



Annual Report

for 2015

including diary and excursion dates for 2016

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, 27th APRIL, 2016 at 2.30 p.m.

AGENDA

Chairman's welcome

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 2 Minutes of SVA CIO AGM held on 29/04/2015
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Election of Trustees
- 4.1 The following trustees will stand down to establish the rotation programme but they are eligible and are standing for re-election:
 - Handel Bennett
 - Alan Darrant
 - Edmund Harrison
 - Neville Staddon
 - Elizabeth Warren
- 4.1 Peter Brookes was appointed trustee by Executive Committee and is now standing for election
- 5 Presentation of remaining Trustees
 - Dr Bob Symes & Dr Nigel Hyman Museum
 - Di Fuller Footpaths
 - John Dowell Publications
 - Richard Thurlow Conservation & Planning
 - Chris Woodruff Keith Owen Fund
 - Brendan Lee & John Ridgley Talks
 - Richard Huntington Woodlands & Estates
 - Brian Hall AONB
 - Vacancy Newsletter/Website
- 6 Presentation of Annual Report and Accounts
- 7 Appointment of auditor
- 7 Presentation of new website
- 8 Questions and comments
- 9 AOB (please notify Chair in advance of the meeting)

Close of meeting

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 2015

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 2015

Conservation and Planning		
Richard Thurlow	513171	r.j.thurlow@btinternet.com
Footpaths		
Di Fuller	576669	di_fuller@hotmail.com
Woodlands and Estates		
Richard Huntington	519350	richardjhuntington@yahoo.co.uk
River Warden		
Peter Brookes	597461	peter@peterbrookes.plus.com
Museum Chairman		
Dr Nigel Hyman	579815	nigelhyman@live.co.uk
Museum Curator		
Dr. Bob Symes, OBE	578114	bobcar37@btinternet.com
Publications		
John Dowell	568681	jd@rockfordgraphics.co.uk
Meetings		
Brendan Lee	513102	brendan.frances.lee@gmail.com
John Ridgley	579 819	jridgley44@gmail.com
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership		
Brian Hall	515787	brianhalldevon@gmail.com

SUB COMMITTEES & WORKING PARTIES 2016

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	Michael Brittain	Ian Radburn
Norma Self	Christopher Brown	Nick Keast	John Dyson
Martin Ward	David Spring	Jenny Donnelly	Ian Collins
Phil Bradbury	Phil Lee	Martin Ward	David Spring
Peter Byrd			
Investment led by Neville Staddon			
Michel Brittain	John Dyson	Michael Newman	
Keith Owen Grants led by Chris Woodruff			
Liz Warren	Neville Staddon	Kate Tobin	Alan Darrant
Chris Fitzhenry	Ed Harrison	Nick Keast	Peter Moss
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 Nigel Hyman, Honorary Curator			
Emeritus Curator, Bob Symes	Rita Bewes, Secretary	Ann Jones, Treasurer	
Hilary Briers	Beryl McIndoe	Rab Barnard	Christine Barnard
Christine Bull	Peter Soper	Peggy Anderson	Dave Anderson
Tony Walsh	Ann Walsh	Caroline Stanley	Rick Moore
Jeremy Woodward	Roger Le Voir	Roger Trend	Graham Thornton
Liz Fishlock	David Forward	Kelvin Dent	
Communications led by Richard Thurlow			
Val Huntington	Alan Darrant	John Dowell	Hilary Briers
Richard Huntington			
Publications led by John Dowell			
Hilary Briers	Sylvia Brownlee	Carol Griffiths	Nigel Hyman
Andrew Rugg-Gunn			
Woodlands and Estates led by Richard Huntington			
River led by Peter Brookes			
Countryside Walks led by Elizabeth Cotton			
Local History Group led by Prof. Brian Golding OBE			
Social vacant			
Membership	Andrew Scott 519797	andrewscott@sidford.orangehome.co.uk	

Sid Vale Association CIO

Minutes of the 1st Annual General Meeting of the SVA CIO 2.30pm on 29th April 2015 at The Manor Pavilion, Sidmouth

58 people attended the meeting

1 **Apologies** Edmund Harrison, Nigel Hyman, Felicity & Roger Carver

Alan Darrant, Chair of the Association, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 **Minutes of the AGM held on 30th April 2014**

Agreed and signed after correcting 9.2 Edmund Harrison (not Harris).

3 **Matters Arising**

The Chairman was asked to update some matters brought up under AOB last year.

- 1 re diverting the northern end of the Byes footpath via Fortescue - John Dyson responded that he had been in touch with relevant parties but no progress to report.
- 2 Old guide books of the area had been donated to the Museum and Local History Group
- 3 SOS had not made an appeal for further donations but SVA had given additional funds.

4 **Election of Trustees**

President Alan proposed that Handel continue his role of President of the SVA CIO – agreed by members.

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

Alan explained that Brian Golding (History Group) had requested that his nomination as trustee be withdrawn, but proposed that all other nominees (as listed below) be elected en bloc. This was seconded by John Townsend and agreed by the meeting.

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| • 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 |

5 **Presentation of Annual Accounts**

Neville Staddon presented the annual activity accounts for 2014 but explained that the Annual Accounts as required by the Charity Commission had been subject to full audit this year as the legacy and dividend income had brought the SVA's income for 2014 over the limit for independent examination. These accounts had been prepared by Easterbrook & Eaton and would go to the next SVA Executive Committee for approval. Thereafter these would be available from SVA and via the Charity Commission website.

The investment portfolio had grown to >£3 million and dividends received were >£760,000.

He highlighted the fact that although the charity was in a strong financial position the day to day expenditure of the SVA including the Museum now exceeded its general income so was reliant on legacies and investment income.

The Treasurer was asked:

1) whether investments were held in ethical funds rather than fossil fuels etc.

He explained that Keith Owen had specifically requested that his endowment be invested in FTSE 350 companies to yield high income. Some of these were indeed fossil fuel companies.

The chairman agreed that the Executive Committee would discuss the matter at a future meeting.

2) why there was a difference between the Keith Owen Grants agreed and the actual expenditure. This was due to the time delay by the organisations progressing the projects to the point where the award could be claimed.

Joan Bennett proposed a vote of thanks to the Treasurer and investment committee for their excellent stewardship of the funds. This was seconded by Liz Warren and agreed by the meeting.

6 **Appointment of Auditors for 2014**

Neville recommended that Easterbrook Eaton & Co be appointed as Auditor/Independent examiner for 2015. This was seconded by John Townsend and agreed by the meeting.

continued overleaf

7 Presentation of Annual Report and Review of SVA Activities

Alan highlighted some of the events and activities which had taken place through the year and introduced the group leaders involved.

The 2016 Calendar was now available and photos for 2017 were being sought. He also commended the latest SVA publication – The Natural History of the Sid Valley by Louise Woolley.

The Museum collection was increasing and exceeded space available in Hope Cottage. SVA was actively trying to resolve this problem.

SOS campaigning had contributed to changes being made in the Local Plan including the deletion of the industrial site at Sidford and work was still being undertaken to protect areas of land at The Knowle despite EDDC's decision to relocate its offices. The Inspector is due here in July and residents are encouraged to comment on the latest plans which are open for consultation.

8 Questions and Comments

There were a number of comments about the EDDC local plan and whether access from Bulverton Road would be gained to the Alexandria Estate together with speculation about future developments.

9 AOB

Handel gave details about the forthcoming excursion to Abbotsbury and Portland Bill with just a few places remaining. The spring 2016 excursion will be publicised by email and interested parties were asked to sign up and give their email address.

He also sought help in organising future trips with a view to relinquishing this role next year.

The formal meeting closed and Handel gave an informative and entertaining power-point presentation on the History and Progress of The Valley of a Million Bulbs.



