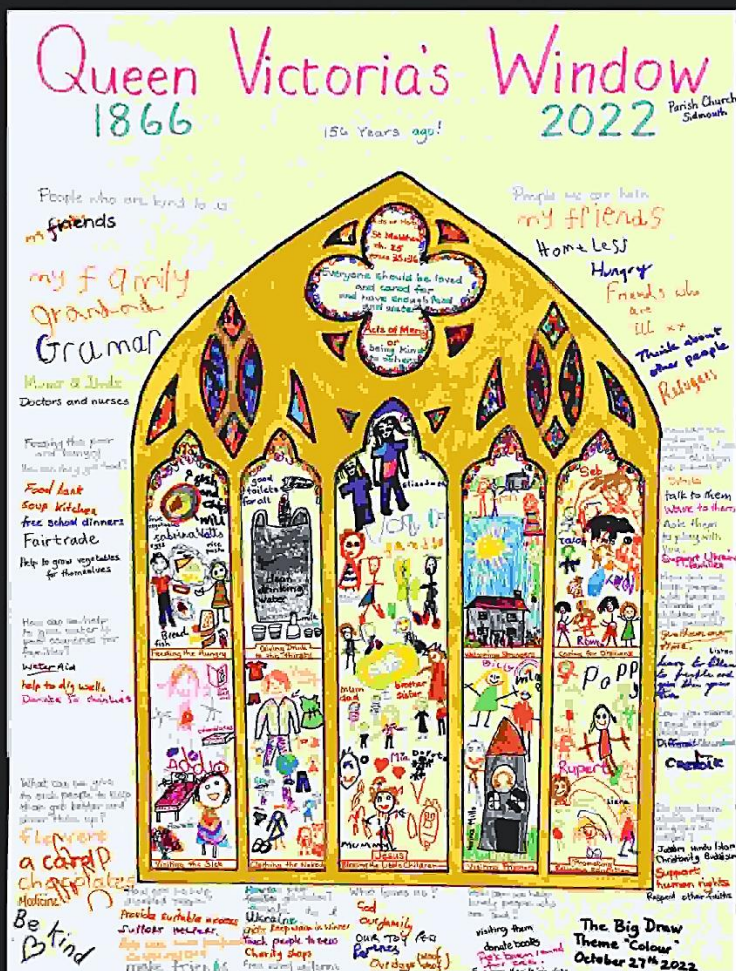


Including Annual Report and Accounts for 2022



Annual General Meeting Wednesday 24th May 2023 at 2.30pm
All Saints Church Hall – *Please bring this report with you*



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. At the annual general meeting, members of the association elect the charity trustees for a three year term of office. The trustees have collective responsibility for the whole organisation and meet every month.

In addition to those responsibilities each trustee takes on the role of an officer of the association and/or the lead or chair of a working group responsibility for a particular activity of the SVA.

The full constitution is available on the website at www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk or by contacting the secretary, Liz Warren

secretary@sidvaleassociation.org.uk

Data Protection Regulations.

The SVA is committed to the safety of its members' personal information and complies as far as possible with General Data Protection Requirements (GDPR). Member's names and addresses, together with the type of membership they hold (life or annual), are held on a computer file with limited access and minimal processing. These details are not given or sold to any third parties. To comply further with GDPR we are required to notify all members of the right to have such details erased in certain circumstances. Any member requiring further information should write to the Membership Secretary at The Sid Vale Association CIO, 36a Fore Street, Sidmouth EX10 8AQ.

SVA Magazine

The AGM report will now be permanently combined with the spring magazine to reduce costs. The next magazine is due in the autumn. Articles or any queries about writing articles should be sent to the editor by email to

publicity@sidvaleassociation.org.uk by mid-September. Anything about anybody/place in the Sid Vale, coast or sea at the editor's discretion.

Please let us know of change of address/details by email or post so that your magazine gets safely delivered. June Diffey and her team do an admirable job delivering but only if they have the correct information!

CALLING COUNTRYSIDE WALKERS

We need a keen walker to take over the role of organising countryside walks. They take place once a month, usually the second Tuesday and are approx. 5 miles in length. Please email info@sidvaleassociation.org.uk for more information.

Cover photo by Alan Clarke-the drawing of Queen Victoria's window which the children completed on the Big Draw children's activity day (see article page 38)

Sid Vale Association CIO AGM

24th May 2023 at 2.30pm
All Saints Church Hall, Sidmouth

Agenda

Chairman's welcome

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of SVA CIO AGM held on 15/06/22
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Election of Trustees

The following Trustees were appointed by the Management Committee and are now standing for election

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------------|
| • Gary Cross | IT and Website |
| • Peter Rose | Volunteer Co-ordinator |
| • Philip Wragg | Planning & Conservation |

5 Presentation of remaining Trustees

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| • Alan Clarke | Keith Owen Committee |
| • Heather Hodge | Membership |
| • Richard Huntington | Land & River |
| • Val Huntington | Publicity & Magazine |
| • Nigel Hyman | Publications/Talks/Walks |
| • Ann Tanner | Museum |
| • Gary Turner | Treasurer |
| • Liz Warren | Secretary |

6 Presentation of Annual Report and Accounts for 2022

7 Appointment of auditor - The Trustees recommend to the members that the SVA continues to engage with the firm of Westcotts Chartered Accountants, Honiton, in their role of Independent Examiner, or Auditor as required.

