



Annual Report for 2014

including diary and excursion dates for 2015

The First Civic Society in Britain

Founded 1846

The Association promotes conservation and heritage, the Museum, and facilities for recreational and cultural activities in the Sid Valley.

www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk



MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTIONS

The Sid Vale Association is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registration number 1154749.

1. Membership shall be open to all who are interested in furthering the purpose of the Association. Details of subscription rates are shown in Membership Report. Those residing outside the Sid Valley may be required to subscribe an additional sum to defray postal charges. Initial subscriptions for those joining after 30th September cover the following year.
2. An Annual General Meeting shall be held in or about the month of April, to receive the Executive Committee's report, the report of the Chairman of the Museum, and audited accounts. The Executive Committee, consisting of not more than 20 members, and the Officers of the Association, shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. Special General Meetings may be called by the Executive Committee, or by not less than 20 members of the Association whose subscriptions are not in arrears.
3. Nominations for membership of the Executive Committee should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Mrs Liz Warren, 43 Primley Road, Sidmouth, seven days before the Annual General Meeting. They must be supported by a seconder, and the prior consent of the nominee must have been obtained.

Notice of AGM of the Sid Vale Association CIO

to be held at the MANOR PAVILION
on WEDNESDAY, 29th APRIL, 2015 at 2.30 p.m.

AGENDA

Chairman's welcome

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of last AGM
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Election of Trustees (nominations have been received as follows:)
 - President Rev'd Handel Bennett
 - Chair Alan Darrant
 - Vice Chair Edmund Harrison
 - Treasurer Neville Staddon
 - Secretary Elizabeth Warren
 - Museum Dr Bob Symes & Dr Nigel Hyman
 - Footpaths Di Fuller
 - Publications John Dowell
 - Conservation & Planning Richard Thurlow
 - Keith Owen Fund Chris Woodruff
 - Talks Brendan Lee & John Ridgley
 - Woodlands & Estates Richard Huntington
 - AONB Brian Hall
 - History Group Prof. Brian Golding OBE
 - River vacancy
 - Newsletter/Website vacancy
- 5 Presentation of Annual Accounts
- 6 Appointment of auditor
- 7 Presentation of Annual Report and review of last year's activities
- 8 Questions and comments
- 9 AOB (please notify Chair in advance of the meeting)
- 10 Close of meeting

Presentation: "Valley of a Million Bulbs: The Story"
from Vision to Reality, a Community Experience.

Tea and coffee available in the bar

Sid Vale Association CIO

President
Revd. Handel H C Bennett

Vice President
Mr Brian L Callaway

OFFICERS FOR 2014

President	Rev Handel Bennett	514211	campsbay2@tiscali.co.uk
Chairman	Alan Darrant	519848	a.darrant@tiscali.co.uk
Vice Chairman	Ed Harrison	514430	egharrison12@yahoo.co.uk
Hon Treasurer	Neville Staddon	516158	septembertree@btinternet.com
Hon Secretary	Liz Warren	576998	ejw01@talktalk.net

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE April 2014

Communications (Newsletters/Annual Report/Website)

Felicity & Roger Carver 514860 sva@thetowerhouse.com

Publications

John Dowell 568681 jd@rockfordgraphics.co.uk

Team River Warden

Vacant

Footpaths

Di Fuller 576669 di_fuller@hotmail.com

AONB

Brian Hall 515787 brianhalldevon@gmail.com

Woodlands and Estates

Richard Huntington 519350 richardjhuntington@yahoo.co.uk

Museum Chairman

Dr Nigel Hyman 579815 nigelhyman@live.co.uk

Museum Curator

Dr. Bob Symes, OBE 578114 bobcar37@btinternet.com

Conservation and Planning

Richard Thurlow 513171 r.j.thurlow@btinternet.com

Membership Secretary

Andrew Scott 519797 andrewscott@sidford.orangehome.co.uk

SUB COMMITTEES & WORKING PARTIES

Conservation and Planning led by Richard Thurlow

Robert Crick	Colin Essex	Brian Hall	Richard Huntington
Alan Weaver			

Footpaths led by Di Fuller

Phillip Atkinson	Peter Moss	Margaret Moss	Michael Brittain
Ian Radburn	Norma Self	Chris Brown	Nick Keast
Nick Howell	Mary Howell	John Dyson	Martin Ward
David Spring	Ian Collins		

Investment led by Neville Staddon

Michel Brittain	John Dyson	Michael Newman
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Keith Owen Grants led by Chris Woodruff

Liz Warren	Alan Darrant	Ed Harrison	Peter Moss
Neville Staddon	Kate Tobin	John Townsend	Rev Handel Bennett

Meetings led by Brendan Lee & John Ridgley

Dr. Peter Fung	Tracey Cann	Angela Drakes	John Foxell
Jill Burke	Sally Milward		

Museum led by Bob Symes, Curator

Nigel Hyman, Chairman	Rita Bewes, Secretary	Ann Jones, Treasurer
Christine Barnard	Rab Barnard	Hilary Briars
Beryl McIndoe	Peter Soper	Ann Walsh
Clr Kelvin Dent	Carol Griffiths	Rick Moore
Roger Trend	Maurice Corbett	Graham Thornton

Peaslands Knapp led by Kate Tobin

Jon Ball	Roger Carver	Felicity Carver	Diana East
John Jones	Colin Seward	Roger Trend	Sandra Trend

Communications (Newsletter/Website) led by Felicity & Roger Carver

Publications led by John Dowell

Hilary Briars	Sylvia Brownlee	Carol Griffiths	Nigel Hyman
Andrew Rugg-Gunn			

Woodlands and Estates led by Richard Huntington

Phil Ashby	Michael Davies	Gerry Turner	Charles Berry
John Capel	John Foxwell	Bruce Thomas	Cliff Butlin
Graham Knapton	Joyce Stevenson	Michael Tilley	Alan Waters
Vivien Insull	Val Huntington	Ed Harrison	

Local History Group led by Prof. Brian Golding OBE

River vacant

Social vacant

Membership Secretary Andrew Scott

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Representative Brian Hall

Countryside Walks led by Elizabeth Cotton

Sid Vale Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 2.30pm on 30th April 2014 at The Manor Pavilion, Sidmouth

53 people attended the meeting

- 1 **Apologies** Brian Calloway, Edmund Harrison, Patrick Stubbs, Julie Andrews-Ponter, Di Fuller, Richard Thurlow, Richard Huntington

Alan Darrant, Chair of the Association, welcomed everyone to the meeting and paid tribute to Sir Jack Boles, vice president, who had passed away.

- 2 **Minutes of the AGM held on 29th April 2013** Agreed and signed

- 3 **Matters Arising** None

- 4 **Annual Accounts**

Neville Staddon presented the annual accounts for 2013. He highlighted the fact that the day to day expenditure of the SVA now exceeded its general income. Shortfalls were covered by investments and legacies (excluding the Keith Owen Fund). There had been some exceptional expenses during the year including repairs and redecoration of the Museum building. The SOS funds remaining at December 2013 had now been spent.

The Annual Accounts for 2013 were approved, and John Mullins was thanked for his prompt attention regarding their examination. John had been involved with SVA for over 46 years – latterly as Independent Examiner.

- 5 **Appointment of Auditors for 2014**

Neville explained that the financial activity of the association was approaching the level that would require the association to employ professional auditors in the future. In view of the proposed transfer of assets to the Sid Vale Association CIO, he therefore recommended that Easterbrook Eaton & Co be appointed as Auditor/Independent examiner for 2014. This was seconded by Alan Darrant and agreed by the meeting.

- 7 **Review of SVA Activities**

To complement and update the previously circulated Annual Report, a powerpoint presentation was made by Sarah Bennett. She spoke about the numerous and various activities which took place during each month of 2013 and thanked all the volunteers for making it such a successful year.