Chairman's Report 2015

2015 saw a number of highly significant developments for the SVA and for this valley.

The long saga of the Local Plan (originally entitled '2006 to 2026') had almost reached its conclusion as the old year ended. It was in the first weeks of 2016 that the Inspector, Mr Thickett finally approved the plan. Sadly, our very strong arguments against the proposal and the district council's belated decision last spring to omit the Sidford employment site after all, was overturned by Mr Thickett. The one crumb of comfort is that the northern half of the site will only go ahead if the first phase has been taken up within five years. The inspector similarly approved the development of the Knowle site. The crumb of comfort there being the abandonment of plans to include the southern part of the gardens and the lowest car park. We await the planning application.

We celebrated the great contribution Dr Bob Symes made to the museum on his retirement after a fourteen year tenure as curator; we saw Dr Nigel Hyman succeed to that role; and we began the long awaited acquisition of premises to relieve the pressure on space at the museum. The Fore Street premises will become the headquarters for the Association.

Another decision made in 2015 was to update our website, and we will be showing our new, much improved version on screen at the AGM.

With its new headquarters, and all the other developments, I hope the SVA is going to be much more 'visible' in 2016. But that will be to report on in next year's annual report!

Alan Darrant

Sid Vale Association CIO

Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2015

GENERAL FUND

2014		2015	
£	£	£	£
		Income	
	1,750		2,193
894		715	
494	400	656	59
	890		890
2,818		2,349	
2,436	382	2,171	178
	3		14
	45		255
	3,470		3,589
		Expenditure	
422		136	
2,480		1,810	
1,564		1,432	
0		0	
150		366	
700		717	
390		341	
100		0	
125		150	
	5,931		4,952
	2,461		1,363

WOODLANDS AND ESTATES

		Expenditure	
1,902		873	
895			
349			
309	3,455	429	1,302
		Peasland Knapp	
	938		1,259
	4,393		2,561

TRUST FUND

2014	2015
	Income
11,265	Dividends/interest 10,814
33	Sampsons Sidmouth 105
33	Walks Leaflets
2,250	Museum insurance refund
73,071	Legacies
	Total income 10,919
86,653	
	Expenditure
	Clock – Hope Cottage 66
	Museum
5,750	Transfer to Museum account 5,184
	Special items
5,063	SOS
	Trumps 955
	Total Expenditure 6,215
10,813	
75,840	Surplus for year 4,704
	Plus
2,322	Expenditure transferred to capital 4,479
12,926	Stock adjustment 5,074
16,183	Unrealised gains 6,135
	15,688
31,431	20,392
107,271	
2,461	Less
	Deficit from General Fund 1,363
	Depreciation 1,280 2,643
104,810	Excess income over expenditure 17,749
169,443	Balance brought forward 1st January 274,253
274,253	Balance at 31st December 292,002

KEITH OWEN – ENDOWMENT

2014		2015	
	Income		
97,876	Realised surplus on investments		
2,290,804	Balance Brought forward 1st January	2,974,672	
585,992	Unrealised gains	84,417	
<u>2,974,672</u>	Balance carried forward 31st December	<u>3,059,089</u>	

KEITH OWEN – REVENUE ACCOUNT

	Income		
149,542	Dividends	138,738	
1,893	Tax refund	1,246	
<u>1,113</u>	Interest	<u>641</u>	140,625
	Expenditure		
191,357	Awards	109,846	
4,393	Woodlands and Estates	2,561	
25	Competitions		
<u>2,547</u>	Expenses	<u>1,037</u>	113,444
	Excess income over expenditure		
	expenditure over income		27,181
	Balance Brought forward		<u>90,792</u>
<u>136,566</u>	Cash Balance carried forward	<u>117,973</u>	
<u>90,792</u>			

SIDMOUTH LANDSCAPE FUND

	Income		
4,060	Sales of calendars	3,253	
<u>1,785</u>	Less expenditure	<u>2,070</u>	1,183
	Debtors		787
512	Interest		<u>3,451</u>
<u>3,406</u>			5,421
6,193			
	Expenditure		
80,358	Balance as at 1st January	85,456	
(1,095)	Unrealised Loss/gains	2,098	
<u>85,456</u>	Balance as at 31st December	<u>92,975</u>	

SIDMOUTH MUSEUM

2014		2015	
	Income		
184	Donations		80
5,125	Donations/public		5,806
140	Other Donations		340
1,098	Gift Aid		1,250
133	Enquiries		159
9,553	Sales shop		8,142
414	Sales online		489
	Interest		0
245	Miscellaneous		993
<u>16,891</u>			<u>17,259</u>
	Expenditure		
143	S W Water		139
4,075	Electricity		4,249
859	Telephone		1,012
1,488	Cleaning		1,613
157	Subscriptions		278
422	Exhibits		490
	Children's' area		197
1,725	Conservation		926
262	Acquisitions		274
1,150	Advertising		1,497
823	Helpers/refreshments		703
284	Printing/Postage/Stationery		349
222	Travel		20
1,272	Equipment		2,251
4,499	Stock purchases		2,306
3,068	SVA Publications		2,798
115	I.T.		172
307	Collections		247
172	Property		1,292
659	Miscellaneous		2,959
84	Office		198
52	online costs		123
<u>21,838</u>	Running expenditure		<u>24,093</u>
	Special items from Trust fund		
750	Insurance		750
	Signs		434
<u>22,588</u>	Total Expenditure		<u>25,277</u>
5,697	Expenditure over Income		8,018
7,361	Balance Brought forward		7,414
5,750	Cash Transfer from Trust Fund		5,184
<u>7,414</u>	Balance carried forward		<u>4,580</u>

Mrs. A Jones Museum Treasurer

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2015

2014		2015	
ASSETS			
Tangible fixed assets			
2,096		Fixtures, fittings and equipment	5,120
226	2,322	Heritage assets	401
			5,521
Cash			
5,026		HSBC Treasurer's Account	1,127
4,118		HSBC Landscape Account	2,313
21,685		Caf bank	30,973
108,633		Virgin Money	139,915
1,119		COIF	1,124
5,937		Hargreaves Lansdown Cash account	5,785
7,414		HSBC Museum account	4,580
153,932			185,817
512		Debtors	787
12,926		Stock	18,000
167,370		Current Assets	204,604
(1,875)		Creditors	(930)
165,495		Net Current Assets	203,674
2,663,690		Investments	2,640,572
601,080	3,264,770	unrealised gains	716,852
	3,432,587		3,357,424
			3,566,619
REPRESENTED BY			
274,253		Trust Fund	292,002
372,459	7,414	Museum General Account	4,580
	85,456	Landscape Fund	92,975
	90,792	Keith Owen Revenue	117,973
	2,974,672	Keith Owen Permanent Endowment	3,059,089
	3,432,587		3,566,619

A Darrant Chairman P N Staddon Treasurer

NOTES

The annual report and accounts in accordance with the Charity Commission's regulation is available on their site or from the Hon. Treasurer.

The accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis.

Investments are in UK listed companies, and shown in the balance sheet at current market value.

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 2015 the Executive Committee had approved grants due in 2016 from the Keith Owen Fund totaling £90,057 (2015, £112,000).

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

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Sid Vale Association CIO

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st December 2015.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and the seeking of explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Christopher Hodge BA FCA, Easterbrook Eaton Ltd,
Cosmopolitan House, Old Fore Street Sidmouth EX10 8LS 8th February 2016



We are actively seeking a volunteer to work alongside our

TREASURER

with the view to taking over from him in due course.

The ideal person would have a background in accountancy or similar.

The Association now has stewardship of:

- The General Fund
- The Trust Fund
- The Landscape Fund (with the National Trust)
- The Keith Owen Fund (an endowment).

An investment committee oversee the Keith Owen Fund under our Treasurer's chairmanship.