8 AOB (please notify the Chair prior to the meeting)

Close of formal meeting

9 Presentation to be confirmed

Tea and Biscuits

NB The full Trustees' Report & Accounts are available on the SVA website and a few hard copies will be brought to the AGM.
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Sid Vale Association CIO
Minutes of the AGM held at 2.30pm on Wednesday 15th June 2022
at All Saints Church Hall, Sidmouth

49 people attended the meeting

Ed Harrison welcomed everyone to the first AGM in person since 2019 and the covid pandemic. He reflected that last year's digital meeting by zoom had been a first in the 176 years of the organisation's existence. He reminded everyone that the SVA was managed and run entirely by volunteers and a recent count up had numbered them at over 200. He thanked each and every one of them and commented that the late Keith Owen had left his legacy to the SVA because he was so impressed by the voluntary nature of the organisation.

1. Apologies Brian & June Diffey, Naomi & John Lott, Heather & Steven Knight, Rev. Jonathan & Michele Rose, Trevor Heynes, Alan Clarke

2. Minutes of the last SVA CIO AGM held 15th June 2021 (via zoom)

Agreed and signed.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Election of Trustees

The following Trustee was appointed by the Management Committee and is standing for election: Alan Clarke (Chair of Keith Owen Fund Grants Committee). Agreed unanimously.

The following Trustees' terms of office end at this AGM and are standing for re-election: Edmund Harrison (Chair), Valerie Huntington (Publicity & Magazine), Elizabeth Warren (Secretary). Agreed unanimously.

5. Presentation of remaining Trustees

• Heather Hodge	Membership
• Richard Huntington	Land & River
• Nigel Hyman	Publications/Talks/Walks
• Ann Tanner	Museum
• Gary Turner	Treasurer

6. Presentation of Accounts for 2021

The Income and Expenditure 2021 and Balance sheet as at 31st December 2021 had been circulated prior to the meeting via the spring edition of the SVA magazine. Gary Turner, the Treasurer, explained that the full Trustees' Report and Annual

presented to the Charity Commission were on the SVA website, and that he also had hard copies available at this meeting.

Gary explained that 3 years ago the Trustees had made a unanimous decision to place the SVA's investments into the hands of professional Fund Managers and that the recent turbulent money markets had demonstrated the wisdom of that decision. Despite recent dips, the funds were still worth >5% more than 2 years ago when they were handed over to Investec.

Ed Dolphin asked if there were any known significant risks to SVA finances for example from Ash die back or the Museum building.

Ed responded by saying that a number of Ash trees had to be cut down but they were only removed if in a place where they were considered a risk to the public as dead trees were helpful to encouraging biodiversity. The Museum is leased from STC who insure the building. Also the SVA office at "Trumps" is on a very long lease and any defects are reported to the managing agents.

Gary was thanked for looking after the Charity's finances so studiously.

7. Appointment of Auditor

Gary said that Thomas Westcott Chartered Accountants, Honiton, had continued to act as SVA's auditors or independent examiners (depending on income) and he recommended that we retain them for the forthcoming year. Agreed unanimously.

8. AOB

None had been notified.

Ed Harrison thanked all those attending and he closed the formal meeting at 2.50pm.

He then asked if anyone present wished to make any comments or ask any questions. Phil Lee thanked Val for the splendid SVA Magazines, and also all the volunteers who not only delivered them, but checked on members during the pandemic.

Val thanked John Dowell for all his work on producing the magazines as it was a joint effort.

9. Presentation – Sidmouth's Wild Flower Year

Ed Dolphin gave a fascinating presentation on the recent work of members of the Biodiversity Group who had monitored and mapped over 400 species of wild flowers within the valley. He had put their findings together in a publication for SVA.

Tea and biscuits were served.

Sid Vale Association CIO

Income & Expenditure 2022

	General Fund	Museum	Trust Fund	Keith Owen Fund	Landscape Fund	TOTAL 2022	2021
Income							
Admissions		7,115				7,115	5,513
Grants Received		1,922				1,922	16,869
Donations & Legacies	6,224	1,544			2,000	9,768	6,759
Events & activities	1,848	1,700				3,548	1,140
Investment income	1,550		3,073	81,626		86,249	81,048
Membership Subs	3,879					3,879	3,089
Rental Income	1,100					1,100	1,100
Sales & Other Income	-	7,248				7,248	11,721
Total Income	14,601	19,528	3,073	81,626	2,000	120,828	127,239
Expenditure							
Awards				27,662		27,662	17,600
Banking & Insurance	3,384	733			5	4,122	3,565
Depreciation		504				504	3,841
Events & activities	2,891	245				3,136	1,511
General Admin, travel etc.	349	10				359	889
Governance	1,220	340				1,559	1,769
IT & digital activity	2,260	1,520				3,780	4,145
Museum Activities		5,261				5,261	6,908
Office Furniture & equipment	795	2,401				3,196	3,397
Plaques				56		56	54
Premises other costs	2,189				233	2,422	1,883
Printing & publicity	1,173	2,079				3,252	5,301
Professional fees	1,320			22,210		23,530	25,019
Repairs & Maintenance	5,113	1,205		69		6,387	4,583
Utilities	911	2,453				3,364	2,562
Woodlands & estates				6,350	3,564	9,914	7,537
Total Expenditures	21,605	16,751	-	56,346	3,802	98,504	90,565
Net Operating Income	(7,004)	2,778	3,073	25,280	(1,802)	22,324	36,674
Other Income							
Gains on Investments			(14,133)	(375,462)		(389,595)	303,022
Total Other Income	-	-	(14,133)	(375,462)	-	(389,595)	303,022
Net Income/(Expenditure)	(7,004)	2,778	(11,060)	(350,182)	(1,802)	(367,271)	339,696
Balance brought forward	-	-	535,147	3,648,116	15,420	4,198,683	3,858,986
Transfers	7,004	(2,778)	774	(5,000)		-	
Balance carried forward	-	-	524,860	3,292,934	13,618	3,831,412	4,198,683

