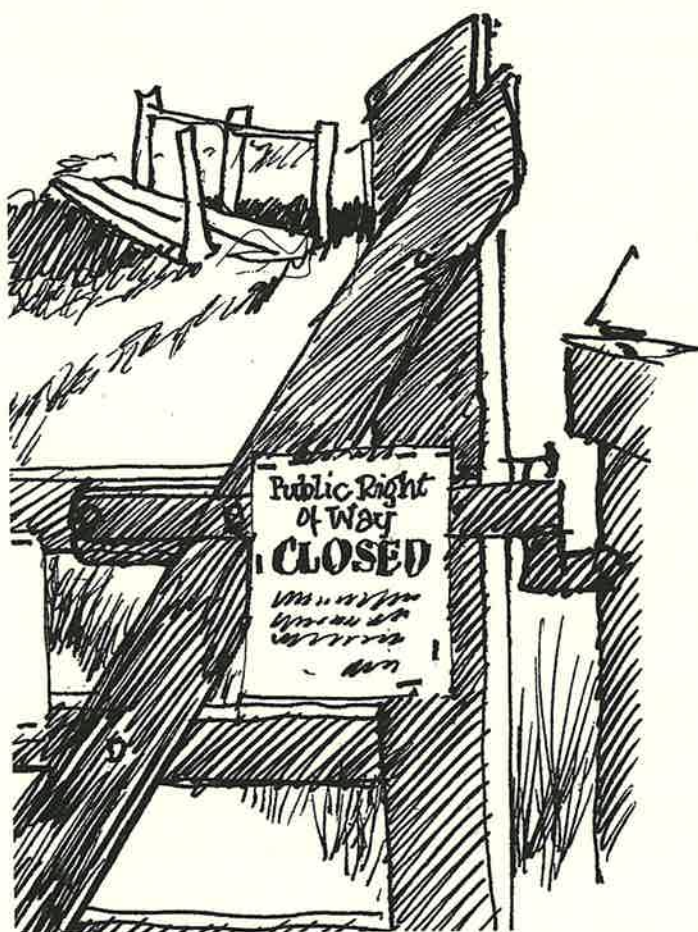


# OTTER VALLEY ASSOCIATION



VOLUME 22/2 APRIL 2001

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

April 4th From Hangmans Stone (GR 208904) On B3174.

Wed 10 am Parking on verges of Southleigh Road.

### **All Day walk, Bring picnic**

*Walk Leader* John Daly (Tel: 01297-22173)

April 14th From Broadhembury, Drewe Arms (GR 107043)

Sat. 10 am 3 hour walk with one initial climb

*Walk Leader* Pat Doran (Tel. 445954)

April 24th "Wildlife of the River Exe Valley"

Tuesday 7.30. Masonic Hall Budleigh Salterton

*Speaker* Rod Lawrence: Professional Naturalist

May 9th From Joneys Cross (GR 056897)

Wed 10 am 3½m Easy walk to see bluebells,

*Walk Leader* Lin Ford (Tel: 445230)

### **May 17th. Annual General Meeting**

Thur. 7.30 p.m. Peter Hall, Budleigh Salterton

May 19th From Otterton Green (GR 081852)

Sat 10 am 5½ miles- River and coast

*Walk Leaders* Robert and Margaret Sellin (Tel. 443283)

June 6th From East Budleigh Hayes Lane CP (GR 066849)

Wed. 7pm 2½ hour EVENING walk. Shortwood Common

Pub at end

*Walk Leader* Ken Watson (Tel: 445859)

June 23rd From Ottery St Mary Land of Caanan (GR 096955)

Sat. 10 am 6 mile walk- Hilly

*Walk Leader* Frank Burke (Tel. 568864)

**N.B. Walks are temporarily suspended owing to the Foot and Mouth outbreak**  
(see inside for further information), but they are included above for the time when we can resume.

Material for the July issue should reach me by **Wednesday June 13th., please**

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

This is the last newsletter before the AGM, and as you all know it is at the AGM that we elect the Officers for the year ahead.

At this stage I do not know if there will be any vacancies on the Executive Committee, we will have to wait and see. However there are one or two areas in which we need some help.