Please contact the Chairman or Treasurer for information – or if you know of anyone who might fill this role, please ask them!

Keith Owen Fund Investment Committee

In addition to the original Keith Owen legacy of £2,256m the investment portfolio includes £200,000 from the Trust Fund and £75,000 from the Landscape Fund, making the total cash actually invested £2,531m. There was no additional or withdrawal of cash during the year.

The stock market was very volatile throughout 2015 with large variances between the sectors. Mining and Oil companies in particular fell very substantially whilst Construction companies saw an increase in their value. The FTSE 100 at the end of the year was 4.9% lower than at the 1st January 2015. The market value of the portfolio at 1st January 2015 was £3,264m, only a few changes were made to investments during the year, and with the spread of the portfolio over all the major sectors, the portfolio outperformed the FTSE 100 with a market value at 31st December 2015 of £3,357m, an increase of 2.8%.

Income from the investments was £153,385, and although this was lower than the £162,895 received in 2014, when a number of companies paid a special dividend, it still represented a yield of 4.57%, based on the market value of the fund at 31st December 2015, compared with the average from all FTSE 100 companies of 3.9%.

The outlook for 2016 is not so rosy with the FTSE 100 falling very sharply in February, and some of the larger dividend paying companies have announced that they will not be paying, or will be reducing their payout in 2016.

Neville Staddon

Membership

At the time of writing (February 2016), our total numbers stood at 2214, comprising 2094 life members and 120 annual members.

These figures confirm a continuing downward trend, and during 2015, much thought has been given to the need for a recruitment drive. These researches are nearing completion, and details will be announced during 2016. There will be an emphasis on the recruitment of new members paying by annual standing order. Details of new subscription rates are given elsewhere in this Annual Report.

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 2016 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 Annual Report and newsletters are delivered by hand to all 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 9am and 6pm on weekdays: 01395 519797.

Andrew Scott

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

Have we got your email address?

We would like to make sure we have up to date email addresses for all our members. We promise not to bombard you with unwanted messages, but there are occasions when we would like to contact you between newsletters with up to date information about events, or when we need your support. We know that some of you will have changed your email addresses since you joined, and indeed many of you were members long before emails existed! So please email andrewscott@sidford.orangehome.co.uk with your latest address. Thank You.

ARE YOU A LONG TERM LIFE MEMBER?

DO YOU THINK THE SVA'S WORK IS VALUABLE?

THEN THIS IS FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

It has become very evident that the costs of running the SVA now exceed our subscription income. This is compounded by the fact that the "Life membership" subscription, (to which most members belong), at rates set many years ago, does not even now cover the costs of producing, printing, distributing and posting the Newsletters and Annual Report. We also have to replenish our Trust Fund to make sure we have enough cushion to cope with various expenditure items, such as the £16,000 repair and redecoration bill for the museum in 2013.

We do therefore rely heavily on Bequests and Donations to ease the short fall, but these are unpredictable. Hence as you may be aware we have been forced to raise the costs of the Annual subscriptions to £10 and Life Subscription to £100 for those who live within the Sid valley.

Although all Annual members are now paying the increased annual fee, there is of course no such pressure on Life members, who have been guaranteed "life membership". Nevertheless, I am asking you to consider "topping up" your original subscription to help us. (Someone else has suggested they would prefer to convert to annual membership and pay by standing order.)

As an illustration of the marvellous value that the SVA has provided, I discovered recently, looking through old Annual Reports, that individual life membership cost just £7 twenty years ago! In the case of my wife and myself, our joint life membership cost £25 in 2003 (the 2016 cost is £160 for a couple). So, for 13 years we have supported and enjoyed all the SVA does for £12.50 each – that works out at 96 pence a year! We couldn't help feeling that put us in debt! We have therefore made a contribution of our own.

If any of you are also minded to 'update' your membership, your support, in whatever amount, and in whichever way, that would be greatly appreciated. In that case, please send donations to our treasurer, or direct to the SVA account at HSBC, sort code 40 42 02, a/c 7073 9685.

Alan Darrant

PLEASE ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO JOIN THE SVA

We are proud that everything the SVA does is through volunteers, and this was an important factor in Keith Owen's decision to entrust his Fund to us. Not one person receives any payment – even much of the expenditure on printing inks and paper, telephone calls and such is never claimed for. We therefore have two basic needs to provide all that we deliver: a continuing supply of volunteers, and a similar supply of income.

The matter of income is dealt with elsewhere, but on the first count, we need a healthy growth in membership: many of our existing members have provided voluntary service for many years in the past, and are now taking a well earned rest, and so we MUST continue to attract new generations. All of you could help by publicising the good work of the SVA to family, friends and neighbours, and URGING THEM TO JOIN.

Many thanks!

Trumps Update

As members will recall, we are acquiring a property in the former Trumps in Fore Street. This is close to the Museum, is a building eminently appropriate for the Association, and has sufficient space to cater for our needs now and for the foreseeable future.

Over the past year the exterior of Trumps has been renovated by the current owner. Although there have been delays in the process, as this Report goes to



print we are on the point of signing a Contract for the purchase of part of the two top floors, which we will renovate for our needs. We expect to start this in April, ready for occupation later in the year.

Any donations will be much appreciated!

Alan Darrant

Membership Application Form sid vale association

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



I/We wish to become Member(s) of the Sid Vale Association

Title Surname (BLOCK LETTERS please)

First name(s) 1

Second member

Address

Post Code Phone

E-Mail Address

EITHER I/We enclose my/our Annual/Life Membership subscription of £
Please delete as appropriate and make cheques payable to *The Sid Vale Association*

OR I/We have completed the standing order mandate opposite (Please ✓)

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

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

*By cheque or cash – or
cheaper by standing order!*

		Outside the Sid Valley including postage		Within the Sid Valley	
		Cheque/ cash	Standing order	Cheque/ cash	Standing order
ANNUAL MEMBER	an individual	£12	£10	£10	£8
	2 at same address	£18	£16	£16	£14
LIFE MEMBER	an individual	£120	-	£100	-
	2 at same address	£180	-	£160	-

Area Date Receipt Memb.Card WG NMM GA

Help us – and make new friends at the same time!

I/We will be happy to help (as and when available) and would like more information about one (or more) of the following: (Please ✓)

- 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

STANDING ORDER MANDATE

To The Manager Bank

Branch Address

Post Code

Please set up the following Standing Order from my/our account

Name(s) of account

Sort Code - - Account Number

Recipient Sid Vale Association CIO
Recipient's Bank CAF Bank (Charities Aid Foundation)
25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ
Sort Code 40 - 52 - 40 Account Number 00016416

Please pay the sum of £ First payment date

Quoting SVA reference

Regular payment date 1st January, yearly until further notice

Signature Date

Excursions 2015

Our excursion programme is provided as one of our social activities. As well as perhaps taking you to new destinations to discover fascinating people and places, it is an opportunity for our members to share interests together, to meet new members, and make new friends.

In 2015, we arranged two excursions, both of which were well supported. The June coach tour explored the Sub-tropical Gardens at Abbotsbury in Dorset, took time for lunch in Weymouth; continued with a visit to Henry VIII's castle overlooking Portland Harbour, and toured the Isle of Portland, viewing the famous stone quarries, and the lighthouse at Portland Bill. It concluded with a 'substantial' cream tea, and a return home through the Dorset countryside.

In September, we made a return visit to Hestercombe House and Gardens in north Somerset, and located near the Quantock hills. After 3 hours, we drove to Cheddar, and made a tour of the last cheese making factory in Cheddar village. We sampled a variety of cheeses, took a stroll through the village, and then left through the Cheddar gorge and the Mendip Hills. We enjoyed the quintessentially typical English landscape, of beautifully kept stone walls and lush cattle-rearing meadows. We joined the ancient Roman Fosse Way near Shepton Mallet; and paused to ponder the wonder of the British cider-apple industry, before stopping for a cream tea with home made cakes, produced by the ladies of Kingsdon Church in Somerset.

