

# OTTER VALLEY ASSOCIATION

PO Box 70 Budleigh Salterton EX9 6WN

[www.oval.org.uk](http://www.oval.org.uk)



[Visit to Blackhill Quarry \(See Page 18\)](#)

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## Chairman's Message



The AGM marks the beginning of a new year for the OVA and we welcome Roger Saunders as our new Hon. Secretary. Having pursued a scientific career in the USA, Roger and his family are now developing their wildlife friendly garden bordering the watercourse that becomes the Budleigh Brook. Regular bat visitors are evidence of their success! Roger is actively involved with the East Devon AONB Parishscapes Project (digitising the Tithe Maps and making the information accessible online) as is Martin Smith who is now both the Membership Secretary and Acting Treasurer.

If you were unable to attend the AGM and would like copy of the Trustees' Report it is available for download from the website or contact the Secretary. Potential recruits to the Executive Committee are invited to attend meetings as observers to find out more about what is involved and how the association works. Please contact any of the committee. Your association needs YOU if we are to continue the wide range of our activities.

An interpretation board, financed by the sustainable development fund of East Devon AONB, is now in place in the Jubilee Field. It draws attention to the plan to create a wildflower meadow and increase biodiversity. "Coastal habitats have the potential to attract a wealth of wildlife if managed in a sensitive way as well as adding a wonderful splash of colour in the summer months." We are very grateful to Kimmo Evans, Communications Officer at the AONB, to local artist, Neil Rogers who designed the board and to local carpenter Philip Hartnell, who installed it (See photo page 4).

Inspired by the bat walk in May (page 22) the OVA has purchased two bat detectors to lend to members with a guidance sheet on how to use the equipment and identify the bats detected. A returnable deposit of a cheque for £60 payable to the OVA will be required at the outset to ensure its safe return. We hope borrowers will want to complete a data record sheet to log their findings. Anyone wishing to borrow a detector should contact Hon. Sec. Roger Saunders by email at [RSRBioventures@aol.com](mailto:RSRBioventures@aol.com) and he will arrange it.

**Helen Tickle**



## From the Editor



The role of Editor has been and will, I am confident, continue to be a fairly steep learning curve for me. Providing what you, the members, enjoy and want from your Newsletter while balancing that with the need for it to be the primary organ of communication for the Executive and other committees sometimes means I have to make decisions about content which are not clear-cut. The philosophy I have adopted is to provide you with an effective mix of entertainment and OVA information. However I cannot do that in a vacuum and so I am grateful for every comment I get, good or bad, which helps me to hone the content. Please keep them coming! Examples of this duality of purpose can be seen in Brian George's railway campaign article a couple of issues ago and Caroline Allen's astro-meteorology column. Like the competitions, these are intended solely as entertainment. If anyone cares to submit other contributions I shall be grateful to receive and consider them. My only caveat is that they must be linked to the OVA's area of benefit.

I am pleased that Jed is back providing the cover illustration for this Newsletter despite his being fiendishly busy on other projects. His illustration of the huge Tonka toy that the chaps at the quarry get to play with is wonderfully evocative of the day. See the report on Page 18.

Elsewhere in this edition you will find an advertisement for a Wedding Fair at Bicton. Carrying this is part of the negotiated settlement for the use of their facilities for Exec committee meetings. We also have photos of the OVA's involvement in Budleigh Salterton's Gala Week activities. Unlike the last couple of years, the weather for the Young Pirates Treasure Hunt was kind to us. Approximately 40 young pirates turned up to search for golden pebbles on the beach. As we only have 25 such pieces of treasure, Alan Huddart and I had to resort to a technique first seen in "The Great Escape" and could be seen shaking our legs to allow pebbles to slide unseen down the inside of our trousers to replace those already found. All well and good but it did get a little painful as the larger ones bounced off ankle bones. At least the young pirates enjoyed it even if we felt like Long John Silver by the time we had finished.

**Nick Speare**

## Devon Water Vole Recovery Project

The water vole, famously known as Ratty in Kenneth Grahame's "Wind in the Willows", is now extinct in Devon and Cornwall, though there are populations just across the border in Dorset and Somerset. The Otter Valley Association is now participating in a project whose aim is to encourage the natural recolonisation of the rivers Axe and Otter.

