'bold enough to open debate and discussion about Dartmoor issues, never before tackled properly in the post-war period' (NL 32). Moreover our debates had been 'lively, good-humoured and informative'. In summary we were 'dynamic, thoughtful, constructive and innovative'.

I drew attention then to 5 issues:

- State of vegetation and the future of hillfarming
- Renewable energy
- Housing and the consumption of resources
- Democracy
- Crownhill Down

I didn't know then that the Mires Project would be so crucial in terms of our relationship with the high moor. And 'rewilding' had barely raised its head. The state of moorland vegetation and the future of hillfarming seem even more critical now. Housing remains a major issue with some catastrophic results (eg for Steward Community Woodland). The democratic deficit, in the form of an unelected National Park Authority, is still with us, with little hope of speedy remedy. Resources (energy, food, timber, stone, water) will inevitably become more and more under scrutiny as population and consumption expands, and as the effects of climate change impact upon people, plants and animals. A vast area of Crownhill Down has been destroyed by the new Drakelands Mine managed by Wolf Minerals, exploiting tungsten and tin, but not before the sweetener of £1 million was spent on archaeological investigation – an almost unheard of sum for rural archaeology.

In summary, I think we can be proud of the consistency and accuracy with which we have presented ideas and information in the past 20 years, and in our healthy questioning of policies emanating from powerful national bodies such as Natural England, and from DNPA itself. Our complete independence and our volunteer ethos gives us particular strength.

To use an archaeological metaphor, we forensically probe beneath the surface, in order to build the most accurate picture we can of Dartmoor in all its rich

diversity and complexity so that, as an independent voice, we can represent contemporary Dartmoor and its potential in the best way we can. We can be equally proud of our engagement with a very wide range of Dartmoor people, and I'm sure we will build on this in the future. We can be specially proud of our Newsletters which contain hundreds of pages of reliable and considered content – I hope maybe these will be digitised in the future, but for the time being they provide a remarkable paper record of what the Dartmoor Society has achieved, much of it highly innovative. The very fact we exist has, I am sure, made some decision-makers think more coherently about their policies and actions.

We have been fortunate to have high quality and long-lasting officers – Steve Mason is our fourth Newsletter Editor after Mike Hedges, Carolyn Tiley and Elisabeth Greeves (Acting!). Tanya Welch is our fourth Hon Secretary after Christine Linfield, Sue Andrew and Elisabeth Greeves (Acting!). We have had four Treasurers too – Bernard Raeke, Simon Dell, Peter Fillingham and currently Tom Orchard.

Maybe there is a message here in that for all this time you have had only one Chairman! Some other things never change – the Examiner of our Accounts, for example, Simon Murray, has been a stalwart since 1999. Our President too, Peter Beacham OBE, has been an ideal supporting presence through all these years. We have so far held 118 Executive Committee meetings, all of which I have had the privilege of chairing!

But a society is nothing without its members, and I must express heartfelt gratitude for your interest and keen involvement through two decades. We strive to make all our events enjoyable while maintaining both courtesy and rigour in thinking, planning and action. Thank you all. We've done all right. As they say on Dartmoor, 'That's uv ut!'

Our aims are as valid now as they were in 1998, even in a fast-changing world.

Tom Greeves, 14 April 2018.



Glendinning visit (Feb 2013)

Tom Greeves

Minutes of the 20th AGM

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Sue Andrew, Jonathan, Moira and Ralph Aylett, Peter Burkill, Simon and Annabel Booty, Myra Dupuis, Caya and Julian Edwards, Peter and Mollie Fillingham, David German, Dawn Hatton, Peter Mason, David Ridgway, Joan Rolfe, John Walling, Jean and Martin Webb, Janet Wellingham, Janice Went, Chris Wright and Mo and Mike Wright.

2. Minutes of 19th AGM

The Minutes of the 19th (2017) AGM, which had been published in the Newsletter and circulated at the meeting, were approved unanimously as a correct record, and were duly signed by the Chairman Dr Tom Greeves.

3. Chairman's Report

This was read by Dr Tom Greeves and is printed in full in Newsletter 62, June 2018. There were no questions regarding his report.

4. Report of the Honorary Treasurer for the Year ended 31 December 2017

Tom Orchard introduced the Annual Accounts for the Year Ending 31 December 2017. These had previously been circulated with Newsletter 61 (February 2018). He explained that the Accounts had an extra column for the Dartmoor Resonance Music Festival (DRMF).

Subscriptions were much the same as the previous year at £4,722 (£4,822), and Gift Aid was marginally up at £1,002.53 (£984.23). Tom Orchard thanked everyone who had contributed to the Gift Aid Scheme and welcomed all other available taxpayers to partake if they were able to do so.

Overall the income was smaller than the previous year. The late Autumn Events (the Debate and the Quiz) between them contributed a net £1,188 in 2016, and as they did not happen in 2017 this income was not available.

Costs overall were similar to the previous year (except that last year we bought and wrote off the new Gazebo for £509).

The Research Fund is lower at the end of 2017 as a result of two donations, £5,000 to the DRMF and £1,000 to the *Dartmoor Peatland Heritage – A Bibliography*.

The DRMF Account shows a zero income less expenditure as, by convention, for a large event such as the DRMF, the income and expenditure associated with it

are shown in the year that it takes place. Grants and donations received for DRMF were £9,030 (inclusive of the Society's £5,000) in 2017 and costs were £614 (£500 for the Woolrich composition and £114 for the Logo design). The difference of £8,416 has been held over until the 2018 Accounts as deferred income.

In questions, Tony Hill asked if it would be possible to reduce the size of Simon Murray's independent examiner's statement on the back, thus enabling the Treasurer's report to be made larger. Tom Greeves said that his comments would be noted and considered by the Executive Committee.

Tom Orchard proposed adoption of the Accounts, and this was seconded by Nigel Rendle, and then unanimously approved by the meeting.

Tom Greeves thanked Tom Orchard on behalf of the membership for all his hard work and for his excellent maintenance of the Dartmoor Society Accounts.

5. Election of Executive Committee Members

Nominations received were as follows:

Newsletter Editor: Steve Mason proposed by Caya Edwards and seconded by Elisabeth Greeves

General Committee: Caya Edwards proposed by Steve Mason and seconded by Barrie Quilliam; Barrie Quilliam proposed by Tanya Welch and seconded by Caya Edwards; Alan Endacott proposed by Tanya Welch and seconded by Elisabeth Greeves; Fairfax Luxmoore proposed by Dinie Brickl and seconded by Alison Watt.

All five positions were approved en bloc and unanimously by the meeting. Tom Greeves welcomed them all into their new roles. He also invited anyone else interested in joining the Committee to contact him directly – they could be a co-opted member in the first instance.

