

# OTTER VALLEY ASSOCIATION

PO Box 70 Budleigh Salterton EX9 6WN

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



*Winter Edition*

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*Photographs: Mo Bowman*

*Sketches: Jed Falby*



## Chairman's Message



Happy New Year! Just after the last newsletter went to press we heard that our bid to the funding programme 'Making it Local' was successful. Work on our new history leaflet is nearly complete and it should complement our existing range. We are very grateful for a legacy of £100 from the late Mrs Lynette Wilberforce which will be used as part of the OVA's contribution to the costs. We have traced her membership back to 1982 and very much appreciate her gesture.

We are still working towards the setting up of working parties to clear footpaths etc. as requested at the AGM. The organisational aspects are complex but two volunteers are investigating the issues for us. Vacancies exist for parish representatives for East Budleigh and Colaton Raleigh. We are very grateful to Mitzi Crossland and Neville Bennett not only for their service but also for continuing to deal with the posters and Newsletters while we seek new recruits. Sustaining our activities requires a lot of commitment and we always need new blood to share the load.

We have responded to EDDC's consultation process on the Local Development Framework and have questioned the excessive number of new homes envisaged. Representing the membership of the OVA on planning matters is a challenging aspect of our work and has led to a disagreement between the Executive Committee and the Built Environment Sub-Committee. An extract from the minutes of October 26 is as follows:

*The Executive Committee of the Otter Valley Association regrets that differences of opinion over the response to a significant planning application and related procedural issues have resulted in the resignation of the Chairman and members of the Built Environment Committee.*

*However, we wish the Otter Valley Association to continue to meet its constitutional objectives of conserving and promoting this special area in which we live, so the Executive Committee will for the present continue the overview and response to planning applications, whilst encouraging the formation of a new sub-committee to carry out the Built Environment role. We will also carry out a short review of our Rules to ensure, as far as possible, clarity in future actions and responsibilities.*

*We would offer sincere thanks to all the members of the Built Environment Committee for all the work they have done on behalf of the Association over the past years.*

If you are interested in contributing to this area of our work please get in touch.

An OVA 'first' was a well-received talk in french by three EC members and former Chairman, Brian Turnbull, to the local Anglo-French society to which several members belong. We sold some books and distributed recruitment leaflets.

**Helen Tickle**



## From the Editor



This is my penultimate edition as Editor of the Newsletter. As yet, no-one has come forward and expressed interest in taking on the baton but with only one more edition, if there is anyone who is prepared to consider it I would urge them to step forward now so that we can achieve a smooth handover.

In this edition the Events Committee have shown what a wonderfully varied programme they can create with workshops and trips to suit everyone. They do a splendid job and I would like to thank them on your behalf. The additional talk that has been arranged for January, 'Recycling in Devon', is great timing with the introduction of the new boxes and bins and we can learn what they do with all the wrapping paper and trees that will all have come down on Twelfth Night. Maybe Santa and his elves are busy recycling all the unwanted presents ready for next December.

I hope that the cold snap is now nothing but a fading memory for you and, as I write, the OVA Christmas Dinner is on the near horizon. I'm sure we will all have had a great time and I hope that you won a prize in the raffle or the quiz, but if you didn't, there's always next year's to look forward to.

If 2010 was a good year for you, I hope that 2011 is even better. If 2010 wasn't as good as you wished, I hope that 2011 will be.

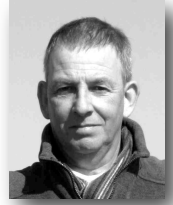
As Dave Allen always used to say at the end of his shows "May your God go with you!"

Happy New Year!

**Nick Speare**

## Executive Watch

*(Clive focuses on the Executive Committee)*



In accordance with its Constitution, the Otter Valley Association is managed by an Executive Committee (EC), appointed each year at the AGM. This committee has a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Secretary, and up to 12 additional members who represent the parishes of benefit or other areas of activity described by the Objectives in the Constitution. The officers and members of the EC also become Trustees of the OVA, in accordance with the Charities Act 1993. A copy of the Constitution is available on the website, or by request to Hon. Secretary.

Our Constitution was first written 31 years ago when the OVA was formed. It was reviewed several times in past years, and is now reviewed bi-annually by the EC. Any suggested amendments are then put before the membership at the following AGM where they must be supported by more than two-thirds of the members present. The last amendment was approved in 2002, and the last review carried out in 2008. In that review it was decided that the Constitution still met the requirements of the 2006 Charity Act and the Objectives of the OVA.

The EC acts within a set of Rules which are reviewed on a regular basis. These Rules conform to and enable the EC to carry out the Aims and Objectives in the Constitution. The first part of the Rules define how the EC should act in the day to day management of the OVA. The second gives greater detail to the roles and duties of the Officers and EC members and provides guidance to the various committees appointed by the EC.

The last change to the Rules was in 2008, when the wording of several areas was brought into line with the 2006 Charities Act. Any change to the Rules requires the approval of two-thirds of the Trustees of the OVA. During the six years I have been a member of the EC, there have been two reviews of the Rules, and a new review has been approved by the EC.