The accidental release of mink from mink farms has been a prime cause of the demise of water voles in Devon. A ban on mink farming was introduced in January 2003. A single adult mink can patrol about a mile of riverbank and will eliminate the water vole population from that stretch. The mink are voracious, agile predators and are the enemies of many species of small mammals and birds that live on the riverbanks.

However, there are indications that the wild mink population has recently been severely curtailed from significant stretches of the Axe and the Otter, possibly because of competition with otters and through

the capture and destruction of mink by trapping. So-called "mink rafts" are used to monitor the mink population (and other small mammals) and traps are then set in places where mink have been detected.



We are participating in the Devon Water Vole Recovery Project by assisting Mervyn Newman, East Devon District Council's water vole officer, in his monitoring programme. Mr Newman has provided us with mink

rafts and training in how to use them. Volunteers from the Natural Environment Committee spend a few hours each month checking and recording activities of mink, otters and water rats.

The information that we obtain should be helpful in assessing the prospects for a successful re-introduction of water voles to the River Otter.

**Norman Crossland**

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### **Philip Hartnell fixing Jubilee Field Interpretation Board**



*(See Chairman's Message)*

## Shouting over a (Clamour) Bridge

*Gerald Millington has the last Shout!*



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The bridge appears in a painting of Otterton Park by Rev. John Swete on his perambulations in 1795. It shows a view of the River Otter with the warren (hill) in the background and a delightful grouping of trees with a primitive wooden bridge over the river and a lady standing in the middle.

The plan drawn up by James Green proposing the embankment in 1808 has a brief line drawn across the river at its present day site. In his letter to Lord Rolle dated 12<sup>th</sup> July 1808, giving his specification for the embankment he states: “the Budleigh brook, which now runs into the River Otter by various channels should be conveyed directly into the river a little below the wood bridge at the park”. The admiralty in its report on the embankment of 1851, marks and names it as Clamor (sic) bridge and this is the first use seen of the name of the bridge.

It appears to takes its name “Clamour” from a field, once part of the Colever open-field of the middle ages. It is listed as field no. 1335 on the Otterton tithe award of four acres of arable land, and is part of a holding known as "Ashfords". The field lies on the high ground above the bridge and to the east of Park Lane. The other two fields of Ashfords were Furze Hill, two acres, and Colever, one acre.

It is not known where the name Clamour comes from but could be a family name. It does not appear in the various subsidy rolls etc. of the 16th Century. Clamour Bridge is not marked on the Otterton tithe map. The Ashford family are recorded in Otterton between 1632 and 1728. Many fields are named after their holders, as are cottages and farms.

**Gerald Millington**

## Ottertton Rollers

Gerald Millington thinks that the Ottertton Rollers poem in the last edition might relate to the winning of the “Morrison Bell Cup” circa 1922.



He has three photos of the team around that time but the only one where we are certain of the names is the attached. Clearly this is not quite the same team, but it is contemporary, and it contains nine individuals mentioned in the poem whose identity has been recorded in OVApedia

## OVApedia

OVApedia reached an important milestone in its development when the 50<sup>th</sup> article was loaded onto the website in the middle of May. It can now be claimed to be well stocked and successfully launched. In fact,

articles continue to flow in at such a rate that we are already within reach of loading the 70<sup>th</sup>. A big “thank you” is due to all our contributors and Robin Holt our archivist who has proof read everything.

A very productive meeting has been held with Fairlynch Museum who have agreed in principle to participate in using OVApedia as a way of making some of their previously researched material available on the web, with suitable acknowledgements. This collaboration can only be to the benefit of both organisations.

So here is a quick guide to what’s in OVApedia. One way to do this is draw attention to the distinctive genre of our most prolific contributors to date:

**Roz Hickman:** has provided biographies of Otterton and Colaton Raleigh individuals who led notable, often colourful lives and some more general insights into village life including: the poem featured in the previous Newsletter and a fascinating piece on the Cider Act.

**Harry Lane:** has now completed his history of the Duke family who owned the Otterton and Budleigh Manors for more than 200 years before the Rolles.