In 2015, we also announced a Spring excursion, using e-mail distribution, with 'hard copy' for those without an e-mail address. If you would like to be notified of Spring excursions in future, (and not already informed us), please let us know. Meanwhile there are still some seats available on the April 6, 2016, tour to the China Clay museum and Country Park near St. Austell, followed by a Springtime visit to the 'Lost Gardens' of Heligan. See our website for details.

If our excursion programme is to continue it will only do so if one of our members would like to volunteer. I am happy to assist (if desired), but 'new blood' will be welcome. Please make contact.

Handel Bennett

SVA Countryside Walks

Our walks this year have taken us all over East Devon starting at familiar places like Livonia Road or the Bowd and further afield to Blackberry Camp and Higher Eype. We meet the leader of each walk in a car park at 10am and are taken on a "Mystery Tour" of 5 miles through lovely Devon countryside.

The Livonia Road walk in April, led by Jackie and Roger, was the most popular with 28 walkers. From the urban scene of a residential street we were soon up on

Salcombe Hill walking through pleasant woodland and catching glimpses of the sea before returning via Salcombe Regis to the Byes.

Vivian took our group to Higher Eype near Bridport for the August walk. The weather was fine and clear so we could see our target, Colmer's Hill, from the beginning. Luckily, the climb was not as tough as it had looked and the view across the fields and coast of Dorset was spectacular.

Another amazing 360 degree view greeted the hardy walkers who climbed up Meldon Hill from Chagford village on the September all-day walk led by Cliff and Pam. Again the weather was good and the easy walk downhill was most enjoyable.

As coordinator for the past two years, I have asked many willing friends in the group to lead our walks but never actually organised one myself. So, in November, I chose a well-loved route from White Bridge along the Coastal Footpath, then inland to Otterton and back by the River Otter. An easy choice, familiar to most SVA members, which was just as well as I nearly went wrong in the first five minutes!

Once again, I must thank everybody who has volunteered to lead walks this year and all the people who have participated.

I would like to encourage existing and new SVA members to join us and hope this brief report gives you an inviting idea of what the Walking Group is like. It is good fun. The people you meet are interesting and friendly and you have the opportunity to get to know our beautiful countryside. We walk 5 miles on the first Tuesday of each month taking about 2½ hours. Details of forthcoming walks are published on the SVA website, in the Newsletter and on the Museum noticeboard. Contact the leader by phone for more information.

Elizabeth Cotton



Colmer's Hill, August 2015
Photo by Haylor Lass

The 2015 year in Woodlands and Estates

2015 has been a disappointing year for weather unless you are a meteorologist. The winters seem to be getting milder and wetter and the summer seems to be getting cooler. When we do have a dry spell it turns into a drought and is usually followed by torrential downpours.

This has had its effect on the woodlands and estates and coupled with greater foot and pawfall, Margarets Meadow, Gilchrist Field and Soldiers Hill are turning into quagmires at the time of writing.

The team, headed by Mike Davies, are busy laying bark chippings at pinchpoints to alleviate the problem as these areas do not have great drainage.

Peaslands Knapp Jon and Penny Ball have taken on the Peaslands Knapp management from Kate Tobin this year. Very many thanks go to Kate who has done excellent work to create the Knapp and keep it the way it is. Kate will stay on the scene to help where needed.

A Butterfly and Moth day was held in conjunction with Devon Branch of Butterfly Conservation this summer. It was well attended although the weather, being mainly grey cloud and drizzle, was not helping to spot butterflies. The following species were seen: large skipper, meadow brown, common blue, small tortoiseshell and speckled wood. A painted lady was seen in the road at the conclusion of the last walk. Butterfly and moth food plants spotted were: knapweed, birds foot trefoil, garlic mustard, tufted vetch, cinquefoil, nettles and brambles which indicate that the habitat is good for butterflies. To date 18 species have been recorded on the reserve throughout the year. The night before, moth traps had been set up and many beautiful moths were identified and photographed by about 35 visitors. The moth highlights were 2 elephant hawk moths, 3 buff tips, several dark arches, heart and darts, willow beauty and buff ermine.

A new bench has been placed at the top of the hill facing Muttersmoor and sheep will be grazing this spring at the end of February.

The Peaslands Knap team are Jon Ball, Penny Ball, Roger Carver, Felicity Carver, Diana East, John Jones, Colin Seward, Roger Trend and Sandra Trend.

Margarets Meadow, Gilchrist Field, Livonia Field The year saw the clearing of brambles and the planting of new specimen trees. Amongst the varieties chosen are Silver Birch "Grayswood Ghost" which has a lovely white bark, Liquidamber "Worplesdon" which has stunning autumn foliage, Nyssa Sylvatica, Amelancier and an Acer Rubrum, all noted for their autumn foliage.

The bulb planting included some additional snowdrops down by the river and the photo shows the snowdrops in 2016.

Once again, the Yellow Rattle has done its work and grass cutting has been kept to a minimum. This helps us in our overall expenditure as we are on a very tight budget for a while. Fences and gates have been repaired by our skilled woodworker volunteers.



Fewer liberties have been taken with our property this year and apart from the excitement of a tented resident there has not been much to clear up.

A decision to leave the pond as it is has been reached, as any further work will cost large sums of money and permissions are currently not available for drawing of water from other landowner's river frontage. The discovery that the pond was a dump for builder's rubble in

the past does not help with water retention issues either and so, it is hoped that what is there now will prove a haven, of some sorts, for wildlife.

Soldiers Hill, Allotment Field Wood and Combe Head Wood The bluebells were in abundance on Soldiers Hill and in Combe Head Wood. However in addition we were treated to a display of foxgloves afterwards. As they are bi-annuals this will not be repeated in 2016.

Bramble and bracken fighting has been in full swing, although the steepness and slipperiness of Combe Head Wood makes work very difficult. We are eagerly awaiting the spring to see if our work has reduced the bracken's ability to grow. In order to diversify what is available to wildlife, some Ash has been cleared to make way for a variety of trees, kindly donated by the Woodland Trust and Sidmouth Arboretum, consisting of Rowan, Cherry, Hazel, Birch and Thorn. A few Wood Anemones have been planted and it is hoped the rabbits and deer will allow them to thrive.

The remaining land is under agricultural tenancy and is used for pasture.

The maintenance team for the above land is Phil Ashby, Alan Waters, John Capel, Cliff Butlin, Graham Knapton, Vivienne Insull, Joyce Stevenson, Jackie Stokes, Roger Livesey, Edward Hulme, Charles Berry, Gerry Turner, Mike Davies, Grizelda Shipp, the SVA sponsored NT apprentice, Val and Richard Huntington

In the following paragraphs, I thought it might be interesting to give a brief background to one of our lesser known estates, the Trow Pump, especially as it will require a little maintenance work by us in the not too distant future.

Trow Pump In 2011, Trow Pump became the property of the Sid Vale Association. This old pump was constructed in 1884 under the guidance of the sons of the Reverend Anderson-Morshead in order to bring water to the hamlet of Trow. Prior to that date, the hamlet had to fetch water from a spring over a half mile away and carry it in buckets to the cottages. Not easy as it



is all uphill and the hamlet was much more widely spread in those days.

Over several years it had to be deepened from 83 feet to over 126 feet and it was in use until 1915, when a conventional water supply was connected to a tap in the nearby lane.

The pump and its house fell into disrepair and after many years it became a concern and the SVA took an interest in it as a symbol of a previous time. In the sixties, the SVA repaired the whole building and renovated the pump. In 1984 the building was listed and in 2011 the SVA took ownership from the EDDC. The pump can be found at the head of the lane that leads to the remaining Trow Cottages.