6. Election of Independent Examiner of Accounts

Tom Orchard proposed that Simon Murray should continue as our Independent Examiner of Accounts because he does such an excellent job and is very content to continue in this role. This was seconded by Judy Ehlen and was unanimously approved by the meeting.

7. A.O.B

No matters were raised.

Tom Greeves officially closed the Meeting at exactly 4.00 pm.

Chairman's Report

My first duty is to give a short appreciation of Dr Keith Strelling (1925-2018) who died in February, and whom many of you will have known. His funeral service and burial were held at St Leonard's church, Sheepstor on 9 March.

Keith joined our Executive Committee as a general committee member at the very start of the society. He was a resolute defender of Burrator from commercialisation, and wrote a piece about it in our very first Newsletter, and another short item in Newsletter 8 (June 2000). He served on the committee continuously until 2012 when he retired due to ill-health. For several years he took on the role (from Mike Hedges) of collating information from graziers about traffic accidents involving animals on some of the unfenced moorland roads within the 40mph speed limit, and wrote reports for our Newsletters. He was a wise and charming person, always ready to give helpful advice. His wife Janet was a constant support, and we offer our deepest condolences to her and her family.

While on the subject of committee personnel, Simon Booty has retired this year as a general committee member. He first joined the executive in 2011 and was always ready to give sound advice based on his decades of experience as a hillfarmer at Sherril, near Dartmeet. But we will always value his readiness to assist with erecting and taking down the gazebos at Widecombe Fair and Chagford Show, and to storing items at his farm (which he continues to do). He and Annabel hosted a splendid farm visit for us. Simon also provided practical assistance and equipment with our PCWW boundstones project over four years, and he and his son Alex saved the day on our last expedition (October 2016) by generously returning to Sherril from near Nuns Cross to pick up a tractor and trailer which enabled the rescue of a larger tractor and trailer that had become 'stugged'. Simon has a deep fund of knowledge about Spitchwick Common and is part of a team exploring how we can use evidence from Gidleigh and Chagford Commons to demonstrate the impact of Natural England's policies over the past 25 years or so.

Elisabeth Greeves has relinquished her post of Acting Newsletter Editor which she held for five years! She has been given a 'thank you' gift by the Executive Committee, and I thank her most warmly for all her hard work on your behalf. We are very pleased to welcome Steve Mason as our new Newsletter Editor, and have all been impressed by his first issue (Newsletter 61).

Our year's activities got off to a very colourful start with a visit to Lukesland Gardens in May, which I described then as one of Dartmoor's treasures. Our intended celebratory walk and picnic to view all the restored PCWW

boundstones, one hundred years after their erection, between the Scout Hut and Nuns Cross, unfortunately coincided with a blast of Dartmoor dampness in June with strong winds, hill fog and persistent rain. Nonetheless, a handful of us completed the route and I hope some of you will inspect the stones in your own time. Our barbecue and walk in July was held for a second time at the lovely garden location of Heron's Brook, South Zeal, the home of Wilf and Helen Hodges. August saw us once again with a stall at Chagford Show, as well as a visit to ancient Pizwell Farm, the fascinating home of Sue and Frank Martin.



Braving the elements on the PCWW boundstones walk (Jun 2017)

Tom Greves

Our latest expedition to a renewable energy site took place in September when we visited the nine large wind turbines sited at Den Brook on the northern edge of Dartmoor. A forecast of very strong winds combined with Met Office warnings led to the postponement of our important debate on the use of Dartmoor stone scheduled for October, but this will be held in October this year, hurricanes notwithstanding.

We were treated to a very special evening in November on the occasion of a research lecture given by Martin Graebe and his wife Shan on the collecting of Dartmoor songs by the Rev Sabine Baring-Gould. The talk (plus singing) was of outstanding quality, and has been reproduced in our Newsletter. February 2018 was the occasion of a much appreciated visit to Buckfastleigh, organised by John and Margaret Tuffnell, and our last event of the AGM year, cleverly in between significant snowfalls, was an excellent walk from Fingle Bridge upstream to view the recently restored hydro plant serving Castle Drogo, and also the logan stone which was on every tourist's list from the mid-18th to the mid-19th century. Our splendid guide was Tom Wood.

During the year I have attended meetings of the Peatland Partnership. The Dartmoor Society and the two hillfarming representatives are in a minority in this group in opposing new machine work on the mires, but we make our voices heard. Plans are afoot for a new phase of machine work on remote Dartmoor mires (Hangingstone, Redlake, Rattlebrook and Flat Tor Pan), so we watch this space with considerable misgivings. But, very positively, a grant from The

Dartmoor Society enabled research to be carried out for the compilation of *Dartmoor's Peatland Heritage – A Bibliography* which is a first-class product bringing together all known publications relating to Dartmoor peat – this was something we argued should have been done right at the start of the Mires Project in 2010.



Steward Wood visit (Apr 2007)

Tom Greeves

Regarding woodlands, the saddest story is that of Steward Community Woodland and its inability to persuade DNPA to consider a new planning application for sustainable dwellings within their woodland. All but a handful of adults and children are now left, and DNPA seems determined to remove them. But they still own the woodland and may be able to revive their low-carbon lifestyle one day. Much more encouraging has been the surprise abandonment this week by DNPA of their case at a public inquiry, opposing an appeal by The Hillyfield at Harbourneford against enforcement etc relating to structures and activity in their woodland, which we will be visiting next month. This is a victory for commonsense and hopefully marks a

turning point in DNPA's attitude towards small woodlands and their potential for sustainable management of the highest quality.

But most importantly in 2018 is the recognition that this is our 20th anniversary year. To mark it, we have been working with splendid partners (Simon Ible, Wren Music, Seventh Wave Music and Lucy Luxmoore), plus composers and musicians, to create a unique festival of wondrously diverse Dartmoor music from prehistory to the present day – the Dartmoor Resonance Music Festival which will take place over nine days in June (16-24 June). We have already raised over £22,000 (nearly £1500 of which has come directly from the generosity of members), but are hoping to raise at least £1000 more if we can – if any of you know local firms who might be interested in sponsoring us, please let me know as soon as possible. Like our Literary Festival of 2008, nobody has created a festival quite like this before. Tickets are being sold online so please do book up as soon as you possibly can and please tell all your friends and acquaintances

about it. It's going to be terrific and inspiring, with several world premieres. Please also buy raffle tickets today – some prizes have been generously provided by Country Cheeses and Premier Foods (Ambrosia) in aid of the festival. If anyone is able to help with 'front of house' duties on any of the evenings, please also let me know.

We have arranged a special event with MoD in June, and are hoping to organise a meeting with Natural England and commoners in July, to study the vegetation of Gidleigh and part of Chagford Commons. Our barbecue will be at Brentor on 6 July, and we are hoping to arrange another farm visit in August. The debate on Dartmoor stone will be on 20 October and our research lecture will be given by Adrian Colston on 9 November.