**Roger Lendon:** has written biographies of Budleigh Salterton residents with a military flavour. Who came to prominence in the battle for the Heights of Pharon in 1793?

**Gerald Millington:** has provided historical articles on the Otter estuary and its bridges (including the definitive answer to the spelling of Clamour Bridge), the Clinton Devon Estates and smuggling.

**Anne Speight:** has written an extensive social history of Joel Carter and family from Harpford. When coupled with articles from other authors on rural life on subjects like education, we are beginning to see a vivid picture emerge of the ups and downs of life in the Otter Valley in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Learn how a Man of Repute as Overseer, Churchwarden and Collector of Taxes became bankrupt in the space of a few years with the fall in corn prices in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.

(ctd.)

Another way is to search by subject e.g. by village name, by century, by using terms such as biography, education, agriculture. However, if you know what you are looking for you can be very specific indeed. Find out: what accumulates moles in millions; who lived with stuffed penguins; what links the Dove to the Ark and Otterton and where Pig Street is.

OVApedia can be found under the History tab of the OVA website. All the articles by the authors listed above can be found by typing in their names.

**David Daniel**

### **Workshop with Todd Gray 5<sup>th</sup> September**

As part of our formal launch of OVApedia we have, in collaboration with the Events Committee, arranged for Dr Todd Gray to hold a workshop on the subject of how to use local document resources to conduct research into local history subjects. Todd is regarded by many as the foremost contemporary Devon Historian and is well known through his books and lectures.

The workshop will be held in the East Budleigh Church Hall on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September from 10.00 to 12.30. We shall be taking Todd to lunch at a local pub afterwards and participants are invited to join us and make it a social event if they wish.

Cost will be £10.00 for the workshop to include morning coffee. Numbers are limited but we intend to open bookings, if available, to non members from 18<sup>th</sup> July as part of a general publicity launch. So please get your bookings in.

If you would like to participate in this workshop please return the slip on page 23 with your cheque for £10.00 per person

## EVENTS COMMITTEE

The Events committee members have had a very busy few months. Our activities have included:

- a Bat Evening where we saw bats and using detectors heard a lot more (*see report on page 22*).
- a Quarry visit seeing a working quarry and the conversion of areas back to heathland (*see report on page 18*).
- two Otterton town walks (*see report on page 22*).
- and of course, our usual contribution to the Gala week activities.

My thanks to all of the committee members who worked so hard. (*Not to mention husbands. Ed.*)

We still have the Braunton Burrows visit and the Canal Cruise to complete our summer events. In the autumn we have arranged a guided walk on Exmoor with Tony Burges (*see article page 16*).

As a committee, we are very conscious that all our members come from Budleigh Salterton. The absence of OVA members from the other villages in the valley on our committee means we are not aware and do not participate as fully as we would like in their village activities.

We would welcome any member who would wish to join us. Please phone me on 01395 445960.

**Nicky Daniel**

## **Weather or Not “The Alternative Forecast”**

We should enjoy some pleasant weather in the Otter Valley this summer, but there will be fluctuations of temperature with hot and humid spells alternating between much cooler and breezier conditions which, I am afraid to say, will be punctuated by severe thunderstorms.

Thundery showers should appear just after the Full Moon on the 7<sup>th</sup> July and possibly later in the month around the 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>. It should continue warm and sultry into early August but oppressive humidity could produce more storms around the 9<sup>th</sup>.

August 17<sup>th</sup> ushers in a cooler period when temperatures drop and counter-clockwise east winds bring showers. The last week of August could be particularly turbulent with gale force winds and rain.

Blustery showers are possible between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> September but round about the 12<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> we could all enjoy a delightful Indian Summer when a ridge of high pressure moves across the countryside; an idyllic few days of “morning mists of mellow fruitfulness”. It is downhill from now on I am afraid as disturbed atmospheric conditions in the latter half of September produce leaden skies, low hanging clouds, east winds, falling temperatures and windy showers once more.

A dismal final two weeks and finale to my forecast! But in-between it should be nice!