In previous articles, I described the first meeting of the EC after the AGM and the workings of the Events Committee. In future articles, I will go into greater depth on the duties of members of the EC, and some of the decisions that are made on your behalf. Finally, I hope those who attended the OVA Christmas Dinner enjoyed the last event of this year, and wish you all a Happy New Year!

**Clive Bowman**

### Events' Events



When the members of the Events Committee are discussing future projects we are always worried that they may not appeal to the membership. We also have to bear in mind that the cost of halls, speakers, entrance fees, Christmas Dinner and especially the cost of coaches have all increased. We are, therefore very pleased that all our varied events this autumn have been well attended.

This spring we hope you will join us on a guided snowdrop walk with a WI lunch included and later in April come to Slapton Ley to visit the nature reserve with a guide. Caroline Allen has obtained one of the West Country's dowsing experts from Cornwall to give us a workshop. As a result this workshop will be more expensive than usual but it will include a ploughman's lunch. Many of you will, by now, have partaken of our locally sourced lunches.

We also have a return visit Sidbury Manor planned for March 22. Names were taken from the waiting list and there were sufficient people to fill this trip.

We have had some problems with booking halls for the talks. Please note the Jan.11 talk will not now take place at the Colaton Raleigh Village Hall and will take place at Budleigh Salterton Masonic Hall at 7.30pm. With the introduction of recycling to Budleigh Salterton, an additional talk has been added to the programme on January 20. This will, however, start at 8.00pm in the Masonic Hall, not the usual 7.30pm.

The fire at Newton Poppleford Church Hall has forced us to change the planned venue for our AGM on Wednesday 11 May. We have now booked East Budleigh Village Hall instead.

Many talks and events take place near to the time of distribution of the newsletter and changes are difficult to advertise to the membership. We have a number of email addresses of members but if you are willing to be contacted by this means please email [info@ova.org.uk](mailto:info@ova.org.uk) or [alan@huddart.me.uk](mailto:alan@huddart.me.uk) to confirm this. Your email address will not be passed on to anyone else and will only be used for OVA reminders or changes and perhaps occasional items that will be of interest to OVA members. If you are a regular attendee of our talks, visits, walks, etc. I would urge you to give us an emergency e-mail address.

**Nicky Daniel**



## Annual Estuary Litter-pick Saturday 19 March 10.00am



Come and join us in the annual clean-up! We will assemble for a briefing at 10am in the Lime Kiln Car Park, where litter pickers may park without charge for the 2-hour period. As last year, the OVA is offering a small prize in book vouchers for the most interesting piece of debris collected so this gives an added interest.

The debris that accumulates each year on the marshlands in the lower part of the estuary comes in part down the river but mostly from the sea, especially during storms and high tides. It is not only unsightly but constitutes a threat to the teeming bird population that inhabits the area. Plastic can kill, so it is essential that we remove it from the birds' habitat.

The clean-up depends entirely upon the efforts of OVA volunteers so please make a note of the date in your diaries and calendars. Clinton Devon and the AONB/EDDC will, as usual, be combining to organize the removal of the rubbish and you will be provided with plastic bags and instructions on where to operate. Both sides of the estuary will be scoured up to the White Bridge.

The clean-up is timed to coincide with low tide so there is a lot of fresh mud around. Wellington boots are advised and, since it is not difficult to get stuck in the mud, it is essential that children are accompanied by an adult. It is also a good idea to wear protective gloves. Health and Safety will be included in the general briefing at 10am and all should wait for this before setting off. Dogs are not permitted in the nature reserve.

All who participate in this event enjoy it, so why not come along? Your help will be greatly appreciated. I always look upon it as a good excuse to get out on the ground in an area from which, for the rest of the year, we are excluded and which we can only be viewed, often through binoculars, from the sidelines.



**Patrick Hamilton**



## Regeneration of Commons

You will remember the piece in the last Newsletter about the fire on the Commons in August. Mo Bowman has been working on a project about the



regeneration of the heathland and sent me these photographs of the final scope of the devastation and of the regeneration that is taking place, albeit at



a slow pace. It is encouraging to see the way that nature can eventually recover despite our worst efforts if left to its own devices. **Ed**



## **An Introduction to OVApedia Wed 9 February Budleigh Salterton Library**



Many of you may not yet have explored the wealth of historical research and information about the local area that is now available on OVApedia, part of the OVA website.

We have, therefore, booked Budleigh Salterton library for the afternoon of Wednesday 9 February to demonstrate and explain to members and non-members how to use this facility. We will be able to assist you with hands-on experience using the library computers.

We have booked two sessions, each of which will last 1 hour 15 minutes. The cost will be £3.00. Please complete and return the members' priority booking form by January 20 at the latest.

Session 1 will run from 2.15pm until 3.30pm  
Session 2 will run from 3.40pm until 4.55pm

See Application Form on page 21

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### **Talks Review**

Just look at what you missed! Approx. 50 members attended both these talks.

**Oct 10, Rod Lawrence**, naturalist and media advocate for our environment presented a talk on the biodiversity of our special section of the Jurassic Coast. So many conservation projects and so much enthusiasm.