Do look out for us at Chagford Show and at Widecombe Fair. Do take a wadge of membership leaflets with you and distribute them wisely.

It remains for me to thank all your hardworking committee members whose support is invaluable to me. Our officers – Hon Secretary Tanya, Hon Treasurer Tom Orchard, Membership Secretary Wilf Hodges and Newsletter Editor Steve Mason – go about their business with good humour and efficiency. Chris Wright, our Website Manager, is completely unflappable and more than able and willing to deal with any electronic issue. Caya Edwards as Publicity Officer manages Facebook and Twitter, and other outlets most effectively. Barrie Quilliam as a general committee member is always ready to help whatever the situation. Elisabeth Greeves (now a general committee member) has already had a mention! We also have four co-opted members – Ann Willcocks, Liz Miall, Fairfax Luxmoore and Alan Endacott – each of whom brings particular experience to our committee, and we are grateful to all of them. As you know, I myself will be standing down as Chairman at next year's AGM. I am very pleased that at least one very good candidate is prepared to put their name forward to take on the role of Chairman. Finally, as always, I thank you as members for enabling this society to exist, and I hope to see all of you at the music festival and at other events.

Tom Greeves 14 April 2018



TDS stall at Widecombe Fair (2017) Tom Greeves

The Dartmoor Society Award 2018

Tom Greeves announced that the recipient of our 21st Dartmoor Society Award is Rosemary Howell from Lukesland at Harford near Ivybridge.



Rosemary Howell with Tom Greeves

Chris Chapman Photography

He said that members of the Society had visited Lukesland Gardens in May 2017 and were hugely impressed by their sophistication and beauty, which have been largely created and nurtured by Rosemary Howell and her late husband Brian.

Since 1970 they have added ponds, waterfalls, bridges and undertaken a wide range of planting of trees and shrubs, all focused around the Addicombe Brook which runs off the moor.

The gardens are now managed by Rosemary's son and daughter-in-law John and Lorna. They are a testament to very considerable horticultural skill and imagination and are one of Dartmoor's real treasures. Tom was delighted

to recognise this through the presentation of the award on behalf of the Society.

The beautifully crafted award plate, made by potter Penny Simpson and calligrapher Michael Edwards, both from Moretonhampstead, is inscribed 'The Dartmoor Society Award 2018 – for Rosemary Howell for exquisite Lukesland Gardens'.

Rosemary said that on behalf of her late husband and her late father-in-law she was absolutely delighted to accept the award and that she was looking forward

to finding an appropriate place to display it. She added that the gardens would be open every Sunday, Wednesday and Bank Holiday until the middle of June and she was in the process of building a new kitchen for their existing tea room, which would hopefully allow them to cater for larger groups of visitors.

To bring the day's proceedings to a close Tom Greeves thanked all for attending the AGM and invited everyone to enjoy the magnificent tea provided by Elisabeth Greeves and her helpers, to whom the Society is very grateful.

Being such a special occasion our members were also delighted to tuck into a large 20th anniversary cake.

Also for the 20th anniversary, and specifically to raise funds for the Dartmoor Resonance Music Festival, the meeting included a raffle.

Special thanks are owed to Premier Foods (Ambrosia) and to Country Cheeses (Tavistock) who donated splendid prizes, as did several members. The raffle raised £73.00.



The 20th anniversary cake

Barry Welch



Tom cutting the cake

Barry Welch

AGM raffle

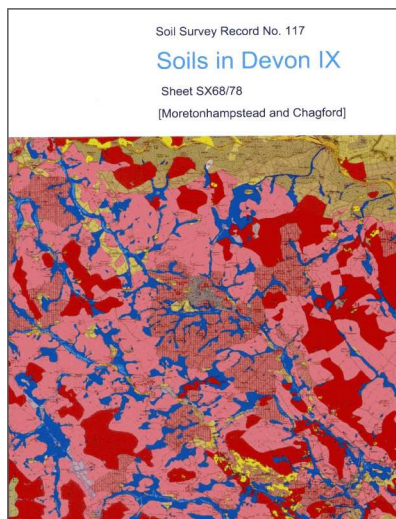
A very special 'thank you' to all our Members who kindly donated raffle prizes for our Special 20th anniversary Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 14 April 2018. Also a big 'thank you' to everyone who bought raffle tickets at the event – we are delighted to report that we were successful in raising an amazing £73.00 which has been donated to our forthcoming Dartmoor Resonance Music Festival. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Summer shows

The Dartmoor Society is pleased to announce that it will be attending both Chagford Show on Thursday 16th August and Widecombe Fair on Tuesday 11 September. We will be delighted to see everyone attending these shows so please do look out for us and visit us on the stand to have a chat as well as enjoying all the other exhibits. See you there.

A GREAT PUBLISHING ACHIEVEMENT *SOILS IN DEVON IX* by Tim Harrod

Members will recall that Dr Tim Harrod gave a superb research lecture in November 2013, and that he was the recipient of our Dartmoor Society Award in 2014 for his 'indefatigable survey of Dartmoor soils'. He led a fascinating study day on Dartmoor soils for Society members in June 2015. In that year, which was UN International Year of Soils, Tim published a new Soil Map covering 20 x 10km squares of north-east Dartmoor based on detailed fieldwork. The map filled a gap left by the demise of the Soil Survey of England & Wales in 1987, and is by itself an amazing product in terms of content and beauty.



Now Tim has published (in 2017) a text to accompany the map, in the form of a 384-page well illustrated book which has the full title *Soils in Devon IX – Sheet SX68/78 [Moretonhampstead and Chagford] (Soil Survey Record No. 117)*. Although a technical book, with much valuable scientific data, it also includes fascinating observations on the landscape itself. The Society can be proud that we contributed grants for both map and book, but this was only a small gesture of support compared to Tim's achievement, which must stand as one of the most remarkable pieces of individual research and publication in the history of Dartmoor.

We heartily congratulate Tim Harrod on bringing his decades of dedicated work to this splendid fruition, which will be of value for generations to come.

Tom Greeves

DARTMOOR CALENDAR 2019



This is a stunning 13 month calendar of Dartmoor images taken by photographer Tracey Elliot-Reep. The 13 photographs are a beautiful evocation of Dartmoor in all seasons and will make the perfect Christmas gift. Included with the calendar are 4 free postcards and an envelope.

The calendars cost £6.99 at events, or £8.50 by post. To order a copy, simply complete the order form and send it with payment of £8.50 (includes p&p) to: The Dartmoor Society, PO Box 38, Tavistock, Devon PL19 0DN. There is also an order form online.