**Caroline Allen**

## Budleigh netted by Cape Cod town

*(Editor's note: I believe this may be of interest to members. Michael's contact details are included should you wish to get involved.)*

'Beau séjour' is the proud claim made by Budleigh Salterton Town Council on its coat of arms and it might therefore be only natural to assume that French speakers make up most of its foreign visitors. In fact the links between our area and the USA are possibly even stronger than those between Devon and Normandy when you think of the transatlantic voyages of Sir Walter Raleigh and Roger Conant, both born in East Budleigh.

It was Conant, the leader of the company of fishermen who founded the town of Salem, Massachusetts, in 1626, and it's with the Massachusetts community of Brewster on Cape Cod that Budleigh Salterton was linked as its sister-town in 2001. Our famous beach is pictured on the Brewster Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce website at <http://www.brewstercapecod.org/>



Brewster is an American town bigger than its UK relative although it shares many characteristics with Budleigh, apart from its coastal situation, being an historic sea captains' town boasting many architecturally distinctive houses situated in a noted conservation area. The distance involved means that a traditional twinning arrangement involving, for example, group travel would be too expensive for most. However, an internet-driven scheme is a different matter and could be an effective way of making Budleigh residents more aware of the Brewster link than they have been.

A group of Budleigh residents who are keen to maintain the link with Brewster have set up a website specifically to focus on news and features of interest to people in both towns. If you would like to be kept informed of our progress please email [mr.downes@gmail.com](mailto:mr.downes@gmail.com)

**Michael Downes**

## OTTERTON TOWN WALKS

This spring Gerald Millington led two Otterton town walks for OVA members. We assembled on The Green and were surprised to find we were standing on the old port. He led us up Anchoring Hill to show the lay-out of the town and its evolution from prehistoric days to the present and from there he also pointed out the interesting landmarks around Otterton. Walking along the main street we found most of the thatched cottages had at one time been farmhouses. The tour finished in the church. We thank Gerald for imparting some of his extensive historical knowledge of the village and the Clinton family.

We had made a small charge for the afternoons and Gerald, in lieu of a fee, wished any excess money to be given to Shandford. Richard Pike,



Chairman of the charity, was delighted to receive a cheque which will be added to the Residents' Comforts Fund. The presentation was made at the start of a Parishescares walk along the Otter

**Nicola Daniel**

*JULY - SEPTEMBER*



**July 4 , Sat - 10.00am. WALK (Energetic)**

Joney's Cross CP , SY057898. 6 miles, 3 hours. Pleasant walk on footpaths across Aylesbeare Common Nature Reserve.

*Walk leader:* Steve Hagger , 01395 442631



**July 11, Sat – 10.00am. WALK (Moderate) Pub Lunch**

Budleigh Salterton Free CP, SY061821 5½ miles - 3½ hours. Coastal Path to Exmouth and return along part of old railway track. Optional Pub Lunch at The Powder Monkey, Exmouth or bring own lunch.

*Walk leader:* Shane Badham, 01395 567531



**July 15, Wed - 10.00am. WALK (Moderate)**

Woodbury Castle, Estuary CP, SY032872. 4½ miles, 2½ hours. Westward towards Woodbury with fine views over the Exe Valley, some stoney paths, could be muddy after rain.

*Walk leader:* John Jones, 01395 443651



**August 12, Wed - 10.00am. WALK (Moderate)**

East Budleigh Hill CP, SY065849. 5 miles, 2½ hours. Hayes Lane, woods and commons returning via Yettington.

*Walk leader:* Stan Herbert, 01395 445113



**August 19, Wed - 10.00am. WALK (Energetic)**

Salcombe Hill CP, SY139882. 5 miles, 2½ hours. Circular walk with some steep steps; coast path to Weston with good views.

*Walk leader:* Brian Leveridge, 01395 443358

*JULY - SEPTEMBER*

*continued*



**September 5, Sat - 10.00am. WALK (Easy) / Pub lunch**  
Tipton St John CP, SY092918. 5 miles, 2½ hours. Easy walk viewing the Upper Otter from both banks, might be muddy after rain. Optional pub lunch in The Golden Lion.