**Nov 11, Cressida Whitton**, archaeologist, Devon County Council, illustrated the wealth of archeological sites lying under our doorstep. An important aspect of her role is to ensure that such historical treasures are not destroyed in the name of progress.

**Sue Chapman**

## Heavens Above! Alternative Weather Forecast - Winter 2011



“Dirty days hath September  
April June and November  
From January up to May  
The rain it raineth every day  
All the rest have thirty-one  
Without a blessed gleam of sun  
And if any of them had two-and-thirty  
They'd be just as wet and twice as dirty”

No, it's not déjà vu all over again!

If you remember, this time last year we spent a month shovelling four inches of what the pundits forecast as "partly cloudy" from our pavements. However, although we are in for more bleakly cold weather with high velocity winds and above average precipitation, it will not be so penetratingly cold for quite so long this winter. Also the dirty wet days that do occur will alternate with quieter spells of sparkling brilliance. The bad news is that these days only sparkle squeaky clean because they follow a scrub-a-dub-dubbing by sleet, storms, gales, blizzards and just possibly, a hurricane! It is going to be a very turbulent and invigorating few months with alternating hot and cold fronts colliding like dodgems causing the heavens above to ignite and burst giving us lot down below a right scouring.

### January



A kaleidoscopic pattern of weather awaits us at the turn of the year. Power lines blow down as time-tables screw up, caused no doubt by the wrong type of snow on the lines, (for travellers searching for missing suitcases the astronomical theory is that the rings of Saturn are composed entirely of lost airline luggage). We could see some really weird and wacky kinds of weather in the first two weeks of the year with heavy snowfall early on interspersed with sparkingly bright periods of brilliant sunshine. A sharp rise in

## Weather

temperature around the 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> is a classic recipe for a thunderstorm when an ebullient hot front meets a cold wet one. This complex pattern of shifting conditions smoothes out after the Full Moon of the 19<sup>th</sup>, and the later part of January should be much drier than the earlier. There will be a few gloomy grey days of glowering skies and biting east winds but these will be punctuated with just the right sort of bright sunny days to make us itch to get outside and plunge into the countryside.

### February



Turbulent skies threaten hail at the start of the month, but I think the clouds could be all mouth and no trousers. In fact the first three weeks of February appear to be very much drier and sunnier than usual as Jupiter blows away the clouds and brings delightful weather of the kind that makes being outdoors so agreeable. Things may go pear shaped from 24<sup>th</sup>, however. We might escape the battering that the Northern part of the country will get in the last week but we won't get off scot free. I anticipate a tail-end swipe from a squall at most and a disturbed atmosphere at the least.

### March



Liquorice allsorts weather patterns at the start of March, with sporadic cold severe conditions alternating with what looks to be downright glorious weather! There could indeed be a very pleasant few days in the second week once we have mopped up a few localised difficulties. Dry from the 12<sup>th</sup> onwards but the ground will still be wet. Mud or landslides and such like could be in the news and a rise in temperature could make the atmosphere feel rather humid and claggy. The dark clouds slither back after the 19<sup>th</sup> as a low pressure system works its way into the Equinox bringing dank and dismal conditions in its wake. Downpours could be quite intense at the end of the month. Expect a deluge just as soon as they put a ban on hosepipes. Roll on Summer!

Which brings me to a point of etiquette I have been puzzling over: if you see a heat wave, should you wave back?

**Caroline Allen**



## **Galanthus Walk**

### **Thursday 24 February**

Did you know that the botanical name for Snowdrops is Galanthus meaning 'milk flower'? And that if you admire them you are known as a Galanthophile?

If like me, you are a Galanthophile there is a feast awaiting you. On 24 February you could be jaunting off on a three mile Galanthus Walk to spot up to nine different varieties of these lovely hard-leaved little flowers. The first to push their heads through the frost of the New Year. Contrary to popular belief they are not native to Britain but were introduced by the Romans with several other species arriving later on from the eastern Mediterranean.

The day will start when the coach collects us from Budleigh Salterton Town Hall at 09.00am. It will take us to Harbertonford School for coffee and biscuits. From there we make our way on foot along the comfortable hard surfaced lanes from Harbertonford to Ashprington, winding along the river and through ancient woodland, dotted with farmland and buildings that have stood here since Saxon times.

The ancient drovers track we have chosen should hopefully be awash with several varieties of snowdrops. Despite the easy walking surface I must stress that the last half mile of this walk is a steady UPHILL climb of approximately 1 in 6 and therefore only for those comparatively sound in wind and limb!

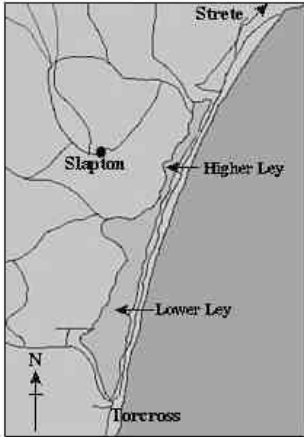
When we arrive at Ashprington Village Hall lunch, provided by the local W.I., will be simple but good! Home made Vegetable Soup with Bread & Cheese, and Fruit Crumble. Afterwards in the local Church, a ten minute talk about the history of the Village by the Church Warden. Then, depending upon the weather, we can then either retrace our steps back from whence we came (downhill all the way) to have a cup of tea at Harbertonford School before climbing back on the coach. Or, if the weather is unkind, the coach will come and collect us in Ashprington and take us straight home. Cost is £18.50 per person to include transport, coffee, lunch and tea.