MEMBER PROFILE

Tom Orchard
Honorary Treasurer

Our editor has asked me to write a brief profile of myself for the DS Newsletter – so here goes!

I am a Plymouth born lad, and went to school at Devonport High School for Boys (where I am still involved as a Governor). Whilst at the school, along with many others in that day and age, I joined the Scouts. The troop was adventurously led, and from early teens we spent most school holidays combing Dartmoor. In the summer, this was done with small tents – I believe this is now known as ‘wild camping’.

In the winter, we developed a good friend in Jimmy Martin, who at that time looked after Bellever Youth Hostel at weekends (he later became the full time Warden and was a very well known Dartmoor personality). He was enormously kind to us and the Bellever Youth Hostel facility allowed us ‘year round’ access to the moor. We learned the lie of the territory and map reading with 1 inch maps and the (then new) Silva compasses. We also took part in the very early Ten Tors expeditions.

As I write, I am looking out on a snowy Dartmoor scene, and for those of us of a certain age this is reminiscent of the great 1962-3 winter, which started on New Year's Eve 1962 and went on for most of the next three months! I recall that during half term in February 1963 a group of us wanted to get out on the moor so badly that we donned every item of clothing we could think of and set off for Ducks’ Pool. We crossed the Plym near Plym Steps and the river was totally snowed over with the surface being crusted and the river effectively bridged. The visitor book at Ducks’ Pool had to be dug out, written in, then filled in again with snow!

My university days and then career took me away to the Thames Valley following school (with frequent visits to parents – Dartmoor has always been ‘home’ to me!). But fortune was kind. I re-arrived in the West as a contract accountant to Touche Ross in the run up to the private ownership of HM Dockyard in 1987. I, and a few others, thought this would be three good months work before moving

on like all itinerant contractors to pastures new. The rest as they say is history! I stayed, and became Chief Accountant to DML (subsequently Babcock) until retirement in 2010.

During that time I renewed my love of Dartmoor walking on both privately organised trips and organised walks such as the Abbots Way, the Lych Path Way, The Crosses Walk and the Princetown Charity Challenge. I am a life member of another Dartmoor organisation, and joined The Dartmoor Society at the outset. I also took to a hobby called Hash House Harriers. Loosely, this is a recreation of the old ‘hare and hounds’ concept where a trail is laid and runners follow it. And where do such trails most frequently get laid? Well over Dartmoor of course!

I take part in some other Dartmoor activities. I am a co-opted committee member of the Meavy (Wigford and Lynch) Commoners, which allows me to see Dartmoor issues from a hill farmer's viewpoint. I also (along with Tom Greeves) attend a gathering called the Burrator Advisory Group. This group meets periodically, and meetings are hosted by South West Lakes Trust at their Burrator HQ. Just about all parties interested in the well being of the Burrator Reservoir area take part (Commoners, DNPA, DPA, DS, Burrator Parish Council, anglers as well as SWW and SWLT staff). Although the odd conflict of interests arises, on the whole there is a remarkable degree of unanimity about steps necessary to maintain and preserve the estate whilst keeping the main purpose of providing a water supply to the fore!



Tom enjoying his beloved Burrator

Steve Mason

Lastly, I am currently involved in a small group which is drafting the next Burrator Parish Community Plan. My remit is to look at the section which will deal with the large area of Burrator Civil Parish that is not inhabited, and in the process of formulating the Parish Plan engage with other interested parties, most of whom have a plan of their own (or are like BP busy drafting one!).

I admit to not being as knowledgeable about the antiquities and the ecology of Dartmoor as several colleagues on the committee, but I just love being out on the green turf (all seasons and all weathers!!). I know not how what some would see as a slightly frightening area gets so completely under one's skin, but it has been under mine since a very early age!

LETTERS

In response to DEFRA's consultation paper concerning the future of food, farming and the environment, our Chairman Tom Greeves sent the following letter on behalf of the Society to the Agriculture Consultation Team of DEFRA's Future Farming Directorate.

3 May 2018

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Future for Food, Farming & the Environment

Our comments on this consultation document are the following:

1. **The Dartmoor Society** is a Registered Charity (No.1111066) with broadly educational aims. It was established in 1998 to be 'an independent voice for those who find Dartmoor a source of livelihood or inspiration'. We have a minimum of 425 members. Since our creation we have played a constantly active role in commenting on farming and other policies on Dartmoor, and have organised many public debates and lectures on Dartmoor issues.

2. Balancing approaches to the natural and cultural environment

We welcome significant mention of the need to safeguard 'historic landscapes' and 'cultural heritage' alongside 'natural capital'. However, we feel that in post-war Britain there has been an imbalance between resources applied to the natural environment compared with the cultural environment. For example, there is a need to establish a framework of understanding for 'cultural capital' in rural areas, and there should be recognition of the importance of *Cultural Diversity* alongside *Biodiversity*. More significantly, the power and influence of **Natural England** regarding decision-making for farmers in the uplands has been too great, and has resulted in radically negative changes to the commons of Dartmoor over the past 25 years or so. The reduction of grazing livestock by 80% or so on many commons has had a disastrous effect on vegetation, enabling the spread of dense gorse and *molinia* grasses, which prevents farmers gathering their livestock, prevents access for the public and which obscures internationally

renowned archaeological features. Hill farmers understand best how to husband and manage livestock and vegetation well in the uplands, and it is vital that their voices are heard through the Dartmoor Commoners' Council and others.

3. Peatland restoration

We have consistently questioned the vocabulary and actions relating to the very fashionable concept of 'peatland restoration' on Dartmoor. The Dartmoor Mires Project 2010-2015 was, in our opinion, severely lacking in scientific rigour. We do not support the use of machines in so-called 'restoration' of the peatlands of Dartmoor. Some previously undisturbed mires have been radically altered by machine interference, without proper preparation, scrutiny and monitoring.

4. Proposed Agricultural Bill

There is an urgent need for reform of **protective landscape designations** in the uplands. In particular, SSSIs and Scheduled Monument legislation are no longer fit for purpose when applied to an upland such as Dartmoor. The dominance of the SSSI criteria (which are for natural features) distorts protection as they do not include cultural features. Scheduled Monuments, although having the scope to comprise large areas, are not sufficient to recognise the cultural content of **the whole** of moorland Dartmoor and its moorland newtakes. Both concepts were developed before we had the data (which we now have) which demonstrates that every part of the commons and moorland newtakes of Dartmoor have significant tangible cultural content stretching back some 6000 years, alongside their significance for the natural environment. **We therefore propose** that the Agricultural Bill should include a new designation of **Ecocultural Landscape** specifically for moorland areas i.e. all the Dartmoor commons and moorland newtakes. Criteria for designation would include both the natural capital and cultural capital of these areas, in balance. Essentially such legislation should specify that there should be no disturbance of these landscapes without specialist consultation.