*Walk leader:* Jed Falby, 01395 445455

**September 5, Sat WORKSHOP - Researching Local History**  
Led by Todd Gray - (*see page 8 for details*)



**September 12, Sat - 10.00am. WALK (Moderate)**  
Castle Lane CP (limited parking, share cars if possible), SY043823. 4½ miles, 2½ hours. West Down Beacon, coastal path to Littleham for short conducted tour of church and churchyard. Return along disused railway track, may be muddy.

*Walk leader:* Hazel Harland, 01395 445665



**September 19, Sat - 10.00am. WALK (Moderate)**  
East Budleigh CP, SY065849. 6 miles, 3 hours. Interesting route from the village on footpaths and lanes circling Otterton.

*Walk leader:* Steve Hagger, 01395 442631



**September 26, Sat -10.30am. EXMOOR Walks**

*See Page 16 for details*

OCTOBER - DECEMBER



**October 7, Wed - 10.00am. WALK (Moderate)**

Crook Plantation, SY057866. 5 miles, 2½ hours. Crook Plantation, Bearden Barn, Wheathill Plantation, Hayes Wood and Yettington.

*Walk leader:* Gordon Wilson , 01395 568594



**October 10, Sat – 10.00am. WALK (Easy)/Pub Lunch**

Tipton St John CP, SY092918 5 miles - 2½ hours. Circular walk through varied scenery north and west of Tipton. Optional lunch at the Golden Lion.

*Walk leader:* Peter Hills, 01395 568576



**October 21, Wed - 10.00am. WALK (Moderate)/Pub Lunch**

East Budleigh CP, SY065849. 4 miles, 2½ hours. Interesting town walk which includes a visit to the historical East Budleigh church. Optional lunch at the Sir Walter Raleigh.

*Walk leader:* Stan Herbert, 01395 445113



**October 28, Wed - 7.30pm. TALK - Peter Hall Budleigh**

'The history, development and future for our National Parks'

*Speaker:* Dr George Wilkins (Distinguished Astronomer & National Parks speaker)



**November 7, Sat – 10.00am. WALK (Moderate)**

Four Firs CP, SY032864. 5 miles, 2½ hours. Blackhill Quarry, Hayes Wood and Woodbury Castle.

*Walk leader:* Stuart Lovett, 01395 443283



**November 11, Wed – 10.00am. Fungi WALK (Easy)**

Newton Popleford Sports Ground CP, SY087900. Easy walk looking for and identifying fungi including waxcaps.

*Walk leader:* Marion Nalder, 01395 442176

OCTOBER - DECEMBER

*continued*



**November 18, Wed – 10.00am. WALK (Moderate)**

Joney's Cross CP, SY057898. 5 miles, 2½ hours. Pleasant circular walk on Harpford Common.

*Walk leader:* Robert Cartledge, 01395 576897



**November 18, Wed – 7.30pm. TALK East Budleigh Village Hall**

East Devon – A Living, Working Landscape

*Speaker:* Kimmo Evans – East Devon AONB



**December 2, Wed – 10.00am. WALK (Moderate) Pub lunch**

Knowle Village Hall CP, SY052827. 5 miles, 2½ hours. Shortwood Common, Hayes Barton, Squabmoor, maybe muddy after rain. Optional lunch at the Dog and Donkey.

*Walk leader:* Brian Turnbull, 01395 567339



**December 5, Sat – 10.00am. WALK (Moderate)**

White Bridge SY076830. 5 miles, 2½ hours. Coast and river walk; coast path to Crab Ledge, Colliver Cross, Clamour Bridge, finishing along the riverside. May be muddy and/or exposed.

*Walk leader:* David Daniel, 01395 445960

**December 16 Wed - Christmas Dinner**

*Details in next Newsletter*



## The Round Table

Yesterday evening, Helen and her husband invited their neighbours (two couples) for a dinner. The six of them sat at a round table. Helen tells you the following:

- "Victor sat on the left of the woman who sat on the left of the man who sat on the left of Anna.
- Esther sat on the left of the man who sat on the left of the woman who sat on the left of the man who sat on the left of the woman who sat on the left of my husband.
- Jim sat on the left of the woman who sat on the left of Roger.
- I did not sit beside my husband."



**The Question: What is the name of Helen's husband?**

*Answers, as usual, to the Editor - details on back cover*

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*Solution to: The Masters Plaza*

The first step is to work out the ranks of the 5 Masters.