See Application form on Page 21

**Caroline Allen**

## Visit to Slapton Ley 26 April and 4 May

Slapton Ley National Nature Reserve is surrounded by 200 stunningly beautiful hectares of managed wildlife habitat including of course the Ley itself, the largest freshwater lake in the South West.



After a welcome coffee and biscuits at the Field Centre we shall don stout boots and sally forth to explore this scenic corner of Devon, nestling between Dartmoor National Park and the Start Bay Coast.

During our two to three hour nature

ramble, our guide, the reserve manager Nick Binnie, will introduce us to the special character and nature of the landscape pointing out the wildlife, flora and fauna we meet. If encouraged he may also tell us the tragic history of the D-Day Landing rehearsal as we climb the cliffs to look down over Slapton Sands.

Slapton Ley has magnificent views and a wide spectrum of wildlife which changes greatly with the seasons. Spring is, of course, synonymous with wild flowers. On the ground we should see the woods awash with a blue and white tapestry of bluebells and ransoms and, looking up, marvel at the arrival of thousands of passage migrant birds en-route to their breeding grounds. We may even be lucky enough to catch sight of the Golden Oriole or an Osprey.

Coach transport, coffee and biscuits and guided walking tour of the Nature Reserve is included in the price of £18.00 p.p. Those who wish may bring a



## Future Events

picnic or if you feel in need of more substantial fare, the coach will take us to the Start Bay Inn for lunch where the local fish is caught by the Landlord himself. There is one moderately steep hill during the walk and so stout shoes and walking poles are recommended!

There will be two trips, each taking 20 people. Please indicate on the Application Form on page 23 your first choice of dates and if you can or cannot make the alternative date. However, please do book early to avoid disappointment

**Caroline Allen**

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## Future Dates for your diary

Later in the year we have planned two further OVA adventures to "they foreign parts" led by Tony Burgess. So pencil the dates into your diaries now!

### **Friday 13th May - Looe to Polperro Cornish Coastal Path Adventure**

Coach to West Looe and then a walk along the spectacular coastal path to Polperro and an exploration of the local area.

### **Friday 30th September - Dartmoor Layers of History Adventure**

Based around Grimspound and Bellever, we shall be looking at how prehistoric settlements withstood the moor's weather for thousands of years, how the stones were then purloined by the medievalists to make walls, how they were damaged by the tin miners' relentless digging and destroyed, or reduced to sad remnants, by forestry.

Both events will of course be rounded off by our traditional adventurers' optional cream tea.

Application Forms and more details will appear in the April newsletter.

**Mo Bowman**

2011 JANUARY to MARCH



**January 11, Tues - 7.30pm TALK N.B. Change of venue**  
Masonic Hall, Budleigh Salterton. "East Devon Pebblebed Heathlands." A close look at the East Devon Pebblebed Heathlands and its unique species.  
*Speaker:* Mr David Jannaway



**January 20, Thursday 8.00pm TALK N.B. Start time**  
Masonic Hall, Budleigh Salterton. "Recycling in Devon" A review of the new recycling scheme, where it all goes and plans for the future.  
*Speaker:* Naomi Firth. Waste Management Officer. EDDC



**Jan 26, Wed - 10.00am. WALK (Moderate)**  
Kersbrook (under railway bridge), SY069830. 5½ miles, 2½ hours. A pleasant walk at this time of year along part of the old railway track and back on coast path.  
*Walk leader:* Shane Badham, 01395 567531



**Jan 29, Sat - 10.00am. WALK (Moderate) / Pub lunch**  
Knowle Village Hall CP, SY052827. 5½ miles, 2½ hours. A circular undulating walk over the commons to Bystock Fishponds with varied topography including woodland and heathland. May be muddy. Optional lunch at the Dog & Donkey.  
*Walk leader:* Steve Hagger, 01395 442631



**Feb 9, Wed - 10.00am. WALK, (Moderate)**  
Donkey Sanctuary CP, SY161892 5 Miles, 2½ hours. The countryside, coast and donkeys. Optional lunch at the Café and an opportunity to see more of the donkeys.  
*Walk leader:* Bettina Wilson, 01395 578450



**Feb 9, Wed - 2.15pm. and 3.40pm. Introduction to OVApedia**  
(See Page 7)





**February 10, Thurs - 7.30pm TALK**  
Peter Hall, Budleigh Salterton. "Devon Place Names, Origin and Evolution." Talk by a freelance writer photographer with a strong interest in local history.  
*Speaker:* Robert Heskwith




**February 24, Thurs - Snowdrop Walk**  
(See page 10)


2011 JANUARY to MARCH *ctd.*


 **Feb 26, Sat - 10.00am. WALK (Moderate)**  
White Bridge, SY076830. 5 miles, 2½ hours. Our ever popular local walk to Otterton via the Coast path and returning along Park Lane. Plenty of fresh air guaranteed.  
*Walk leader:* John Jones, 01395 443651


 **March 1, Tues. 7.30pm - TALK**  
East Budleigh Village Hall "The history of East Budleigh through its Buildings" Enjoy an imaginary walk through East Budleigh with the Estate archivist for Clinton Devon Estates  
*Speaker:* Gerald Millington.