More detailed information can be found at the SVA Sidmouth Museum.

Anyone who would like to help maintain these estates and woodlands, please contact me on 01395 519350 or any other committee member for more details.

Richard Huntington

Rural Footpaths

There are almost 60 miles of Public Rights of Way in the Sid Valley parish. A group of volunteers spend time each month monitoring these footpaths looking at signposts, fences, stiles, gateposts and the general condition of the path. Any urgent work that needs to be undertaken is reported to the relevant authorities. This team also carries out a detailed Annual Survey of all Public Rights of Way in the Sid Valley. Our parish has one of the largest amounts of Public Rights of Way in the county and we are fortunate to have the South West Coast Path and the East Devon Way passing through our Parish.

The SVA is represented by the co-ordinator on the Parish Paths Partnership, where it is involved with local Councillors, the County footpaths warden for our area, members of the Ramblers Association, The Horse Riders Association, Trail Riders Federation, landowners, path wardens and path improvement volunteers. This group is chaired by a Town Councillor.

Our survey completed over last winter has shown a lot of damage caused by the amount of rain and run-off during the winter. Work on improving drainage and making steps safe will be required over the spring and summer. Some work is allocated to County approved contractors and other remedial work is undertaken by a team of volunteers who cut back vegetation growing across paths and carry out ditch clearing and step repairs, for example, where large equipment isn't needed. We think that the general condition of public rights of way in the Sid

Valley is very good. We have the South West Coast Path and the East Devon Way running through our parish and support from the National Trust and the East Devon AONB. Our beautiful countryside paths and bridle ways are valued by locals and visitors and are of important economic value to the area. The footpath volunteers enjoy helping to keep the paths in good condition.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact me at di_fuller@hotmail.com

Di Fuller

Landscape Fund

There was no call on the Landscape Fund, which is jointly owned with the National Trust, during 2015. The balance on the fund did however increase from £85,456 to £92,974 the increase of £7,518 came from the surplus on the sale of the Landscape Calendar £1,970, dividends from investments of £3,451 and unrealised gains on the investments of £2,097.

Currently there are no known demands on the Fund, which can be used for the acquisition of Land in the Sid Valley.

Neville Staddon

River Warden's Report

This year has been committed to three main events on the river – the battle with Himalayan Balsam, the successful rescue of fish and their transfer past School Weir, and the investigation of a gravity connection to the old Victorian pond.

Himalayan Balsam In the early part of the year, a joint initiative was undertaken with Sidmouth in Bloom where we aimed at trying to reduce the spread of this invasive species. Himalayan Balsam grows in proximity to damp river areas, and unfortunately the River Sid has over 50% of its length infested. A particularly bad area is at the rear of the Rugby club at Sidford. Although the Sid Vale Association has responsibility for some 800m of river, there are only a few stands of balsam, and these have generally been removed by members wherever possible.

Following a short article in the Sidmouth Herald last year, the 1st Sidmouth Cub Scouts contacted me to see if they could assist in the “bashing” programme, as this will also go some way towards their Global Challenge badge. I contacted a local ecological consultant who is prepared to give a briefing to the Scouts at the appropriate time when the balsam will be starting to grow, (provisionally 14 July) after which the Cub Scout group – hopefully including family and friends – will be able to join in the bashing. I will



Himalayan Balsam, pretty but extremely invasive

try to arrange the meeting to be held somewhere in the Sidford area.

Any members of the SVA who would like to participate will be most welcome.

Fish Rescue In autumn a number of fish return to the River Sid to shelter and spawn. A report was received that fish were trying to jump up the impassable School Weir, which is over 3.3m (10ft) high. In order to assist their passage up river, a number of fish “rescues” were arranged whereby fish were carefully netted below the weir and then transported (by wheely-bin!!) to the higher level above the weir, for them to continue their journey up stream. This year we netted 93 larger fish including three salmon (two female + one male), along with 90 sea and brown trout, and numerous smaller elvers and younger fish. The netting is done under the watchful eye of officers from the Environment Agency who also monitor the health and condition of the fish netted.



A beautiful female salmon after her exciting ride in a wheely bin!!!

Victorian Pond General’s Pond, Gilchrist’s Pond or simply Fish Pond – as described on the 1890 Ordnance Survey map, was a large semicircular pond with two islands just to the east of the river at the north end of what is now called Gilchrist’s Field. There are reports that the pond was once a small boating lake but sadly the original area has now been substantially backfilled. Over the years a large number of trees have grown, forming the splendid copse at the top off Gilchrist Field – so there is no possibility of the pond returning to its former amenity. All that now remains is a small circular shallow pond, perhaps 20m diameter, with one natural island – now a haven for wildlife.

Being now in the middle of a copse of mature trees, the pond is considerably overgrown and lacks direct sunlight, causing it to have become stagnant and prone to silting etc.

The original source of water to the Victorian pond was considered to be from springs to the east, but with development and the natural deepening of the adjacent river, this source has considerably diminished, and so an alternative supply from the river has been considered. In order to assess whether a gravity connection from the Sid was viable, another SVA member and I undertook a survey of levels between the river pond and outfall. This revealed that the fall from the normal water level of the river, at its optimal location – upstream of the pond but still in SVA land, is only some 164mm higher than the existing pond level and an even less fall of



The remains of the Victorian pond – now heavily overgrown

35mm from pond level to the bottom of the outfall pipe. Unfortunately this indicates that a gravity pipeline from the river to the pond and then to the outfall is not practicable, unless major work is carried out to deepen the pond and provide a new outfall pipe – all of which would cost a considerable sum of money and is unlikely to receive the necessary Environment Agency approval and licences. Equally as the pond is a popular play area for children (rope swings etc) any deepening may not be considered prudent.

In order to determine the best way forward for the pond, I intend to investigate appropriate alternatives, including appropriate planting, and habitat management, possibly with a small amount of reprofiling and or thinning as necessary.

I would like to thank the immense help of members of SVA and other Sidmouth organisations, including Peter Endersby and friends from Sidmouth in Bloom, the Environment Agency and Mike Flynn and friends for the fish rescue, and Peter Lyons for the survey at the pond.

Peter Brookes

Conservation and Planning

Our objective is to make sure that the SVA involves itself in all appropriate Conservation and Planning issues in the Sid Valley.

One of our main activities is to monitor Planning Applications and to comment on them accordingly, where we feel that they have an impact, good or bad on the Sid Vale. Now that all such applications are available to review “on the web”, this process is much easier, since we can do it in the comfort of our own homes, but this does mean that we do not now meet as regularly as in the past. Where we feel strongly about an application we attend the relevant Sidmouth Town Council, or East Devon District Council Planning meeting to articulate our views. It would not be appropriate here to list those which we supported or objected to but happily over the last year these generally co-incided with the relevant decision making bodies!

As many readers will know, for the past three to four years we have been concerned with two significant planning issues which will greatly affect the Valley. Firstly, we have been very much involved in fighting against EDDC’s intention to vacate their HQ at the Knowle for residential construction on the site. You might remember the Petition (over 2500 signatures against), and the March (over 3000 people). They intend to relocate to Honiton and Exmouth. EDDC’s first plans for the development were rejected, but they persevered with a reduced scheme. We continued to fight very strongly against the proposals, but EDDC decided to proceed with the sale. Their intention is to allow the construction of Housing and a care home on the site. They have taken out a temporary loan of nearly £10m for this, and have justified the move on the basis that the energy costs savings over the next twenty years will pay for the costs of the move!

