

# Mendip

the  
mendip  
society

The Newsletter of The Mendip Society

Issue No. 156 • July 2019

*Caring for the Mendip Hills*



Still all smiles in spite of the rainy season we've been having – as long as there's shelter on hand!  
Have you ever been inside our gazebo – in the rain or the sun?

Did you know that the Society has two Nature Reserves – Do you know where they are?  
One is Slader's Leigh, a limestone flower meadow, the other is Tania's Wood  
Both are beautiful at any time of the year but never more so than in high summer



## WE HAVE ENJOYED



### WEDNESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> MARCH –

#### A VISIT TO A FASCINATING CHURCH, FOLLOWED BY A SHORT WALK

At the beginning of March a small group from The Mendip Society was given an excellent tour of St James Church, Cameley. This is a very special church, a Grade 1 Listed building now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust. It is a hidden gem. We saw the original timber pews from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, box pews used by local gentry (possibly including the ancestors of Jacob Rees-Mogg) and the row of hat pegs along the nave walls. I found the remnants of the medieval wall paintings remarkable, reminding us of an age when messages were conveyed through pictures and visual symbols. Our guide, Robert Medland, interpreted these paintings but we were advised to return on a day when the sun shines through the windows, because the lighting brightens the subdued colours of the paintings. I shall certainly follow his advice! – **Gill Dyson**



### WEDNESDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – SURVIVING THE LAST ICE AGE – A MENDIP PERSPECTIVE

Several Society members mingled with the many residents of the line of small villages along the B3139 Wells road gathered in the pretty church at Henton; Christchurch almost glowed in the twilight so completely full of primroses was the surrounding churchyard. We were all gathered there to hear Dr. Danielle Schreve talk on a project which has absorbed her for over a decade. Terry Gifford introduced her as he had arranged for this evening – here is his take on things: -

#### “The Diggers’ Dining Plan: Supporting the Ebbor Gorge Excavation” by Terry Gifford

As I descended the steep steps from Gully Cave last July I was struggling with a problem other than the usual arthritis. The Mendip Society’s visit to the excavation, which I was just leaving, had set me a challenge. Here were a little band of students and staff from Royal Holloway University of London scraping at the earth on hands and knees without pausing to look up, carrying out extremely heavy buckets of dirt all day, every day, for two weeks, and making the most amazing discoveries. Society members had just been invited to enter the recently revealed lower, original, entrance to the cave which had been the resting place of the bones of arctic fox, aurochs, reindeer, brown bear and hyena. You probably know this list from Professor Danielle Schreve’s talk at the Society AGM two years ago, and that this cave was a kind of microclimatic refuge for mammals between the fluctuations of ice ages. On the last day of digging last year, the teeth of a baby woolly rhinoceros were found. Two years ago, the first flint of human occupation was unearthed. It’s going to get more exciting as the slow, hard work continues.

So my challenge was: how might the Mendip Society offer support to this effort, other than the financial aid already contributed to the project’s shoestring budget? How about us offering a meal at the end of the day to these earth-scratchers – a Diggers’ Dining Plan? They rent a house in Wells and most Society members live too far away to make this idea practical. But my neighbours along the Wedmore road out of Wells might find this bunch of scientists interesting guests, when scrubbed up a bit. And the centrally placed Henton church was looking for speakers to raise money for a Re-ordering Fund to turn the church into a more adaptable community resource. So on 27th March, Danielle drove down from London to give a talk to a packed church attended by Society members and neighbours from Worth, Yarley, Henton and Bleadney. £250 was raised for the church Re-ordering Fund and thirteen people offered an evening meal for the period of the excavation this year. Such generosity was more than enough as Danielle had suggested that eight evenings would be ideal. Let’s hope this cunning plan works out, although there’s more certainty of this than of knowing what lies under the earth of Gully Cave awaiting the scrape of a lucky trowel.

**Ed** – Our visit this year on June 20<sup>th</sup> was too late for this July issue, you can read all about it in November.

### FRIDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> MARCH – THE SOCIETY AGM -7PM

Wookey Hole Community Centre was a very cosy venue for our meeting, I don’t think we could have packed another member in. The business part was done in good time, and the Management Committee elected for a further year, with the addition of two new members, Michael Rolfe and Sheila Dixon. (As with previous members elected three years ago, we introduce Sheila and Mike elsewhere in this newsletter.)

Richard Ashley, a society member and also of The Bristol Naturalists’ Society very kindly brought us a goodly number of copies of their special edition publication of “The Mendip Hills”. for members to take home freely; various enterprising members, unable to be there, commissioned others to acquire a copy on their behalf! We thank Richard, and the Bristol Nats for their kind donation to us; many years ago several of our members experienced in the sciences belonged to that society and contributed to their publications.

After tea and cakes (provided again by Sue Ivens, thank you Sue) Gerry Cottle, owner of Wookey Hole Resort had us laughing all the way through his quite irreverent talk on his past life, present plans and future ambitions; we are grateful to him for providing us with a venue this year.

**Ed** – I personally am grateful to Janet Hellier, who after my plea for a meetings ‘minute taker’ offered to do just that; she has already one meeting under her belt, perfectly too, so thank you Janet.





**FRIDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2019 –**

**“MENDIPITY” – THE PRESIDENT’S QUIZ – 7.00PM**

Jason, Mine host at the Burrington Inn provided 40 delicious ploughman suppers for our quiz night contestants who arranged, and re-arranged themselves finally into seven teams to fight for the prize of a bottle each of Les Davies’ lovely apple juice, made from the fruit of his mother’s orchard. It was a good natured, well, closely fought, and at times difficult battle, with questions asked by Quizmaster Les, scored by Sue Gearing, who together with husband Peter devised most of them.

The final result was a win for the ‘Barley Rye’ team by a narrow margin, with ‘The Mendip Times’ in hot pursuit. But everyone enjoyed it and agreed it should be pursued again next year. Watch out for it in these pages.

**SATURDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL –**

**A CHARCOAL MAKING AND DRAWING DAY IN TANIA’S WOOD NATURE RESERVE, UBLEY**

In April the weather persisted in coming from the Arctic north and it was a rather chilly day when we made charcoal in Chris Claxton’s homemade kilns, but wrapped up warmly one kiln was emptied and another refilled and started on a burn. With willow sticks cooked in a tin, we had perfect drawing charcoal, and after a hot soup and roll lunch everyone settled in a chair to put their chosen view onto paper; such concentration! And such pleasing results to a very different experience in our nature reserve, hopefully to be repeated in the future. With thanks to Chris and tutor Dr John Steers.