Yours sincerely, Tom Greeves
Chairman, The Dartmoor Society

If you have any comments you would like to make to Tom, or any points you would like to make to further the debate, do please write in and let us know – contact details are given on the inside front cover.

PAST EVENTS

Buckfastleigh visit 14th February 2018

The weather on the day of our visit was not the best with grey skies and continuous rain. However, it certainly didn't dampen the spirits of our eager members who had congregated in the South Devon Railway car park just off the A38 in Buckfastleigh. We were all welcomed by John and Maureen Tuffnell and their lovely little dog Toby. John explained that Buckfastleigh is primarily known for its woollen, leather, mining and quarrying industries and we would see plenty of evidence regarding this along the way. He explained that the name Buckfast means stronghold, traditionally a place where deer and buck were held, and Leigh would have been the pasture belonging to Buckfast, hence the meaning 'deer held in a pasture'.



Steam train in the station

Barry Welch

On leaving the car park we climbed up and over the foot bridge that straddles the railway line and, being half term, we were delighted to see the steam train was in the station which made a perfect start to our walk and really added to the historic atmosphere. We then passed through the cosy booking office with its roaring open fire and set off towards the town.

We stopped opposite the Dart Garage aptly titled due to its close proximity to the River Dart which, due to the recent wet weather, appeared to be at an impressive height indeed. The garage had been built on the site of an old quarry and at the back of the garage itself was a limestone cave. There is evidence of several quarries in Buckfastleigh and John informed us that local stone was taken and used either for building or, as in the case of Whitecleaves Quarry which had a harder stone, ground down into small aggregate and used for road building.

Rock House is nearby and this was originally a private boys school, then it became a restaurant, followed by a hotel before finally becoming a retirement home which it remains to this day.

We crossed the road and descended some steps following a slightly flooded path to Orchard Millennium Green. Maureen explained that she is a Trustee of this park area which is one of the few special open spaces within the confines of the town specifically designated and protected for the local community; from Easter time onwards refreshments are sold there.

John then pointed out Church Steps which is a flight of stone steps leading from Station Road up the steep hill to the parish church of the Holy Trinity which stands above the town. About half way up the limestone flight, two adjacent steps have pitched stone treads laid at right angles to the others. These are known locally as the kissing steps. It is also in this area of the town that around dusk, a very large colony of pipistrelle and greater horseshoe bats fly down the course of the river.

Just over the bridge is a car park on what used to be the site of the old Buckfastleigh cinema. From this vantage point we could also see The Old House, originally built in 1820 and now a Grade II Listed building. John Bovey used to live there and he had a variety of jobs including Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Ale and Stout Agent, Vaccinations Officer, Sanitary Inspector and Insurance Agent!

As well as the River Dart, which flows past Buckfast Abbey and the South Devon Railway on its way to Totnes, Buckfastleigh's past industries also utilised water from the River Mardle and the Dean Burn. Originally there were 13 pubs in the town which is also known for being one of the best preserved medieval towns with a fascinating layout. It was only by passing through the many arches into the courtyards behind the various



Exploring one of the side alleys

Barry Welch

houses that we could fully appreciate the scale of building that exists there. It was a classic example of the importance of getting out of the car and exploring

the town's nooks and crannies in order to discover what historical secrets are hidden down the many side streets and alleys.



Outside the museum and The Valiant Soldier in Fore Street

Barry Welch

After congregating in the reception area of The Valiant Soldier we paid our special agreed group rate to visit the pub and its museum. As there were so many of us we were split into two groups, one being led by John and Maureen to learn about the social and industrial history of the Higher Town while the other remained to explore the pub and museum.

The Valiant Soldier stands in Fore Street and John told us that at one time this rather narrow road used to have to cope with two-way traffic, including articulated lorries carrying bales of sheepskins. Due to the town being located mid-way between Plymouth and Exeter, and approximately 20 miles from each city, it was historically used as a major coaching stop, where the horses were changed and rested and the weary passengers would seek refreshment and possibly a bed for the night.



Wilcocks' iron foundry (left)

Barry Welch

Next, we saw the remains of James Wilcocks and Son iron works foundry and furnace. John told us that the castings shed floor would have been covered in casting sand and, rather interestingly, the castings for the first water wheel just inside the gate at Kelly Mine on the outskirts of Lustleigh were made on site here. We also saw the engine house for the foundry and the castings would have been taken to the finishing shop nearby. Below the building beside the river,

there had originally been a horizontal water wheel which needed only a small volume of water, but flowing at high velocity, to turn it. The old buildings there were very well preserved and held a special sort of atmosphere, substantially adding to the town's industrial past.

Further up Fore Street we found ourselves at the site of the old London Inn and John pointed out a small tap set in a recess near to pavement level. This tap was

one of many that had been fitted by the Hamlyn family back in 1892. Prior to this time water had been drawn from the river but after an outbreak of Typhoid the wealthy local Hamlyn family took it upon themselves to fit several of these taps in various sites throughout the town. The Hamlyns were also the original owners of the woollen mills up until 1920 and, together with other philanthropists in the town, erected new cottages for the workers to live in.

As we passed the Globe Inn we were all fascinated to see the date 1733 above the fish and chip shop. From a social history viewpoint, in 1838 there were over 700 looms in the town prior to the trade being mechanised. The Hamlyn family were the dominant force in the development of the woollen and hide industries in the town although, following the long-term decline in the woollen industry, Hamlyn's mill was sold to the Co-operative Wholesale Society in 1920.

In Chapel Street we then saw the remaining terrace of four cottages from the woollen industry with a tenter loft, for drying cloth, in the upper storey. The material was put on tenter hooks, cleaned and then rolled into bales. Such a combination of dwellings and tenter loft is surprisingly rare, both in Devon and on a national scale, and this Grade II listed building is one of only four known to be left in the UK. We saw Wilcocks' name on down pipes, manhole covers and lamp posts in the vicinity and it was clear to see the impact that the foundry had on the town.



The bar of The Valiant Soldier

Barry Welch

John then showed us the Devonian Sheepskin Factory some of which is still working today. This was also the site of an old farm where a small dairy herd was kept which supplied the Co-op grocery shop with milk. It has been recorded that in 1938 the Town Mills worked an incredible 25,000 skins a year and in 1938 Buckfastleigh produced 5.5 miles of cloth per week.