- 8 **Re-election of President**

Alan proposed that Rev Handel Bennett be re-elected: seconded by Neville Staddon and agreed by the meeting.

- 9 **Election of Officers**

9.1 Chair Handel took the chair for this item and proposed that Alan Darrant continue as chairman: seconded by Mike Flynn and agreed by the meeting. Alan resumed the role.

9.2 Vice Chair Neville Staddon proposed that Edmund Harris continue as vice-chair: seconded by Joan Bennett and agreed by the meeting.

9.3 Treasurer Alan proposed Neville Staddon continue as Treasurer: seconded by John Dyson and agreed by the meeting.

9.4 Honorary Secretary Alan proposed that Liz Warren continue as Hon Sec: seconded by Handel Bennett and agreed by the meeting.

- 10 **Confirmation of other Executive Committee members**

Alan suggested that the leaders/chairs of each of the SVA interest groups who, together with the above officers, currently form the Executive Committee be elected en bloc. This was proposed by John Dyson, seconded by Fliss Carver and agreed by the meeting.

- 11 **Special Resolution**

Further to the wishes of SVA members expressed at the last AGM, the Sid Vale Association CIO had been set up and registered with the Charity Commission. Members were therefore asked to vote on the following special resolution:

That pursuant to Clause 25 of the 1999 constitution the Association Charity number 262514 shall be dissolved and that, when able, the Executive Committee implement the transfer to the new CIO Charity number 1154749 (subject to ensuring that this would not lead to the loss of the Keith Owen Trust Fund):

- 1 *all the assets, liabilities and activities of the charity*
- 2 *the Keith Owen Endowment*

There being no votes against, nor any abstentions, the vote for the resolution was declared unanimous.

- 12 **AOB**

The following questions/comments were raised

- 1 Whether there was any progress re diverting the northern end of the Byes footpath via Fortescue? John Dyson responded that no plans had been drawn up but he would look into this.
- 2 Where to donate old guide books of the area – to the Museum and/or Local History Group
- 3 Will SOS make an appeal for further donations now as funds spent and they may need to act quickly re local plan? – This matter to be raised at the next SOS committee meeting. Although a member, SVA cannot speak for SOS. SVA funds could be made available if necessary.
- 4 Reminder that bookings can be made for next SVA excursion – only 10 seats left!
- 5 Concerns were raised as to whether amendments made to member's addresses via the SVA website were getting through
- 6 Please could address area on future calendar envelopes be enlarged?

The meeting closed at 4.00pm.

Chairman's Report 2014

As chairman, I would ideally like to be involved in all the Association's activities, but that is rather unrealistic. The following are those I have been regularly involved in over the last few years:

- The Conservation and Planning Committee, which has been rather more exercised than usual recently with the Local Plan, and relocation of the council offices almost constantly on the agenda.
- The Keith Owen Grants Committee, which has some very lively discussions, because we have to argue whether projects put forward a) are the sort of thing Keith wished his legacy to be used for, and b) can be supported under our constitution.
- The Local History Group, which is proving very interesting with its mix of those who are actively researching some aspect of Sid Valley's history, and those who come along to listen and chip in if they have some information.
- The Museum Committee, which has made me far more aware of the very strong team there, and the fascinating collection they have – and entry is free.

I have joined in the bulb planting days, attended some of the Manor Pavilion talks, though that has more usually clashed with other commitments, walked some of our footpaths, and visited all of our land holdings at some time or another, some involving a steep uphill walk, made easier by the steps and handrails our Woodlands and Estates team have so professionally installed, others a less demanding walk on the level. Liz Cotton told me I should join in the countryside walks, but I am afraid I have so far failed to rise to that challenge! The best I can say about the river is that I have walked beside it, but I would like to think there are a few volunteers who would be keen to join a team to take responsibility for our stretch of the Sid: we have a very thorough report by Devon Wildlife Trust, which gives recommendations for actions we might take in our care of the river. Please contact me if you think you might be interested.

Finally, in election year, my wish is that whoever are our local and national governments after May, they will drop the term 'affordable' when discussing housing: homes so described are all too often way beyond the means of young people, and all parties are guilty of it. In East Devon, as elsewhere, we need to put the needs of this vital sector of society first, for they are our future. Once that need is being properly addressed, attention can turn to the more expensive homes. But am I being naïve?



Alan Darrant

Membership

Despite the favourable publicity resulting from the continuing work of the Keith Owen Fund, we have again experienced a slight decline in our membership – down approximately 100 from last year's levels. At the time of writing (late February 2015), our total numbers stood at 2272, comprising 2141 life members and 131 annual members. A sub-committee is now working on ideas for a recruitment drive in 2015, but in the meantime, all existing members are urged to do their best to encourage new people to join.

Our annual New Members' Meeting was held at Kennaway House in September for those who had joined in the previous 12 months. A Powerpoint presentation was made giving details of the Association's work and a visual display was assembled. Details of the 2015 meeting will be advised and circulated shortly.

As always, I should like to express my thanks to our team of distributors and helpers who unfailingly ensure that members' copies of the AGM and newsletters are delivered by hand to all our members residing in the Sid Valley. I am truly grateful to them all, as I could not do this job without their support.

My contact details are andrewscott@sidford.orangehome.co.uk or by telephone between 9.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. on weekdays: 01395 519797.

Data Protection Act

Members' names and addresses, together with the type of membership they hold (Life or Annual), are held on computer file. No details of subscription payments are held on file. This information continues to be held on a cardex system. Whilst there is no requirement for us to register under the Data Protection Act, we are required to notify all members of any information held on computer file, and to give them the opportunity to have such details erased. This note is therefore published to meet this requirement, and will be published annually in the Annual Report. Should any member not be prepared to have his/her name held on computer, will they please write and inform the Membership Secretary accordingly

Andrew Scott

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

<i>Life Membership:</i>	<i>£30 (£40 for 2 persons living at the same address)</i>
<i>Annual Membership:</i>	<i>£5 (£7 for 2 persons at same address)</i>
<i>UK Postal Delivery:</i>	<i>add £20 per address for Life Members</i>
	<i>add £2 per annum for Annual Members</i>

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE CURRENT YEAR BECAME DUE ON 1st JANUARY 2015

If you have not already paid, please do so at the AGM, or remit to the Membership Secretary, or pay at the Museum, Hope Cottage, Church Street, Sidmouth.

KEITH OWEN – ENDOWMENT			
2013			2014
	Income		
	26,207	Realised surplus on investments	97,876
	2,264,597	Balance Brought forward 1st January	2,290,804
	<u>2,290,804</u>	Balance carried forward 31st December	<u>2,388,680</u>
 KEITH OWEN – REVENUE ACCOUNT			
	Income		
133,176		Dividends	149,542
		Tax refund	1,893
3,000	136,176	Interest	<u>1,113</u>
			152,548
	Expenditure		
92,334		Awards	191,357
1,673		Save our Sidmouth	
12,930		Woodlands and Estates	4,393
2,967		Competitions	25
392	110,296	Expenses	<u>2,547</u>
			198,322
	25,880	Excess income over expenditure	
		expenditure over income	45,774
	110,686	Balance Brought forward	136,566
	<u>136,566</u>	Cash Balance carried forward	<u>90,792</u>
 SIDMOUTH LANDSCAPE FUND			
	Income		
3,941		Sales of calendars, Postcards etc	4,061
1,863	2,078	Less expenditure	<u>1,785</u>
			2,275
	1,560	Interest	<u>3,406</u>
	3,638	Excess of Income over Expenditure	<u>5,681</u>
	76,721	Balance as at 1st January	80,358
	<u>80,358</u>	Balance as at 31st December	<u>86,039</u>