Secondly after three attempts, EDDC finally managed to present a Local Plan in a sufficiently robust state to satisfy the Inspector at the Local Plan Examination.. The final Plan resulted in a larger housing number allocation for the District than had previously been predicted, but still only 100 planned houses for Sidmouth, (plus windfalls). Unfortunately the Inspector decided that as a matter of principle he would accept the allocation of Employment land at Sidford, because he could not see that the Alexandria Estate had adequate and planned proposals for improvement. He never investigated in depth the flawed figures EDDC had used to justify the site which was put forward by a firm in Sidmouth and a major landowner in Sidbury. Unfortunately we do not believe that there are any grounds that a Judicial Review would be justified.

We can console ourselves with the facts that, without a spirited and continual opposition to both these proposals, they would have been worse than they are.

We will continue to monitor and argue against the proposals for both these issues as they progress.

The History group meets regularly and one of their activities has been to prepare a list of non “Graded” but important built structures in the Valley, with the objective of submitting them to EDDC. If accepted, the inclusion of these “Assets” in an EDDC list will carry some weight if a planning application affects them adversely. The team have reviewed all the assets originally proposed by the SVA in 1984, and have identified others for inclusion. The list is now being finalised and will be submitted to EDDC in due course.

Richard Thurlow

Museum Report

The Museum, by a variety of means, shares both our local heritage and its natural history with our own town residents as well as being a major attraction for visitors. 2015 was a further successful year and visitor figures were 12,500 despite overall poor weather during the summer.

A major new display explained the effect of the **Napoleonic Wars** on Sidmouth and included items relating to Captain Carslake, a notable Sidmouth resident, who was a midshipman on HMS Victory at Trafalgar. ‘**Turner in Sidmouth**’ told of his visit in 1811 to sketch the town from the sea and his unusual interpretation of Chit Rock in the later, final painting. The **Lindemann** and **Reynolds** displays were new, replacing the older ones. There was a new **Great War Home Front** display as well as a display reminding us that **Mining** was historically important in Devon as well as Cornwall. A popular new display contained **Hand Bags** of different ages.

The successful annual **Lace Day** in May was again run by Marion Wagstaff and members of the Axe Vale Group. We are indebted to Marion for her weekly lace demonstrations.

There were several children activity days, directed by Ann Walsh, including the ever popular **Red Rocks Day**. Beryl McIndoe did a sewing demonstration in which children had their initials attractively embroidered onto book marks. The **Big Draw Day**, led by artist Margaret Adams, had the theme **Red Arrows Over Sidmouth** and both children and adults helped complete the painting which we intend to make into a post card.

Emma Oliver-Trend once again was a great hit with her **Singing the Sidmouth Rocks** during the Folk Festival. She organised a ukulele workshop and attracted much interest.

The renovation of the Land and Man Room was completed and Roger Le Voir curated both the geology and archaeology displays.

The shop had a most successful year and we were sad that Carol Griffiths had to resign from its supervision due to ill health. Peggy and Dave Anderson have enthusiastically taken on this important role. The **Late Night Opening** evening in December remains very worthwhile in terms of both visitor numbers and shop sales.

The science festival in October included Fossil Friday in the Museum and the following day Roger Le Voir organised the talks and displays in Blackmore Hall.

We are, once again, grateful to the walk leaders who often braved the rain. The town walk figures were similar to 2014 and the geology walk figures were markedly higher than the previous year.

Our Museum mentor is Susan Eddisford, based in Exeter’s Royal Albert Memorial Museum, and her expertise and encouragement is much appreciated. Susan recently came to the Museum to check our Accreditation Forward Plan progress.

Our essential ‘behind the scenes’ staff work throughout the 12 months but are rarely seen by visitors.

We remain very grateful for the dedicated work of the stewards. It is worth looking at TripAdvisor online in connection with the Museum; it is clear that the stewards are very highly rated.

In the new season there are new displays which include the **Early History of Postal Services in Sidmouth and the Sid Vale**, the **Best of the Art** Collection with emphasis on local artists with their individual histories, **Lace, Railway** and the **VW Devon Conversions**. Local **Cliff Erosion** will be explained. There will be **Best of Costumes** to include the uniforms of the Town Crier and the Lord of the Manor. The historic house, **Sand**, will receive its first display in the Museum. The 2015 Napoleon display has been rearranged, now called **Napoleonic Connections**, and includes a number of new items. A **Folk Festival** display is planned to overlap with the August event and hopefully will attract new visitors. The Museum presence will be prominent in the October Science Festival including **Super Science Saturday** on October 15 in the Masonic Hall.

We are urgently seeking help for our publicity and collections; new stewards are always very welcome.

The major event of the season was Dr Bob Symes's decision, in September, to step down from the honorary curator's post but, happily, he will remain involved as emeritus curator. The Land and Man Room has been renamed after him. He had been in post since 2001 and has given immense energy, expertise, and above all, enthusiasm to this role.

Nigel Hyman (Curator)

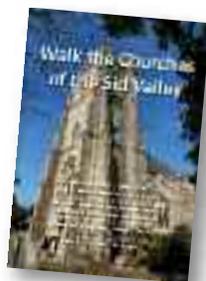
2015 Publications



The Natural History of the Sid Valley Written by Louise Woolley, this booklet introduces us to the amazing variety of plants and animals to be found in the different habitats of the Sid Valley through the seasons. While it is not an identification book, there are lots of photos and suggested walks for different times of the year to help you to look out for some of the more elusive species.



Walk the Churches of the Sid Valley This booklet, written by Prof. Brian Golding leads us around the 20 churches in the Sid Valley, starting with an easy stroll taking in the 10 places of worship in the town centre, followed by five longer walks covering the churches in Salcombe Regis, Sidford and Sidbury.



Sidmouth Scientists This book, by Professor Robert Miles, celebrates the contributions to science of four Fellows of the Royal Society who lived in Sidmouth: astronomer Norman Lockyer, Ambrose Fleming inventor of the radio valve, Sidney Brown who designed radio equipment and loudspeakers and Frederick Lindemann who played a large part in the development of radar during World War II.

Sidmouth A History This "must have" history of Sidmouth was first published in 1987. It covers the history of the town, starting with the geology, and includes chapters on prehistoric and Roman eras, Saxon, Viking and Norman times, the Middle Ages, the Tudor Epoch, the 17th and 18th Centuries, the Regency Period, the Victorian Age and the 20th Century. In this new edition, revised by Nigel Hyman, a new chapter chronicles the early years of the 21st Century, and many of the old black & white illustrations have been replaced with colour pictures.

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

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 29 members on the email contact list and two other members. Attendance at meetings averages about 10. 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.

A sub-group continued to work on a local heritage list under the energetic leadership of Jeremy Woodward in collaboration with the EDDC. Taking together the local list created in 1973, when grade 3 listing was abolished, together with the results of a study by the SVA in 1984 and the public consultation in 2015, a total of over one hundred buildings of various kinds have been identified that are important to the local heritage. Further work is needed before they can be formally adopted. It is hoped that some of the more extraordinary entries may form the basis of a book to be published by the SVA.

In September, Katie Findlay of the South West Heritage Trust visited to introduce the "Devon Remembers" project which is marking the centenary of the First World War with a series of research projects on fishing, farming, hospitals etc. during the war. Discussion covered the limited response to recruitment appeals in some areas of Devon, the reluctance of Devon people to switch to eating fish and under-reporting of the influenza epidemic. Nigel Hyman emphasised the importance of Stephen Reynolds to fishing in the south west and queried the location of the Nursing Home in Seafield Road where he spent his last days.

Brian Golding reported that the Sidmouth war memorial had been listed as grade 2. He also reported on finds at the parish church during building of the new extension, including three brick vaulted tombs, probably dating from the late 18th Century. Nearby plaques on the tower wall, which may be related, refer to members of the Hodge family, Sidmouth surgeons of the early 19th Century. Julia Creeke reminded the group that POH referred to Surgeon Hodge in his diary. Brian's book on walks around the churches of the Sid Valley was published by the SVA during the year.

Alan Darrant led discussions on forming a group to digitise the local church registers. Some information is already available online, but not necessarily in the best format.