The only true possibility is that *Archimedes* has the 3rd rank, *Hassan* 1st and *You* 5<sup>th</sup>. *Einstein* has the 2nd rank and *Galileo* the 4<sup>th</sup>. The second step is to list all the possibilities for successive ranks so that they are not next to each other. Then establish which possibility is the room number and which the table. The Final answer is:

	Hassan	Einstein	Archimedes	Galileo	You
Rank	1	2	3	4	5
Table number	2	4	1	5	3
Room number	3	1	5	2	4

First at reception to collect their key to the Masters' Plaza and the £10 book token is Malcolm Burge of Newton Popleford - Congratulations.

## Parishcapes

The Parishcapes Project (East Devon AONB) has been greatly assisted by several members of the OVA over the last 18 months. Martin Smith has put in a huge amount of time, patience and skill in liaising between Parishcapes and the GIS department at Knowle where he has been allowed to use a 'hot desk'.

Thanks to his work, most of the tithe maps have now been georectified onto an Ordnance Survey base and are ready to be populated with polygons. Martin has also been overseeing a second strand of work: harmonising the work of other volunteers who have been entering the tithe apportionment data, which lies behind each number on the map, onto digitised spreadsheets.

Each apportionment has its own particularities and harmonising is essential. Martin has completed the final stage of the work with his own parish (East Budleigh), by linking the apportionment data with the fully polygonised map. Finally, Martin has assisted in the training of four other volunteers, including OVA member Roger Saunders, to work with Geographical Information Systems (GIS) software.

Other OVA members, such as Brian Turnbull, Alice Huddart and Roger Saunders (again), have either transcribed tithe apportionments or proof read the results.

The outcome of this work will eventually benefit all OVA members who will be able to interrogate the tithe map data (map and apportionment) from their own computers.

Parishcapes is more than just maps and OVA members have also been involved in Parishcapes training days: for example, archaeological surveying and an introduction to the collections at the Devon Record Office.

**Phil Planel**

### **Update from Martin Smith:**

All of the tithe maps for East Devon are now online at <http://www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk/dro/index.html>

The tithe apportionments, which have been transcribed by volunteers, have now been placed online too and they can be found at:

<http://www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk/Titheapportionments.htm>

If you save the tithe apportionment to your computer and open it in Adobe the document becomes searchable allowing you to look for specific pieces of data.

## Wedding Fair at Bicton House

Sunday 25th October 2009 11am - 4pm

Our Stylish Georgian mansion, with its stunning views over the lake and rolling Devon countryside makes a superb location for any wedding celebration and reception.

Working with Cottesloe Brides and a range of local exhibitors we would like to invite you to sample all that Bicton House has to offer.



- ❖ Complimentary goody bag and free refreshments
- ❖ Staff on hand to discuss your wedding or reception
- ❖ Relaxed and friendly atmosphere where you can browse and shop at your leisure
- ❖ Admission £2.00, Concessions £1.50
- ❖ Proceeds to local charity Dream-A-Way

We look forward to welcoming you to our  
**Wedding Fair**

Limited disabled access to first floor

## Exmoor Walks September 26<sup>th</sup>

Would you like to join fellow OVA members on Exmoor for a day's walks?

We are arranging a day where you can enjoy a mix and match of gentle or strenuous guided walks with Tony Burges, the Exmoor and Dartmoor guide. The itinerary can be varied depending on the wishes of those attending on the day.

Our suggested itinerary is to meet at the Lynton carpark at 10.30 am (please tick car-sharing arrangements on the form).

In the morning Tony will lead an approximately 4 mile walk in the Valley of the Rocks or, alternatively, you can self-guide a shorter walk yourself. We will then take the funicular railway to Lynmouth and the gentle walk to Watersmeet Cafe where you can purchase a cream tea if you wish. We finally walk back to the railway and return to our cars.



*Valley of the Rocks*

We have looked at hiring a coach for the day but this would, unfortunately, push the cost to over £20.00/ head, but we do urge car-sharing, which keeps the cost very low, and is in line with the OVA's Green Agenda policy.

