

# OTTER VALLEY ASSOCIATION

Registered Charity no. 278266

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



Bicton College, 6-8.45 pm  
Tickets £5 from local rep.  
or Rowan Turnbull

VOLUME 25/2    APRIL 2004

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY WALKS AND TALKS, 2004**

**APRIL 14th, WED. 10 a.m. BUDLEIGH SALTERTON PUBLIC HALL, G.R.061821. 5 MILES, MODERATE. KERSBROOK, EAST BUDLEIGH, KNOLE. RIVERSIDE, GREEN LANES. *Leader:* EDWARD DIX, 01395-442326.**

**April 21st, Wednesday 7.30 p.m. Talk, 'The Jurassic Coast, a World Heritage Site'. *Speaker:* Chris Pamplin, World Heritage Site Team. Peter Hall.**

**APRIL 24TH, SAT. 10 a.m. OFFWELL - please note change re car-parking. USE FORESTRY COMMISSION CARPARK, NOT THAT OF THE VILLAGE HALL. 2½ HOURS, EASY. VISIT TO WOODLAND MANAGED BY THE OFFWELL WOODLAND AND WILDLIFE TRUST. PLEASE SHARE CARS. PARKING DETAILS ETC FROM *Walk Leader:* PHILIP GREENHOW, 01395-567996.**

**MAY 8TH, SATURDAY, 10 a.m. KERSBROOK OLD RAILWAY BRIDGE, G.R.069829. 2½ HOURS, MODERATE. COUNTRY WALK, SPRING FLOWERS, SKYLARKS, EARLY BUTTERFLIES, COMMONS. *Walk leader:* JED FALBY, 01395-445455.**

**May 13th, Thursday 7.30 p.m. Annual General Meeting and talk on 'The Hebrides' by Cyril Shere. Peter Hall, Budleigh Salterton.**

**MAY 15TH, SATURDAY, 10.30 a.m. OVA VISIT TO COCKINGTON. See page 8 for details. *Organiser,* Nicky Daniel, 01395-445960.**

(continued on inside back cover)

## CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

I am using this report to say farewell as Lin and I will be leaving the immediate area in the near future.

I have been actively involved in the work of the Association for the past 18 years, and I would encourage anyone who wishes to do something worthwhile for the community and the environment to take some part in the varied work of the OVA.

The Association celebrates its 25th anniversary this year and we are indebted to those who had the foresight to form it all those years ago. I hope that we have not disappointed their expectations.

An amenity society such as ours can not count on a succession of victories in its fight to conserve the built and natural environment (it can not be held responsible for the not infrequent obtuseness of those to whom its sage advice is given!).

What it can and should do is faithfully to reflect the views and aspirations of the community, and at the same time to give pleasure and information to its members through talks, walks, outings, parties and publications. In this last respect, I think our list of publications is impressive and has recently been augmented by a most attractive and informative leaflet to accompany a walk along the lower River Otter, and also by a village trail for East Budleigh.

Elsewhere you will see notices of events that have been arranged for this year.

In order to mark our 25th anniversary we are billing the summer party at Bicton College on 22 June as an Anniversary Party. I hope as many members as possible will determine to attend and so launch the Association on its voyage into the next 25 years, and at the same time show our appreciation of the hard-working members of the Social Secretaries' group. They are always looking for new ways to entertain us, as indeed they did on 2 March at the lively, well-attended party for new members.

At this time of year, the chairman traditionally has to exhort members to attend the AGM, not usually, it must be admitted, with great success! Please let this year be an exception. Notice of the AGM is given on the next page. A particular requirement this year is for someone to come forward to fill the post of Hon. Secretary. John Saul stepped into the breach last year, and has done the job with his customary efficiency and good sense, but he made it clear that he was standing for one year only. So he is looking to pass on the baton; any volunteers for this vital post?

Finally, I must express my grateful thanks and appreciation for all the support that I have received as Chairman from the officers and members of the Executive Committee. It has been a pleasure to work with them.

**Alan Ford**

# FORMAL NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 13 May 2004, at 7.30 p.m.  
in the Peter Hall, Budleigh Salterton

## A G E N D A

- 1) Apologies for absence
- 2) Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 May 2003  
(circulated in July 2003 Newsletter)
- 3) Matters arising
- 4) Chairman's report
- 5) Hon. Treasurer's report
- 6) Adoption of Accounts
- 7) Vice-Chairman's report
- 8) Election of Officers
- 9) Election of Executive Committee
- 10) Appointment of Hon. Auditor
- 11) Any other business
- 12) Date of next meeting

## Refreshments and talk by Cyril Shere: 'The Hebrides'

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS** - Nominations (which must be in writing) for Officers and Members of the Executive Committee must reach the Hon Secretary (Lawns, Westfield Road, Budleigh Salterton, EX9 6SS) at least two weeks before the AGM (by 27 April). They should be seconded by an OVA Member and must be signed by the Nominee as willing to stand for election.

**THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** consists of the Officers and not less than six and not more than eight members who shall be elected annually. Current Executive Committee members may stand for re-election if they wish.

**RESOLUTIONS** - Members wishing to put resolutions to the Meeting should submit them in writing, duly seconded, to the Hon. Secretary by 27 April (two weeks before the AGM). It would be appreciated if Members wishing to raise questions at the AGM would inform the Hon. Secretary by the same date to enable adequate answers to be provided.

## **SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER**

Subscriptions for 2004/05 are due at the beginning of April. Minimum subscription rates are £3 p.a. for individuals and £5 p.a. for families or households. If you have not already done so, please pay your subscription now to:

The Hon. Treasurer, OVA,  
Luttrell House, Harpford,  
Sidmouth EX10 0NJ

This will ensure that you receive your copy of the next Newsletter.

Cheques should be made payable to Otter Valley Association. Alternatively, you may like to consider using a Banker's Order to ensure that your subscription is paid regularly each year. Eighty-three per cent of OVA members already pay in this way. If you would like a form to complete, please contact the Treasurer at the above address or by telephone on (01395)-568501,

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## **FROM THE EDITOR**

It's hard to believe - but true - that I'm now in my second year as OVA Newsletter editor, and still using a faithful old (1992 vintage) Canon StarWriter word-processor. The big news, from an editorial and production standpoint, is that last month I bought a laptop computer which, in future, will provide, I hope,

a more sophisticated page layout. At present I'm still a terrified computer user, soon to begin classes at Exeter College. And there will be an e-mail address via which Newsletter contributions can be sent. Thank-you, meanwhile, to members who use the Royal Mail so that I can enjoy OVA articles and reports over breakfast at: 1 North Street, Topsham, Exeter EX3 OAP. A (brief) technological progress report will appear in the July Newsletter.

Pat Quaife

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**OVA 25th ANNIVERSARY  
SUMMER DRINKS PARTY**

***Tuesday 22 June 2004***

***at Bickton College, 6.00 to 8.45 p.m.***

This really is a mid-summer event not to be missed and you are urged to obtain your tickets in good time (see below). We will be using the foyer, a ground-floor room and the outdoor 'apron' at the College where drinks and nibbles will be served and the anniversary cake cut at 8 p.m. Make sure you enjoy this piece of OVA history by buying your tickets (£5 each), well in advance please, either from your local representative or from:

Rowan Turnbull,  
Hayes, Church Road,  
Colaton Raleigh,  
Sidmouth EX10 0LH.

(Tel.: 01395-  
567339)

Please enclose an s.a.e and your cheque (made out to Otter Valley Association) for £5 per person.

## **'A WALK ROUND EAST BUDLEIGH' - a new OVA leaflet**

This new OVA leaflet describes a circular walk of about two miles around the village and surrounding countryside. It has been designed to give the visitor to the area a brief introduction to the long and interesting history of East Budleigh and also to provide a guide to a pleasant walk of an hour or two.

The front of the leaflet has a full-colour photograph of the High Street taken in mid-summer when the village was preparing for the annual 'Village in Bloom' competition. Many of the ancient buildings of East Budleigh are briefly described, together with notes on the history of the village and some of its notable alumni, such as Sir Walter Raleigh and Roger Conant, founding father of the city of Salem in Massachussets. The leaflet also has a street map with numbers to indicate the features of interest that are described in the text. Although it was not possible to deal with the history in any detail every effort was made by the History Section of the OVA to check the accuracy of the historical facts that are given.

The leaflet can be obtained free of charge from Budleigh Salterton Library, the Tourist Office and, in East Budleigh, the Rolle Arms or the Sir Walter Raleigh. It will provide a useful complement to 'A Walk Round Budleigh Salterton' which was published several years ago.

**Norman Crossland**



## A walk round East Budleigh



### Otter Valley Association

Helping preserve and improve our local  
environment

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

### THE HIDDEN FACE OF EAST BUDLEIGH

Did you know that:

- in the 19th century East Budleigh was a centre for the distribution of smuggled goods?

- the kindly vicar of East Budleigh for 58 years, the Revd Ambrose Stapleton, was himself involved in the lucrative trade of smuggling?

- the non-conformist minister of Salem Chapel (built 1719) may have been in league with the vicar of All Saints to assist in smuggling brandy?

- the site of Old Gospel Hall, another non-conformist chapel now a private house, was part of a thriving tannery supplying leather buckets to the Tudor navies?