Nigel Hyman reported on the planned move of the Museum document archives to the upper floors of Trumps and on his investigations into its history, from its founding by Stone and Gove in 1813 to the departure of the last Trump in 1971. Members recalled the overhead railway system used for taking payments to the cashier and returning receipts. The firm occupied several locations in Sidmouth, including the Trumps café and winter garden in the building now occupied by Carina's and Trumps Court which was the location of the delivery stables. Julia Creeke said that she thought the shop fittings dated from 1904.

Once there, he hopes to get together a group to index the SVA newsletters and annual reports as these contain valuable past research. He also sought help from the group in updating the definitive history of Sidmouth, which was produced in 1987 and last updated in 2000.

Julia Creeke led several discussions on aspects of the history of Salcombe Regis that surfaced as she worked on her anthology of writings on the village, which was published by the SVA in November. The recent history of the land on Salcombe Hill and of the tortuous negotiations that led to its purchase for the National Trust started a particularly lively debate. The whereabouts of many of the documents on the Cornish family, including the letters of Charlotte Cornish, remains a mystery. Information on Lady Harvey, wife of Wellington's chief of staff at Waterloo, was also sought following the discovery of references to her grave in the churchyard.

An old box from the SVA archive was opened and found to contain photographs of the construction of the Mill Street flood prevention scheme in 1967, together with some earlier photographs of the Methodist Church before creation of the lower floor.

Alastair Watson reported on progress in assembling documents relating to the military role of Sidmouth in World War 2, including a letter sent in 1942 from a Group Captain objecting to the move of the Medical Training Establishment from Harrogate to Sidmouth. The complete set will be deposited at the museum.

Other discussions were held on diverse subjects ranging from street lighting around the old station, land ownership on Salcombe Hill, early Victorian schools, the seven stones ring on Muttersmoor, the sad story behind a memorial in the parish church, and the history of the coastguard in Sidmouth.

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 9th May, 11th July, 12th September or 14th November.

Brian Golding

SVA Meetings at the Manor Pavilion 2015

2015 proved to be quite a successful year for our meetings at the Manor Pavilion.

January 14th

Fiona Eaves gave a very insightful presentation on the theme 'Athens: Not just the Acropolis'. The talk explored the architecture, art, culture and social aspects of this hugely significant historical site.

February 18th

Professor Brian Golding gave a fascinating talk on street names in Sidmouth to a large and very receptive audience at the Manor Pavilion; the talk was based on a booklet Brian had written on this very local of subjects.



March 18th

Dr. Rosalind Leveridge gave a presentation on 'Proud of our little local picture palace: Sidmouth and the cinema 1896-1918'. This was part one and I am hoping Rosalind will return and bring us up to date on the story of the cinema in Sidmouth.

October 14th

This was the SVA supported talk by Professor Monica Grady on the amazing work she did as part of the group that landed 'Philea' on a comet. The evening meeting was part of what was a very successful 'Science Week'; the Manor Pavilion was nearly full to capacity with a mixed audience which included a number of teenagers, and the professor made a very technical subject accessible to the enthralled listeners.

We should consider more evening meetings as they could increase participation.

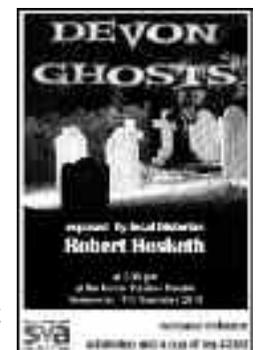
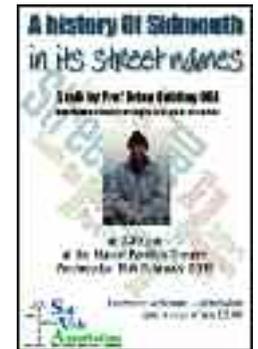
November 11th

Historian Robert Hesketh gave a talk on 'Devon Ghosts' to an audience of around fifty people. The presentation was very interesting as it took us on a tour of the various haunted public houses, castles and churches of Devon. There were some interesting questions at the end and a number of his books were purchased. It was also encouraging to see people partaking of the refreshments in the bar and chatting about the event.

Many thanks to all our colleagues who have helped throughout the year.

We are currently putting together our programme for 2016/17, so if there is anyone with a 'story to tell' please let us know.

John Ridgley and Brendan Lee



Keith Owen Fund

Project	Type	Award
Climate week	Event	500
Sea Fest	Event	2,000
Science Festival	Event	2,000
Sidmouth in Bloom	Civic campaign	10,300
Sidmouth Folk Week	Event	8,740
Sidbury Cricket Club	Renovations	8,500
Surf Life Saving Club	New boards	3,240
Sidmouth Gig Club	Rowing machine /equipment	1,950
Kennaway House	Children's literary event	250
Parish Church	Tower repairs	9,000
Ten Tors (Sidmouth College)	Mess tent	750
Sidmouth Town AFC	New facilities	20,000
St Francis Church	Solar panels	3,970
Sampson Society	Memorial Stone	1,260
	Total	72,460
SVA/National Trust volunteer ranger		6,500
SVA Million Bulbs Project		25,000

We have had a busy year for the Keith Owen Fund grant committee with 27 applications and 14 grants awarded to value of over £72,000. This now means that the total grant award since 2007 has now exceeded £650,000 with over 138 applications approved over the last 9 years.

The mild winter has provided an earlier than normal burst of colour from the bulbs in the valley this year and it really feels like Spring has come early – how long will it last? The thousands of hours of volunteer time and support from business and public bodies has left a lasting legacy for generations to come and my committee, many of whom have played a key role in the delivery of the project, feels it's right that we take a break to recharge and reflect.

We have, as in previous years, supported a range of events and festivals. Many of these are supported by volunteer effort but run with professional efficiency and coordination. They have served to put Sidmouth on the map and provided opportunity for enjoyment and learning for a wide range of ages. We hope our funding will enable them to thrive and develop their independence.

A range of sports and activity events have received support this year including a new tent for the Ten Tors group at Sidmouth College. Having assisted in training walks and with both my children being fortunate to have completed the Ten Tors

challenge, I am especially pleased that we are able to help provide a much needed modern mess tent for the group. Enabling a diverse range of opportunities for healthy exercise is important for our future generations, whether it's sailing, surfing, dance, hiking or team sport.

I have no doubt we will continue to receive a wide range of applications to the fund in 2016, in addition to demands for mainstream SVA developments. I hope, despite our new objects, we can continue to support innovative projects that serve to engage and celebrate our community, reward volunteer effort and conserve and enhance the valley's heritage. I am sure our new committee members, Nick Keast and Chris Fitzhenry, will ably assist in this regard and continue where the departed John Townsend left off. John was a key committee member particularly in the bulb project and one whose enthusiasm and passion will be sorely missed.

I would like to formally thank all my committee for their fantastic support, time and deliberations in delivering the fund. I include in these thanks the investment committee. As SVA members, you too can play your part by spreading the word about the fund and encouraging suitable applications from others, to enable us to continue to make a real difference in the valley.

*Chris Woodruff, Chairman,
Keith Owen Fund*

THANKS FOR THE MEMORY

We continue to be grateful to those who remember the Sid Vale Association in their Wills. The Bequests we receive help us to continue our activities of conservation, heritage and philanthropy, which can benefit all who live here, and for those who will arrive in years to come.

Including the SVA in your will is a recognition of happy memories of years spent within the Sid Valley. Keith Owen spoke with fondness of our heritage, as "England as it used to be". Not so much 'stuck in time' I suspect, but rather 'a place of happy memories, with friends and family!'

For many of us, Sidmouth has been a place to which we have loved to come; and which in the passing of the years, we have come to love! Any bequest, large or small, is a really thoughtful way to contribute to the conservation of Sidmouth's valley, coast and community. It's more than a memory. It's a way of saying: 'Thank you for the past', and, 'Please protect for the future'. A task to which the volunteers of the SVA remain committed.

