

**Saturday, 20th June 2015, Ottery St Mary with Iain Ure**

***"In the Footsteps of Samuel Taylor Coleridge"***

A select group of 9 walkers set off from Newton Poppleford on a cloudy morning to discover the delights of STC's poetry. We soon stopped on the Harpford bridge to listen to the 'Sonnet to the River Otter'. Fortified, the group walked up through Harpford Woods and then up the steep climb to Fire Beacon Plantation and along in the woods to White Cross.

There we stopped for rest and refreshment, whilst listening to a short extract from the 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner', and enjoying extensive views towards the far western and northern horizons. From there it was downhill nearly all the way to Ottery St Mary.

On entering a delightful woodland garden we were treated to a reading from 'Kubla Khan'. As we neared a woodland by the River Otter again, we had to be quiet as we came to the Pixies Parlour, and were disappointed not to be greeted by them, but remembered that they do not like to come out around noontide. So we stopped and 'The Pixies Parlour' was recited, and, as it was Pixie Day in Ottery St Mary, we hoped for glimpses of the little creatures around the town.

We went for lunch to the Lamb and Flag, and after a pint and food, walked up to the beautiful church to look at the interesting astronomical clock. We also saw several other historic buildings around the town, as well as the Japanese 'Otari' bell in Sainbury's car park.

On reaching the Land of Canaan, the Pixie Day was in full swing, with children enjoying all the fun of the fair. We could not wait for the various bands to play, or the main attraction, the Pixies Revenge, which was in the evening, as we had five kilometres to stroll along the gentle banks of the River Otter to get back to our starting point. It was a delightful day, and the sun shone on the way home.

***Dee Woods***  
**24 June 2015**