I learned all this, and much more, about East Budleigh when following the walk suggested in the leaflet on a sunny winter afternoon. It was particularly interesting to see Salem Chapel close to (instead of sweeping past it in a car) and to cross the main road over to Frogmore Road for a little bit of rural walking before turning back up to the Old Gospel Hall and the Rolle Arms.

This well-researched compact leaflet is a most welcome addition to the OVA's list of publications.

PQ

### **URGENT CHANGE - Offwell Walk of 24 April**

Please do NOT park at the Offwell Village Hall car park (the grid reference 194996 shown on the current membership card and the poster) but use the nearby Forestry Commission car park instead. It would be helpful if cars could be shared where possible. Details from the walk leader, Philip Greenhow on 01395-567996.

### **OVA VISIT TO COCKINGTON, SATURDAY 15 MAY**

This is the last chance to buy coach tickets (£5 per person) for this visit. They can be obtained from Mrs. N.D. Daniel, Highbury, 7 Marine Parade, Budleigh Salterton EX9 6NS. Please enclose a s.a.e and make cheques payable to Otter Valley Association. (NB: we leave Budleigh Salterton Public Hall at 10.30 a.m.)

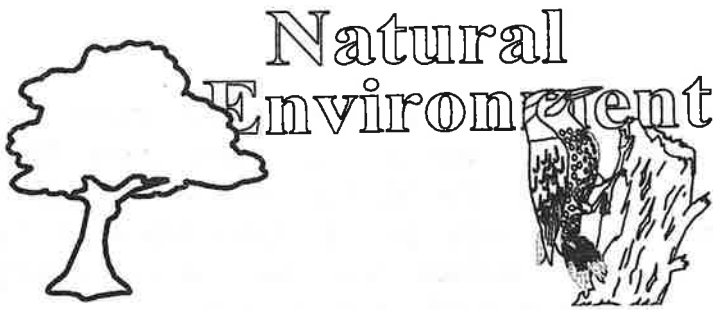
### **OVA WALK, 'THE BYES', SIDMOUTH**

**Saturday 10 July, 2 p.m.**

Unusually, this summer we are organising a guided walk of one and a half hours around the Sidmouth meadows. It will incorporate meadows, trees, the River Sid, bird life and butterflies. The leader will be Brian Calloway of Sid Vale Nature Reserve, who has kindly offered us tea afterwards. Meet at the junction of Levonia Road, Sidmouth at 2 p.m. If you would like to take part, please contact Nicky Daniel on 01395-445960 as she needs to know numbers by 26 June.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Talks Secretary** Belinda Mountain, who has sold her flat, can now be reached on 01395-446761 or on her mobile number: 07860-721811, until further notice.



## **WHERE WAS BUDLEIGH BEACH WHEN THE ICE CAME?**

The World Heritage site, 'The Jurassic Coast', has been much in the news last year, and is expected to attract increasing numbers of visitors this summer and in the future., The designated length of coast, from Exmouth to Burton Bradstock, shows in its coastal cliffs spectacular exposures of rocks laid down in the Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous geological periods. Of course, the popular fame of this coast rests on the major finds of dinosaur bones in the area over the last 200 years or so.

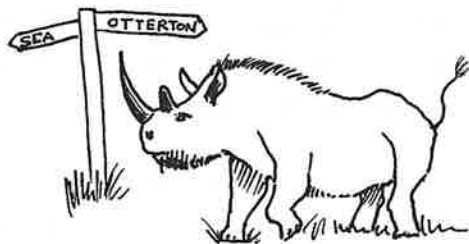
The dinosaurs lived mainly during the Jurassic and Cretaceous periods, which cover a time-span from 190 million years to 65 million years before the present. The dinosaurs, having been around (and evolving) for some 125 million years, suddenly disappeared from the Earth, for reasons not yet clear. An important exception is the Crocodile, which is still with us, of course.

The immense length of geological time periods is very difficult for us to comprehend. Thinking of the length of the Age of the Dinosaurs (125 million years) it is interesting that the most recent geological period, the

Quaternary, covers only the last two million years. Of this, the most recent one million years have been dominated in Britain by the Ice Age, which consisted of at least four cold periods (the glacials) separated by three much warmer periods (the interglacials) during which the climate was much as at present.

During each glacial period, large continental icecaps, much like the ones that Greenland and the Antarctic have today, built up over the colder continents, including Europe. In Britain the ice cover extended as far south as South Wales, and the northern margin of the South-West peninsula. The South of England would have experienced tundra conditions - lots of winter snow, rain and water everywhere, with little or no vegetation and only the hardiest of animals (man had left for the warmer south - as usual).