SIDMOUTH MUSEUM		
2,013		2,014
	Income	
157	Donations	184
4600	Donations/public	5,125
	Other Donations	140
63	Gift Aid	1,098
	Enquiries	133
7172	Sales shop	9,553
448	Sales online	414
406	Miscellaneous	245
<u>12,846</u>		<u>16,891</u>
	Expenditure	
137	S W Water	143
1,928	Electricity	4,075
830	Telephone	859
1,511	Cleaning	1,488
720	Subscriptions	157
1,310	Exhibits	422
118	Conservation	1,725
545	Acquisitions	262
1,604	Advertising	1,150
580	Helpers/refreshments	823
682	Printing/Postage/Stationery	284
214	Travel	222
402	Equipment	1,272
4,929	Stock purchases	4,499
	SVA Publications	3,068
4,151	IT	115
539	Collections	307
34	Property	172
649	Misc	658
	Office	84
	online costs	52
20,883	Running expenditure	<u>21,838</u>
	Special items from Trust fund	
1,090	Insurance	750
16,159	External redecoration and repair	
3,651	Publications	
1,871	Radiators from CAF	
691	Picture	
<u>44,345</u>	Total Expenditure	<u>22,588</u>
31,499	Expenditure over Income	5,697
12,459	Balance Brought forward	7,361
25,770	Transfer from Trust Fund	5,750
691	Transfer from Keith Owen Fund	
<u>7,361</u>	Balance carried forward	<u>7,414</u>

Mrs A Jones Museum Treasurer

SID VALE ASSOCIATION BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2014

2,013	ASSETS	2014	
	Cash		
2,376	HSBC Treasurer's Account	5,026	
58	HSBC Landscape Account	4,118	
18,537	CAF Bank	21,685	30,829
0	Notice deposit accounts	0	
123,407	Virgin Money	108,633	
1,111	COIF	1,119	109,752
	Hargreaves Lansdown Cash account		5,937
	Museum		
	HSBC Current account		7,414
2,465,805	Investments		2,663,690
<u>2,692,279</u>			<u>2,817,622</u>

REPRESENTED BY

169,443	Trust Fund	244,697
7,421	Museum General Account	7,414
80,358	Landscape Fund	86,039
7,687	SOS donations	0
136,566	Keith Owen Revenue	90,792
2,290,804	Keith Owen Permanent Endowment	2,388,680
<u>2,692,279</u>		<u>2,817,622</u>

A Darrant
Chairman

P N Staddon
Treasurer

NOTES

The accounts which are subject to audit have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis to show the net cost of the activities of the Association.

Investments are in UK listed companies, and are shown in the Balance Sheet at cost. The market value of the investments at 31st December 2014 was £3,264,770 (31st December 2013 £3,120,899). An additional £100,000 was invested during the year.

In addition to Assets in the Balance Sheet the Association owns approximately 20 acres of land on Salcombe Hill known as the James Cornish Field, 2 acres known as Combe Head, 2 acres at Highfield Bickwell Valley, over 19 acres in the Byes comprising Livonia Field, Gilchrist Field, Margaret's Meadow, 1.6 acres at Peaslands Knapp, and Trow pump house Salcombe Regis. The Association also rents about 2 acres known as Allotment Field Wood on Soldiers Hill Salcombe Regis.

At 31st December 2014 the Executive Committee had agreed to pay grants due in 2015 from the Keith Owen Fund totaling £112,000 (2013 £107,657).

Funds	Purpose
Unrestricted	
General	The general running of the Association
Trust	The acquisition of land and or property Carrying out special projects or work in furtherance of the Aims of the SVA
Museum	Exclusively to cover the Museum running and capital expenditure
Keith Owen Revenue	Income from investments to be used in accordance with the Memorandum of Intention to support and encourage the aims of the SVA
Restricted	
Landscape	Held jointly with the National Trust for the purchase of land
SOS	Donations received to make representations regarding the Local Development Plan
Endowment	
Keith Owen	To be invested in UK equities/funds

HOPE AND REMEMBRANCE

There is hope for a town that cherishes its past; and a future for a people who love their landscape. We continue to be grateful to those who year after year, remember the SVA in their wills. Bequests can be ear-marked for special funds like the Landscape Fund, which seeks to acquire green spaces in perpetuity for the pleasure of residents and visitors. Others remember the work of the Museum; the care for rural footpaths, the River Sid, and for local conservation and planning issues.

We are grateful for bequests received during 2014: from: Pamela Joan Bennett £2,000, Mr A.R. Clarke £2,500, and Miss Kathleen Dougill £68,564.

Sidmouth is a place people love to come to; and in the passing of years, they have come to love! Any bequest, large or small, is valued by the Executive Committee of our registered charity 1154749. This mindful support is a tremendous help in the conservation and heritage work carried out by our volunteers. We all remain deeply grateful for the thoughtfulness of those in the past, and present, who leave provision for our work in the future. Please help, and thank you.

Revd. Handel Bennett, President

Sid Vale Association Who's Who

The SVA Executive Committee comprises a wide range of interests, experience and skills, as these potted biographies indicate.

Handel Bennett *President*

Married to Joan, spent 30 years in the travel industry, concerned for Heritage and Conservation. Retired priest, joined SVA 1999, Chairman 2004-10, President from 2013.



Alan Darrant *Chairman*

My wife and I have lived in Sidmouth for fourteen years, and we have four grown up daughters. I started working life with the Port of London Authority, but after a few years switched to teaching, retiring after nineteen years as head of a large primary school.

I was secretary of the SVA for six years before becoming chairman, and am also chairman of the Abbeyfield Court house committee, one of three Abbeyfield houses in Sidmouth. I played cricket for a few seasons with the Sidmouth club until my knees informed me I was no longer a youngster. I now channel my energies into the garden.

Ed Harrison *Vice Chairman,*

I am a native of Bristol and moved to Exeter in 1969 on qualifying as a Chartered Surveyor. I commenced practice in Sidmouth in 1979. I am married to Christine and we have two sons, two granddaughters and one grandson. Hobbies include yachting and walking.



Neville Staddon *Hon Treasurer*

Devonian born in North Devon moved to Sidmouth in 1954 employed by the former Sidmouth Urban District. Career all in local government finance. Appointed Deputy Treasurer to the newly established East Devon District Council in 1974 and retired as Treasurer in 1994. Chairman of the SVA investment

committee, which includes responsibility for investing the Keith Owen legacy.

Liz Warren *Hon Secretary*

My parents moved to Sidmouth 45 years ago so I have been a regular visitor for many years. Before retiring and moving here in 2011, I was CEO and Company Secretary for a Shropshire charity which was part of a national network. I have worked alongside numerous volunteers and have experience of the constitutional matters of running a charity. Much of my work was involved with seeking grants to maintain and develop services, it is now a privilege to be a member of the Keith Owen Grants Committee which awards grants to local groups and charities.



Di Fuller *Footpaths*

I spent 30 years in education as a teacher in secondary schools, an advisory teacher for a Local Authority and as a teacher trainer and manager in Further Education. I have been involved with conservation and the countryside all my adult life following an Environmental Science degree. Having been regular visitors to the south west for holidays, Robin and I moved to Sidmouth 8 years ago, particularly attracted by the landscape and opportunities for walking.

Chris Woodruff *Chairman, Keith Owen Fund Committee*

I started my career as an RAF engineer before converting to conservation. I have worked at all tiers of local government in urban fringe and rural projects ranging from Berkshire to West Sussex, St. Helens to the Forest of Bowland, before my appointment in East Devon in 2003. I live in the Roncombe Valley, Sidbury with my wife and two teenage children. A former Director of the NAAONB and Manager of the East Devon AONB Partnership, I am locally active as Trustee for Sidbury Millennium Green.