*L – concentration in (initial) silence. R – Everyone could collect a bag of charcoal for their summer BBQs.*

**SUNDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> MAY – FAMILY WILD DAY OUT IN SLADER’S LEIGH NATURE RESERVE.**



*Above:  
The best way to get there*

*L – Under cover flower  
printing with Sally*

After several weeks of quite ok weather the Bank holiday Sunday was wet – but still they came to our Wild Day event – and crowded into the gazebos to dodge the heavy showers. John Dickson once again enthralled the young and their parents alike with his enchanting grass snakes and newts; bug hotels were enthusiastically put together by hammer wielding children; innovative badges made, dens built and some lovely flower pictures printed. The Earth Science Centre, with its rock collections and microscopes drew budding scientists.

Hot drinks and cakes provided by Sarah of the AONB and great help given all-round by their Young Rangers, including being look-outs on the trips through the Shute Shelve tunnel, all made it an enjoyable day in which to get that bit closer to nature.



## AND NOW, TO LOOK FORWARD TO –

### FRIDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> JULY – A SPECIAL INTEREST GUIDED WALK IN STOCKHILL WOODS & THE MINERIES TO SEE / HEAR NIGHT JARS ON MENDIP – 8.30PM-LATE



*A beautifully camouflaged night jar.*

This evening walk will be lead by our local naturalist Chris Sperring to hear and hopefully see these elusive birds that nest on the Mendips in Summer.

MEET STOCKHILL WOOD car park 8.30pm - (until possibly 10.30pm)

GRID REF ST 554514 BA5 3AS (nearest postcode)

Be prepared to walk through the woods and the Mineries. Insect repellent and suitable clothing/footwear essential – nothing squeaky or rustling. Numbers limited so please book online using the RESERVE BUTTON. Please leave a contact number in case of bad weather; cost £4pp. No dogs please.

Judy 01749 672196 (mobile on the day only 07443639048).

**PLEASE NOTE** – The reserve button does not work with some anti-virus programmes in which case please ring JUDY to book

### TUESDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> AUGUST – GETTING DOWN AND DIRTY IN MENDIP – 2PM A VISIT TO THE SANDFORD LEVY MINE & CAVE

Venue: Mendip Activity Centre, Churchill Ski Centre, Churchill, BS25. Meet in the main car park.

Most of us know about the famous Mendip Lead Mines of our forefathers, but how many of you have actually been there? If you haven't, and have wondered what it must have been like, then this is your chance to see at first hand. We will be lead by Phil Hendy, who is the regular Mendip Times contributor for all things Caving. We will be in safe hands!

I have been assured that there is no wriggling through tight spaces and nearly all of it will involve a bit of stooping and walking. Therefore stout shoes or wellingtons plus old clothes are recommended. You will be supplied with a helmet and torch but bring your own (if you have them) as a backup.

The tour is expected to last about 2 hours and will involve experiencing quite a lot of history, various wildlife and unusual cave formations. The Group size is limited to 10, and you must be over 7 years of age



Cost £5 per head; book with Richard asap to avoid disappointment.  
Richard Frost 01275 472797 / richardfrost608@gmail.com



Someone said

*"There is said to be a ghostie in there" and another said – "The size of the animal footprints in the mud was something else!! Big fleshy pads & HUGE scratchy claws".*

Left – in Sandford Levy Mine

### SUNDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST – HOCUS POCUS AT WOOKEY HOLE – 7.30PM

At the recent AGM, Gerry Cottle invited us to come as a group to his most recent introduction – a

**NEW** **SPECTACULAR MAGIC & ILLUSION**

# HOCUS POCUS

@ Wookey Hole Theatre **In July & August**

**Evening Entertainment For All The Family**

★ **FOOD & BAR FROM 5:30PM** ★ **SHOW TIME 7:30PM** ★




**BOOK NOW**

We have arranged for a group booking on **Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> August**, the show is for children and adults so take the grandchildren and enjoy the fun. Our group ticket price is £7.99 for everyone. Bookings must be paid for in advance, to Richard 01275 472797 / [richardfrost608@gmail.com](mailto:richardfrost608@gmail.com). We will meet as a group at 7pm to go in on one ticket, but as above, the theatre café opens at 5.30pm for food before hand if wanted. We have to confirm our booking by Monday August 5<sup>th</sup> – so please book as soon as possible. A great social event.

### **WEDNESDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST – WINE TASTING VISIT TO FENNY CASTLE VINEYARD, WORTH, WOOKEY, BA5 1NL – 2.30PM led by Terry Gifford**

Since the Mendip Society last visited Fenny Castle Vineyard two years ago, two of their wines have won gold medals in the 2019 Independent English Wines Awards where 132 English and Welsh wines were blind-tasted by a panel of 25 high-calibre judges. One of those wines, the sparkling Blanc de Noir, was recently served at an international reception in the Chapter House at Wells Cathedral.

So why have you wine buffs not been able to find Fenny Castle wines in the shops? Simply because James and Gill Cumming sell all their 500 bottles a year themselves.



In this two hour tour James will lead us through the varieties of vines, first planted in 2011, and talk about the route Fenny Castle Vineyard has chosen through the English wines industry, before offering us a tasting of four different wines and a variety of ciders. Of course, there will also be an opportunity to purchase a bottle or two.

Places, for which there is a charge of £15.00, must be pre-booked with Terry by 26th August ([t.gifford2@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:t.gifford2@bathspa.ac.uk), or 01749 679128). Due to limited parking at the vineyard you can park at Terry and Gill's house, Ben Knowle Farmhouse, Worth, Wookey (first left on Castle Lane, BA5 1NL) before 2.00pm and walk up the lane. See <http://fennycastlevineyard.co.uk> for further information.

### **THURSDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER – “THE GLASTONBURY PILGRIMS WAY – A new Somerset Trail” by CHRIS SIDAWAY at St James' Church Hall, Winscombe BS25- 2.30PM**

A talk about a new walking trail being planned which will follow the route that Medieval Pilgrims took from Puriton on the River Parrett to Glastonbury Abbey. It will explore the archaeology, history, natural history and culture of the Polden Hills and beyond. Chris Sidaway was involved in setting up the River Parrett Trail and the Coleridge Way and sees this as a way of complementing Somerset's Heritage Trails and invigorating the local economy." A walk is also planned to coincide with this talk. ffi ring 01275 472797.