All this ice led to a dramatic lowering of the sea levels throughout the world. The most recent glacial period was probably also the coldest one with a maximum ice build-up at about 20,000 years ago. At this time sea levels are thought to have been 100 to 120 metres below their present level. Thus the odd woolly rhinoceros living in Budleigh Salterton or Otterton would have had a long walk to the nearest sea, at least 50 miles and maybe much more.



It is possible that 20,000 years ago the sea did not reach east of Plymouth and that what we know as the English Channel would have been simply a very large river (later to become the Rhine) running through a number of big lakes on its way to the Atlantic. Remember that this river drained most of Western Europe since the North Sea outlet was blocked by ice.

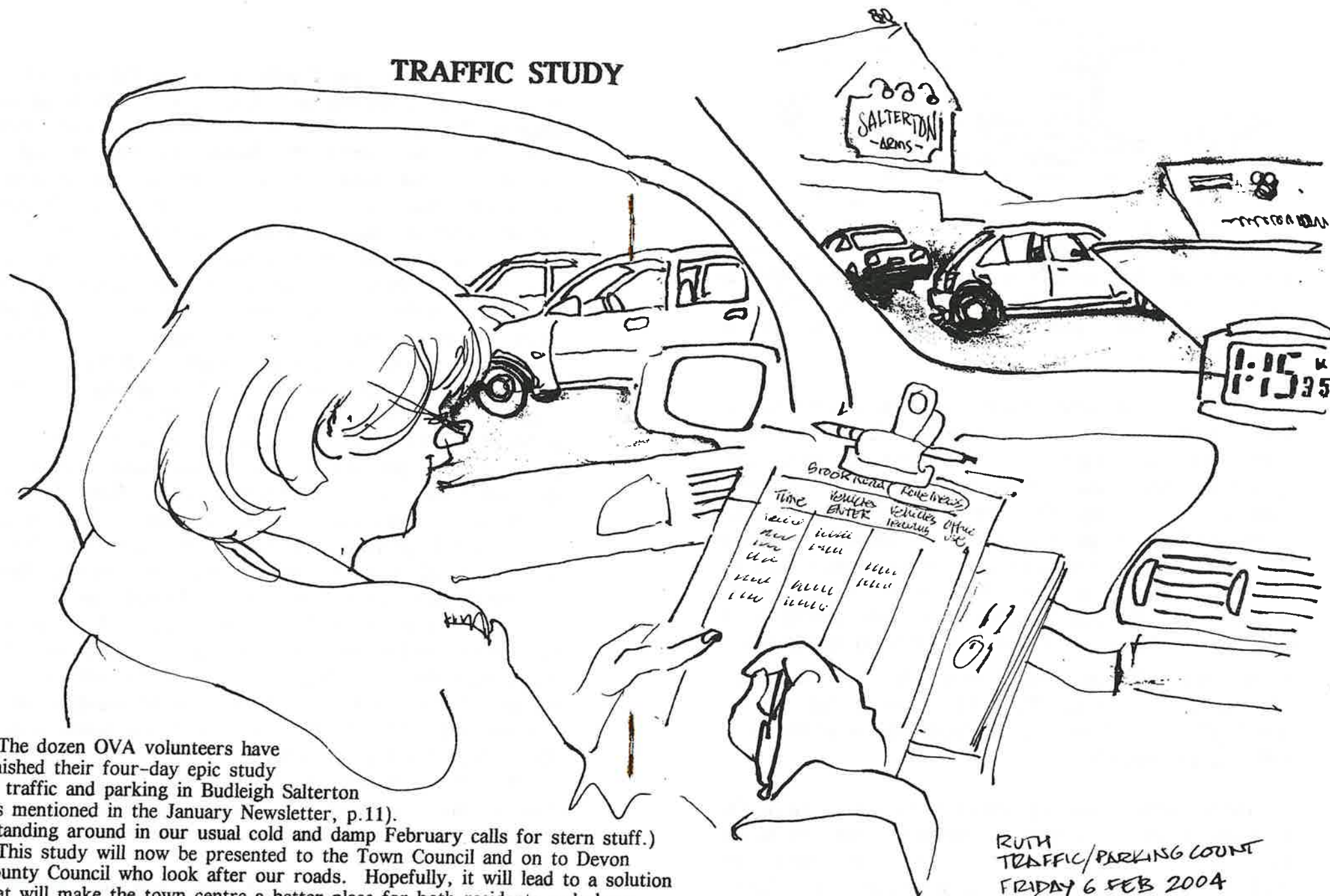
At that time our local valleys, the Otter, the Exe and the Sid, would have been cut much deeper due to lower sea levels and high runoff. From about 12,000 years ago the climate started to warm, the ice sheets melted and the sea level rose (rapidly at first). In this way, the sea steadily encroached over the land surface shaped by the rain and frost of the recent past. These drowned landscapes include organic remains, particularly submerged forests, which have been found in several locations in off-shore East and South Devon.