These statements have been extracted from the statutory Report & Accounts 2022, which were subject to an Independent Examination by Westcotts Chartered Accountants. A copy can be downloaded from the SVA website. Investments are managed by Investec and are shown at the market value as at 31st December 2022.

Sid Vale Association CIO

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2022

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Fixed Assets		
Tangible assets		
Buildings	263,306	263,306
Furniture & Equipment	22,663	22,663
Furniture & Equipment Depreciation	(22,663)	(22,159)
Heritage Assets	401	401
Total Tangible assets	<u>263,707</u>	<u>264,211</u>
Non-Current Assets		
Investec Capital	46,300	60,791
Investments	3,035,189	3,433,003
Total Non-Current Assets	<u>3,081,489</u>	<u>3,493,793</u>
Total Fixed Assets	<u>3,345,196</u>	<u>3,758,004</u>
Cash at bank and in hand		
CAF Cash	431,971	369,195
HSBC Old Account	9,495	-
HSBC Treasurer's Account		14,986
Investec Income		19,215
Museum account HSBC	41,582	35,658
Total Cash at bank and in hand	<u>483,048</u>	<u>439,055</u>
Current Assets		
Stock Asset	8,000	8,000
Sundry debtors	3,000	1,000
Total Current Assets	<u>11,000</u>	<u>9,000</u>
Creditors: amounts due within one year		
Current Liabilities		
Sundry creditors	7,832	7,376
Total Current Liabilities	<u>7,832</u>	<u>7,376</u>
Total Creditors: amounts due within one year	<u>7,832</u>	<u>7,376</u>
Total assets less current liabilities	<u>3,831,412</u>	<u>4,198,683</u>
Charity funds		
Keith Owen Endowment	3,011,837	3,387,300
Keith Owen Revenue	281,097	260,816
Landscape Fund	13,618	15,420
Designated Fund (Premises)	30,000	25,000
Trust Fund	494,860	510,147
Total Charity funds	<u>3,831,412</u>	<u>4,198,683</u>

A Tanner Chair
G Turner Treasurer

SVA Annual Report - Chairman's Review for 2022

2022 was a year of 'getting back to normal' after the disruption caused by the pandemic. Sadly, towards the end of the year there was a resurgence of the Covid virus but thankfully this was short lived. All our activities returned to normal with talks in All Saints Hall in the winter and a real face to face AGM. The volunteers party in December made a welcome return -although I had to miss it due to Covid!

You will find all the reports of our activities in this edition. It is impossible to single out individual activities. The Museum had a very successful year, one excursion went ahead, the Knapp and Margaret's Meadow teams were all busy maintaining our land and the Planning Committee submitted a detailed response to the second consultation on The Local Plan. At the end of the year the owners of The Sidford Employment Site placed the undeveloped site on the market so we shall have to await events.

As always, I am grateful to all the volunteers and especially the Trustees for their dedicated work for the SVA.

Sadly, I decided to step down as Chairman and as a Trustee at the end of the year due to health issues, it has been a privilege to serve as Chairman of our Association.

Edmund Harrison

Editorial

You will notice that the magazine looks different this time. John Dowell sadly could no longer carry on as publisher so a huge thank you to him for all his work. Ann Tanner has kindly stepped in to produce this edition and has done an admirable job so an additional big thank you to her and all the team who deliver the magazine to your doorstep. The first half of the magazine contains all the reports from the trustees and management team leaders of the activities within the SVA. The demise of the huge beech tree in Margaret's Meadow was a sad sight to see but on a positive note, the 'rotting down' process has given a large number of other residents a home. For those who enjoy walking, you may well come across a trig point which you can read about in 'Crumbling Cliff's article. If you search for his trig point above Weston beach, take a visit en route to Salcombe Regis and visit the church as written about by Peter Whitfield. If climbing uphill is too big a task, take a look around the SVA owned Knapp and Orchard, carry on to the council owned cemetery where you might spot some of the wildlife seen by Kate Tobin in her article. The tale of Emma, a house maid, as researched by Judith Taylor in her article relates a tragic tale of poverty (please go to our web page to read the article in full).

Do visit the museum this year - there is lots to see. A huge amount of work goes on behind the scenes as Jane Bell recounts in her article. The shipwreck display is eye catching and there is a beautiful new lace display.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the magazine. As ever, thank you for supporting the SVA.