On returning to The Valiant Soldier, Valerie Browning guided us round the pub and museum, her enthusiasm to share the history of this important building being obvious to us all. She explained that it was 1000 years ago when the town first started brewing beer and in 1746 the building now known as The Valiant Soldier was originally built. In 1939 its last landlord Mark Roberts became the

tenant, then in 1965 the Whitbread Brewery decided there were too many pubs in the town and withdrew the Roberts' licence. Mark died in 1969 but his wife, Alice, carried on living in the upper part of the property until the mid-nineties. Teignbridge Council acquired the pub in 1997 and a trust was formed which set about recording and preserving its contents before opening it to the general public. The public bar is a veritable time capsule with the original till, tankards, signage and pub furniture etc still in-situ. We were all in awe of these fantastically preserved artefacts.



Original furniture in The Valiant Soldier

Barry Welch

All the artefacts and living accommodation date back to the 1940s, 50s and 60s when nothing was ever thrown away! On our tour we saw the snug where the women drank because they weren't allowed to drink in the same area as where the men socialised which was of course the public bar. There was a state of the art fridge/freezer dated 1947 in the old kitchen, and the other living accommodation consisted of a sitting room, bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs.

The uppermost room comprises a museum stocked with artefacts from the First World War and this area is sited above what used to be Mark's bicycle repair shop. There is also a visual experience behind glass showing the attic space with more artefacts from the period such as children's toys, the original external Valiant Soldier pub sign and much war time memorabilia etc. Finally, there was another museum space displaying amongst other local items, prisoner's stocks, as well as Roman coins dated between AD 41 and AD 54. We all agreed it had been a totally unique experience.

Once we had completed our historical feast, we repaired to the South Devon Railway Café where they were expecting us and had prepared home-made scones, cakes and some very welcoming tea. Our sincere, collective thanks to John and Maureen Tuffnell, Valerie Browning and all the staff and helpers who contributed to this amazing afternoon enjoyed by all.

Details regarding The Valiant Soldier's opening times etc are available on their website: <http://www.valiantsoldier.org.uk>

Tanya Welch

CHRISTMAS CARDS



The Dartmoor Society has produced two new Christmas cards this year in packs of ten comprising five of each image plus envelopes.

The photographs depict a Dartmoor Robin by Peter Burkill, and Nine Maidens, Belstone, by Steve Mason. The greeting message inside reads 'With Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year'.

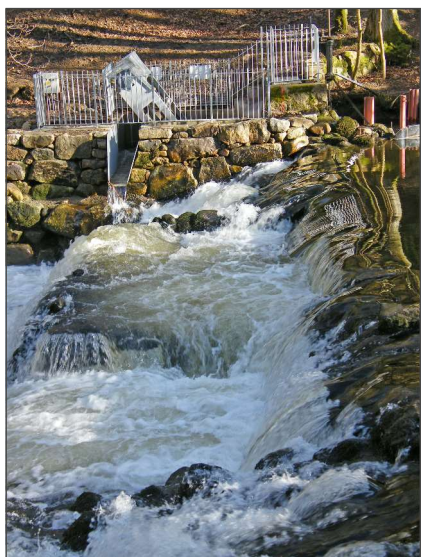


Packs will be available at the Society's indoor events priced £3.50 each. They are also available by post priced £4.50 for the first pack and £4.00 for each additional pack, to cover postage and packaging costs. Please send orders to: The Dartmoor Society, PO Box 38, Tavistock, Devon PL19 0XJ.

Castle Drogo hydro-electric plant visit

Wednesday 7 March 2018

Twenty-nine members were extremely fortunate to experience a most welcome day of spring-like sunshine. This was after a spell of several days of icy and snowy weather, and the effects were brilliantly displayed by the dramatic force of the River Teign, straddled by the historic 17th century Fingle Bridge which was the meeting place for the start of our walk.



The weir and water intake structure

Barry Welch

engineering firm, to enquire whether hydro-electric generation would be possible on the River Teign.

Work didn't actually start until 1927 when Sir Edwin Lutyens designed the building and Gilbert Gilkes and Co installed two turbines. By March 1929 the turbines were producing enough electricity to feed the 332 electric plug sockets in the castle itself and, most importantly, to power all of the modern gadgets in Julius Drewe's very forward looking home. In its day the plant would have been almost unique and fortunately, when restoring the building, the majority of the original infrastructure was found to be sound and re-usable – even the concrete pipe which feeds water from the weir to the turbine house was still in good condition.

We were privileged to have as our guide Tom Wood, Area Ranger for the National Trust. He pointed out some roe deer grazing high up near the top of the Teign Gorge, and later we were treated to a cormorant sitting in a tree by the weir for the turbine. The track beside the River Teign up to the hydro-electric plant was quite wet and even icy in places but the air was clear and the views outstanding. During 2017 the turbines had been restored so that they once again were able to utilise the power of the River Teign. Originally, the idea for the plant arose at the same time that Castle Drogo was being built in 1916 when Julius Drewe, the castle's owner, wrote to Gilbert Gilkes and Co, which was a well-established

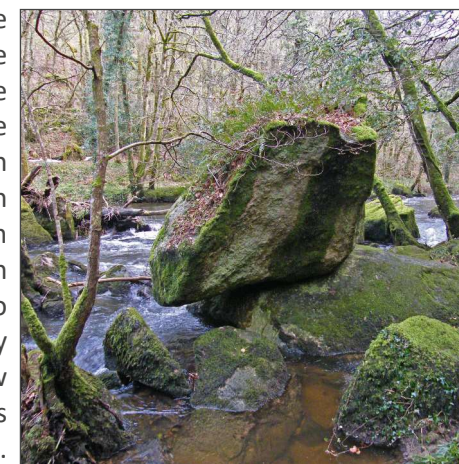
Tom Wood explained that as well as the restoration work that had taken place, the project also required the installation of new elements including a state of the art intake screening system which ensures that fish and eels cannot enter the turbine system. A new cable had also been installed which brings power directly to the castle's visitor centre. Any excess power generated is used to heat one of the boilers in the biomass house so there is absolutely no waste.



The plant inside the turbine house

Barry Welch

We then climbed a stone stile over the Deer Park wall and crossed the suspension bridge. A short distance downstream we reached the impressive weir for the turbine house, and then scrambled down to the very large logan stone right on the water's edge. Tom Greeves told us that this stone was on the 'must-see' list of every tourist to Dartmoor from the mid-18th century until the mid-19th century, but is now neglected and overgrown. It was thought to have druidical associations. He read from two eyewitness accounts of visits – one in 1799 by the Rev Richard Warner who was guided by a tailor from Chagford who 'skipped on with the alertness of a flea', and the other in 1856 when a group of ladies crossed the river from Whiddon Park 'on a Ladder like witches on a Broom Stick'!