By 6000 years ago the sea was almost back to its present level (perhaps 5 metres below current sea level) and the coastline to its present position. During these last 6000 years or so the sea has formed the cliffs as we see them today, and the combination of river silt and coastal sediments has filled up our estuaries, the Sid completely, the Otter almost and the Exe not far behind. Today, in each of these cases an equilibrium is reached depending mainly on how much water comes down their respective rivers.

On the subject of time scales, it is worth remembering that 6000 years ago Jericho was already an ancient fortified settlement, as were other sites in the Levant.

**Robert Sellin and Stan Murrell**

## TRAFFIC STUDY



The dozen OVA volunteers have finished their four-day epic study of traffic and parking in Budleigh Salterton (as mentioned in the January Newsletter, p.11). (Standing around in our usual cold and damp February calls for stern stuff.)

This study will now be presented to the Town Council and on to Devon County Council who look after our roads. Hopefully, it will lead to a solution that will make the town centre a better place for both residents and shopkeepers. Thank-you to all who helped.

Jed Falby

RUTH  
TRAFFIC/PARKING COUNT  
FRIDAY 6 FEB 2004

# Built Environment



In earlier newsletters I have referred to the importance of the space between buildings in determining the quality of the built environment. Emphasis at that time was placed upon the need to maintain and reinforce the mature planting which is such a significant feature of the area, and especially of Budleigh Salterton.

Of more immediate concern to this committee has been the recent spate of new boundary fences and walls which seem to spring up almost overnight with little apparent consideration for the effect on adjoining neighbours or on the environment in general. Unfortunately, the planning rules are somewhat relaxed in this respect, giving permitted development rights for any wall or fence not more than one metre high where it abuts a vehicular highway, or two metres high elsewhere. These rules apply equally to Conservation Areas and AONBs, and there is no restriction whatsoever on materials and construction unless specifically set down as a condition attached to a planning permission.

Three recent planning applications have drawn the attention of the Built Environment Sub-committee to the potentially damaging effects on the immediate environment of wall and fencing proposals. The first

concerned the boundary wall along the road frontage to the Nattore Lodge development in North View Road. A low 'Budleigh Pebble' wall had already been approved and the application proposed the addition of decorative metal railings along the top of that wall. The committee considered this proposed addition to be totally out of sympathy with the local built tradition and should not be approved. Fortunately the application was subsequently refused.

The two other applications, one in East Budleigh and the other in Budleigh Salterton, both involved erecting a solid feather-edged boarded fence more than one metre high and abutting a public highway. Both were in a prominent position in a residential area where the surrounding properties were bounded with hedges or other planting to provide a degree of privacy. The committee felt that the erection of high fencing in each of these locations would be intrusive and out of character with the surroundings and made formal objections on this basis. It was therefore encouraging to learn that the Planning Authority supported this view and decided to refuse both applications.

It is reassuring to know that the planners are aware of the potential damage to the built environment of such relatively minor developments. It must be hoped that those people proposing to carry out similar work, but which falls within the scope of permitted development, will give equal attention to the need to protect our fragile environment.

**Brian Brown**





The reopening of the footbridge over the river at Harpford is an enormous relief. Its closure made life very difficult for many people, including children who could only walk to school by using the very dangerous road bridge at the bottom of Four-Elms Hill. It cut off the paths through and around Harpford Woods and Fire Beacon Hill from the paths along the Otter, so preventing some interesting long walks. The County is to be congratulated on finishing the work so quickly. Much of the credit for getting the work done lies with the people who circulated and signed the petition.

The lane westwards from Selwood Farm in Colaton Raleigh should be a very handy way of reaching the common. It connects to the two bridleways along the eastern edge of the common and provides circular walks from Stowford and from Hawkerland. But for years nobody much has used it. Why? Because of deep wall-to-wall water. Now Clinton Devon has kindly agreed to our draining the water into the adjacent field.

The work will present some problems. A ditch will have to be cut along a short stretch of the lane to join to a drainage channel through the hedge. I'm a little worried that passing tractors may 'collapse' the ditch: we may therefore have to put in a perforated pipe.

Contractor Martin Banks has made a super job of the bridleway on the south side of Hawkerland as far as the

little stream. He has cleared the surface, dug a ditch along the north side to catch the water coming off the common, and placed pipes under the bridleway to carry the water to the ditch on the south side. When I last looked at it there was a staggering volume of water being carried under the bridleway. It's no wonder our puny efforts at drainage in the past failed to solve the problem.