Val Huntington

SVA Annual Report - Membership Secretary

In 2022, membership increased by 105 new members. This number is down on 2021 but is still something to be pleased about especially in times where many other organisations are struggling to recruit members and to stay afloat.

The leaflet information boxes around Margaret's Meadow, Peaslands Knapp and the Museum still seem to be proving popular but, annoyingly, have been subject to some vandalism this year which has meant several replacements having to be installed.

From the information we collect via the questionnaire on the forms, people are joining us because of the diverse volunteering opportunities we offer, the talks, interest in the museum, countryside walks and personal recommendations.

Sadly, we have also lost 88 members. The three main reasons for the losses were moving away, going into care and RIP.

Last year, we announced new subscription rates to help cover our rising costs and that we were intending to change from standing orders to direct debits as a means of payment. We have set up a direct debit system with a company called 'GoCardless', a major provider of financial services of which of you will already be aware. All new members who have joined us recently have all been requested to set up a direct debit so that their future renewals are simpler and more cost-effective. The Treasurer and I will soon contact existing members currently paying by standing order/cheque/bank transfer etc. with instructions for setting up this new system of payment. We hope to complete this by the end of June 2023.

DO we have your up-to-date details?

June Diffey and her team of magazine distributors have been doing a sterling job, but it would help enormously if you could keep me updated with any changes to your mailing address, telephone number and email addresses otherwise we cannot run efficiently. We are adopting email as our preferred means of contact, so it is important we have the correct details for you. Please send any of the above amendments to:
membership@sidvaleassociation.org.uk

Heather Hodge

Please encourage your friends to join the SVA
Membership forms can be downloaded from the Sid Vale Association website, picked up from one of the boxes in Margaret's Meadow, the Knapp or the Museum

Sid Vale Association – Points of Contact

ALL enquiries to the SVA can be sent to:

info@sidvaleassociation.org.uk the email will then be forwarded to the relevant person(s).

The following can also be contacted directly:

chairman@sidvaleassociation.org.uk secretary@sidvaleassociation.org.uk
treasurer@sidvaleassociation.org.uk
museum@sidvaleassociation.org.uk publicity@sidvaleassociation.org.uk
membership@sidvaleassociation.org.uk



**INCLUDING THE SVA IN YOUR WILL IS SO EASY
AND THE IMPACT WILL LAST FOREVER**

The running costs of membership and our services have recently run at a loss thereby using up reserves accumulated gradually over many years. In fact, our costs frequently exceed our income because we try to keep membership affordable. The Keith Owen Fund, by the way, cannot be used to support the SVA's core activities.

The last few years have sorely affected our donation income from visitors. In addition, the financial markets' reactions to the war in Eastern Europe have had a major impact on our investments and income.

More than ever then we are greatly appreciative of those giving to the Sid Vale Association through their wills. In 2022, we received bequests from Mrs Margaret Vera Longhurst, Mrs I Jones, Mr Arnold Wright.

Any bequest, large or small, is valued by the Association (which is a registered charity no.1154749).

Lifetime donations are also welcome and can be made direct to our bank account no. 00016416, sort code 40-52-40, giving your full name as a reference.

We remain deeply grateful for the thoughtfulness and generosity of past supporters, and for all who make provision for our future endeavours. Please continue to remember the Sid Vale Association.

Gary Turner, Treasurer

The SVA Keith Owen Fund Grant Committee met on its regular 2-monthly cycle throughout 2022.

A total of seven award applications were received during the year, and from these four awards were made with a total value of £34,000.

- Sidmouth Rugby Club - Floodlighting Project at Sidford
- Sidford Tennis Club - Floodlighting Project
- Sidmouth in Bloom
- Sidmouth Coastal Community Hub - Riverside enhancement project

The number of 'Expressions of Interest' and award applications received to the Fund during 2022 remained significantly below the levels prior to Covid. There may be a number of reasons for this, but it could well be that 2022 was a year where voluntary organisations were simply still continuing to get themselves re-established 'post-Covid'. Encouragingly, 2023 brings early signs of increased activity and interest in award applications.

During 2022 there were some changes in the membership of the KOF Grant Committee.

- Peter Moss was a staunch supporter of the SVA and a member of our Grant Committee for many years. Sadly, Peter died in the latter part of 2022. We miss Peter and recognise all that he generously did in support of the SVA and the Keith Owen Fund.
- Ed Harrison has recently stood down as Trustee and Chair of the SVA. As such Ed is no longer a member of our Grant Committee. We thank Ed for the immense experience that he was able to bring to our discussions.
- We are delighted that Di Fuller has agreed to become a member of our Grant Committee. Di has (of course) previously been a Trustee of the SVA and has a wide experience of both Sidmouth and its voluntary organisations. We are so pleased to have the experience and insights that Di now brings to our group.

Overall – we feel that the Keith Owen Fund Grant Committee is a stable, strong and collaborative part of the SVA. Our request to you as members of the SVA, is to please be active ambassadors of the Keith Owen Fund. If you know of a voluntary organisation considering a worthwhile project needing support and that fits with our SVA Objects – then please point them towards us.