### **TUESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER – A PHOTOGRAPHIC EXPLORATION OF MENDIP” – 2.30PM BY BERNARD SELICK & DAVID DAGGAR at Wells & Mendip Museum, Cathedral Green, Wells.**

Our speakers, both serious and experienced amateur photographers, have spent two years exploring the Mendips with their cameras to reveal surprising facets of the area, past and present, giving us a new impressive way of looking at our unique landscape. For information contact Richard Frost 01275 472797.



### **SUNDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER – COME WITH ME TO THE OLD S & D @ 11AM**



**A GREAT DAY OUT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY – VENUE IS SOMERSET & DORSET JOINT RAILWAY, MIDSOMER NORTON SOUTH RAILWAY STATION, SILVER STREET, MIDSOMER NORTON, RADSTOCK BA3 2EY (on the B3355)**  
(<https://www.sdjr.co.uk/find-us>)

The station is beside the B3355 Silver Street, 1/4mile from the centre of Midsomer Norton, parking in the station is for disabled & staff only but free car parking is available directly opposite in Norton Hill School in Charlton Road. only 2 minutes away. Only £6 p/head and half price for under 15's, payable on the day.



There is lots to do and see on the only remaining live steam railway to use the original section of track on this famous and iconic line that once went from Bath to Bournemouth over the Mendips. Built in the 1870's and closed in 1966 this is part of our history restored.

Your 'all day ticket' secures you unlimited steam travel all day, with a static buffet coach for refreshments. Visit the restored station buildings, goods shed, signal box, Anderson shelter and two museums; one in the original Victorian Stable Block and the other in the WWII Pill Box. There is also a gift shop and a second hand book shop.

No need to book, but it would help to know the numbers before hand as if there are enough of us, then we may get our own coach! Come and enjoy the atmosphere and exhibits on this once-proud and much-loved holiday route. Contact Richard Frost 01275 472797 / [richardfrost608@gmail.com](mailto:richardfrost608@gmail.com)

**WEDNESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – “THE FUTURE OF THE MENDIP HILLS AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY” A talk by Jim Hardcastle, introduced by Les Davies MBE. at Wells & Mendip Museum, Cathedral Green, Wells at 7pm-9.30pm**



*\*The RGS(with IBG) is the UK's 'learned society' & professional body for geography, founded in 1830 for the advancement of geographical sciences.*

This is a joint event with the Mendip Society and the Mendip Hills AONB, held in conjunction with the ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY & IBG (The Institute of British Geographers).\*

Jim, who is the Manager of the AONB Unit, will explain the future management of the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty,(AONB); his theme will be “The good, the bad and the alarming” with an insight into the future of this very special protected landscape.

There is no charge for entry but donations to the Mendip Hills Fund are asked.

Doors open at 6.30pm. Teas/coffee/biscuits available. Parking is limited outside the museum, with some disabled bays. There is normally ample free parking within the City after 6pm.

Advanced booking is required on [les.davies@westcountryman.co.uk](mailto:les.davies@westcountryman.co.uk) / Tel; 01458 445233.

There is a limit to seating in the Museum so book your place as soon as you can, it will be too late if you wait for the NEXT NEWSLETTER due on NOVEMBER 1ST.

**THURSDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – “A HISTORY OF KNITTING PATTERNS” – 2.30PM – AN ILLUSTRATED TALK by SARAH HARRIS at ST.JAMES' CHURCH HALL, WOODBOROUGH ROAD, WINSCOMBE.**

This is more fun than it sounds; we see how social history is expressed through knitting patterns, from the earliest printed patterns, through to the current revival of the craft. This is a nostalgic journey for those who once suffered the indignities of a knitted swimsuit, with a look at the fashions of a bygone, but not necessarily, more innocent, age. Illustrated with slides of patterns from Sarah's extensive collection.

Details from Richard – 01275 472797 / [richardfrost608@gmail.com](mailto:richardfrost608@gmail.com)

Entry for all talks (unless stated otherwise) is £2 for members and £3.50 for non members, includes free refreshments.



We couldn't get Les' photo onto his column on page 15, so it is here instead.

This is at the Royal Bath and West Show this year, the AONB Young Rangers with Les outside the Environmental Youth Awards area, with the EYA Committee.

*L to R: Major Gerry Webb; Jim Hardcastle (AONB); Dr. Peter Vile, Dept Chair; Les Davies MBE, Chair; Major Andrew Horsley; Sarah Catling, AONB.*

## From the Chair

By Richard Frost

The day to day running of the Society can be a very frustrating task as the Committee has constantly to think and plan for events and items which we hope will be of interest to our members. So- please do not be afraid to tell us what you think would be of interest to both you and the membership as a whole.

The subject of membership now brings me onto the rapidly growing problem of an ageing organisation make-up. We do not seem to have a major problem in attracting members, but their gain cannot keep pace with those who do not renew. On the future horizon is our one primary cause for concern – the immediate problem of just how to attract a younger membership. In an effort to understand and address this situation, the Society took part in an event aimed squarely at young families. The aim was not to attract the youngsters of single figure ages, but their parents. Below is my account of this event, which gives food for thought.

It made me realise that we have a ready source of this market, and it's our own children and Grand-children! My suggestion is that all of us give our children a Family Membership as part of their birthday or Christmas present. It is amazing value for money, and can be given to them as an investment to foster a growing interest in outdoor activities and to join in with what is going on in their Community.

If successful, it is not a problem for us to include a programme of events aimed at them in which, as a family, they can participate and enjoy. You know it makes sense, so just get on the website or contact Peter Janes our Membership Secretary.



## AN EVENT WITH A DIFFERENCE by Richard Frost

On the 18th May this year, the Society took a space at "OFFEST FAMILY DAY" held at the Mendip Outdoor pursuits centre in Churchill. If you take a look at the website [www.offest.org.uk](http://www.offest.org.uk) my guess is that you will think that this is not our sort of thing! However, our participation was by invitation to President Les Davies to inject some culture into its programme. This was an invitation from Heaven. I saw this as our chance to project ourselves into an area of a younger membership. I know it's dramatic, but if we do not do something very soon, then we will wither and die.

