

## Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June, “Under the Viaduct” with Stella French

The walk started in pouring rain with a long, steady climb from Okehampton Station to Okehampton Camp. The sun soon came out again as we came out on to the open moor, admiring an old granite Cross at Fice’s Well. According to legend, this marks the site of an old spring where young people came at Easter to discover whether they would be married in the coming year.



From the hilltop there were spectacular views of Yes Tor and High Willhays. We stayed close to a wall skirting around the edge of Okehampton Camp, a site of a Medieval Settlement and the Meldon Quarry. A lamb in the field decided a better view was to be had from the top of the wall but soon scampered back down to its Mum.



Descending to the valley we were shown the remains and spoil heaps of a 19<sup>th</sup> century copper mine next to the stream. The Red-a-Ven brook, with its little waterfalls and pools was so attractive that we decided to stop there for lunch, but were rudely interrupted by another heavy shower of rain.



Onwards to an old quarry where granulite was quarried from the late 1800s to the 1970s to manufacture glass onsite. We followed a lovely grassy path towards and underneath the impressive Viaduct, which once carried the main train line to Plymouth and Cornwall.



The last part of the walk was along the West Devon Way into Okehampton, traversing the golf course and through woods into town, with good views of the Norman castle ruins. A lovely

stroll through Simmons Park and up some steep steps brought us back to the station and a welcome tea in the platform café.

This was a stunning walk, taking in moorland fringe scenery, views of the high moors and glimpses of an old industrial landscape. Thank you Stella!

Rosemary Hatch