We are in process of planning our effort for Gala Week and we need help in the planning and building stages. Also help on the day. We are still trying to find an Archivist to look after the OVA records etc, AND we desperately need a Vice-Chairman, to join the Executive Committee at the AGM to take over as Chairman in 2002. Most of you will have noticed that Alan Ford has been acting as Vice Chairman for the last two years, but he undertook these responsibilities solely to give me support in my role as Chairman. We have always known that Alan could not take over as Chairman when I retired. I will offer myself for re-election for a third year at the AGM but, under the Constitution I must stand down at the AGM in 2002.

Most of you reading this newsletter are hopefully enjoying your deserved retirement, and maybe you do not want the hassle of Chairmanship of the OVA. BUT I hope that you will give some very serious thought to the matter and hopefully someone will come forward. The OVA is doing a very good job and we have a first class team doing it. Look upon the job as doing your bit to help the Environment in these difficult times. Anyone interested can call me on 01395 445696 for an informal chat. As you know the OVA is a very enlightened organisation and thus we will be most happy to have a Chairperson!!!!

As I write we are right in the middle of the dreadful 'foot and mouth' crisis. We decided to cancel our walks programme for the whole of March, and at the moment it is hard to see us being back during April. (*But please see David Jannaway's note on the next page: Ed.*) You should all know the dates walks are planned for and you should know the names and phone numbers of walks leaders. We do not know how long this tragic affair will go on for, but we will keep on advertising walks, even though they may not take place. As soon as the paths are reopened, we will resume immediately. The Committee will do every thing possible to pass the word along but if you have any doubt about any particular walk perhaps you could phone the walks leader

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM when perhaps you will join us for glass of wine. We hope that there will be a short colour slide presentation.

John Lee

## THE MARK ROLLE PROJECT

As you will have seen from previous Newsletters, Alan Ford is preparing a book for the Association on the buildings of the Mark Rolle era. In order to help in his researches he would like to make a brief survey of the internal planning of some of the Mark Rolle cottages. If any member (or their friends) who live in one of these cottages is willing to invite him in for this purpose, would they please 'phone him on 445230 after 12th. April. It would be much appreciated.

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## WALKS PROGRAMME 2001

Due to the foot and mouth epidemic, our scheduled walks programme is cancelled until we are given the all clear, when normal service will be resumed. However, all is not lost. A series of town walks is being organised, starting with Budleigh Salterton on Wednesday 11th April at 10 a.m. Meeting point will be the Public Hall car park GR 061820. If you have never been on this walk before I think you will find it interesting. Another date for your diary – Saturday 28th. April at 10 a.m. This time for a walk around Exmouth. Meeting point beach facing Maer Rocks GR 012798. A further walk at Topsham on Wednesday 9th. May at 10 a.m. starting from Holman Way car park GR 968882. Further information from David Jannaway 01395 567159

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## FOOT and MOUTH PROBLEMS in the OTTER VALLEY

We in the Otter Valley Association pride ourselves in the empathy that we share-in good times and bad- with those whose livelihood is in the Countryside. Whether it be Footpaths becoming overgrown, planned buildings not in harmony with existing or crumbling banks along the River, the welfare of the countryside is fundamental to the OVA and the decisions that we make

The current outbreak of 'Foot and Mouth' has touched all of us, walkers, residents and Farmers alike. It is to all of those in the Farming and Associated activities that the Otter Valley Association extend our very sincere and heartfelt sympathy. We are 'country folk', we have a love of animals and we take pleasure at seeing them around us when we are out on our walks. Like the Farmers we look forward to a return of those days

All of our outdoor activities for the foreseeable future were cancelled weeks ago and will remain so until we hear the 'all clear'

John Lee

**AGENDA FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**THURSDAY MAY 17TH. AT 7.30 P/M.**  
**PETER HALL, BUDLEIGH SALTERTON**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 18th. May 2000 (circulated in July 2000 Newsletter)  
†
3. Matters arising
4. Reports by Chairman and other Executive Committee members
5. Election of:
  - ◆ Chairman
  - ◆ Vice Chairman
  - ◆ Honorary Secretary
  - ◆ Honorary Treasurer
7. Election of Executive Committee (maximum 8 members)
8. Appointment of Hon. Auditor
9. Any other business
10. Date of AGM 2002