Richard Thurlow *Conservation and Planning*

I was a Chartered Engineer, and worked for 40 years with an international consultancy firm. I travelled extensively and lived in several different countries in my career. I retired seven years ago and came to Sidmouth with my wife, an ex-teacher, attracted by the town, sea, and surrounding beautiful countryside. My interests are in the built environment and activities such as Croquet, Golf, the Sea and walking.

Nigel Hyman *Museum Chairman*

I am a retired consultant neurologist and have lived in Sidmouth for 9 years. For the last 5 years I have helped in the Museum which includes being one of the town walk leaders, giving talks and writing articles about the town.



Richard Huntington *Woodlands and Estates*

I moved to Salcombe Regis in 2001 after living in Warwickshire for most of my life. I was born in Surrey and educated at Dulwich College. I briefly went to Reading Uni to study agriculture and spent my practical year at Yarcombe. I then worked in IT for my entire life but never lost my love of the countryside and particularly this area. My parents lived here from 1985-2014 and would bring us on holiday here regularly, hence my familiarity with it.

John Dowell *Publications*

I started my working life in town planning and ended up planning one town for one week of the year as Director of Sidmouth Folk Festival in the 1980s. Since then I have worked in graphics and printing and now lead the SVA's publications team.



Keith Owen Fund

The major award for 2014 was once again the Million Bulb project, the result of which is evident wherever you drive in the and around the valley.

Planning is already well underway for 2015 bulb planting programme and as ever, we are grateful for the generous support of our key committee members, East Devon DC, landowners, community groups and notably, Sidmouth Garden Centre. Regarding the latter, it is fitting that they have won a national award for their community involvement in particular the bulb project. Something our readers may well have seen reported recently in the local papers.

The project fund remains wisely invested and it has been encouraging to see a steady stream of applications this year. At a time when other perhaps more mainstream sources of discretionary funding are being squeezed the fund plays an increasingly important role in enabling local action and enterprise amongst our diverse range of interest groups and clubs.

As the popularity of the fund increases we will need to ensure it is dispersed wisely, as Keith intended. Our balance will be to encourage innovation and new ideas whilst ensuring the unique character, special qualities and local culture of the valley remains strong and vibrant.

The fund has supported a range of festivals this year and we are grateful for the inspiration and professional approach many of the volunteers running these events demonstrate. It is equally pleasing to see the fund support local heritage projects and new ventures such as the Surf life saving club alongside the more established Brownie and Scout groups. The valley has an excellent sporting tradition and the support we are able to provide for our local sports facilities helps to encourage an active and healthy lifestyle in the youth of the valley.



**Chris Woodruff,
Chairman,
Keith Owen Fund**

*Neville Staddon,
KOF Treasurer,
presenting a cheque
for £5400 to the Surf
Lifesaving Club.*

Organisation	Award	Purpose or Reason
1st S. Brownies	600	Support costs for Centenary celebrations
All Saints Church*	1,500	Toddler Group new facility
Surf life-saving Club*	5,400	New equipment, instructor training, trailer
Friends of Salcombe Regis Church*	3,000	Church masonry conservation.
Sidmouth Drill Hall CIC*	900	One day Sea Festival.
Valley of a Million Bulbs	38,000	SVA ongoing project.
Sidholme Music Room*	7,500	Organ Restoration & Sidm. College students
Sidmouth Hopper*	7,500	Support for seasonal bus service
Friends of Byes Wild Flowers*	640	Planting in Sid Meadow (NT)
Science Festival*	4,000	Programme Support
Folk Festival	9,000	Programme Support
Sidmouth Methodist Hall & Church*	2,922	Audio upgrading and installation
Sidmouth Majorettes*	2,535	Performance costumes
Sidmouth in Bloom*	9,110	Support to campaign
2nd Sidford Brownies	250	Support costs for centenary celebrations
National Trust	6,500	Restoration & conservation works
Sidmouth Scouts HQ	25,000	Support for new HQ
Kennaway House	125	Shrubs
Sidbury Football Club*	2,200	Improvement of facilities at Sidford
Sidmouth Arboretum*	1,920	Completion of 2014 Tree Survey
Sidmouth Town Junior Vikings*	1,500	Grass mower
Sidford Wildlife Garden*	16,500	Wildlife garden
Sidmouth Hospital Comforts Fund*	300	Large plant pots for courtyard display
Sidmouth Guides Hall*	2,900	Replacement of boiler
Sidmouth Parish Toddlers	600	New toys
Parish Church Tower*	5,500	Heritage restoration
TOTAL	£154,902	KEY: * Matched funding up to a maximum

Have YOU applied for funding yet?

You will find the terms, conditions and an Application Form for a grant, on our website www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk

Excursions 2014

Once again we operated two very successful excursions in 2014.

The June coach tour visited the art and opulence of Wilton House, on a lovely sunny day. We enjoyed the spacious grounds and a tour of the family home of the Earls of Pembroke since 1544. The paintings by Peter Brueghel, Rembrandt and Van Dyke were truly wonderful. On this 70th anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy, we learnt that detailed planning, and the final decision to liberate Europe, happened in this great house. Whilst some took lunch in the restaurant, others had the pleasure of a picnic beside the river. On the way home, the ladies of Kingdon village (near Podimore) very kindly arranged not only a cream tea for us, but a fine selection of home made cakes as well!

Our September excursion had three parts. A visit to East Coker village near Yeovil to read and share T S Eliot's poetry, celebrating his arrival in England 100 years before; then to Somerton the first Capital of Wessex, for a walking tour and lunch; and finally a visit to Brympton House. It stood before the Domes Day book was compiled, but ever since it has been owned by only 5 families in a thousand years! (See Newsletter 81, for further details of our visit).

We are currently seeking someone to share (or lead) the programme of excursions, and anyone with some experience would be helpful. Please contact me if you would like to help. We are still exploring the idea of adding a third Spring excursion, with details being circulated to e-mail addresses earlier in the year. We are grateful for the e-mail address contacts already supplied. If you are interested, and have not already told us, please use the e-mail facility on our SVA website, heading your e-mail "Address for Excursions". Thank you. Happy travelling in 2015.

Handel Bennett

SVA Countryside Walks

We have taken twelve good walks this year visiting different parts of East Devon with, on the whole, fine weather though sometimes lots of mud! Three excursions stand out for me.

On November 4th, we met at the Donkey Sanctuary with Doug and Sheridan as leaders and headed west towards Salcombe Regis along footpaths through pastureland. Turning south we walked through quiet woodland to the South West Coast Path with views of the glittering sea below and then back via Dunscombe to our cars. This walk showed all the delights of the East Devon countryside – farms, woodland and sea – wonderful.

In September, Cliff and Pam took us on an all-day walk on Dartmoor, starting at Widdecombe. What a contrast to East Devon – wide open views under a huge

sky. We walked up to Hound Tor and Grimspound where we had a picnic lunch with moorland ponies and their foals watching us cautiously. The walking and the weather were perfect and the day finished very well with tea at the Wayside Cafe in Widdecombe.

Our annual evening walk in June led by Norma started at Seaton Tower. We crossed the A3052 into Horriford Woods. This is a magical place. It felt almost tropical with loud birdsong and enormous, crowded trees. Joyce nearly convinced us that the Gruffalo lived there!

Unfortunately, as we turned south down to Seaton and along Roman Road, the skies opened and we were thoroughly drenched – the only serious downpour in all the walks this year.

This has been my first year as Walks Organiser. I must thank the leaders who have volunteered to plan and direct the walks and the many people who joined us enthusiastically each month.

For existing or new SVA members I recommend you join us – for your health, for pleasant company and for getting to know our lovely environment. We walk five miles on the first Tuesday each month and 10 miles on Dartmoor in late summer. If you would like more information, please get in touch. 01395 514690

Elizabeth Cotton

Communications

During 2014 the Annual Report for 2013 and the July and November 2014 Newsletters were produced and distributed to each member of the SVA.