 **Mar 9, Wed - 10.30am WALK (Easy)/Pub Lunch N.B. Later start time**  
Otter Inn CP, SY078874 Colaton Raleigh. 3 miles, 2 hours. If you don't walk much or want to start walking this gives you the perfect opportunity with a short mainly level walk along local lanes and banks of the Otter. Optional lunch at the Otter Inn.  
*Walk leader:* John Jones 01395 443651

 **Mar 19 Sat - 10.00am Annual Litter Pick**  
(See Page 5)

 **Mar 19, Sat - 10.00am. WALK (Energetic)/Picnic Lunch**  
Tipton St John CP, SY092918. 9 miles, 4 hours. Along the River Otter and a walk up to Fire Beacon Hill and East Hill via the Waxway. Please bring a packed lunch for the sociable lunchtime stop.  
*Walk leader:* Jan Stuart, 01395 568235

 **Mar 22, Tues - 2.00pm. Sidbury Manor Visit**  
Sorry! Fully Booked

 **Mar 30, Wed - 10.00am. WALK (Moderate)**  
Joney's Cross CP, SY057898. 5 miles, 2½ hours. Harpford Common, Newton Poppleford, Dotton and Vennings Copse. An interesting route over varied terrain on tracks and lanes, may be muddy and stony.  
*Walk leader:* Gordon Wilson, 01395 568594



2011 APRIL to JUNE.



**April 2, Sat - 10.00 Dowsing Workshop**  
(See Page 13)



**April 2, Sat - 10.00am. WALK (Medium)**

Lower Way, Harpford SY092899 (Postcode for satnav EX10 0NQ). 6 miles, 3 hours. Harpford Common and Bowd. Hilly terrain over wild heathland and returning along old railway track.

*Walk leader:* Steve Hagger 01395 442631



**April 13, Wed - 10.30am. WALK (Moderate) / Restaurant Lunch**  
**N.B. Later start time**

Escot Park CP, GR080983. 4 miles, 2½ hours. A circular walk with good views of open countryside from local paths and lanes. Optional lunch at Escot Park Restaurant.

*Walk leader:* Trish Bisley 01392 410423



**April 16, Sat - 10.00am. WALK (Moderate)**

Crookes Plantation, Stowford, SY 057866. 5 miles 2½ hours. Woodbury and Bicton commons, Yettington.

May be muddy!

*Walk leader:* Shane Badham 01395 567531



**April 26, Tues - 08.00am VISIT Slapton Ley**  
(See Page 11)



**May 7, Sat - 10.00am. WALK (Easy) / Pub Lunch**

Peak Hill CP, SY109872. 5 miles, 2½ hours. Jed Falby's artists' walk, easy going with two short stops for sketching with demo by Walk Leader Jed. Non artists very welcome to come along. Optional pub lunch at the Kings Arms, Otterton.

*Walk leader:* Jed Falby 01395 445455



**May 4, Wed- 08.00am VISIT Slapton Ley**  
(See Page 11)

2011 APRIL to JUNE *ctd.*

**May 11, Wednesday 7.30pm**

**AGM 2011**

East Budleigh Village Hall



**May 13, Fri - Looe to Polperro Cornish Coastal Path Adventure**  
Details in next Newsletter



**May 18, Wed - 10.00am. WALK (Energetic)/Picnic Lunch**

Lime Kiln CP SY073820 (charges apply) 10 miles, 6 hours. A varied and interesting walk to Colaton Raleigh via cliffs and commons with a leisurely return along the river Otter. Bring a picnic for lunch at Colaton Raleigh.

*Walk leader:* Brian Turnbull 01395 567339



**June 8, Wed – 10.00am. TOWN WALK (Easy)/Pub Lunch**

Newton Poppleford Playing Field CP SY088090 4 miles, 2½ hours. Easy route around back lanes and footpaths of Newton Poppleford with time for a brief look at some of the historic features in the village. Optional lunch at the Cannon Inn.

*Walk leader:* Haylor Lass 01395 568786



**June 22, Wed - 10.00am. WALK (Energetic)**

Salcombe Regis Church CP, SY148888. 4 miles, 2½ hours. Circular walk around Salcombe Regis visiting Weston Mouth and the Donkey Sanctuary. Includes some coastal paths with splendid views, there are some steep climbs.

*Walk leader:* John Jones 01395 443651



**Sept 30, Fri - Dartmoor Layers of History Adventure**

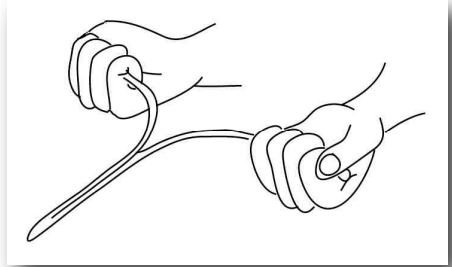
Details in next Newsletter.