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** Nominations (which must be in writing) for Officers and members of the Executive Committee must reach the Secretary at least two weeks before the AGM. They should be seconded by a member of the OVA and must be signed by the nominee as being willing to stand (constitution clause 6)

**RESOLUTIONS:** Members wishing to put resolutions to the meeting should submit them in writing duly seconded to the Hon. Secretary at least two weeks before the AGM. It would be appreciated if members wishing to raise questions at the AGM would inform the Secretary by the same date to enable adequate answers to be provided.

† Copies of this agenda and of the minutes of the last AGM will be available at the meeting.

## **SUBSCRIPTIONS**

These are due on the first of April. Most OVA members already pay their subscription by Banker's Order. This ensures that it is always paid on the due date, and saves a great deal of time for our voluntary helpers. If you do not currently use this method of payment, and would like to do so, the Hon. Treasurer, Brian Turnbull, Hayes, Church Rd., Colaton Raleigh, Sidmouth, EX10 0LH, will be happy to send you a form.



## WHERE CAN I WALK?

Well nowhere much. All paths, bridleways and cyclepaths outside towns are closed as are the commons. The County Council does not have powers to close lanes open to vehicles, so the closures of UCRs (green lanes) are ultra vires, but I strongly recommend you do not walk them: many are riskier than footpaths. You may well think that a path near you presents no danger. You may even be right. To make a rational choice of what to close and what not would have meant looking at each case individually, and there wasn't time for that. Walking on a closed path may cost you £5,000 even if it does seem safe.

So what's left? There are interesting road walks around many of our villages, and books which describe what is to be seen, but please keep away from farms, and from fields where animals may be kept. There are interesting walks in Budleigh Salterton, Sidmouth (but the Byes are closed), Exmouth and Ottery St. Mary. Now you can take the opportunity to visit the places you always thought you might some day. The walk along the front at Budleigh Salterton is wonderful, but don't stray westwards beyond the built up area. Walking on beaches is allowed.

I strongly recommend Bicton Park. An annual ticket will cost you £9 (£7 if you are as ancient as most of us) and lets you in as often as you like. A dog will cost you a further £1 for each visit and it must be kept on a lead. Unfortunately the park doesn't open until 10.00am. but it's open every day and you can have lunch there.

OVA's guided walks were of course cancelled even before the restrictions were introduced.

Alan Jones.



**December 13th: the last OVA walk of 2000:** Thirteen brave souls ignored the weather and turned up for the Three Commons Paddle on 13th. December. It really did stop raining on this particular morning and the walk was dry from above if somewhat damp and muddy underkeel. The cascade over tree roots was overcome only to meet a log jam of Royal Marines on Lymptone Common. Circumnavigating the spectacular Black Hill Quarries we hove-to in a sunny spot on East Budleigh Common for a short break. Leaving Hayes Wood to port we splashed our way across our final common (Shortwood) and sailed past Dalditch Farm and Squabmoor Reservoir on the last leg of our two hour voyage.

Mike Harland

**Saturday 3rd February 2001 - Otterton and Ladram Bay:** It was encouraging to see 27 walkers, including several first-timers. congregating at Otterton Green despite the grey and threatening morning.

As we set off over Otterton Bridge, a rival troop appeared coming from the opposite direction. It looked as if mediaeval warfare could break out at any moment. Fortunately, they turned out to be Ottery St Mary Ramblers, and the rival armies were soon fraternising as we walked together along the rushing Otter to the fish pass. At Rickety Bridge, our ways parted, and a quick body count showed that the OVA group was still intact.

Rydon Lane is a stiff pull up from the river, amply rewarded by views across the valley to Bicton and Colaton Raleigh. After a short breather, conversation flowed freely along Chockenhole Lane, where a charm of goldfinches flitted through a copse. Emerging at Sea View Farm, we admired the impressive barn. Its architectural detailing, and the tell-tale initials MR, identified it as part of Mark Rolle's remarkable programme of 19th century agricultural improvement in the Otter valley.