The event was sponsored by Thatcher's Cider, Wrington Rotarians and the YMCA; it featured a whole raft of activities aimed at the younger families with children and the list of events was mind boggling ! I just wish such opportunities were around when I was young. Laser Guns, tower climbs, archery, and axe throwing (!) were there along with the more gentle face painting. In short everything a youngster would enjoy.

Les and I talked about our involvement, and we decided to play to our strengths. Firstly Les gained the attention of his audience with his splendid talk about Mendip and its geological past, which meant Dinosaurs. Their eyes widened when he broke up a piece of limestone and asked them to smell it, instantly transporting them back 300 millions years as they actually smelt the atmosphere directly from those times.

Our gazebo was next door to the AONB's outside of which was a children's dry stone wall building contraption consisting of what looked like a pile of small rocks. They just loved it! So while they "played" with this, I steered their parents into our gazebo, where we had a display of the Society's events which showed a group of happy people actually doing this in full scale. The parents who saw this all wanted to have a go themselves, and I think we can look forward to seeing this in our future programme.

In addition to this we offered a short walk around the top of Sandford Hill. These walks only took about 30 minutes and in this I was ably assisted by walks leader Rose Foote. My thanks go out to Rose for her help with the groups of families as they heard information about The Wimblestone (which the children loved), the history of Sandford Quarry and the Cheddar Valley Railway. It also took in a chat about the lead mining and pits on the hill.

Most of our activity was in the afternoon as the morning seemed to be full of children all rushing about trying their skills on the numerous attractions. It all emphasised the fact that children loved being outdoors with something interesting to do. The whole event took place on an ideal day and I did not want to consider what it could have been like if it had been wet and windy! However, this is something we must get involved in if we wish to carry on with our activities.

Working with the others sponsors showed me the amount of planning and level of organisation that goes into making such an event a successful day.

*L – The children's dry stone wall building 'game'*





## THE PROBLEM OF LITTER by Peter Janes

Earlier this year Keep Britain Tidy organised the Great British Spring Clean to help tackle the ugly litter problem that blights so much of the country. Many local groups took part and their efforts have been covered in the Mendip Times and Chew Valley Gazette. Concerns about safety, liability and insurance have stopped the Mendip Society from organising litter picks along road sides but Gill Davies is going to gather information on forthcoming events run by parish councils so that members can participate in those. (watch the web site). Please let her/us know if you hear of one in your village, or even better are planning one yourself. As told in the March newsletter even two or three pickers are 'a group'.



In April, three members, Richard Sudworth, Janet Sherwin and Peter Janes, carried out their own litter pick on the Old Frome Road and gathered eight bags of rubbish in a couple of hours. This covered just a short stretch of the road but shows what can be done.

More recently, the Society took part in the #RoadToGlasto2019 project, run by Keep Britain Tidy and other groups, that aimed to collect 10 tonnes of plastic from beaches and road sides in the South West and use it in the construction of Shangri-La's 360-degree Audio-Visual Arena– The Gas Tower – at this year's Glastonbury Festival. It was turned into boards (below ) that built the stage and which can be used over and over. The photo L eft-shows some of the committee after the last meeting with some of the huge plastic items we collected from lay-by dumps.



Admirable as local efforts are, we need, as a country, to generate less waste plastic, recycle more of it and create real disincentives to dropping litter. There are signs that the Government is finally recognising this and has carried out public consultations on a tax on plastic packaging and a mandatory deposit / return scheme for drinks containers. The Mendip Society responded to the latter supporting the introduction of such a scheme in England and Wales (one can only hope that this survives the current turmoil at Westminster).

The Scottish Government has said that it intends to introduce such a scheme within 12 months with the deposit being set at 20p. Similar schemes already operate successfully in various other countries."

The Society is also supporting the C.P.R.E. in their campaign for a bottle deposit scheme – recently they did a survey entitled "A green bonus for charities?" in which they found that over 50% of people would donate their deposit to charity rather than reclaiming it, all or some of the time. This could raise over £2 billion for good causes!

We think it's brilliant that so many people would be happy to donate their deposits in this way, and we'll be pushing for the option to donate your deposit to be part of England's system.

## ECO-BRICKS by Judith Tranter



In the last newsletter we wrote a bit about making eco-bricks –stuffing all our single use crunchable plastic into throw away plastic bottles. At the recent family day in Slader's Leigh we collected the plastic from visitors' refreshments and stuffed them into a bottle on a table in the gazebo; many people had a go at bashing it into the bottle with a long handled wooden spoon, many said they already made them for their school, place of work or community and took them to a collecting point for a particular building project. One thing is sure – you have to be determined to crunch and bash it down very hard to get the bottle to a satisfactory hardness. I am told you have to be able to stand on it without it crushing. We filled a bottle – and it was hard packed enough, so I took it to the Community shop "Replenish Weston", in Meadow Street when I had to go to Weston for an appointment. They are collecting the bottles for "The Friends of Grove Park", who help the Council with their job of parks maintenance; the Friends are building seven huge composting bins from the all these bottles, something which at present the Council can't do.

L – Richard in the 'Replenish Weston community shop with 'my' bottle.



## SOCIETY BUSINESS – NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

At the recent AGM two new members were elected to the Management Committee.

As with the election of the new Committee three years ago we printed an introduction to members so everyone knew who they were and would recognise them at events and on walks etc; they have compiled them themselves.

So we have –



### **SHEILA DIXON**

I have been involved in farming all my life, living on the peripheral of Mendip between Winford and Clevedon. I worked at Long Ashton Research station where Les Davies was a colleague!

I am involved in the N Somerset Agricultural show which is held on land that my father farmed as a 5th generation tenant farmer on the Tyntesfield estate.

I joined the Mendip Society in the '90s as I enjoy walking and wanted to learn more about my local countryside.



### **MICHAEL ROLFE**

"Hi. I am Michael Rolfe. I am a retired Quantity Surveyor. I became a member in 2015. My particular interest is to maintain the beauty of The Mendip Hills AONB and the immediately adjacent countryside. I moved to Cross in 1979 and was instrumental in helping to set up and manage, as Secretary, Cheddar Valley Junior FC. I became a Compton Bishop Parish Councillor in 2007 and, after a four year break, am a Councillor once more. My role has been and continues to be, to head up its Planning Application Response Group, a role I also perform for The Mendip Society. My main interests include the theatre, croquet and model railways. My main aim, as a member of the Society, is to help prevent/lessen the impact that urbanisation will have/is having on the countryside to the immediate North and South of The Mendip Hills.