## Dowsing Workshop Saturday 2 April

Come and join us in East Budleigh Church Hall at 10.00am on Saturday 2 April to enjoy a day's course on 'divining', more correctly known as 'dowsing', with Aaron Bray.

Aaron, a local water engineer, and current Chairman of the BSD (British Society of Dowsers) Water Special Interest Group is a registered professional dowser, a tutor with the BSD, and a member of the Well Drillers Association. An Award winner and one of the most highly qualified men in his subject, Aaron has offered to come and demonstrate his art to both absolute beginners, like myself, and those already familiar with dowsing during the course of a morning's workshop.

After we have picked up the rudiments of water divining, map dowsing and finding lost objects we should be able to easily find our way to the hearty soup 'n ploughman's lunch in the Hall. After lunch we will be led on a field trip in the surrounding countryside. There, under Aaron's eagle eye, we can experiment and practise our newly discovered skills for ourselves.



Numbers are limited to 25 at a time so send in your booking forms promptly. This event should be very popular, but Aaron is happy to make a return visit for a second date if he divines there is enough interest. Cost will be £18.75

See Application Form on page 23

**Caroline Allen**

## Visit to MET OFFICE 11 September 2010



Most people have a passing interest in the weather, even if it only extends to finding out if it will rain to-morrow. When Caroline Allen organised a visit to the Met Office on one of their open days it seemed an excellent opportunity to see inside the Met Office's new building.

Thirty of us left by coach from Budleigh Salterton and after showing our photo ID's were allowed in this glass, state of the art headquarters.

We were ushered into a conference room where a climate change expert explained something of the Met Office history. It was founded in 1854 by Captain Fitzroy, better known as the Captain of HMS Beagle that took the young naturalist Charles Darwin on his voyages of exploration to South America in the 1830's.

His primary concern was to improve safety at sea. These days the Met Office is involved in a huge number of tasks.

These range from weather forecasts for television channels and monitoring climate change, to providing vital meteorological forecasts for the armed forces in Afghanistan. There are also quirky jobs such as advising biscuit manufacturers when the weather is likely to be hot enough for them to need to transport their chocolate biscuits in refrigerated lorries!

We were allowed to look through glass doors where the super computer lives. The latest can perform 124 trillion calculations in a second. Too mind boggling to comprehend! We went outside to have a look at the various instruments the Met Office use daily and I was interested to learn that they have had trouble with rabbits digging everywhere and birds messing on the satellite dishes. Some things never change.

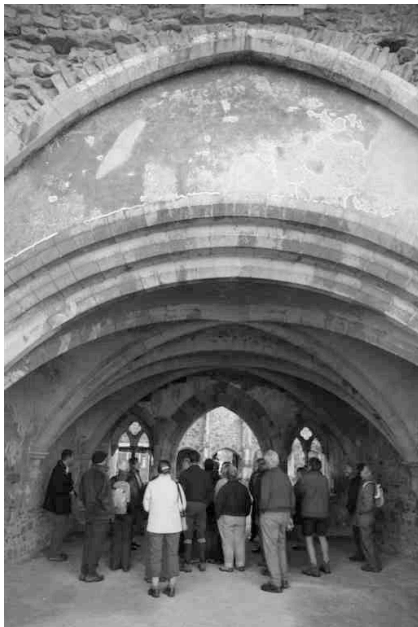
To work in the Met Office you need a degree in meteorology or a science subject and the building houses seventeen hundred people. For such a number it seemed remarkably quiet and because the building is a fair way from Exeter they have a restaurant and cafe, a shop and a gym. As twelve hour shifts are expected the latter is probably useful after a long day hunched over a computer.

All in all a fascinating glimpse into the highly complex and varied world of meteorology.

**Sheridan Brenchley**

**All Things Bright and Beautiful**  
**Exmoor Autumn Colours Adventure**  
**Monday 25 October 2010**

It was indeed a bright and beautiful day, despite temperatures below freezing, as 29 OVA members set off in two minibuses towards Exmoor. Disembarking at Dunkery Gate, we took the exposed path to Dunkery Beacon, at 519 metres the highest point on Exmoor, where we stopped for a coffee break and photo opportunity. The cloudless sky ensured such wonderful visibility we could see right across the South West Peninsula from High Peak to the North Devon coast and beyond.



Our route then descended through moorland. We had been promised the sight of red deer and we were not to be disappointed. Our leader, Tony Burges, spotted some in the distance and it soon became evident that we were surrounded by large groups, well camouflaged in the heather. Sadly, it was either too late in the season or they were too wary of us, so we did not see, or hear, them rutting.

Shortly after this, events took a more dramatic turn when it became clear that one of our party was unwell and Tony had to take the difficult decision to dial 999. Nicola Daniel then led the main group to our Webbers Post lunch rendezvous, leaving Tony and others to escort the ailing man down the steep

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hillside to the car park where an ambulance was waiting to take him and his wife to Taunton Hospital.