The monks from Otterton Priory are said to have used the track now known as Bar's Lane to walk to their Chapel of Ease at Sidmouth. We followed in their footsteps, climbing steadily as far as the Coast Path. There our spirits were lifted by the splendid view past Sidmouth to Beer Head, and some light refreshments.

During our cautious descent of the steep Coast Path from High Peak to Ladram Bay, a pair of peregrine falcons circled overhead and flew off. Fulmars and gulls wheeled among the stacks as our feet scrunched on the deserted beach.

One last climb brought us to Monks Wall, and we shook some of the mud from our boots on the metalled road past Stantyway Farm, another MR building. Keen-eyed walkers spotted a solitary primrose and a fine display of Winter Heliotrope on the back road down into Otterton, where we arrived about 12.40. And the rain held off all morning.

Brian Turnbull

**January 6th 2001: Birds of the Estuary. A bird watching stroll.** Having to second guess what the weather will be like twelve months hence, when deciding on a walk that demands good light conditions and weather that's just bad enough to encourage birds to stay awhile on the estuary at Budleigh Salterton is just about impossible, but the impossible happened when 44 walkers, complete with binoculars and telescopes, turned up to for a bird watching stroll in perfect conditions. The sun shone brilliantly from a clear blue sky onto the remnants of the flood waters which stretched their way up the river Otter towards Otterton.

Firstly we directed our attention towards the sea. On the rocks at the mouth of the Otter we could see Gulls, Oystercatchers and Rock Pipit. Turning to face inland we watched an almost stationary Grey Heron and several dabbling ducks. Then we turned towards the birds on the salt marsh and beyond. Walking through Lime Kiln car park we saw Stonechat and Pied Wagtail, just past the gate we stopped to observe Greenfinch, Goldfinch and Chaffinch. On to the first viewing platform and there was plenty to see including Widgeon, Teal, Cormorant, Redshank, Meadow Pipit, Curlew, Greater and Lesser Blackback Gulls, but the treat was seeing several Snipe. One of our party pointed out a Little Egret (until recently quite rare but now becoming common in this part of the world. Global warming?) further up river so we pressed on. Past the Dunnock, Robin, Wren, Longtail Tits, and numerous other small birds. A quick look at the muddy patches on the salt marsh to see the Lapwing. As we headed toward South Farm Road we became aware of a Tiding of Magpies; I counted no fewer than seventeen in one tree and there may have been more. As we were a large party we got a bit strung out so some of the group saw birds that others missed, including the



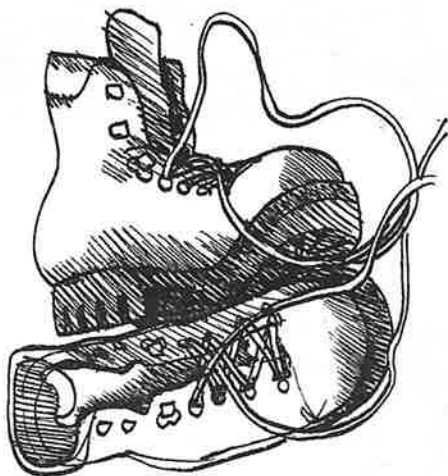
Water Rail and Kingfisher. The flooded fields afforded us the opportunity to admire the wonderful colourings of the Shelduck, mostly white with a broad chestnut coloured belt around the forepart of its body and black on the wings, glossy green head and upper neck, the legs are pinkish red, and the bill is bright red, that of the male having a knob at the base. What a dandy! On the return journey back to our cars the raptors appeared, a Buzzard and a Kestrel.

This was a delightful way to spend a beautiful January morning and with 48 different species of birds recorded a particularly successful birding stroll.

David Jannaway.

### **February 21st 200 - Squab-**

**moor:** A last minute change of starting place was necessary so thirty-one walkers and three dogs set off from the Squabmoor Reservoir car park on a beautiful morning. Our route took us down to the reservoir where we were enlightened with a brief history of the reservoir. A few of the spring flowers were starting to show themselves as we went on past Dalditch Farm and Shortwood House to the old railway track at Bear Lane which we followed to Castle Lane.