## WELCOME TO YOU BOTH, GLAD TO HAVE YOU WITH US.

### **The Digital Newsletter**

For the March issue of the newsletter, all those who were willing to receive a link to retrieve the file of it, either compressed or in the final larger printers pdf form, managed to get their copy, as far as we have been informed anyway. If anyone didn't, please contact Peter Janes, on [membership@themendipsociety.org.uk](mailto:membership@themendipsociety.org.uk).

If anyone else would like to try this method please send an e-mail to the same address asking to be sent the link.

### **Small Heritage Grants**

The Society is registered with the Charity Commission as a 'grant giving charity'. In the past we have supported applications from various groups, both voluntary and statutory, to improve their village facilities and appearance, from conservation groups working on projects of benefit to the landscape and historical places of the Mendip Hills and also to benefit the lives of the people who live here too.

In the last few years the applications have slowed down somewhat and we need to up our game a bit.

So we are asking you, the members, for help. A great many of you belong to other groups of all sorts or your family members, or neighbours do; please will you spread the word that we are open for business and ask them to contact the Secretary on [secretary@themendipsociety.co.uk](mailto:secretary@themendipsociety.co.uk) who will make sure it gets to the Grant Officer, Clive Constance.

***Our grants are usually not huge but they can, and do make a difference to a project***

### **A Space for Members**

From time to time, and more frequently now, we receive requests from members who ask us to ask something of the general membership; it makes more sense to have a space where they can ask things for themselves and we don't have to bother you with yet more e-mails.

So this is the space (for this time anyway) and here's the first request!

**Carenza Ellery asks that "anyone who is interested in lift sharing to / from south Bath or anywhere en route to a walk in the programme please contact her on 01225 835599 or 07962 076370/ [cbx550mini@gmail.com](mailto:cbx550mini@gmail.com)"**

## A SOCIETY OPEN DAY TO REMEMBER – IN WESTBURY QUARRY

**SATURDAY 15TH JUNE** – It was advertised as a ‘family day out to explore and enjoy peaceful sunny wildlife areas’ with protected wildflower meadows and a pond teeming with life. Whoever wrote that (ok, I admit it was me!) didn’t know about the RAIN in which the Mendips would be engulfed for at least a fortnight. But how could we cancel it – when it had been advertised in the Mendip Times? So it went ahead in the rain.

Andy, best quarry Manager, brought two bucket loads of stone down to the flat quarry floor and five society members, who happen to be part of the AONB walling group, built a dry stone wall, from scratch so that visitors could see how it is done. These stalwarts only retired to shelter during the heaviest downpours and the wall was done. The Mendip Rocks! Festival would like them to continue building it at their launch event on August 10th “It’s a Blast” when some lucky ticket holder gets to blow up a car.



*Just drop it here Andy please*



*Not particularly high but – nice all the same!*

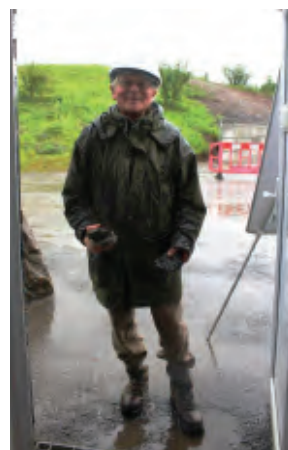
Up until mid afternoon we had no families arrive, but plenty of adults, keen to go with Peter Hardy, well known geology walks leader, around the quarry to learn all about the different ages of the rock strata and what they told about the making of Mendip. Luckily he had brought along his extensive collection of rocks and fossils which were on show in the reception/classroom area so when shelter had to be sought everyone could pack into there. Whilst there, those who wanted it were plied with hot drinks and biscuits to fortify them for the time outside.



For Peter’s second walk he was joined by Neil Adams, a BSc (1st class honours) Geology Graduate who did his PHD Dissertation on the early Pleistocene cave dig in this very quarry. Both tutors were excellent and visitors were fulsome in their appreciation.

And as an added bonus with all the rain there was a lot of outwash from the gravels to the bottom of the hillside where the observation path went and one lucky

lady just picked up a knuckle bone of a small bear, and two teeth. She was thrilled to be allowed to keep them.



*A very wet Peter Hardy*



Also on offer was badge making, luckily under a gazebo sited next to the pond so John Dickson, in charge of pond dipping, could take shelter when no one was venturing out to have a turn with the nets. However one family was made of sterner stuff and thoroughly enjoyed dipping and getting John to tell them all about the little creatures they found.

We couldn’t have held this event, rain or sun without the members who

came and ‘did’ – wallers: Ian, Julian, Malcolm, Tucksey, David T, Julian & Richard E, plus Royette & Ernie, Sheila & Peter and of course Nigel Taylor, facilitator, John, Peter & Neil, dipping and walks, plus our thanks to the owners of the quarry, Alford Technologies, for permission to visit.



## NATURES RESERVES – REPORTS FOR THE SPRING 2019

### SLADER'S LEIGH



The spring this year has been very dry for the most part, the ground was certainly extremely hard for our first work day of the year but we had to do what we had planned because the little whips given to us by TCV (a community volunteering charity) through their partner OVO Energy, had just arrived and needed somewhere to live.

This was at the top of the meadow where an old hedge, cleared by our neighbour, had been replaced by a solidly made wooden fence line against which we wanted to plant an English native species hedge. We had approx.500 whips of 9 different species and when we had finished this area, we moved down the boundary of the meadow a bit and bulked up another sparse hedge, we estimate about 45 meters in total. A good day's planting, we were all so pleased.

However, a few weeks later a phone call from a member told us that she had seen, in front of the seat just down from the Small Leaved Limes fenced area, by the overflow planting line, a very recent fire site, with drink cans etc around. Sure enough there was, and what the vandals had been burning were the canes which supported the whips whilst the guards to protect them from rabbits had been thrown over onto the railway embankment amongst the trees. We managed to find most of the guards and cut replacement stakes to put them in position again, but were left with a strong feeling of revulsion against these people whoever they are, at what might be called a minor incident, but was a pointless and sick act of destruction- just because they could. But I'm glad to report that after the rains of June the whips are doing well, as are the widespread cover of orchids. It was touch and go whether the flowers would be out in force for the 'Wild Family Day Out'; they were – just.