The problem was so severe that few people were willing to plough through the deep mud on the bridleway. Instead, they tended to look for ways round, and these ways round in turn became mired, damaging the common.

There is still work to be done on the western part of this bridleway before it is satisfactory for its whole length.

Colin Campbell of Newton Poppleford has now joined the Footpaths Committee. It was clear from the first meeting he attended that he is both keen on footpaths and has a very good knowledge of Newton Poppleford's paths.

Alan Jones

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### **An Energetic Winter Walk, 3 January 2004**

The New Year started with an 'energetic' walk to compensate for all the excesses of Christmas and New Year. Twelve brave walkers showed up on Mutter's Moor and the rain stopped to honour the occasion.

Our first stop was on the site of the Seven Stones (still lying unloved at Bicton until the OVA can succeed in re-establishing them back on the Moor). Then on to Bulverton Hill where Keble's seat will soon rediscover its lovely views as the trees are now due for felling. Here too is the old pack-horse trail to Sidmouth which we followed down to the top of Four Elms Hill where it was replaced by a new coach road; now the pack-horse trail is almost impassable except by 'energetic' OVA walkers.



THE OLD SIDMOUTH COACH ROAD  
SAT 3 JAN '04

The old/new coach road looks down on the new/old Bowd Inn which sits on the 'modern' road of the seventeenth century, which was only widened in recent living memory.

So on through a sea of mud to Bickwell Lane and Bickwell Farm, and then up, up the gruelling hill that is the Sidmouth side of Mutter's Moor to return to our starting point, puffing and panting but ready now to face the real New Year.

**Jed Falby**

## **A Bird-Watching Stroll, 14 January 2004**

Once again, as last year, the weather misbehaved. The first 15 minutes were spent in our cars sheltering from a very heavy shower of rain. We were not daunted as from the cars we were able to see some birds, the best of which had to be four Avocets that did a fly-pass up the river to join the gulls.

The tide was very full which, together with flood-waters, meant that the Salt Marsh was covered with water. This was to our advantage, because once we got going all the birds were very much closer to us. We did not leave the car park for at least 20 minutes because there was so much to see. The Kingfisher gave us great views, perching quite close by. There were so many other birds to see, including Widgeon, Shell Duck, Teal, Reed Bunting, Meadow Pipits and Rock Pipits, a variety of finches, including colourful Goldfinches with their bright red faces. A Kestrel flew over our heads and settled in a bare tree allowing us to observe him. Along the path going toward White Bridge were small green Siskins feeding on the Alders (a favourite food of theirs) and in the meadows we could see the Grey Heron and white Little Egret.

We were not even halfway along the path when the rains started all over again and my dozen or so stalwart birders abandoned me. Left to my own devices, I braved the heavy shower. Whilst sheltering I watched eight Common Snipe. These secretive birds were right out in the open feeding; they must have thought that everybody had gone home. All was fine until a Blackbird came and perched next to me and, on seeing me unexpectedly, screeched out its alarm call sending the Snipe into cover.

One bird I did not see on this day was a special bird I had been observing for some time: a Black-Headed Gull, with rings on each leg. I got the number from the ring and reported the find to the British Trust for Ornithology. An e-mail from the Netherlands has told me that the bird was rung in Copenhagen in 1993 when it was three years old. It has been sighted many times but this was its first visit abroad. A pleasing thought that this bird came to Budleigh Salterton for its winter break. I am positive it did the right thing.

**David Jannaway**



THE UNSINKABLE  
DAVID JANNAWAY  
14 JAN 2004

### **White Cross, 24 January 2004**

Twenty-eight set out on a walk which was not as advertised. On the original plan we were to traverse a section of riverside footpath which has now been washed away. Instead, we set off from Tipton, along the Otter, and turned across to Lancercombe Farm. We

wriggled along a couple of bridlepaths to Roundball Farm and then took a footpath towards Waxway.

David Jannaway led some of the party back by an escape lane which let them off the bother of trekking up the hill to White Cross. A clear day meant there was a splendid view to reward us at the top. We continued through woods to Hollow Head Cross, then trudged downhill all the way to Coombe and back to base.

**Bettina Wilson**

### **River Otter, Peak Hill and Ladram Bay, 25 February**

On a very sunny early spring morning, 15 walkers arrived at Hayes Lane carpark for one of the few long walks on the OVA programme. It was good to see both familiar faces and also some new ones. We left at 10 a.m., and after reaching Otterton, on the way to Colaton Raleigh we stopped to have a look at the willow 'spilling' on the banks of the Otter. Walking on, we spotted across the fields two egrets, a heron and three deer. Then, continuing on our journey, it was lovely to see clusters of blue and white violets.