Alan Clarke

SVA Annual Report - Land

Margaret's Meadow, Gilchrist Field and Livonia

The big event last year was the collapse of the old Beech Tree at the gateway of Margaret's Meadow and Gilchrist. The very strong winds proved too great for this old stalwart and it split with half remaining standing and the rest collapsing into the meadow. Despite checking it and getting professional surveys we were caught out and it came down at 11 am on Sunday. The remaining tree was made safe, and the fallen parts cut up and sold which partially covered the costs of the tree surgery. Sadly, there was a nesting place for owls inside the hollow trunk, ignoring the box that had been put there. However, the nesting box has been replaced and hopefully the owls will return to the pruned tree.



The other event of significance was the cutting down of the diseased Ash trees in the Golden Copse. This actually improved the appearance of the copse and let in more light for the trees remaining.

Salcombe Regis

Soldiers Hill produced a crop of haylage for the farmer before the drought set in.

Combe Head Wood tree planting survived the drought, and the Hazel, Thorn, Cherry, Crab Apple and Mountain Ash are thriving.

Allotment Field Wood now handed back to the Town Council, has had a lot of Ash cut down due to disease and unfortunately some of the work affected Combe Head Wood. Oak planting has replaced the felled Ash here and a repaired dividing bank has been planted with Blackthorn to encourage the AONB favoured Brown Hairstreak butterfly.

Trow Pump received a makeover this year by volunteer Phil Lee who repainted it.

The Knapp

The Knapp team have been busy with general maintenance and also working at the entrance to Highfield. A new access to the knoll at the Knapp was also constructed and extra fruit trees planted in the orchard. Unfortunately the Devon Whitebeams planted at

the Knapp and Highfield did not survive the drought. What did survive the drought was the reinvigorated Knapp pond which managed to retain water for the entire year, previously it had dried up in most summers. This presents an opportunity for the creatures which occupy a pond all year round, such as Dragonfly and Mayfly, which hitherto was not available.

The Knapp provided some welcome grazing for 9 sheep last summer as the farmer had run out of grass in the drought. The sheep are welcomed by the neighbours and are doing a good job of reducing the grass on Peaslands meadow.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who contributed to the maintenance in the last 12 months, your work is really appreciated in keeping our land such a pleasant place to walk.

Richard Huntington

SVA Annual Report - Publicity/Magazine

In May, we attended Sea Fest which generated a lot of interest in the SVA which resulted in some new members. Children's activities were laid on by the museum team along with SVA publication sales.

Our membership open day at SVA HQ took place in September. It was nice to see so many of you and welcome new members. Deborah Robertson (deputy museum curator) laid on a display of the life and works of local artist/cartoonist Lawson Wood. Wine and cream teas were served.

We were also able to hold our volunteers thank you party in December, which was very well supported (pictured right). A magnificent spread was laid on by Matt Weaver from the Fort Café.



As part of the 175th anniversary of the SVA, it seemed appropriate to restore the early record books and minutes of the very first meeting of the SVA in 1846. The books were in rather a sorry state so they were sent off to a bookbinder for restoration, they should last for another 175 years.

Val Huntington

Saturday 20th May – Come and see us at **Seafest**, at our stand on the Ham. All day. This year the theme is 'Driftwood and Thrift'.

SVA Annual Report - Footpaths and Bridleways

Another year of the team of volunteers undertaking the tasks listed on the Work Programme which was compiled in January 2022 and submitted to Devon County Council (DCC) Public Rights of Way team.

The work commenced in early February with the team clearing a forgotten path which runs parallel to the rerouted bridleway by DCC. It was felt that this path should not be lost and so will be kept open as a permissive path later this year.



Other tasks included protecting a footpath from falling into a gully by filling the landslip with stone and realigning the sleeper bridge. Quite a long job but the team worked on until the path was made safe after a couple of visits.

With the evenings becoming lighter the team started meeting on a Monday evening in April instead of Sunday mornings. The next months saw the team repairing stiles, fixing way marker posts and fingerposts and replacing discs. As usual some evenings were abandoned due to heavy rain and on occasions a good soaking was had!

The team spent much time clearing brambles and general overgrowth as well as fallen trees and tree limbs - these being reported by members of the public and the County Council footpath warden.

The Sidmouth and East Devon Walking Festival got underway on 17th September with an open event in the cellar bar at Kennaway House. As usual there was variety of interesting walks across East Devon, including The Sid Valley Ring, East Devon Way over several days starting in Exmouth with a coach laid on, South West Coast Path and many more. A programme brochure with booking information was produced and circulated to local shops, hotels, caravan sites and Tourist Information Centres and is available on the web site visitsidmouth.co.uk. Not personally involved with the Festival it is thanks to another group of volunteers that made this event possible.

The Sid Valley Ring (SVR) is still very popular with walkers, some doing the 14 miles or so complete route or the shorter one of about half that distance. Changes had to be made in Salcombe Regis due to the Town Council employing a contractor to fell the Ash trees on safety grounds which presumably were suffering with Ash Die Back. This path which is near the War Memorial is still not in a suitable condition so the SVR will remain diverted until the path is levelled out.

We have had some damage done by off road "dirt" motorcycles on a couple of bridleways which has caused extra work for the volunteers repairing the ruts which could easily cause a twisted or broken ankle - thoughtless and irresponsible individuals.