The picture, left, was sent in by Joy Russell a visitor from Highbridge; it is a small part of a large swarm of male Green Fairy Long-horn moths on the Small Leaved Limes in May, something I have never seen in all these years of managing the reserve! Thank you Joy – the link to her great little video is [www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBpkPITIJhU&feature=share](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBpkPITIJhU&feature=share)



### TANIA'S WOOD



The wood recovered nicely from the effects of the drought last year and is once again bright and fresh, green and leafy – and that includes the hedge length laid in January, what we could see of it that is as on our first work day in May we found it completely smothered in cleavers – 'sticky willy', and boy – did it stick. But we had to clear it off and away from underneath to let the new shoots grow well. We also did a great deal of clearing in the section of the field at the lower end of the wood which forms our car park, separated off by a hedge which we planted on our first workday three and a half years ago. We had planted whips there too, barely 18ins high some of them, now we had to remove their guards for their health. The field is quite damp, especially in the winter, so the species in our mix loved it and now look like a full blown hedge, they will be demanding to be laid fairly soon!

Another big task was completed by three licensed chain saw holders, led by the President, the day before the AONB volunteers were there. A lovely lime tree had heaved itself out of the ground in a fierce storm just a week or two previously and was then balanced in amongst the rest of the canopy. Ordinarily we would have left it there – it was still very much alive, but we couldn't take the risk of it dislodging and falling with the small children of Blagdon Forest School using the wood weekly. It was cut off four feet from the ground and winched out by Les' Land Rover, and cut into rounds which now form a second camp circle for the children. The volunteers next day filled in the great hole left by the roots, some of which were still anchored. Packed with soil, it is hoped it might regenerate from them as limes sometimes do.



Top – cut lime tree being winched out.  
Bottom – clearing the hedge line.

## Mya Rose and the Gilbert White Award, Birding and Camps

Contributed by Mrs Helena Craig

On Saturday 9th February 2019 Compton Martin teenager, Mya-Rose Craig aka Birdgirl, was awarded the UK Gilbert White Youth Award for Biological Recording by Dr Jo Judge, CEO of The National Biodiversity Network. The 17 year old Chew Valley School Sixth Former received the award for bird ringing and nature surveys which she does at Chew Valley Ringing Station. Mya-Rose who said "I would love to do bird ringing with more children from the Chew Valley" obtained her ringing licence as she turned 16 years old.

The award was presented after Mya-Rose had given a confident and entertaining talk to a packed hall in Compton Martin entitled 'Born to Bird', about her travels, her many near-death experiences and amazing wildlife and birds seen around the world. She hoped to soon become the youngest person in the world to see 5,000 bird species of the world, (which she did soon after in Spain after seeing a Rock Bunting).



Mya-Rose who blogs under the name of Birdgirl and has appeared regularly on TV and radio supported Chew Stoke's Mike Dilger, the well known nature expert on BBC1's The One Show, as he gave a talk, The Trials and Tribulations of a Wildlife Presenter. The evening raised £900 for 'Black2Nature', an organisation set up by Mya-Rose in 2015 aiming to get children and young people who are Visible Minority Ethnic (VME) or from areas of deprivation engaged with nature by organising nature camps. During the evening she spoke about the organisation. She said, "I think it is really important for young people from different backgrounds to enjoy nature together to improve community cohesion and for managing their mental health. As a birder, I had noticed that when I visited reserves or went on walks, I never saw any other VME young people, even in city centre reserves.

*Mya-Rose (left)* takes up the story – "This is something that was really worrying me and so I worked hard to get young people from VME and inner-city Bristol backgrounds to come to my camps. Camp Avalon was my first camp in 2015, then Camp Chew in Compton Martin; they were very important as there were no other opportunities for young people, whether into wildlife, birds or don't know anything about nature, to come together on a nature camp.

In 2015 it was interesting to watch the eight VME teenagers that came. Initially, they did not know what to expect and felt 'bored' before something clicking in their minds and them engaging with the nature around them. For some, it was the idea of looking in a mammal trap, whilst for others, it was holding a bird during bird ringing or wildlife art. It made me realise that anybody could connect with nature; they just needed to see how, and maybe be shown how. There is something special about watching a 'tough' 14-year-old boy from the inner city, seeing a bird closely for the first time and then his pure delight in holding it, releasing it and then looking at me and smiling from ear to ear. That was a special moment for me.

I'm really looking forward to our Camps/Chew for children aged 7-11 years and CampsAvalon 12-18 year olds near Glastonbury ; it would be great if young birders came along and maybe brought some friends. It would also be fantastic if students from Bristol and Bath could help at the camp with nature activities, setting up and taking down tents, helping with cooking and washing up, and nurturing the teenagers who attend. The camp needs a lot of time from people interested in nature so that they can talk on a one-to-one with the VME teenagers, finding a way to make nature relate to them and get them to connect. That is much better coming from young people in their late teens and twenties if they are prepared to try and engage with them. I hear adults say all the time that it's impossible to engage teenagers in nature because they are not interested. That is just not true, my experience is that everyone can be engaged with nature. Also we need VME young people to come and help, as they can act as role models, even if they are not interested in nature, so long as they come and are prepared to be open to it, that is all we can ask.



**Mya- Rose with Camp Chew youngsters.**  
Her blog – [www.birdgirluk.blogspot.com](http://www.birdgirluk.blogspot.com)  
<http://campavalon.blogspot.com> for info  
on the Camps 12th-14th & 19th-21st July 2019



## POINTING THE FINGER AT 'SOMERSET FORGE'; SSRHC OPENING; GERALD'S OPEN GARDEN

**VISIT TO SOMERSET FORGE** Following up Mick Bush's article on the fingerposts of Somerset, he and I went to find out more of the facts on post restoration at Somerset Forge in Easton. Tich Masters showed us the 'before and after' evidence of the increasing number they are getting into the workshop. When an arm has been broken off, if the missing piece can be found (often in a garden where it has been stored for years in the village!) it can be rejoined invisibly. However if it needs a new arm, there are standard moulds sized according to the length of the names to be put on it, and whether it needs to be two or one sided. Cast iron letters/numbers are put in the bottom of the moulds and they are then sent off to a foundry either in Dorset or 'up north' for casting; these are taken off and reused over and over. The casting is then painted in the traditional way by one worker at the Forge, who hardly ever runs out of arms to do!