Please consider submitting an article for one of the 2015 Newsletters – we'd love to hear your Sid Vale-related stories, poems or other items of interest. Articles should be no longer than 800 words and an accompanying photograph or illustration would be most welcome.

The deadline for entries for the July 2015 edition is Friday 22 May, and the deadline for the November issue is Friday 15 September. Please email your item to sva@thetowerhouse.com or post it to Felicity Carver at 8 West Park Road, Sidmouth, EX10 9DH.

The website is a great source of information about the SVA and the Events page is regularly updated with dates for your diary.

Visit us at www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk

Felicity Carver, Editor

Woodlands and Estates

The year 2014/2015 has been a year of planning and consolidation.

Peaslands Knap has continued to be well managed by Kate Tobin and her volunteers and is being cleared and improved all the time. Minor vandalism has been overcome and the swing replaced. Bramble clearing is proving successful and the overwintered sheep are helping to keep it clear.

Margaret's Meadow, Gilchrist Field and Livonia Field are being maintained by Mike Davies and his team. New specimen trees have been planted in Gilchrist Field, fences repaired and fallen trees removed. The new mower is being used to good effect and normal maintenance continues despite the vandalism and theft of tools that sadly occurred this year. The extra snowdrops planted by the river have given an excellent display, but the pond area is still requiring considerably more work and possible redesign. The pond project may continue for several years yet.

The planting of yellow rattle has proved so successful that the necessity of grass cutting has been reduced. Given the current difficulty of obtaining contractors, this is a boon.

Golden Copse was vandalised this year but has recovered from the damage. Overall, the Byes area has seen increased use by dog walkers and more general use from the public.

At Salcombe Regis' Combe Head Wood, the battle against the bracken and bramble is getting underway. Until it is won, the planned diversification of plants and trees cannot get going. Thinning of the Ash to give other species a chance has started. The steepness of the plot makes work difficult but a handrail running the length of the plot has been installed which gives some assistance. Very young trees have been donated by Woodland Trust and these are being grown on in pots until large enough to be planted out. These will replace some of the Ash. It is hoped to create a suitable environment for glow-worms, which are known to be in the area. The numbers of bluebells increased this year and it is hoped to introduce wood anemones.

Allotment Field Wood is now under a new lease from the Town Council and SVA no longer have to pay to maintain it. The steps were repaired this year but the wood is being left to its own devices as an unmaintained area. New owl and small bird nesting boxes have been installed here as well as in the copse on Soldiers Hill.

Just to illustrate how much work is involved, I think it worthwhile listing and describing the woodlands and estates that belong to or are leased by the SVA. They are as follows:

Peaslands Knapp An area of land adjoining Peaslands Road, consisting of an estimated 3 acres. This is maintained as a wildlife area by a group of volunteers led by Kate Tobin. It is open to the public for walking and understanding more about wildlife and the environment. It consists of part woodland, part scrub and part meadow and is grazed by sheep in winter.

Gilchrist Field An area of land adjoining the River Sid to the north of Margaret's Meadow. It extends to 7.61 acres and is maintained to encourage wildlife. It consists of mainly rough meadow and a wooded area containing a large pond. The pond is still under reconstruction and is an attempt to reinstate the pond that was there originally.

Livonia Field A small area of land adjacent to Gilchrist Field and bordering Livonia Road. It is 1.9 acres, kept as scrub land with a few silver birch.

Margaret's Meadow An area of land north of the Byes and adjacent to Gilchrist Field. It also borders the River Sid and consists of rough meadow extending to 8.8 acres. It contains the well-known Golden Copse, which is planted with specimen trees selected for their golden foliage and celebrates the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

Highfield Meadow This is a field off Bickwell Lane which is grazed meadow and is currently leased to a farmer by the SVA. It consists of 2 acres and is not presently open to the public.

Soldiers Hill Field This is an area of land consisting of 19.5 acres split into two fields and a small area of woodland. It is adjacent to the war memorial at Salcombe Regis. The meadow is currently leased to a farmer, although there is a public footpath along one side which gives the public access to it. It is hoped that the meadow will eventually contain many wildflowers and is being cut accordingly. The woodland is well known for its bluebells.

Combe Head Wood This is an area of 1.5 acres of steep valley side in the Salcombe Regis valley. It is currently being managed to increase its plant and tree diversity and encourage wildlife, insects and native flowers. It is hoped to encourage glow worms, fritillary butterflies, dormice and other rare creatures which are known to be in the area.

The SVA also owns the **Old Pump at Trow**, leases the **Museum** building in Sidmouth and an area of woodland adjacent to Combe Head Wood known as **Allotment Field Wood**. The latter is 3.98 acres of steep sided deciduous woodland, through which are some permitted and public footpaths. It adjoins National Trust pine woodlands and is a popular walk to the cliffs at Salcombe Mouth.

So you can see that the SVA is a major landowner (approximately 44 acres) in and around Sidmouth and depends entirely on volunteers to keep the majority of its land in presentable shape.

If you could do with a couple of hours exercise a week and don't mind being outdoors then please volunteer for some bramble pulling or grass cutting and join the volunteers headed by Mike Davies.

You can do this by contacting Richard Huntington on 01395 519350, Kate Tobin on 01395 579804, Mike Davies on 01395 515493 or any member of the committee, who will put you in touch with the appropriate person.

Richard Huntington

Rural Footpaths

The Definitive Map Review of the Sid Valley parish has been taking place over the last two years. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the County Council has to keep the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way under review and to make modifications when required as routes need to be added, re-graded or deleted. The review began in 2012 and is almost complete. As new paths are approved by the council, they are published in the local newspapers and posted on the website as well as being available in the Town and District councils for viewing.

Footpaths proposed at Knowle and approved by the County have been challenged by East Devon District Council and are now subject to an inquiry that will take place from 15th September for 2 days.

Each year a group of volunteers survey the 60 miles of Public Rights of Way in the Sid Valley to monitor the general condition of the paths and signposts. The winter of 2013/14 was demanding as there was heavy winds and rainfall and then a mild spring, so we had many fallen trees and then fast, lush growth of grass along paths. Grass cutting had to be carried out twice in many areas to keep pace with the growth. A large number of signposts have been repaired and replaced in the last year and the condition of signage is much improved. Please let us know if you see damaged or missing signs.

This year's full survey was done before Christmas as we have had difficulty with the weather for the last 2 years. The survey was completed early and has allowed us to get started with our programme of work. Replacement of steps and remedial work on rutted or flooded paths is a continuous challenge, but we think the state of the paths is currently good.

The Parish Paths Partnership holds an annual event in February at the Sailing Club to thank all those involved with our Sid Valley footpaths. This year Chris Woodruff, Manager of East Devon AONB, spoke on Conservation Management of the AONB and the background to designation. There were many aspects to landscape management that the audience had not considered and categories for protection that we were not familiar with – there were many questions.

Di Fuller

Landscape Fund

The Fund jointly owned with the National Trust for the acquisition of land was not used during 2014, but benefited from the Landscape Calendar for 2015 which was published by John Dowell with John Warren's assistance. After a slow start the calendar was virtually sold out making a surplus of £2,670. The value of the fund, after taking investments in to account, now stands at £84,945 (2013 £80,358).

Neville Staddon



Looking for something to do?

The Sid Vale Association relies on volunteers for everything it does, so if you have the odd hour to spare and fancy joining in with some bramble bashing, stewarding in the Museum, or making tea for the meetings, we can find a job for you!

Whether you've just retired and are looking for a new interest, or moved to Sidmouth recently and looking for some new friends, we would like to hear from you. Please tick one (or more) of the boxes below that you'd like more information on and fill in your details overleaf – you can also use the form to join the Association if you're not already a member – and send it to:

The Membership Secretary (SVA), 67 Malden Road, Sidmouth EX10 9LZ.
Or visit our website www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk or just email info@sidvaleassociation.org.uk and we will put you in touch with the right people.