After a short break we took the path through Knowle Hill Plantation with a fine view of the Council's recycling facility and on through Lee Ford Plantation and Dalditch Common. We took the high path back with a wonderful view looking down onto Squabmoor Reservoir in brilliant sunshine with the first colours of the trees coming through. What better way to spend a beautiful February morning?

David Huggett



## **THE INLAND REVENUE WOULD LIKE TO HELP YOU (BELIEVE IT OR NOT!)**

Are you having difficulty with your tax affairs? Well, we are here to help you. Our officers here in Exeter are here to answer any queries you may have regarding your tax affairs. You are probably aware that you can telephone our office between 8.30 a.m. and 5.00 p.m on 01392 663000 or visit our enquiry centre in Exeter to discuss face to face anything regarding your tax affairs. We also have a Mobile Advice Centre, which visits local communities to try and help you with your tax affairs especially if you find it difficult to attend our local Tax Office or find it more convenient than to travel to Exeter. If you want any details of when we will be in the area please phone 01392 663295 (if you live near Ottery St. Mary, see below). However, the Mobile Advice Centre is not out and about during the winter months.

You are perhaps unaware that we offer a service to visit people at home who are housebound or find it physically difficult to attend either our TaxEnquiry Centre herein Exeter or our Mobile Advice Centre. If so we will try to arrange if possible for a member of staff to visit you at home. Please contact Exeter 1 Tax Office Customer Services on 01392 663061.



### **DO YOU LIVE NEAR OTTERY ST. MARY?**

The Mobile Advice Centre has been visiting Ottery for 3 years, but some who live nearby are unaware of this. The staff at the Centre can help with tax returns, repayment claims and tax codes. They are also able to help with claims for Working Families Tax Credits and answer questions on National Insurance.

The Mobile Advice Centre will be at Hind St. Car Park on 30th. March, 15th. June, 17th. August and 26th. October. It is open from 9.30 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.

# OFFICIALS 2000/2001

Vice-President: Mrs Dorothy Stammers

## Officers

|                     |                   |        |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Chairman            | Mr. John Lee      | 445696 | telephone (01395) |
| Vice-Chairman       | Mr. Alan Ford     | 445230 |                   |
| Honorary Secretary  | Mr. David Leonard | 445942 |                   |
| Assistant Secretary | Mr Alan Jones     | 568339 |                   |
| Honorary Treasurer  | Mr Brian Turnbull | 567339 |                   |

## Executive Committee

*Representing the Parish of:*

|                    |                    |        |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------|
| Budleigh Salterton | Mr Jed Falby       | 445455 |
| Budleigh Salterton | Mr. Mike Harland   | 445665 |
| East Budleigh      | Mr Graham Cook     | 446523 |
| Colaton Raleigh    | Mr Alan Jones      | 568339 |
| Newton Poppleford  |                    |        |
| Otterton           | Mr Philip Greenhow | 567996 |

|                      |                    |        |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------|
| Membership Secretary | Mr Brian Hawkes    | 442017 |
| Publicity Secretary  | Mrs. Lin Ford      | 445230 |
| Social Secretary     | Mrs. Maggie Morgan | 442872 |

## Sub-Committee Chairmen

|                     |                    |        |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------|
| Footpaths           | Mr Stuart Lovett   | 443141 |
| Natural Environment | Mr Philip Greenhow | 567996 |
| Built Environment   | Mr. Alan Ford      | 445230 |

|                          |                  |        |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------|
| <b>Newsletter Editor</b> | Mr. Brian Hawkes | 442017 |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------|

|                                |                   |        |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------|
| <b>Newsletter Distributors</b> | Major Mike Oakley | 443791 |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------|

The Association 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 (BTCV): it is also affiliated to CPRE. It cares for the environment and any queries should be addressed to your Parish Representative.

Our thanks to Jed Falby for the cover illustration

**Miss F Matty**

**Sunrise**

**Shepherds Lane**

**Colaton Raleigh**

**Sidmouth**

**EX10 0LP**