Fingerposts were always traditionally made, and repaired, of cast iron by Sheldon of Wells but after they closed casting in aluminium was begun, these are now also repaired in aluminium. Inside the posts is a steel core which supports the arms, this core rusts and then rots with the weather and over time expands and cracks the cast iron. Replaced with ordinary steel, however heavily painted the core will still rust – so it is now replaced with galvanised steel.

The picture right shows a post from outside Wedmore, on the road side of a ploughed field. It was knocked down by a tractor which subsequently made its escape uncaught. It clearly shows the rusted core which made it vulnerable. It also shows the way to Fenney Castle where the vineyard featured on page 5 is situated.

Some Parish councils have contacted us to say they are busy renovating their fingerposts but we have yet to hear of any society members taking the initiative and spotting their own post to make beautiful again! Please do contact us



## SANDFORD STATION RAILWAY HERITAGE CENTRE – On The Strawberry Line.

The SSRHC is approximately half-way along the Strawberry Line, between Yatton and Cheddar. There is a pedestrian, cycle, wheelchair and pushchair entrance on The Line just south of the A368 with steps and a ramp. The main entrance to the Sandford Station Retirement Village is on the south side of the A368 just to the east of the Pelican Crossing for The Strawberry Line. There is **NO PARKING** on site but there are no parking restrictions on the A368. Best Postcode for SatNav is **BS25 5AB**. For trains and buses to get there, please look at their website [www.sandfordstation.co.uk](http://www.sandfordstation.co.uk). On 4th June a 'Running Day' launch of the newly installed Gauge 1 Model Railway, gifted by Bernard Parfremont to the centre, was held. This is a large model layout which he had built completely himself, including locomotives, which ran in his garden. Other running days will be held, usually Sundays, weather permitting, times will be on their website.

**The Station, Museum and Café will be open every Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday between April 6th and October 27th 2019 from 11am to 4pm.**



**Society members attend the special opening of Rose Cottage garden in memory of Gerald Offer, with our Grant Officer, Clive Constance.**



*It was a lovely sunny evening amidst all the cold rainy days of June.*

## 2019 Mendip Rocks! Programme events August 10<sup>th</sup> – Oct 20<sup>th</sup>

The details of all events and activities will be found on our website and that of the Mendip Hills AONB. Items marked 'SESC' are run by the Somerset Earth Science Centre; the full programme will also be on their website.



### Festival Programme Launch – Promotional stand at Wells Market Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> August

#### Key Family Events:

**Westbury Quarry "It's a Blast"** – Sat 10<sup>th</sup> Aug – launch day 10-3pm. Blast before midday.

**Fossil Funday & 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open Day at SESC** – Wed 21<sup>st</sup> Aug 10am-4.40pm Fossil id, crafts/arts, quarry visits. To include Arts Festival inspired by Mendip & Somerset geology.

**Burrington Combe Family Fun** – Wed 28 Aug 11am – 4pm. Activities for all ages

**"Explore Ebbor Gorge"** – Sun 20<sup>th</sup> Oct 10am-4pm *“(Earth Science Week)”* – Rocks/fossil activities. – “Making the Mendips” – activities, discovery walks & Festival finale event.

#### Festival Walks & talks:

**Botany & Geology Walk** – Liz McDonnell /P Hardy– Westbury Sub Mendip 10 August 11am & 1pm

**Kilmersdon Coalfield Walk** – Richard Frost – Wed 14 Aug 2pm.

**Blackmoor Lead Mining walk** – Richard Frost Sun 18 Aug 2pm.

**Exploring Fairy Cave Quarry walk** – Thurs 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2pm - 5.30pm.

**The Ancient Springs of Wells Geo Walk- Doug Robinson** – Sat 24<sup>th</sup> August – 10.30am-12.30pm

**Burrington Combe- Deserts, Mountains & Seas Geology walk** - Wed 28<sup>th</sup> Aug, 2.30pm, P Hardy.

**"The Buried Treasure of Fairyland"** . A film premier presenting **Fairy Cave Quarry**. –

Fri 20<sup>th</sup> Sept, 7-9pm – Priddy Village Hall

**Banwell Bone Cave Tours** – Sat 14<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> Sept, 2pm- 5pm. Eventbrite tickets onl, pay on day at caves. £15 refreshments provided. Parking at the Caves, Bridewell Lane, Banwell.

**Fossil Fun at Writhlington, Radstock** – Sat 21<sup>st</sup> Sept –SESC/Simon Carpenter –2-4pm.

**"What Lies Beneath" Walk** to explore Priddy caves above ground with Peter Glanvill –

Weds 25<sup>th</sup> Sept, 2pm. Walk approx. 3.5miles.

#### Mendip Quarry Tours:

- **Batts Combe**, Cheddar – Tues 13<sup>th</sup> Aug AM/PM
- **Moons Hill** – SESC Open Day – 21<sup>st</sup> Aug. AM/PM - (4 Tours).(inc art works show)
- **Torr Works**, Frome – Tues 12<sup>th</sup> Sept Am/PM
- **Halecombe**, Leigh on Mendip – Tues 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct AM/PM

**Mendip Rocks Art Exhibition:** “Marking Time” SESC 15-21st Aug. Mendip geology inspired artists including Deegan & Watchet art group (7 artists), & Jennie Thomas, David Parfitt. Art workshops with some artists Works include watercolours/acrylics and 3D sculptures in the grounds of SESC and some will be for sale. (10% going to the Mendip rocks Festival Fund)

#### Earth Science Week Events 12-20 October *specialist Geo lectures & walks:*

- **Beacon Hill: Geology, scenery & archaeology walk** – Doug Robinson – Sat 12<sup>th</sup> Oct 10am-12.30pm. Meet at SESC to car share, or gateway of Beacon Hill Woods. ST637461.
- **Geo Lecture Day at SESC** – Prof Iain Stewart, Dr Ania Losiak, Prof Tony Watts and others. Sat 12<sup>th</sup> October –1pm-5pm Inc tea and cake. £10pp
- **Blackdown to Shute Shelve geo walk** – Tony Watts (Oxford Uni)- Sun 13 Oct – 2-4.30pm, meet in lower car park of Burrington Combe, by Burrington Inn. BS40 7AT.
- **Mendip Water Sources Cheddar Reservoir walk** – Mike Sumbler (Bristol Water) Wed 16 Oct – 10.30am-12.30pm. Meet at Cheddar Reservoir.
- **Explore Ebbor Gorge Open Day** – Sun 20 Oct –10AM-4PM as above .