The logan stone beside the river

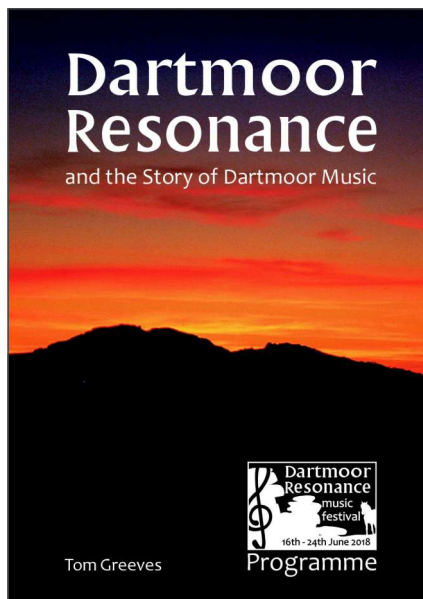
Barry Welch

Tom Greeves then gave sincere thanks to Tom Wood for providing us with such good quality information, and for showing us a renewable energy project which has the full support of The Dartmoor Society. Then some of our members returned the way we had previously walked, while the more adventurous took the Fisherman's Path, ascending and descending the precipitous rocky route at the base of Sharp Tor.

FUTURE EVENTS

Dartmoor Resonance Music Festival

Saturday 16 June to Sunday 24 June



Our Dartmoor Resonance Music Festival, marking 20 years of The Dartmoor Society, promises to be very exciting, with classical, choral, medieval, folk, jazz and other genres featured. Several world premieres will be performed. What makes it unique is that it is all about music inspired by, or connected with, Dartmoor from prehistory to the present day, rather than music that happens to be played on Dartmoor. It is directly involving more than 260 composers, conductors and performers (many of them singers, but also superb musicians).

There has been a great response from our members who have so far donated nearly £1500 towards costs. Further donations are always welcome!

A special 64-page, A5 booklet, written and compiled by Tom Greeves, was printed on 1 June – *Dartmoor Resonance and the Story of Dartmoor Music*. Copies will be available at all venues for £3, or by post for £4.50 (inc p&p). It contains all programme details, plus information on composers, conductors and performers.

For full details visit www.dartmoorsociety.com/drmf. Full details of the events on 20 and 21 June were not available for *Newsletter 61* and are given below:

Wednesday 20 June 2018

JIM CAUSLEY & FRIENDS: 'A MIGHTY RIVER OF SONG' – THE INSPIRATION OF CONTEMPORARY FOLK MUSIC ON DARTMOOR'

Clearbrook Village Hall, nr Yelverton, PL20 6JD – 7.30pm

Tickets £10/children (14 and under) £5

Thursday 21 June 2018

GRANITE

THE GRANITE BAND – KATE & MIKE WESTBROOK with ROZ HARDING, JESSE MOLINS, MATT NORTH, BILLIE BOTTLE, and COACH YORK

Ashburton Community Arts Centre, 3 West Street TQ13 7DT – 7.30pm

Tickets £15/children (14 and under) £5

Granite (world premiere)

Tamar River

Erme Estuary

The box office at Buckfast Abbey is open for bookings for the *Dartmoor Resonance* concert on Tuesday 19 June. Otherwise bookings can be made through Eventbrite or by sending a cheque to The Dartmoor Society, PO Box 38, Tavistock PL19 0XJ, or pay on the door. Several of the events are likely to sell out in advance, so don't delay!

The Dartmoor Society barbecue

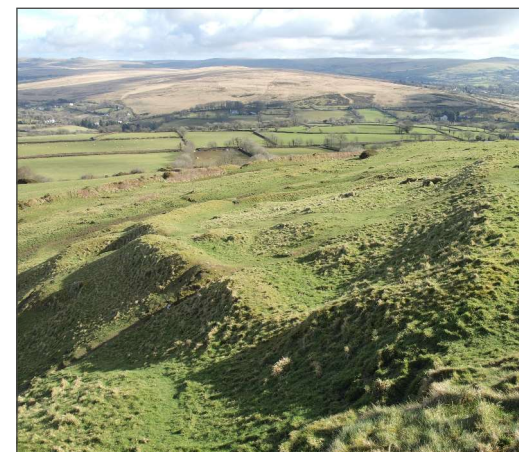
Friday 6 July 2018 – walk 6.00pm, bbq 7.30pm

MEMBERS AND GUESTS ONLY

This summer's Society BBQ will be held at Brentor village hall, grid ref SX 483 813, postcode PL19 OLR, starting at 7.30pm. There are a small number of parking spaces immediately in front of the hall with extensive parking along the adjacent road.

Prior to the BBQ at 6.00pm, Tom Greeves will lead a walk from Brent Tor car park (SX 469 805) to explore the prehistoric and post-Roman earthworks and the church of St Michael de Rupe on Brent Tor.

The tor is the only volcanic peak on Dartmoor and affords spectacular 360° panoramic views from the top. It is accessed via a stony track and the steep climb to the top is over rough grass – appropriate footwear is advised.



Earthwork defences around the tor

Steve Mason

Members £7, non-members £9, booking essential by Monday 2 July.

Corringdon Farm visit

Wednesday 22 August 2018, 2.00pm to 5.00pm

OPEN TO NON-MEMBERS

Philip and Charlotte French have kindly invited us to visit their farm at Corringdon, South Brent, this year.



Hut circle on Corringdon Ball

Steve Mason

Corringdon is first documented in 1284. It is a family run farm on the southern slopes of Dartmoor, all within the National Park. The farm consists of lower (more productive) fields running up to moorland at Corringdon Ball (an enclosed newtake with substantial archaeology – this area is managed to reveal and protect the archaeology under an environmental scheme). There is also some ancient woodland which has had livestock excluded under the same scheme.



Long Barrow stones at Ball Gate

Steve Mason

There is a herd of suckler cows and a flock of sheep, both of which graze adjoining commons, and the majority of the progeny are finished on the farm. The farm is now run by the younger generation with the emphasis on increasing productivity and efficiency.

The visit will comprise a walk of about 3 km/2 miles on rough moorland to Corringdon Ball and also to woodland, followed by tea. Bring suitable outdoor clothing and footwear.

There is no charge for the visit but the tea will cost £3 per person. There is no limit on numbers, but pre-booking is required. NO DOGS PLEASE.

The farm is about 1½ miles west of South Brent, at grid ref SX 676 604, postcode TQ10 9HN, and is approached by narrow lanes. Car share if possible and park at the farm.

Lewtrenchard Church and Forgotten Gardens + Coombe Trenchard house and gardens visit

Wednesday 19 September 2018, 1.00pm to 5.00pm

MEMBERS ONLY

Following on from our very successful 2017 Dartmoor Society Research Lecture where Martin and Shan Graebe told the story of Baring-Gould's journeys across Dartmoor and his search for songs, we are delighted to now offer our Members a very special joint visit which will provide many Baring-Gould references.