Those wishing to walk all day will need to bring a packed lunch.

The cost is £4.00 which does not include lunch, tea or the railway.

See page 23 for application form - Final date for applications 15<sup>th</sup> August.

## Gala Day



## VISIT TO BLACKHILL QUARRY

Shortly before 10 o'clock on Thursday 21 May the shutters came down in the workshop on a full compliment of 41 OVA members welcomed by Quarry Manager John Fowler and co-host, RSPB Ranger Toby Taylor.



Out of sight, but certainly not earshot, we were told, was the plant gobbling up, sorting and spitting out a choice of 10, 20 or 40mm rounds (pebbles) which are mainly destined to become a constituent of concrete. Larger pebbles go via a crusher mainly to Local Authorities who prefer angular pebbles which lock together and contribute to the surface of our roads.

More problematic, at the moment, is the destination of the sand (44%) that remains after the aggregate has been extracted. There's 182,000 tonnes stockpiled in 100 foot high heaps, just waiting to go into your children's sandpit! (*See Jed's drawing on next page*).

Having donned hard hats and hi-vis jackets we were released into a bright, sunny and warm spring morning. Despite these precautions, we were not able to get up close to the sorting process. Safety in this environment is paramount and we would not have wanted to compromise the accident record that was proudly displayed in the yard.

'1,967 days without lost time injury.  
657 days since the last injury'.

A few minutes walk along roads where we had to give priority to the 40 ton dumper lorries (*see cover illustration*), brought us to the heart of the quarry. Here with open heathland, sea views and surprising tranquillity,



we got our first opportunity to see what had been achieved in two years of restoration. This has been undertaken in anticipation of the quarry

finally closing in September after 70 years. Thereafter, Aggregate Industries have a ten year ‘duty of care’ for the site. The RSPB will oversee the management and restoration of the quarry back to heathland.

At this point the group split, half going with Toby to look at the restoration and half with John to learn about the quarrying.

Toby told us about the removal of the pine screens, the ever encroaching wild birch, the cross-leafed, ling and bell heathers and European and Western gorse. He showed us how the wet areas are being created and told us of wildlife that has already taken up residence. We heard about Dartford warblers, nightjars and tree pipits; several butterflies, lizards, slow worms, grass snakes and adders but most cooperative of all, allowing a hands-on experience of nature, was the well established insectivorous sundew. Toby was knowledgeable, grateful for the privilege and enjoying his responsibility. I have to report however that he admitted that joining OVA was one of those things he “kept meaning to do”, so for goodness sake someone get an application form out to him in Newton Poppleford!



John told us, as we surveyed the 'bowl' of some 80 acres, about the plans to return the 30 metre dig to levels of between 93 and 105 metres above sea level. It will be a two year job removing the pine screen, replanting and restoring the site, all overseen by the RSPB.

John reminded us of the process of extracting the “rounds” for use in concrete and house building, currently a diminishing market, and the “angular” pebbles that are crushed into our roads, currently an increasing market, and of course, all that sand.

Computerised automation of the plant has resulted in a staff of just five at the quarry. They have elected to work four, twelve hour days a week from 6.30am until 6.30pm. John was proud to say that he will enjoy his pending retirement, content that he and his company has, and will continue to take care of the natural environment. However, for the moment, the offices and machinery sheds will remain, their future undetermined.

Finally, the two groups converged again, next to a sand mountain, where Diane presented the OVA's cheque for £100 to Toby as our contribution to the RSPB's restoration fund (see accompanying photograph). Our gratitude was expressed to John and Toby who had made our visit so informative and enjoyable. A short walk brought us back to the office we had left a couple of hours earlier. Hats and safety jackets were shed, hands were shaken and our grateful thanks given to Diane for her initiative and expertise in organising so efficiently for our benefit and enjoyment.



**Chris Buckland**

## Look Out for Bats

An enthusiastic group of OVA members went bat watching on a local farm on the evening of 12 May, led by bat expert, Fiona Mathews.

There are 17 species of bat in the UK but not all are to be found in East Devon. Bats' nocturnal habits mean they are best seen at dusk when they come out to catch insects. Before setting out, members of the party were able to have the rare experience of seeing a Pipistrelle and a Daubenton's bat at close quarters, and to learn about bat habits and habitats.