A coffee break came next to give us the energy to climb Passaford Lane. At the start of the hill, one person noticed an animal, constructed from willow, placed in the hedge. We thought it had some characteristics of a wild boar.

Later, we stopped on Peak Hill, and as it was such a clear day it was possible to see as far as Chesil Beach. Arriving at Ladram Bay at 12.45 p.m. we had our lunch, some of us sitting on the beach in brilliant sunshine. What a bonus! A pleasant final phase of our walk brought us back to Hayes Lane for 2.45 p.m.

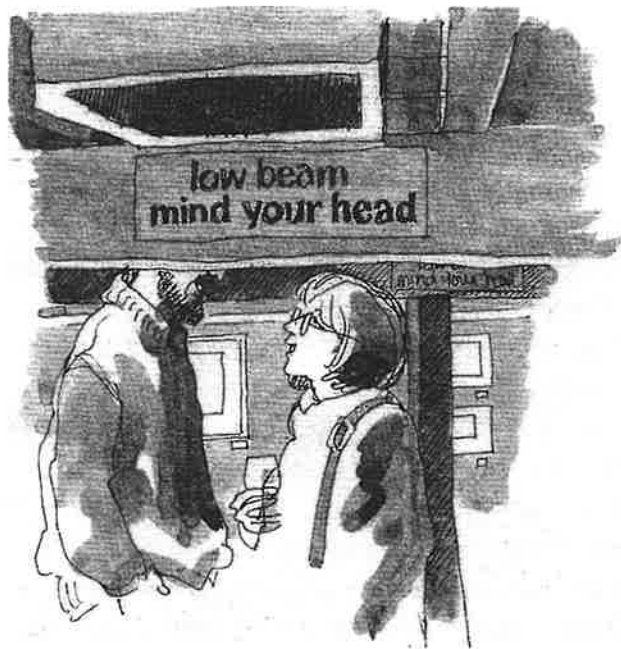
**Edward Dix**

*the Floss on THE MILL: the Re-Awakening of a Watermill* by Desna Greenhow, illustrated by Jed Falby. Hobnob Press, 2004. (134 pp., £8-95)

There can be few OVA members who have not made one or more enjoyable visits to Otterton Mill, and who have perhaps wondered how it came to be the unique and flourishing enterprise it is. Now, all the answers to our questions can be found in Desna Greenhow's delightful book, *the Floss on THE MILL* (with a nod to George Eliot), with evocative drawings by Jed Falby.

In the late Sixties she and her family moved into the Mill House, just opposite the mill, which had been standing derelict and unloved for many years. Visiting it with her son and daughter, Desna had a vision of a restored mill, in full working order, providing flour for organic bread and other foods, as well as being a place for environmental education and exhibitions of arts and crafts. The dream took time - and a huge amount of work and flair - to become a reality, but on 26 July 1977 around 100 people celebrated the re-opening of Otterton Mill and enjoyed the first of many exhibitions.

The next 25 years of unremitting labour - hectic but rewarding - are recorded in the ten chapters of Desna's book. Her account is thematic rather than chronological, with the emphasis in earlier chapters being on the mill and its constituent parts, with headings such as 'Mill Stream', 'Mill Wheel', 'Machinery', 'Stones, Grains and Flour'. Although the technical details are there and will fascinate many readers, the author weaves into the text not only her recollections and the tribulations of her own life (the death of her beloved daughter, Martha, at



the age of 34 being the most poignant), but also the many people who played their part: friends, employees, millwrights, artists and even the ghost of a young apprentice miller of the nineteenth century, Ben, who is still thought to haunt the gallery. The mill's non-human residents receive their fair share of attention too, including Milly the cat, whose party trick is to catch and devour whole eels.

Later chapters deal with the mill's - and Otterton's - long and complex history, 'Arts and Crafts' and 'The Environment' and, at the end, 'Winding Down' when after 25 years the time comes to pass the mill on to a younger quartet who will cherish it as she has done.

Poetry, recipes and drawings supplement the text, adding an extra dimension to this tale of a twentieth-century milleress extraordinary. Please read it - you will find a copy at the Mill or most local bookshops - you will not be disappointed and you will learn a great deal.

**Pat Quaife**



## ON WOODBURY COMMON

A walk on Woodbury Common at night in mid-winter can be an exhilarating experience, but who has seen the White Horse of Blackhill or heard the eerie wailing of Tom Dyer in his death throes?

One day in 1745, Tom Dyer came home from the New Inn, Otterton, the worse for drink, hit his wife Ann on the head and killed her. Somewhat frightened, he ran to his wife's mother, telling her to go to her daughter as she was ill. He then disappeared. Ann's mother found her daughter dead in a chair with blood all over the room.