Towards the end of the year the survey teams walked their designated paths, bridleways and UCR's and reported their findings to me and I compiled the work programme for 2023 and annual return to DCC.

I should like to thank the volunteers who undertake the annual path surveys and the team who work to improve and maintain the 60 miles of footpaths and bridleways in the Sidmouth Parish.

Phil Bradbury

SVA Footpaths Liaison Officer & P3 Coordinator

SVA Annual Report - Conservation & Planning

The Planning Group of the Sid Vale Association considers and comments on individual Planning and Tree Works Applications in the Sid Valley making comments to Sidmouth Town Council and East Devon District Council as appropriate. Notable successes have included:

Boswell Farm, Under Lane, Harcombe, Sidmouth -

We objected to a proposal to turn 52 acres of farmland into a Campsite which was refused by East Devon District Council.

Fire Beacon Hill, Harpford Common - Undergrounding power lines.

We supported the removal of the overhead power lines in this prominent Local Nature Reserve with the power cables being placed underground.

Milford Road, Sidmouth

We objected to the demolition of the original front wall and gate of a house in this attractive terrace of houses in a Conservation Area. The application was turned down on appeal.

Alexandria Industrial Estate, Sidmouth

We have objected to the owners' proposal to allow Retail uses alongside the existing uses in this Industrial Estate – a decision is awaited.

Other contentious applications have been allowed with modifications we have suggested. Inevitably other applications that we were not keen on have been permitted. Hopefully we are making a positive difference regarding planning applications in the Sid Valley in voicing our planning concerns to East Devon District Council.

Separately our Planning Group has recently commented on East Devon District Council's '**Draft Local Plan for 2020 - 2040**' – extending to 350+ pages with 106 new proposed Policies for East Devon and the Sid Valley including 5 new proposed Housing/ Employment sites within the Sid Valley, we have opposed all 5 proposed new Housing and Employment sites.

Additionally, we called for some evidence to be provided for all the new proposed employment sites. Separately it is envisaged that the Government's ambitious housing targets will be moderated during 2023.

East Devon District Council are considering our comments with the next stages being the publication of a final version of the 'Local Plan' and a Public Examination (Public Enquiry) in around 2024. We would plan to be represent the Sid Vale Association at the Public Enquiry once invited by the Planning Inspector.

If anyone is interested in joining our Planning Group or receiving a full copy of our comments on the proposed new Local Plan please contact me via info@sidvaleassociation.org.uk

Philip Wragg

SVA Annual Report – Museum

I would like to thank all the SVA Members who kindly loaned items for our *Royal Celebrations – Victoria to Elizabeth II* display it was greatly admired by our visitors, also our thanks to those who loaned items for the *Early Electronics* display and for *1942 War Room* cabinet.

In February we finally went live with our project to digitise John Tindall's *SHINGLE*, 10 volumes of over 4000 pages of almost daily records and photographs of Sidmouth's foreshore from 1922 until 1931. Our thanks to both *The Arts Society, Sidmouth* and the *East Devon AONB Communities Project Fund*, without their grants this project would not have been possible. *SHINGLE* is available to view on both the SVA and Sidmouth Museum websites.

2022 was the 20th anniversary of the Jurassic Coast Trust, to mark the occasion our museum volunteers received intensive training from the JCT team. JCT also negotiated with Bristol University to loan our museum an amazing display of fossils found along the Sidmouth coastline, the display material was funded by a grant organised by JCT. The exhibition was set up in early June and the loan period has been extended for the 2023 season.

In early June, to celebrate their 20th Anniversary the JCT held a 'Fossil Discovery Day' for their Ambassadors and Members at the Museum to publicise the new Bristol exhibition. The exhibition generated a lot of local interest, in the first four weeks we had visits from the Brownies (16 brownies + 4 adults) and Sidmouth Primary School (65 pupils + 18 adults in 3 groups).

Once again, we hosted students on work experience from Sidmouth College as well as two language students from Italy.

In August we added a new category, *History of Sidmouth Hotels*, to the interactive digital displays, this topic was very well received by the visitors from the hotels.

The Children's Events in 2022 were very rewarding –see separate article. The organisers and volunteers worked extremely hard to make these events very enjoyable for the young visitors and their families.

We were fortunate to have had a very successful year, visitor numbers steadily increased throughout the season. Our thanks to SVA Members who supported us throughout the season, we regard you all as our ambassadors.

Finally, I would like to thank all our volunteers both those that work '*front of house*' and those that work '*behind the scenes*', we depend on them and without their commitment there would be no museum for us all to enjoy.

Ann Tanner

Museum - Children and Family Events

2022 after the trials of lockdown, we were able to offer local children, their families and holiday makers an open-air "Fun in the Sun" event on Wednesday 24th August at our local tennis hard court (behind the museum). There were some old favourites - Splat the Rat, Peepo Board, Fishing Games for U5s, Fossil Hunting and Driftwood Boats to make and take. Also included was Ed Dolphin's seaweed activity which fascinated both adults and children alike.



In the October half term, the "Autumn Event" at the local parish church St Giles and St Nicholas was well attended and very successful. The Big Draw by Margaret Adams (magazine cover photo) was very popular using the Queen's Window as a template for children and their families to draw their version of the Twelve Acts of Kindness. Further attractions included the glass montage offered by Margaret, our local glasswork artist, origami boxes, tree favours, leaf pictures; alongside leaf identification and a simply super paper plane flying activity which saw planes zooming and gliding through the church "runway".