After lunch, Tony took us past the Pentley Seat viewpoint and the intriguing wood sculptures adorning the Holnicote Estate, given to the National Trust in 1944 by Sir Richard Dyke Acland. We then descended a steep zigzag track through the ancient oak woodland of Horner Wood. With a short detour to view an ancient stone bridge over Horner Water, we rejoined the mini-buses and travelled to Cleve Abbey where, once we had prised some members away from the delights of half-price ice-creams, we were given a whistle-stop tour of the ruins. It was then back into the minibuses to return to Dunster, familiar to many as the setting for an episode of the TV series *Poirot*. A search of the unusual octagonal Yarn Market in the centre of the village eventually revealed the cannonball hole in one of the roof beams, a souvenir of the Civil War.

The final stage of this eventful trip was a refreshment stop at the tea rooms



by Dunster Water Mill. In the car park, before we left, Tony led us in the singing of a chorus of *All Things Bright and Beautiful*, written in Dunster in 1848 by Mrs Cecil F. Alexander. It was a fitting coda to our adventure.

I am pleased to report that the walker who had been taken ill was allowed home the following day after tests. Our thanks are due to Tony Burges, and also Mo and Clive Bowman of the OVA, for their calm and courageous handling of a difficult situation, thus ensuring the best outcome for all. The next outing is already being planned and I, for one, do not intend to miss it.

**Barbara Farley**

**Walk From Church Green  
Saturday 20 November**

14 people came on this walk on a dull day with a bit of mizzle in the air. Some arrived telling of their adventures in just simply finding Church Green (some 4 miles SE of Honiton). Others used the map and the Grid Reference in the programme. 3 very sensible people rang me beforehand to ask how to get there and we met at the Hare and Hounds at 9.30am and travelled together. I sensed a determination to come on this walk in an unknown area.

Church Green is the location of Farway Church - about one mile from the village centre.

As Farway has no shop and no Pub I took a pair of ancient, but very beautiful, petrol pumps as being the village centre. At one time the petrol price was marked up 3s-6d per gallon (or something like that!) but this has been removed in fairly recent times.

We did an anti-clockwise walk through Farway up to Northleigh where we had a break to see the beautiful Church and magnificent views and then back to Church Green via Netherton Hall, formerly a home for violent boys. Unfortunately the walk did not attract a former inmate to tell us some good stories !

Even as late as November 20th we still saw plenty of the Autumn colours we have so enjoyed this year. Afterwards some of us enjoyed a carvery at the Hare and Hounds, though some were a little upset that the normal Senior Citizen reduction in the cost of the carvery was not available on Saturdays!

**Peter Hills**

**Walk  
27 November**

A cold north-easterly wind was blowing as 16 of us set off from Four Firs cross roads towards Blackhill Quarry. Although quarrying has finished there is much spoil to be removed and landscaping to be done but the ponds which are left are a haven for wildlife.

We then crossed the commons to Hayes Wood, stopped at Hayes Barton (outside) for refreshments before braving the Yettington Road for a short stretch then rejoining the commons for the return to the car-park via Woodbury Castle. An invigorating walk!

**Stuart Lovett**





## Reports

traffic approaching from the right (one French campervan driver was seen to make the mistake of slowing down, possibly trying to pronounce 'Budleigh', and had to execute an emergency stop to avoid an opportunistic local).

In total nearly 20,000 vehicles were recorded during the two days, and the results are revealing. The traffic approaching the junction from the north divided almost equally between turning left into Knowle (3) and carrying straight on towards Budleigh (2). Similarly, traffic emerging from Knowle and turning right (4) was only a little less than traffic coming from Budleigh(1). Budleigh-Knowle (5&6) traffic was scarcely significant- just over 1% of the total. In other words, the 'minor' road was carrying almost as much traffic as the 'major' one. Indeed, for the first two hours of the weekday it carried more.

How could matters be improved? Re-shaping the junction to eliminate the slip road and realigning the Knowle road would be an obvious minor change. It would also stop the handful of drivers who use the slip-road to jump the queue of right-turning traffic- a manoeuvre as ill-mannered as it is dangerous. However, this would not reduce the long waiting times and the build-up of traffic in Knowle. Only some form of roundabout could more fairly share the delays, more in line with the traffic volumes. At first sight there is sufficient space within the present triangular area to accommodate a reasonable roundabout, but this is a matter for the County professionals.

The prospects for any change in the present economic climate seem slim, but at least we now have some facts to support any case that needs to be made.

### Roll of Honour

Jed Falby (team organiser) John Couper, Patricia Dorran, Steve Hagger, John Jones, David Lindsey-Hall, George Maddaford, Peter Quinnell, Neil Rogers, Brian Turnbull.

Postscript. Older readers may recall that in 2004/5 the OVA made surveys of car-parking behaviour in Budleigh's town centre. These resulted in Brook Road car park becoming a 'Shoppers' Car Park', doubling its use. The information on High Street parking was not used at the time, but it is now proving invaluable in arguing against DCC's proposals to install pay-and-display machines.