Dyer was eventually found in the Bowd Inn, Sidmouth, brought back, tried and condemned to death. He was placed in an inn cage, hung from a tree on Blackhill and left to starve to death. His cries could be heard for miles and, t'is said, still echo across the Common today.

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This article first appeared  
in *Countryside Matters*,  
the Clinon Devon Estates  
Quarterly Newsletter.

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Gerald Millington, Hon. Archivist,  
Clinton Devon Estates

### NIMBYism 1943 Style?

A letter from the Solicitors of a household in Moor Lane to the Rolle Estate Steward in September 1943, agreed to the giving up of some frontage for road widening, but expressed concern that 'the Rolle Estate had sold two fields opposite, to Budleigh Salterton UDC, for the erection of 'working class dwellings'. (These fields eventually became Moormead.)

Local history note from Harry Lane

MAY 26TH, WEDNESDAY 10 a.m. COLATON RALEIGH CHURCH, G.R.082872. 2½ HOURS, MODERATE. GREEN LANES, COMMONS, HAWKERLAND, LOCAL HISTORY. *Walk leader:* STAN HERBERT, 01395-445648.

JUNE 12th, SATURDAY 10 a.m. WHEATHILL CAR PARK, G.R.041847. 9 MILES, ENERGETIC. COMMONS, COASTAL PATH, OLD RAILWAY LINE. PUB LUNCH OR PICNIC AT LITTLEHAM. SHOULD BE FIRM UNDERFOOT. *Walk leader:* PETER HILLS, 01395-568576.

JUNE 30th, WEDNESDAY 10 a.m. SQUABMOOR RESERVOIR, G.R.038843. 5 MILES, 2½ HOURS, MODERATE. COMMONS, WOODLANDS, VIEWS. COULD BE MUDDY/STONY UNDERFOOT. *Walk leader:* BRIAN LEVERIDGE, 01395-443358.

JULY 10th, SATURDAY 10 a.m. HAYES LANE CAR PARK, EAST BUDLEIGH, G.R.065849. 5 MILES, 2½ HOURS, EASY. RALEIGH COUNTRY, THE BELVEDERE, BAKERS BRAKE, HAYES WOOD, YETTINGTON, COLATON RALEIGH, GREEN LANES, LOCAL HISTORY. *Walk leader:* STAN HERBERT, 01395-445648

JULY 10TH, SATURDAY 2 p.m. GUIDED WALK ROUND SIDMOUTH MEADOWS, WITH BRIAN CALLOWAY. BOOK BY 26 JUNE WITH NICKY DANIEL, 01395-445960

JULY 21st, WED. 10 a.m. COLATON RALEIGH CHURCH, G.R. 082872. 6 MILES, 3 HOURS, ENERGETIC. RIVERSIDE, COASTAL, FINE VIEWS. *Walk leader:* BRIAN TURNBULL, 01395-567339.

## OVA OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 2004

(01395)

<b>Chairman:</b>	Mr Alan Ford	445230
<b>Vice-Chairman</b>	Mr Robert Sellin	443283
<b>Hon. Secretary</b>	Mr John Saul	442977
<b>Hon. Treasurer</b>	Mr Brian Ludlow	568501

### **Executive Committee**

#### *Representing the Parish of*

Budleigh Salterton	Mr Clive Bowman	446892
	Mr Nick Speare	443944
East Budleigh	Mr Norman Crossland	445129
Colaton Raleigh	Mr Brian Turnbull	567339
Newton Poppleford	Mr Haylor Lass	568786
Otterton	Mr Philip Greenhow	567996

### **Sub-Committee Chairmen**

Footpaths	Mr Alan Jones	568339
Natural Environment	Mr Robert Sellin	443283
Built Environment	Mr Brian Brown	446013

**History Section** Convenor, Mr Alan Ford 445230

**Membership Secretary** Mr Brian Hawkes 442017

**Social Secretary** Mrs Rowan Turnbull 567339

**Talks Secretary** Miss Belinda Mountain 446761

**Publicity Secretary** Mrs Maureen Bowman 446892

**Newsletter Editor** Miss Patricia Quaife, 1 North St.,

Topsham, Exeter EX3 0AP. Tel.: (01392)-873251

**Newsletter Distributor** Mrs Gill Speare 443944

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. It is also affiliated to the CPRE. It cares for the environment and queries should be put to your Parish Rep.

Mr & Mrs AG Whittle  
24 The Rosemullion  
Cliff Road  
Budleigh Salterton  
EX9 6LA

We thank Jed Falby for the cover and other ill

Contributions are welcome for the next issue b

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