- Membership** Local delivery of newsletters to members
- Newsletter** Writing articles and editorial
- Museum** Stewards Archivists Computer Operators
 Administration Shop
- Meetings Team** Planning Setting up in the Manor Theatre
- IT Presentations** Powerpoint presentations
- Website** Updating of content Technical management
- Social Activities** Planning for social events
- Excursions** Planning
- Walkers** Monthly walks in East Devon
- Youth work** Contact with schools and young people
- Keith Owen Fund** Grants to community projects Investment planning
- Footpaths** Monitoring and maintaining access on country paths
- River Patrol** Monitoring rivers and streams
- Woodlands and Estates** 'Hands-on' managing grass, hedging, trees, wild-life
- Conservation and Planning Team** Monitoring planning applications
- Anything else you might be able to help with or skills you can offer**

.....
We look forward to hearing from you



Membership Application Form

Please send completed form, with payment, to
The Membership Secretary (SVA)
67 Malden Road, Sidmouth EX10 9LZ

Please make cheques payable to *The Sid Vale Association*

I/We wish to become Members of the Sid Vale Association

I/We enclose my/our Annual/Life Membership subscription of £

Title Surname
(BLOCK LETTERS, Please)

First Name(s) 1.

First Name(s) 2.

Address
.....

Post Code Tel. No.

E-Mail Address

GIFT AID SCHEME

I wish to make payments under the Gift Aid Scheme. I want the Charity to treat as Gift Aid ALL donations and subscriptions I make to the Association, from the date of this declaration, until I notify you otherwise.

I confirm that I pay an annual amount of Income Tax which is not less than the amount of tax which may be redeemed by the Sid Vale Association.

Signature Date

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Life Member £30 for one person **or** £40 for two persons at the same address

Annual Member £5 (Plus £2 for each additional household member)

NB: Postal supplements of £20 for Life Members and £2 for Annual Members, per household, apply outside the Sid Valley

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Report from the SVA Local History Group

The SVA Local History Group was founded in 2012, and has met subsequently on the second Monday of every second Month. Meetings take place at the Darlington Room of Abbeyfield Court in Station Road, at 7pm, and last until about 9pm.

Between meetings, information is shared by email. There are currently 27 members on the email contact list and two participating members who are not on the email list. Attendance at meetings averages about nine. The group is open to all who are interested in the history of Sidmouth and its surroundings, whether or not they are active researchers. Membership of the SVA is not required.

The group is affiliated to the Devon Local History Society and the Devon History Forum, and also makes use of the SVA affiliation to the Devonshire Association.

The usual format of meetings is for members to introduce discussion of topics of research that they are working on, but occasionally a full presentation is made of a completed piece of work. Members of the group have access to a wide range of local records that may be of help to new researchers. Topics of research range across local buildings, people, events and social history. Those who undertake research are encouraged to deposit the results of their efforts in the Museum.

Members of the group continued to benefit from SVA affiliation to the Devonshire Association and the Devon History Society. In addition to their periodical publications, several members attended meetings organised by the latter. Of particular significance have been meetings associated with the change of governance of the Devon Heritage Centre from Devon County Council to the South West Heritage Trust, an independent body which now manages the Heritage Assets of both Devon and Somerset.

A sub-group worked throughout the year to develop the basis of a local heritage list. They have been greatly helped by the Otter Vale group, carrying out a similar task there, and by liaison with the EDDC conservation officer. During January, with financial assistance from the SVA, a display was mounted in Sidmouth library, inviting residents to identify objects that helped to define the Sidmouth landscape. These are now being analysed, together with previously obtained material to produce a candidate heritage list.

The centenary of the outbreak of the First World War influenced much of the research carried out during the year. Nigel Hyman contributed several fascinating extracts from the Sidmouth Observer. The declaration of war seems to have been a surprise locally, and was immediately followed by call-up of the Navy reservists and Territorials in the town, including many fishermen. Through autumn 1914, the Observer reported on the welcome for Belgian refugees, a concert at Ellis's cinema, and the requirement to extinguish house lights by 10pm to deter Zeppelin raids prompted by the bombardment of Scarborough – and the fact that the Esplanade lights were left on! It also covered the sinking of HMS Monmouth, which brought the

first Sidmouth casualties of the war. Captain Brandt, who commanded Monmouth, had lived in Sidmouth in 1913 and knew Stephen Reynolds, who drew on his knowledge for his book *The Lower Deck*. When war broke out Brandt was assigned to HMS Monmouth as part of a squadron of 4 ships. Near Coronel in Chile, they intercepted a much larger German squadron under von Spee, which defeated them, sinking the Monmouth with the loss of 735 men. There are excellent archives of the event, including sound recordings made in the 1970s by survivors from HMS Glasgow, and a film made in the 1920s and now owned by the British Film Institute, which covered both this and the subsequent Battle of the Falkland Islands in which the British Fleet was victorious. At home, the Observer reported on the sourcing of clothes for the troops and thermos flasks for the fleet, the billeting of troops in the Market and Manor Halls, conversion of the Suffragette movement to support of the Linen League, and a letter from a Sidmouthian with a German-sounding name pleading his Britishness. Brian Golding also spoke about his research in the Parish Church archives that had led to publication of a booklet, "Sidmouth's War" based on material in the Parish Magazine, available from the Church.

Julia Creeke kept the group updated through the year on her struggles to make sense of the Lousada family, confused by the fact that three Emanuel Baruh Lousadas were alive at one time. She reported that Cliff Cottage was built in 1820 for the nephew who later moved to Peak House which he inherited from his uncle in 1832. She also described a report from Hall's Bank describing the impact of the 1824 storm that demolished the Chit Rock and much of the town, including total loss of Wallis's Library (now the Bedford Hotel). The loss was estimated at £20,000 (£1.5million at today's prices) and subscriptions were raised to assist the destitute and, subsequently, those who had lost their businesses.

Bob Adams directed the group's attention to the design of the cycle bridge in the Byes, and its similarity to a design of Palladio, published in 1570. Further research has not yet identified the inspiration for the Byes' design, which was designed by Sarum Hardwood Structures.

Ian Simpson updated the group regularly on his progress with recording the memorials in the cemetery, which is now complete for the 19th Century. He also investigated Peter Orlando Hutchinson's American grandfather, whose own father had twice declined a peerage from George III on grounds of financial hardship.

Alastair Watson described some of the research he was doing into the RAF in Sidmouth during the Second World War. He was particularly interested in the ownership of the York and Faulkner hotels and how Peter Hook came to run the hotels after joining the RAF. Walter Wagstaffe described how the old Jacob's Ladder, which had been removed during the war, had been burnt in a great bonfire at Manstone on VE day, along with other scrap wood from the Council Depot.

In November the group were joined by trustees of the Keith Owen Fund who invited members to consider activities that could be financially supported by the Fund.

Members of the group assisted in the preparation of booklets, including information on the history of the Gilchrist Field for a Byes walking guide by Andrew Rugg-Gunn and information for a booklet of walks around the churches of the Sid Valley by Brian Golding. Other discussions ranged widely including: local water supplies in East Devon; the Bray family in May Terrace and Old Fore Street in 1908; Salcombe House including residence of the Rev. Cockburn, Dean of York, and its later conversion to the Hunters Moon Hotel – the name coming from Ivor Novello's "Perchance to Dream"; information on brewing in Sidmouth; the 1960s block of flats covered in red, yellow & blue tin tiles in what is now Roxburgh car park; and the history of the churches of the Sid Valley.