It was very rewarding to hear the parents say that it was a very well-run event, great fun for all who attended. oUR thanks to the church for helping us organise a very successful event. We look forward to the opening of the museum in April for our next Children's event. Grateful thanks are due to all our volunteer helpers.

Marian Gadian

SVA Annual Report- Countryside Walks

January - Sixteen of us braved an inclement morning, setting off from Sidbury to Buckton and thence into Harcombe. Leaving Harcombe Valley we returned to Sidbury festive cobwebs blown to the winds.

February - Eighteen of us at Joney's Cross. We set out down Hawkerland Valley, through the trees and meadows of Goosemoor, we were soon amongst the woodland and heath of Harpford Common. The walk was completed in weak but cheerful sunshine.

March - Seventeen of us set out in hazy sunshine to climb East Devon Way westwards out of Sidbury to the ridge of East Hill. A soggy tramp was rewarded by atmospheric views back to the Sid Valley and Sidbury Castle. On East Hill we followed the track to the end of the ridge at Beacon Hill. The planned return route had become a quagmire, so we retraced our route back to Hollow Head Cross, then dropped back to Sidbury.

April - Eight stepped out from The Warren car park to Stoneyford. We admired the views between Stoneyford and Kingston Farm then undertook a brisk walk over the Common.

May - Fourteen walked a scenic circular ramble around Muttersmoor. With the bluebells out, and with still not too much foliage on the trees to block the many views of the Sid and Otter Valleys, the morning proved to be a delightful six miles worth of healthy exercise.

June - Only seven set off from Newton Poppleford, up Fire Beacon Hill through Harpford. Then down the hill following Tipton Brook to the village. After replenishing energy at the Golden Lion the last leg of the walk alongside the river was accomplished in glorious sunshine.

July - Eleven of us set out and headed south along the cliffs from nearby Otterton. Passing Brandy Head Observation Post, then heading inland alongside the Otter towards Otterton.

August - Ten of us set out from Four Firs and headed for Squabmoor Reservoir. Then on past Dalditch Farm to Honeybee House. Then north along Shortwood Lane through wooded country until East Bicton common, before heading back to base camp.

September - Eleven of us set out climbing beside Snod Brook we made for Paccombe Farm, a Donkey Sanctuary outpost. Then over Harcombe Hill and into the woods and fields of Sweetcombe with its lovely views and back to the start point via Buckton.

October - Seven of us set into the murk above Beer. We reached the summit and the spectacular views over the Channel. Descending down and through Branscombe we made for the beachside café. Finally, we walked under Hooken Cliffs before the gentle scramble to the headland and home.

November - Nine walkers heading north along the river Otter. This walk north has its own rewards: impressive sandstone cliffs bordering the river and fine views of East Hill.

December's walk was cancelled due to the poor conditions.

Steve Haynes

Just before we were going to press, Steve Haynes informed us that due to a long term leg problem, he is no longer able to continue as walks leader. The SVA would like to thank him for all the effort he has put in to the planning, checking routes etc so that all who went thoroughly enjoyed the walk.

SVA Annual Report - History Group

Met on five occasions to share a wide variety of research. Meeting notes are published on the SVA website.

Ed Dolphin contributed research into historical land use, including evidence that bronze age field boundaries may have survived in the Sid Valley. He compared records of flowering plants in 19th Century guides by Mogridge and Hutchinson with those found today. A museum copy of Hutchinson's Fern book is valuable for its marginal notes by Sidmouth postman and botanist John Sparks. Amelia Griffiths, who moved to Ottery St Mary on the death of her husband, was a great seaweed collector, known as the Queen of Seaweed, and represented in the Manual of British Seaweed, published in 1840.

Ian Simpson completed his inventories of the Sid Valley cemeteries. He noted at least two burials in Salcombe Regis churchyard that were suicides and highlighted the grave of Dr William Robert Boon FRS, 1911-1994, who developed Paraquat while working for ICI.

Nigel Hyman shared several biographies with the group.

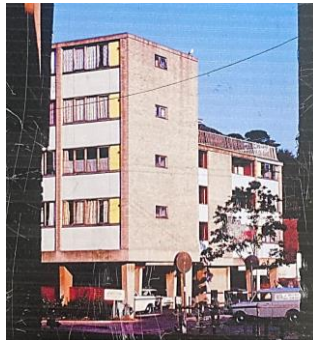
As General Practitioner and Medical Officer of Health, Dr Tom Pullin (1824-1911) was one of the best-known people in the Sid Valley. For the coronations of Edward VII and George V he gave 'royal' mugs to all the children in the Sid Valley with his own name and MD FRCS on them.

The Rev'd Henry Clements, 1829-1913, was 'frail, feeble and spoiled' as a child and both his parents died before he was ten. Educated at Rugby and Oxford, he became curate at Sidmouth Parish Church in 1854 and married his cousin Selina a year later. In 1859 he moved to Torquay, then Ashfield, County Cavan in Ulster, but returned to

Sidmouth in 1865 as vicar. He was a popular man with a dry sense of humour, a talented sketcher and a good scholar.

