

Tuesday, 4th April "The Coleridge Link Walk" with Iain Ure and Dee Woods

On a glorious sunny Spring day, 12 walkers gathered in Newton Poppleford and set off for Ottery St Mary, the hard way. We headed East and crossed over the bridge to Harpford and up along the western edge of Harpford Wood. Then steeply up hill and into Fire Beacon Plantation, where the gradient was easier, and up on to the ridge, with a well-earned coffee stop at White Cross, and an open view to the West.



Rosemary Hatch not only supplied us with delicious home-made Easter biscuits, but also read a lovely poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge called 'Life' which referenced the Otter valley that we were looking across. From then on it was all downhill, stopping briefly at the ancient Waxway Farm, where the owner told us the history of the Farm. We halted in a beautiful woodland garden, full of fabulous magnolias, camellias and early blossoming trees, and listened to a very abridged version of Kubla Khan. As we headed down towards the River Otter, two more walkers joined us. We halted at the 'Pixies Parlour' and heard the 'Song of the Pixies'. Sadly, as it was noontide, we did not see any pixies about.



Soon we were in Ottery and stopped at 'The Volunteer Inn' for some very welcome refreshments. After some sustenance, Iain handed out a short but tricky and fun quiz about Ottery. Fully refreshed, we headed back towards the River Otter, passing the Tumbling Weir, and renovated Mills, now smart housing apartments. The sun was still shining, and it was an enjoyable stroll along the river banks. Rosemary read another delightful poem called 'Primroses' by Tipton Mill, and we had the 'Ode to the River Otter' beside Harpford bridge. It was a most enjoyable and interesting ten mile walk, so many thanks to Iain for all the planning and organising, and the fine weather.

Dee Woods