**J Stuart Yerrell**

## Fungus Foray 10 November 2010

Eighteen of us joined Marion Nalder for this year's Fungus Foray on a lovely sunny morning in November. Starting from Newton Poppleford sports ground and finishing at Harpford churchyard, we scoured the grassland habitats at each end of the walk for mushrooms and also the woodland area in between for wood-rotting fungi.

The playing field yielded several colourful Wax Caps, Ink Caps and delicate grey Mycenae which thrive in moss-rich mown grass.

Fungi are largely responsible for recycling our woodland and we found a variety of mushrooms and bracket fungi which Marion identified for us, even predicting the host tree from one fungus specimen.

We learned that spore colour is the first key characteristic in gilled mushroom identification and the black spores of the Ink Cap is a clue to the early practical value of this group of fungi.

Whilst a few wild mushrooms are poisonous, some are edible but no one could agree that the un-opened edible stinkhorn 'egg' looked appetising; however, a Wood Blewit from Harpford was seen heading home, perhaps for that night's frying pan?

"Have you ever tried smelling a wild mushroom?" asked Marion. The lacy-stemmed open stinkhorn cap certainly lives up to its name but flies love it, apparently. The small pale brown cap of the aptly named *Clitocybe fragrans* (fragrant funnel) is not so obvious, nestling in mossy grass, but has a surprisingly delightful perfume smell.

Knowing a fungus lives there is one thing; finding it is quite another. You have to get very close to the ground to find the tiny club-shaped orange *Cordyceps militaris* which lives on insect larvae or pupae under the grass.

Many thanks to Marion for an enlightening walk. It's good to slow the pace and enjoy the smaller detail of our rich countryside.



**Alastair McGregor**

## An Introduction to OVApedia

Wednesday 9 February

Please send me \_\_\_ tickets to the 2.15pm / 3.40pm session. (delete as appropriate)

Name	
	Address:  Phone: Email:

I enclose a cheque for £\_\_\_\_ (£3 per person) payable to 'OVA' and a

**STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE**

*(address for return overleaf)*

**N.B. Please reply by 20 January 2011**



## Snowdrop Walk

Thursday 24 February.

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ tickets for the Snowdrop Walk

Name	Address Phone & Email
	Address:  Phone: Email:

I enclose cheque for £\_\_\_\_\_ (£18.50 per person) payable to 'OVA' and a

**STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE**

*(address for return overleaf)*

**N.B. Please reply by by Friday 18 February**

## Application Forms

Introduction to OVApedia

Nicky Daniel

7 Marine Parade

Budleigh Salterton

Devon

EX9 6NS



OVA Snowdrop Walk

Caroline Allen

2 Marine Parade

Budleigh Salterton

Devon

EX9 6NS

## Dowsing Workshop Saturday 2 April

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ tickets for the Dowsing Workshop

Name	
	Address:       Phone: Email:

I enclose a cheque for £\_\_\_\_\_ (£18.75 per person) payable to 'OVA' and a  
**STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE**  
*(address for return overleaf)*

**N.B. Numbers limited to 25 so Please reply as soon as possible!**



## Slapton Ley Visit

**Tuesday 26 April or Wednesday 4 May**

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ tickets for the visit on \_\_\_\_\_ (preferred date)

I can/cannot make the other date (delete as appropriate)

Name	Address Phone & Email
	Address:       Phone: Email:

I enclose a cheque for £\_\_\_\_\_ (£18 per person) payable to 'OVA' and a  
**STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE**  
*(address for return overleaf)*

**N.B. Numbers limited to 20 so Please reply as soon as possible!**

## Application Forms

OVA Dowsing Workshop  
Caroline Allen  
2 Marine Parade  
Budleigh Salterton  
Devon  
EX9 6NS



OVA Slapton Ley Visit  
Caroline Allen  
2 Marine Parade  
Budleigh Salterton  
Devon  
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## **Historical Guide to the Lower Otter Valley**



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## **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 order from:

Booksales

OVA

PO Box 70

Budleigh Salterton

EX9 6WN

## Officers *et al*

### **Executive Committee**

**(01395)**

<b>Chairman</b>	Helen Tickle	443901
<b>Vice-Chairman</b>	Haylor Lass	568786
<b>Hon. Secretary</b>	Clive Bowman	446892
<b>Treasurer</b>	Roger Saunders	443248

### *Committee Chairmen*

Built Environment	Vacancy	
Natural Environment	Patrick Hamilton	445351
Events	Nicola Daniel	445960
History	David Daniel	445960

### *Parish Representatives (to whom all queries should be addressed initially)*

Budleigh Salterton	John Jones	443651
	George Maddaford	446077
East Budleigh	Vacancy	
Otterton	John Winson	568274
Colaton Raleigh	Vacancy	
Newton Pophelford	Haylor Lass	568786

### *Other Officers*

Minutes Secretary	Maureen Lister	444269
Membership Secretary	Martin Smith	442333
Publicity Officer	Susan Tickle	444211
Webmaster	Alan Huddart	446761
Speaker Secretary	Susan Chapman	445620
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>	

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