Looking forward, Alan Darrant raised the suggestion that we should contribute to a national drive to transcribe church registers of births, marriages and deaths. Julia highlighted the need for historical information, especially photographs, about the cliffs at Pennington Point, and particularly on the location of the old railway tunnel. The group also hopes to contribute to Devon History Society investigations into early Victorian schools and Food Production in the First World War.

New members are always welcome, and should contact the chairman, Brian Golding, on 578474 or bwgolding@aol.co.uk – or turn up at a future meeting on 11th May, 13th July, 14th September or 9th November.

Meetings Programme 2014

The SVA Monthly talks programme enjoyed a successful run during 2014. During the year, Brendan Lee and John Ridgley took over responsibility for arranging the Meetings Programme. They did a wonderful job and provided an entertaining, interesting and varied programme of talks by excellent speakers.

We are grateful to Dr Nigel Hyman, Iris R Jones-Simantel, Rab & Christine Barnard and Prof Bill McGuire for taking the time to give such informed and enjoyable presentations.

The Monthly Talks season starts again in October through to April 2016. Watch out for details in the SVA Newsletters published in July and November. The talks generally take place at the Manor Pavilion Theatre on a Wednesday afternoon at 2.30pm, (although it has been known for the time and venue to change on occasion, so do check for any updates on the Events page of the SVA Website www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk)

We look forward to welcoming you!

If you have any ideas for an event or would like to make a presentation, please contact Brendan or John on Brendan.frances.lee@gmail.com or jridgely@googlemail.com.

Museum Report

This summary of the last 12 months reflects the Museum's various activities which encourage the understanding, appreciation and research into both our local history and the natural history of the area.

2014 was a highly successful year with visitor figures almost identical to the previous year at just over 13,000.

There were several new displays including **WW1 Home Front, The Connaught Connection** and **Conan Doyle in Devon**.

At the start of the season we had a Long Picture Celebration to mark the bicentenary of our famous painting, with a book signing by Julia Creeke of her **A Picture in Time**. The cross stitch replica of the picture, which proved popular with visitors, will remain with us for 2015.

In April we were fortunate to display a beautiful Devon Quilt, a red poppy themed design, made by members of the South West Quilters Association to commemorate the outbreak of WW1. Donations went to the Royal British Legion.

The annual Lace Day in May attracted much interest and we remain indebted to Marion Wagstaff for her continued weekly demonstrations which now include regular "pupils". The upstairs lace display is being improved in 2015, with expert advice from the Axe Vale Lace Group.

Beryl McIndoe demonstrated our fine smock collection and she was seen, more publicly, on Antiques Road Show when one of our antique dolls received the distinction of being the last item in the BBC programme, due to its royal provenance and fine condition.

We had a noisy but very worthwhile June day when 60 pupils from Ottery Primary School visited.

For the second year running we were very fortunate, during the Folk Festival, to have Emma, daughter of local geologist, Roger Trend, supervising **Singing the Sidmouth Rocks** with a ukulele workshop. As before this was highly successful and we look forward to seeing and hearing her again this year.

There were several children's activity days including one with the Jurassic Coast Museum Partnership in which a giant LEGO dinosaur was assembled by the children who then received their own special edition dinosaur LEGO set. The popular Big Draw Day in October was again designed by artist Margaret Adams and entitled "It's Our World".

The Land and Man Room upstairs has been renovated and this includes an excellent and informative Jurassic Coast wall display which indicates, amongst other things, when this location, Sidmouth, was just above the equator. Roger Le Voir is preparing new archaeology and geology displays for this season.

During the season there were monthly articles in the Sidmouth Herald by committee members in which they described one of their favourite objects. We hope this will continue in the new season.

The subject matter in **A History of the Knowle**, the Museum lecture by Rab and Christine Barnard, remains as topical as ever. Later in the season another talk in the Manor Pavilion, **The Great War – Stephen Reynolds in Sidmouth** (Nigel Hyman) described the fisherman/author's war work, based at Hope Cottage, now the Museum.

The shop, supervised by Carol Griffiths, had an excellent year with record sales of over £9000. There were several new SVA publications including **Brandy for the Parson** (Rab & Christine Barnard), **Sidmouth: People and Places** (Nigel Hyman) and **A Walk in the Byes** (Andrew Rugg-Gunn). A major event this year, to coincide with the start of the season, will be the publication of Louise Woolley's beautifully illustrated and expertly written, **The Natural History of the Sid Valley**.

The Science Festival in October included a walk and talk by Roger Trend as well as Fossil Friday. This year's Festival will coincide with the publication of a pamphlet describing **Sidmouth's Four Fellows of the Royal Society** (Prof Bob Miles).

Dr Bob Symes has planned and coordinated a major revision of many of the displays which have been altered, updated or enlarged for the 2015 season. These include **WW1 Home Front, VW Camper Van, "Railway", "Reynolds"** and **"Lindemann"** displays. New displays include the artist **"Turner"** with his print of Sidmouth as a centre piece, **"Mining in Devon and Cornwall"** and the interestingly named **"What Napoleon did for Sidmouth"**.

We are grateful to our walk leaders, both town and geology, who turn out whatever the weather. This season a determined effort is planned to increase public awareness of these walks and there will again be specials, such as the Long Picture Walk which are popular.

Full accreditation by the Arts Council was again given which, although expected, is highly encouraging. We remain grateful to Sue Eddisford (based at RAMM) for her invaluable help as mentor and advisor.

Thanks to the "behind the scenes" staff, who work tirelessly all through the year but are rarely seen by visitors.

The dedicated stewards are consistently complemented on the friendly welcome and helpful information they give to visitors. We are keen to recruit both new stewards and any willing helpers for children activity days.

The Museum offers something for everybody and continues to be a major attraction in the town.

Nigel Hyman (Chairman)

Publications

Sidmouth's Long Print – A Picture in Time is Julia Creeke's follow-up to her *Story of Sidmouth's Long Print*. While the first book tells the history of the famous 1815 Panorama Print of Sidmouth's Seafront, and the families associated with it over 200 years, this new book charts the fascinating stories revealed in the landscapes, buildings and beach, covering the period of 25 years between the publication of the first and third states of the print.

Sidmouth – People & Places, written by Nigel Hyman, is an anthology of Sidmouth's rich history of colourful personalities and its legacy of fascinating buildings.

We added another title to Andrew Rugg-Gunn's series of *Town Walks* booklets, which have proved a top seller through both the Museum and the Tourist Information Centre. *A Walk in the Byes* takes us through the green lungs of Sidmouth following the River Sid from Waterloo Bridge near the centre to Sidford's Packhorse Bridge.

Brandy for the Parson, compiled by Christine and Rab Barnard, is a story about smuggling, covering the early to mid 1800s, a period of high activity in the trade. It gives an insight into the society of the period and the harsh conditions experienced by Sidmouth's less privileged inhabitants.



Some dodgy looking smugglers at the Museum's launch of Brandy for the Parson!

Remember that you can buy these publications, and more, from the online shop on the SVA website, www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk as well as from the Museum.

John Dowell

Sid Vale Calendar 2017

Each year we hold a photographic competition and the winning entries are printed in a calendar which is sold to raise money for the Sidmouth Landscape Fund. If you would like to enter one of your Sid Valley photos in the competition

please check our website www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk for details. The 2016 calendar is available now from the Museum, online from the website and from several shops in the town.

Terry O'Brien, SRFC Chairman, receives an Award for £20,000 from Handel Bennett, SVA President.



Peter Moss, Keith Owen Fund Member, presents Helen Harms (Chair) and helps a cheque towards recognition for meeting standards for a Forestry Re-brand.