Revd. Handel Bennett, President

Please bring this report with you to the meeting on April 27th

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



Sid Vale Calendar 2018

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 have a photo (or three) taken in the Sid Valley and would like to enter the competition please check our website www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk for details. The 2017 calendar is available now from the Museum, online from the website and from several shops in the town.

Sidmouth Museum

Hope Cottage, Church Street

Opening Times

Monday 1-4pm

Tuesday-Saturday 10am-4pm

Sunday Closed

Free guided strolls throughout the season

Tuesdays 10.30am – **Western Town Walk**

A Royal Death – King Chit – The Field by the Fort

Thursdays 10.30am – **Eastern Town Walk**

Blackmore Gardens & Tunnels – Poorhouse & Jail – Elysian Fields

Wednesdays 2pm – **Geology Walk**

Learn about the rocks and landscape of Sidmouth's 240 million year geological past in a leisurely stroll along the Esplanade



SVA Newsletters

Please consider submitting an article for one of the SVA Newsletters – we'd love to hear your Sid Vale-related stories. Articles should be up to 800 words and an accompanying photograph or illustration would be most welcome.

The deadline for entries for the Summer edition is Friday 20th May. Please email your item to Val Huntington valeriehuntington@yahoo.co.uk

Tri-centenary: Birth of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown Milton Abbas Village plus Longleat House and Gardens

Three centuries after the birth of Lancelot Brown, we are still able to revisit some of the most picturesque landscapes which he designed for England's Green and pleasant land. At Milton Abbey it has been said: 'This sublime landscape is one of the finest examples of the work of Capability Brown in England.'

First we travel by coach to Milton Abbas in Dorset, where a local guide will help us to appreciate some of the 500 acres of land Brown 're-created' for Lord Milton. There will be a short visit to the Abbey, currently the chapel of a renowned public school, which featured in the BBCtv serial *To Serve Them All My Days*, and loosely based on the novel by Sidmouth author, R.F.Delderfield.

Afterwards we visit Milton Abbas, an attractive village which has the distinction of being the first planned settlement in England! Brown laid out the landscape in 1780, and Sir William Chambers created a village of white-washed and thatched cottages. He added St.James Church in 1786. (Weather permitting we will take a walk along the street).

We continue to Longleat House, in Wiltshire, the stately home of the 7th Marquess of Bath, and his family. It is one of the best examples of high Elizabethan architecture, completed in 1580. You will enjoy an unhurried visit, viewing fine art, period furniture and ornamental ceilings in most of the rooms.

Your visit will include exhibitions celebrating 50th anniversary of the opening of the famous **Longleat Safari Park**; the commemoration of 400th anniversary of **Shakespeare's death**; and the birth of **Capability Brown** (1716). You will also be able to view the **Great Hall**, the **Red Library** (formerly family sitting room), the **Lower Dining Room**, the **State Dining Room**, the **State Drawing Room**, a display of late **Victorian dresses**, and the **Grand Staircase**. Guides are on hand to answer your questions. Enjoy a snack lunch in the Cellar café, or make use of the extensive menu in the Tropical Storm café, or take your picnic lunch in the Grounds and Gardens.

(Continued overleaf)



Longleat House

SVA Excursion – 'Capability' Brown Tri-Centenary Thursday June 30, 2016

(Continued from overleaf)

At Longleat, 'Capability' Brown was employed to introduce a new style of 'naturalistic' landscape gardening in 900 acres. Near the main house, a short walk leads to an area he laid out under the quaint title – **The Pleasure Walk**. *(The Safari Park is NOT included in our visit).*

On our way home, we visit again **Kingsdon Church ladies** for a Somerset Cream tea and home made cakes!



18th century
Milton Abbas today

- **Price includes:** Coach, Milton Abbey and Milton Abbas, entry to Longleat House and Gardens (3 hours), cream tea at Kingsdon Village Hall, and driver's gratuity. See Booking form for departure times. Anticipated return 6.30-6.45pm.
- **Booking Form:** Please send to Revd. Handel Bennett, 2 Victoria Road, Sidmouth, EX10 8TZ. Tel. Enquiries 01395 514211
- **Bookings:** will be confirmed from **April 14** and remain open until filled. *Tickets cannot be 'reserved'. Refunds will only be made if tickets can be re-sold.*
- **Payment:** Please make cheques payable to "SID VALE ASSOCIATION CIO".
- **Envelope:** Please enclose s.a.e. postage paid. Thank you

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.



POSTAL BOOKING FORM 2016

Please supply ticket(s) at **£29.75** per person for **CAPABILITY BROWN TOUR Thursday, June 30, 2016, to Milton Abbas and Longleat House & Gardens**

PLEASE ✓ BOX Joining at The Triangle 8.30am Radway 8.33am*
Approx. timings Exeter X 8.37am Green Close 8.40am*

1. TITLE FIRST NAME SURNAME OF EACH PERSON BOOKING

2.

Address

*E-mail Post Code

**Will not be disclosed to third parties.*

CONTACT TEL. NO. OF PERSON BOOKING

Have you enclosed a stamped, self-addressed envelope? Yes/No

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 5th April – Museum – Young people's activities

Regency and Victorian Day.

Wednesday 27th April 2.30pm – Annual General Meeting – Manor Pavilion.

Open to all. Review of 2015 & Election of Officers. *(Please bring Annual Report)*

Tuesday May 3rd – SVA Countryside Walk

Meet at 10am in Peak Hill car park. Grid Ref: SY 110 872 Leaders: Jackie and Roger Tel: 01395 577651

Thursday 5th May – Museum – Lace Day

An extension of our weekly demonstration with visiting specialists and displays.

Wednesday 1st June – Museum – Young people's activities

Sea, sand and smuggling – suitable for 5-10 year olds.

Tuesday June 7th – SVA Evening Walk

Meet at 6pm in car park in School Lane, Newton Poppleford Grid Ref: SY 085 895
Leader: Haylor Tel: 01395 568786 Walking the paths encircling Newton Pop and Goosemoor and back for a pint in the Cannon.

Thursday 30th June – SVA Excursion to Longleat and Milton Abbas –

See flap for details

Tuesday July 5th – SVA Countryside Walk

Meet at 10am in East Budleigh carpark. Grid Ref: SY 067 859 Leader: Norma
Tel: 01395 513974

Tuesday August 2nd – SVA Countryside Walk

Meet at 10am in Newton Poppleford recreation ground carpark.
Grid Ref: SY 088 899 Leader: Vivien Tel: 01404 811267.
Explore the highways and byeways of Tipton St John.

Wednesday 3rd August – Museum – “Singing the rocks”

Geology walk with a difference. Learn the songs, then walk and sing along the Esplanade.

Wednesday 10th August– Museum – Red Rocks Day

Celebrate our World Heritage Coast. Rocks, fossils, minerals explained by our own experts. Fossil rubbings and dinosaur hunt for youngsters.

Tuesday September 6th – SVA Countryside Walk

Meet at 10am at Escot, in front of the restaurant. Grid Ref: SY 080 979
Leader: Margot Tel: 01395 512693

Tuesday October 4th – SVA All day Dartmoor Walk

Meet at 9am in Lidl carpark for carsharing. Bring a picnic lunch. There will be an opportunity for a cup of tea at end of walk. Back in Sidmouth around 4pm.
Leaders: Cliff and Pam Tel: 01395 578699

14th-15th Oct– Museum – Sidmouth Science Week

Dinosaurs and fossils, and other activities

Wednesday 26th October – Museum – Big Draw Day

Everyone welcome, all ages, to help paint a masterpiece designed by local artist.

Saturday 29th October Museum closes for the winter