Bats communicate using high frequency calls which are beyond the range of human hearing. This is called echolocation and by using a bat detector, which picks up the sound, group members got electronic warning of the presence of bats which made spotting them much easier. Different bat species echolocate at different frequencies so it was possible from the sound to detect the type of bat present.

Wandering along country paths by torchlight listening to bat calls and watching their sweeping flight made for a magical evening. Our thanks to Pete Youngman of the East Devon AONB team for putting us in touch with Fiona and to OVA member Tom Pyne for hosting the event.



*(n.b. If you would like to look out for bats yourself see the Chairman's message on Page 1 for details of how to borrow the OVA's own bat detectors. Ed.)*

**Susan Tickle**

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## Todd Gray Workshop

To :	Your Name, Address, Telephone number & E-Mail address
Nicola Daniel Highbury 7, Marine Parade Budleigh Salterton EX9 6NS	

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets at £10.00 each for the Todd Gray Workshop on 5<sup>th</sup> September

I enclose a cheque for £\_\_\_\_\_ payable to OVA and **a stamped addressed envelope**



## Exmoor Walks

(n.b. Final date for applications August 15<sup>th</sup>.)

To :	Your Name, Address, Telephone number & E-Mail address
Mo Bowman 9 Hayes Close Budleigh Salterton Devon EX9 6SR	

I wish to share transport and am happy to have my details passed to other members. Yes/No

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ Tickets at £4.00 each for the Exmoor Walks on September 26<sup>th</sup>

I enclose a cheque for £\_\_\_\_\_ payable to OVA and **a stamped addressed envelope**

Applications

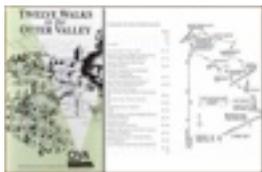
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## Mark Rolle His Architectural Legacy in the Lower Otter Valley



£4.95 via your Rep (or plus £1.00 P&P)

## 12 Walks in the Otter Valley



£2.50 via your Rep (or plus £1.00 P&P)

## Historical Guide to the Lower Otter Valley



£3.50 via your Rep (or plus £1.00 P&P)

## 1842, 1890 and 1933 Maps of Budleigh Salterton



£8 each or £20 a set (cannot be posted)

Available from your Parish Representative, our website [www.ova.org.uk](http://www.ova.org.uk)  
or by post from:

Booksales  
OVA  
PO Box 70  
Budleigh Salterton  
EX9 6WN

## Applications

<b><u>Executive Committee</u></b>		<b>(01395)</b>
<b>Chairman</b>	Helen Tickle	443901
<b>Vice-Chairman</b>	Haylor Lass	568786
<b>Hon. Secretary</b>	Roger Saunders	443248
<b>Acting Treasurer</b>	Martin Smith	442333
<i><u>Committee Chairmen</u></i>		
Built Environment	Geoff Aplin	442951
Natural Environment	Norman Crossland	445129
Events	Nicola Daniel	445960
History	David Daniel	445960
<i><u>Parish Representatives (to whom all queries should be addressed initially)</u></i>		
Budleigh Salterton	Clive Bowman	446892
	John Jones	443651
East Budleigh	Mitzi Crossland	445129
Otterton	John Winson	568274
Colaton Raleigh	Alan Jones	568339
Newton Poppleford	Haylor Lass	568786
<i><u>Other Officers</u></i>		
Minutes Secretary	Maureen Lister	444269
Membership Secretary	Martin Smith	442333
Publicity Officer	Susan Tickle	444211
Webmaster	Alan Huddart	446761
Walks Organiser	John Jones	443651
Newsletter Distributor	Gill Speare	443944
Newsletter Editor	Nick Speare	443944
	Pine Rise, 7a Bedlands Lane, Budleigh Salterton, EX9 6QH <a href="mailto:nspeare@btconnect.com">nspeare@btconnect.com</a>	

The OVA was founded in 1979, is registered with the Civic Trust and the Charity Commissioners and is a member of the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers. It is also affiliated to the CPRE and a member of the AONB Partnership