Graham Yeo, Chairman of the Friends of the Forgotten Garden of Lewtrenchard, and his father-in-law Dr Ron Wawman, who has been active in the Sabine Baring-Gould Appreciation Society (SBGAS) for many years, will conduct a tour of Lewtrenchard Church with its numerous Sabine Baring-Gould connections. After this we will visit the nearby Forgotten Gardens which include woodland, a holy well and a lime kiln which is being lovingly restored as part of a local community project. The tour will last about one hour and is free, although donations are requested. Please park thoughtfully and congregate in the car park of the Church of St Peter in Lewtrenchard at 1.00pm.



Lewtrenchard Church

Steve Mason

At approximately 2.00pm we will drive the very short distance to Coombe Trenchard, following pre-prepared signage, where we will be able to park on the driveway. Once there we can enjoy a leisurely afternoon with our hostess Sarah Marsh, who will share her passion for the whole estate whilst conducting a guided tour around the ground floor of the house, which is a fine example of an Arts & Crafts Edwardian country house. After the tour we will be able to walk around the beautiful Edwardian gardens at our leisure.



Coombe Trenchard

Coombe Trenchard is an Invitation to View property and normally a visit to the house, with tea, costs £18 per person. For our visit, which also includes a hot drink and a slice of homemade cake, a price of only £12 per person has been arranged, which represents excellent value and a wonderful opportunity to visit both venues.

Directions: Exit the A30 via the slip road signed Broadwoodwidge and head south towards Sprytown and Lifton. At the next junction, turn left towards Lewdown. At Lewdown turn right after the Post Office to Lewtrenchard. At the junction, turn left into Lewtrenchard and the church is near the junction on the left at grid ref SX 457 861, postcode EX20 4PN. Prior booking is essential by Wednesday 12 September 2018, maximum 30 persons. NB Our apologies, but any cancellations after Sunday 9 September will not be able to be refunded.

DARTMOOR SOCIETY DEBATE 2018

Saturday 20 October, 10.00am to 5.00pm

OPEN TO NON-MEMBERS

ARE WE USING DARTMOOR'S STONE RESOURCES WISELY?

Chairman: Dr Tom Greeves



Abandoned 19th century quarry with Haytor Rocks beyond

Tom Greeves

Dartmoor's distinctive stone resources have been used since prehistory to create the distinctive built heritage of the area, and further afield. However, for many years, quarrying within the national park has been perceived by many as anathema, and since 1997 there has been no working granite quarry on Dartmoor.

Nevertheless, two quarries survive, and both are important employers – one producing limestone on a large scale at Linhay, Ashburton and another,

much smaller in scale, producing metamorphic building stone at Yennadon, Dousland.

The principle of using local stone for local and regional needs fits with contemporary ideas about wise and environmentally sound use of resources. Are we doing enough to meet this imperative?

A wide range of speakers will explore what makes Dartmoor stone so special – in the morning its geology, archaeology, and its potential use for historic and modern buildings will be explored; in the afternoon the role of the two working quarries will be told. There will be ample time for discussion.

PROGRAMME

1000 **Welcome**

1015 **Kevin Page** (University of Plymouth): The geological diversity of stone in the Dartmoor region

1100 **COFFEE**

1130 **Tom Greeves** (independent cultural environmentalist): The archaeological legacy of Dartmoor stonecutting

1215 **Mike Barr**: The importance of local stone, its use for building on and around Dartmoor

1300 **LUNCH**

1400 **Ian Glendinning & Barry Wilson** (Glendinnings): Limestone: its use and history of quarrying at Ashburton

1445 **Andrea Robertson** (John Grimes Partnership Ltd): Yennadon Quarry: continuing Dartmoor's tradition of supplying building stone

1530 **TEA**

1600 **Discussion** – Have we got the balance right?

1700 **Close**

The day's event will be held in Meldon village hall, grid ref SX 560 924, postcode EX20 4EU. Members £17, non-members £20 (to include coffee, buffet lunch and tea).

DARTMOOR SOCIETY RESEARCH LECTURE 2018

Friday 9 November, 7.00pm

OPEN TO NON-MEMBERS

WHY WE DISAGREE ABOUT MOORLAND MANAGEMENT AND GRAZING REGIMES – THE DIFFERENT NARRATIVES OF THE DARTMOOR COMMONS

by Adrian Colston



© Adrian Colston

Adrian is a PhD student at the Centre for Rural Policy Research at the University of Exeter researching the topic 'Stakeholder attitudes to the narratives of the Dartmoor Commons: tradition & the search for consensus in a time of change'. He has a BSc (Hons) in Biological Sciences (Zoology and Ecology) from Exeter University and an MSc in Conservation from University College, London.

He was General Manager for the National Trust on Dartmoor for 12 years, and Property Manager at Wicken Fen for 7 years. His

research on the Dartmoor Commons is of the greatest importance at a time of major changes in upland farming and environmental thinking.

The event will be held at the Dolphin Hotel, Station Road, Bovey Tracey, TQ13 9AL, grid ref SX 813 782. Members £10.00, non-members £12.00 (to include a light buffet after the lecture). Prior booking essential by Friday 2 November.



Cattle grazing on the Commons

Tom Greeves

SOCIETY NOTICES

Membership

Subscriptions are **£14** per annum for Single and **£21** for Family membership. A Single Life Subscription is £280. Donations and Gift Aid declarations are always welcome.

If you are not a member, but would like to join a forward-thinking charity that works on behalf of Dartmoor's communities and culture, as well as its landscape and historic features, please write enclosing a cheque or postal order, or fill in the online details (www.dartmoorsociety.com) for your subscription.

Payment by standing order is encouraged and a form can be sent on request. Write to The Dartmoor Society, P.O. Box 38, Tavistock, Devon PL19 0XJ, or email info@dartmoorsociety.com

New members

We are delighted to welcome the following new members:

Richard Barter

Sandra Buckle

Richard Connolly

Nicho Farrell

Andrew Griffiths

Emma Hazledine

Zoe Marsden

Alison Remmen

Christopher Townshend

Changes to online bookings

We have made some changes to our online events booking facility. Members can now book and pay online for their guests to attend events on the website.

Newsletter copy date

Please note that the copy date for the October 2018 Newsletter is Friday 7th September. Event reports or items received after this date will be held over to the February 2019 Newsletter. Colour photographs of events or for the front cover will be gratefully received for consideration.

DARTMOOR FRIDGE MAGNETS



Our new Fridge magnets are now available in five beautiful Dartmoor images costing £1.50 each. They can be purchased at some indoor events and also through the post – please add £1.00 p&p (for up to five magnets). To order, simply fill in the enclosed form, or download one from our website, and post it with a cheque to: The Dartmoor Society, PO Box 38, Tavistock, Devon, PL19 0DN.