Keith Owen Fund Investment Committee

A further £100,000 was invested in the portfolio during the year making the total investments to date £2.531m, the value of which at the 31st December was £3.264m. The value of the portfolio increased by 1.9% compared with a fall in the FTSE 100 of 2.7%. The dividends received during the year totalled £162,895 equal to a return of 5% on the market value of the portfolio compare with the average yield of the FTSE 100 companies of 3.54%. Dividends were boosted but special dividends, particular from Vodafone, these will not be repeated in 2015, and the dividends for 2015 are therefore expected to be lower than those received in 2014. Every year so far the portfolio has exceeded the benchmark of tracking the FTSE 100 and exceeding the FTSE yield by 15%.

The portfolio initially comprised the Keith Owen legacy £2.256m and since it was decided to invest other surplus funds the portfolio was divided, as at 1st January 2011, into 2,256,382 units with 1 unit valued at £1, total units at 31st December was 2,476,421 and the value of a unit £1.32, an increase of 32%

Neville Staddon

Please bring this report with you to the meeting on April 29th

The Sid Vale Association

is affiliated to the following:

The South West Association of Civic Societies

Civic Voice

The Campaign to Protect Rural England (Headquarters)

The Campaign to Protect Rural England (Devon Branch)

The Open Spaces Society

The Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art

The Devon Conservation Forum

The Tree Foundation

www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk

Sidmouth Museum 2015

Special 2015 displays In the Shadow of Napoleon
Turner in Sidmouth
Life on the Home Front during WW1
WW1 postcards
Lace
West Country Mining
Stephen Reynolds

Dates for your diary

- March 28th** Museum opens for the season
- 7th May** **Lace Day** The AxeVale Lace Group will be talking about their display which accompanies our own refurbished display.
- 27th May** **Young People's activities** The topic is "paper". From papyrus through parchment to the present.
- 29th July** **"Kids in Museums"** Organised by the guides as part of a national initiative. Activities will take place in the Church and the Museum.
- 5th August** **"Singing the rocks"** This highly successful afternoon combines the geology walk with songs and music
- 12th August** **Red Rocks Day** Our annual celebration of our Jurassic Coast red rocks
- 26th August** **Natural History family day** Walks, talks and activities for all the family. Rock pools, trails, trees & plants.
- 12th-18th Oct** **Sidmouth Science Week** The Museum will feature strongly with displays in Blackmore Hall.
- 28th October** **Big Draw Day** Under the guidance of our local artist, Margaret Adams, help paint a picture. All ages.
- 31st October** Museum closes for the winter
- Opening Times** Monday: 1-4 • Tuesday-Saturday: 10-4 • Sunday: Closed

PLUS Free guided strolls throughout the season

Tuesday & Thursday town walks: 10.30am

Wednesday geology walk: 2pm

SVA Coach Excursion to Dorset Coast & Gardens Wednesday, June 17, 2015

Price Includes:

- Coach
- Entrance to Abbotsbury Subtropical Gardens
- Time for own lunch in Weymouth
- Entrance to Portland Castle with audio-guided tour
- Dorset Cream tea, Portland Bill
- Driver's Gratuity



Our tour commences at 8.30am from the Three-Cornered Plot, with pick-ups en route. We arrive Abbotsbury Subtropical Gardens at 10.00. Afterwards we continue to Weymouth for lunch (own arrangements). Then visit to Portland Castle, and continue to Portland Bill and a Dorset cream tea. We return, by-passing Weymouth and Dorchester to Sidmouth 6.30-6.50pm'

Tickets are available by post, from

- Handel Bennett, 2 Victoria Road, Sidmouth, EX10 8TZ.
- Telephone (01395) 514211.

YOU MAY APPLY AT ONCE by completing the form below, but **BOOKINGS WILL NOT COMMENCE BEFORE APRIL 30th**

We regret that the Association cannot accept responsibility for any loss, damage or injury that may be suffered by anyone taking part in this event. Tickets cannot be 'reserved'. Refunds will only be given if tickets can be re-sold.

BOOKING FORM

Please supply ticket(s) at £26.95 per person for the Dorset Coach tour on Wednesday, June 17th

Joining at ✓ The Triangle 8.30am Radway 8.33am
 Exeter X 8.40am Green Close 8.43am

Name: Mr/Mrs/Miss Tel. No.....

Address

*E-mail Post Code

Please make cheques payable to the *SID VALE ASSOCIATION*
Have you enclosed a stamped, self-addressed envelope?

**Will not be disclosed to third parties.*

SVA Excursion – Wednesday 17th June 2015

Visit to Abbotsbury Subtropical Gardens, Weymouth, Portland Castle, and Portland Bill

Alan Titchmarsh said 'One of the finest Gardens I have ever visited'

We travel along the Jurassic Coast to Abbotsbury Subtropical Gardens, this year celebrating its 250th anniversary! It was HHA/Christie's Garden of the Year 2012, and Chelsea silver gilt at Hampton Court Show. It has a magnificent Victorian walled garden set in 20 acres of woodland valley. Its unique micro climate enables rare and exotic plants from all over the world, to thrive in Dorset. The superb colonial style Teahouse, with veranda overlooking the sunken garden, mentally transports you to the West Indies! Refreshments available indoors, or on the terrace. There are also views over the Swannery and Chesil beach for those able to walk uphill. Disabled access to 48% of the gardens and the Teahouse..

We continue to the Georgian resort Weymouth, where you will have free time to stroll on the promenade, picnic, or find lunch at nearby cafés. Afterwards drive to the Isle of Portland to Henry VIII's Tudor fortress, built to defend Portland harbour. Audio guide provided. (Visit may involve some steps). In WW2 the harbour was used in preparation for D-Day landings (June 1944), and for the building of concrete floating units of Mulberry Harbour, and some can still be seen today. In 2012 it was home for Olympic sailing events.

Following our visit we ascend to the summit of Portland, for (weather permitting), an iconic view of Chesil Beach, Portland Harbour and the Victorian prison. From the coach we view many quarries used for the famous Portland stone. Sir Christopher Wren chose Portland stone to 'face' St. Paul's Cathedral in London, and it has been used for many government buildings in Whitehall, and elsewhere. We continue to famous Portland Bill, where you will have time to explore on foot, before we take a Dorset Cream Tea in the Lobster Pot café, alongside the lighthouse. Return to Sidmouth. A tour with plenty for everybody!

See reverse for booking details.



Dates for your Diary

Wednesday 29th April 2.30pm – Annual General Meeting – Manor Pavilion.
Open to all. Review of 2014 & Election of Officers. *(Please bring Annual Report)*

Tuesday May 5th – SVA Countryside Walk 10 am

Meet: Blackberry Camp Grid Ref: SY 189 925 Leader: Norma Tel: 01395 513974

Tuesday June 2nd – SVA Evening Walk walk starting at 6pm

Meet: The Bowd Inn Grid Ref: SY 104 898 Leader: Haylor Tel: 01395 568786
"Ghost Train" walk exploring old railway tracks to Newton St John. Approx 2 hrs.
Refreshments at end if required.

Wednesday 17th June – Coach Excursion to Dorset – See flap for details

Tuesday July 7th – SVA Countryside Walk 10am Meet: Beerhead Carpark (£)
Grid Ref: SY 227 887 Leaders: Doug and Sheridan Tel: 01395 577891

Tuesday August 4th – SVA Countryside Walk 10am

Meet: Picnic area at Higher Eype It may be useful to arrange car-sharing as
Higher Eype is quite far. Grid Ref: SY 452 922 Leader: Vivian Tel: 01404 811267

Tuesday September 1st – SVA All day Dartmoor Walk

Meet: Woolbrook Lidl carpark at 9.00am for car share. Return to Sidmouth at
about 4.00pm Leaders: Cliff and Pam Tel: 01395 578699 Bring a picnic lunch and
there may be the opportunity for a cup of tea at the end.

Tuesday October 6th – SVA Countryside Walk 10am

Meet: Escot Grid Ref: SY 080979 Leader: Margot Tel: 01395 512693



The Peaslands Knapp group in full swing!