**ALL EVENTS TO BE BOOKED via Eventbrite link: [www.mendiphillsaonb.org.uk](http://www.mendiphillsaonb.org.uk) details 01749 840156.**



## News from the Hills

**From Jim Hardcastle  
Manager of the  
Mendip Hills Unit**



One of our volunteer rangers commented the other day, 'I never knew you [the AONB Unit] got involved in so much!' So, here's an update on what we're working on at the moment.

- Submitting comments and attending the enquiry into the Joint Spatial Plan for the West of England. This could result in two new settlements near the AONB boundary.
- Paying for the Bristol and Avon Rivers Trust to survey the health of the tributaries in the Chew Valley catchment area. 90 sites were visited with 13 'grade 1' high risk pollution sites. A list of actions is now being planned.
- Starting a new recruitment and induction programme for our Volunteer Rangers in September, ensuring all new rangers spend at least 6 months going through a training programme before they are badged as Volunteer Rangers. Our new full time Ranger Volunteer Coordinator is in post. The current Volunteer Rangers have had Countryside Interpretation (helped by Les Davies MBE, Mendip Society President) and Emergency Situation training.
- Bracken is being crushed thanks to various volunteer groups on Burrington Ham to protect the rare limestone grassland; the Landscape Character Assessments are being re-written for the area to help planners protect the special qualities of the area.
- The Mendip Rocks! programme (supported by the Mendip Society) has nearly 30 events taking place during August, September and October.
- A new bunch of Young Rangers are being recruited to start in September (supported by the Mendip Society!).
- The Limestone Link is getting national promotion thanks to an adventure journalist we commissioned to walk and run it.
- After the Big Visitor Count in May when we recorded over 2500 visits at 16 sites across a 4 hour period

we're combining data from other sources to get a better understanding of how many people visit the AONB.



*Les with the Volunteer Rangers*

## A President's View



Dear all,

So half the year has gone already and I am hoping the weather is going to improve. At the time of writing, it's so wet and miserable outside that it could be Autumn! Despite that, there has been a lot going on and still more to come. Thank you to everyone who turned out for the quiz night. It was fun and something a little different, I hope that you enjoyed it. Maybe we can do a Christmas special next time, with more general knowledge questions. Let us know your views!

Likewise the charcoal and drawing day in Tania's wood was something different. I must admit I have been enthused with both the making of charcoal and the drawing. More to come I hope. Such activities add so much to the Society. We are not just a walking or visits group, nor just a planning watchdog / consultee. The Society is widening its scope.

In line with this I have just arranged the first of what I hope will be many lectures in partnership with the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) in Wells Museum. AONB Manager Jim Hardcastle is going to reveal the future of the Mendip Hills, "The good, the Bad and the Alarming" as he explains it. Please come along on Wednesday 6th November. Details are in this Newsletter.

Moving even further forward, the Society will be the sponsoring the AONB Young Ranger programme. What a great way to bring the younger generation on and get them interested in their environment. They came down to the Royal Bath and West Show this time to help with some stewarding at the Environmental Youth Awards (EYA) stand. The picture I've chosen has already been used in the Mendip Times, but illustrates the coming together of different generations to improve and enhance our environment.... After all, not one of the EYA team could be labelled either 'Youth' or 'Young'.... Yes the same quip is used in my Mendip Times column!

Remember if you like what's going on, then tell everyone else. If you don't, then tell us!

With my kindest regards and best wishes to you all. -  
**Les**

## SOCIETY ROUNDUP

**Editor's Notes** – Another 'Mendip' Newsletter in which I have failed to find the room to include everything sent to me or that I wished to include for myself, which can only be a healthy sign? Some members have commented that it is not so much a 'newsletter' as a 'magazine'. What do you, the readers, think – please let me know, by contributing your thoughts and ideas, suggestions and opinions; letters to the editor are encouraged. I draw your attention especially to P8, the Members Space, and Carenza's request for car sharing, these things are more important than ever nowadays, it just takes a bit of effort to arrange. Likewise, our request for you to spread the word about our small grant funding, it will be good for the groups who need support in the Mendip area but also good for our reputation and profile as a Charity, so please send us any suggestions or ideas on this too. Finally, on P6 are details of our first collaboration with the Royal Geographical Society, through our President, who is a Fellow of said Society; help us make it a 'sell-out' event on November 6th and it won't be our last.

It is a sad fact of life that members are asking me to note in this column those long standing society friends who are no longer with us. Jean Mantle writes that Bettina Cohn, well known walks leader has died just 2 days after her 99th birthday. Proof that walking IS good for you!

## 'IN MEMORY' IN OUR LOVELY GARDEN

by Clive Constance

### Dr Gerald Offer 1938-2019

Older members of the Society who remember him will be saddened to learn of the recent death of Gerald in the BRI on the 20th April after a final brief battle with malignant cancer.

Gerald came to Burrington in late 1980 after his appointment as Head of the Muscle Biology Division, in the Agricultural and Food Research Council's Meat Research Institute located in the Bristol University's Vet School site at Langford. He had previously been a distinguished Reader in Biophysics at King's College London.

Gerald fell in love with the Mendips and joined the Society in June 1983. He took an active interest and served for a time as an Area Secretary enjoying organising walks and talks at Combe Lodge. He also loved Burrington Village and took great pleasure in helping out with Village Fetes and other events. He had



a great interest in gardening, building up a fine collection of books and completely remodelling the garden at Rose Cottage giving it a fine tree structure and of course many roses.

He was always happy to open the garden to visitors in June in support of the Village Church. He was pleased when his Partner Clive

Constance volunteered to take over the position of Treasurer for three years from 2013-2016 and happily agreed to host Committee meetings at Rose Cottage when the need arose. And latterly he supported the Gully Cave Dig matching the grant given by the society. A really 'gentle man' he will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

**ED** – Clive opened the garden at Rose Cottage as Gerald had planned to do on Friday 21st June in aid of Burrington Church – see page 13

Sara Bains has asked us to include a notice to all those who knew him, that her Father, Terry Dashwood, of Cheddar sadly passed away recently at Taunton Hospital after several bouts of ill health. She says "I do know that until a few years ago he certainly enjoyed the fruits of the society, especially the walks, and it was on one of those that he met his partner of 27 years so clearly a worthy membership to hold!"

THE MENDIP SOCIETY Registered Charity Number 262867 [www.themendipsociety.org.uk](http://www.themendipsociety.org.uk)

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