Sir Donald Currie was born in Greenock, but spent his childhood in Belfast. He founded the Castle Line which developed a regular service to South Africa. He was a liberal MP from 1880-1906 and a friend of Gladstone. He used his wealth to support many causes, and is remembered by the Currie Cup in Rugby Union. He died at Sidmouth Manor House in 1909.

Following an enquiry about the Roxburgh flats, we were able to locate several photos. The flats were built in the 1950s and pulled down in the 1970s. The site is now the Roxburgh car park off Russell Street.



View of the Roxburgh flats from the junction of Fore Street and Russell Street

An 1816 document shown by Brian Golding, records that in 1809, Thomas & William Jenkins borrowed the equivalent of £2million in today's money on the security of the manor and had now defaulted on the repayments. The paper is watermarked "O & P 1812" - Oxenham and Pym ran a printing works at Topsham mill from 1811-1818.

The Exon Domesday Book recorded that in 1083 Sidmouth had a salt house and 33 salt workers - more than anywhere else in Devon. Brian speculated that by 1200 the salt house may have become the Abbey's market house which by 1322 was known as St Peter's Chapel. After the reformation it became the Anchor Inn, before being demolished in 1805, leaving a fragment in the wall of Duke's.

Christine Horth shared her research on the Arts Club, now Sidmouth Musical Theatre, in the years 1922-39 when R. W. Sampson was a member, including her collection of programmes and press cuttings. Her material is collected at <https://www.sidmouthmusicaltheatre.co.uk>.

In November, Liz Owen introduced members to the museum catalogue and how to access it. The catalogue contains over 110,000 entries, and can be searched in a variety of ways. Several members were given access.

Brian Golding

SVA Annual Report - Museum Walks

There are 10 Museum Town Walk Leaders, 2 Geology Walk Leaders and 2 Tree Walk Leaders (in association with Sidmouth Arboretum).

2022 Town Walk numbers were 250 compared with 283 in 2021. We are looking at ways of encouraging more visitors and we will be discussing ideas with the managers of the town's hotels.

We will organise more themed walks, such as Blue Plaque, Literary Connections and Royal Connections. Both in season and out of season 'bespoke' walks will be better advertised as we know there is an interest in them.

Geology Walks and Tree Walks continue to be successful.

SVA Annual Report - SVA Talks

Zoom Talks 2022

All the zoom talks are still available to see on the SVA homepage.

Scroll down to the bottom of the home page to zoom talks and then click on [here](#) to connect to YouTube (you don't need to subscribe or download anything else-just select the talk you wish to see.)

January 12 *Should we protect local heritage not nationally listed?* Jeremy Woodward

February 9 *Local Nature Recovery Action* Lindi Rich (AONB)

March 9 *Sidmouth; The War Years* (was postponed due to Ukraine crisis)

April 13 *Live Long and Prosper: A history of the health-giving properties of Sidmouth.* Peter Fung

May 11 *The Sid Valley's Ancient Woodland. You can't see the trees for the wood.* Ed Dolphin

Live Talks 2022.

Talks at All Saints Hall (resumed in October after all Covid regulations were finished.

Attendances: 66-126 October 2022 - February 2023. About 90% SVA members

October 6 *Sidmouth at War*: Christine Hardy & Nigel Hyman

November 9 *A History of the Sid Valley in its Street Names*: Brian Golding.

SVA Annual Report - Publications

The SVA publications can be purchased from the Museum and local bookshops, online through the Museum website, the SVA website and the Devon Museums website.

John Dowell, our graphic designer, retired after over 10 years in which he completely transformed our publications in terms of both varied subjects and quality. At the time of writing (February 2023) we are still urgently seeking a replacement.

New publications in 2022 were *Sidmouth's Wild Flower Year* by Ed Dolphin
Sidmouth People: Memorable Residents & Visitors by Nigel Hyman

In preparation:

Sidmouth and Surroundings: Prehistoric Archaeology Guide Laura Beckwith

Nigel Hyman

SVA Annual Report - AONB

Although we only have a few acres in the East Devon AONB, the SVA is privileged to be a Partner in and an Ambassador for, the AONB organisation. This means that we are invited to attend all the meetings and are able to approve and become involved in its projects. We also get to meet other interested parties such as Clinton Estates and other conservation groups and exchange information.

Like everything else, the AONB was hit with Covid restrictions, and everything ground to a halt, but the projects are now slowly recovering. The projects that are most observable are the Farming in Protected landscapes and Nature Recovery projects.

The AONB group has delivered as part of the Farming in Protected landscapes:

- 90 fruit trees
- 1800m hedgerow restored
- 10.8ha meadows enhanced
- 4 ponds restored
- 4.8km permissive access created
- 8 educational visits funded
- 1 people carrier trailer supplied
- 2 farm-based tourism businesses supported

The Nature Recovery project is working in four project areas, they are:

- The Pebblebed and Otter Valley
- East Devon Coastal Area
- Axe and Lyme catchment
- Gittisham and Sid Valley

The projects include species recovery, tree planting and nature corridor improvements amongst others.

Specific projects are overhead Power Line removal (known as undergrounding) to enhance aspect and reduce bird collisions. An example locally is Fire Beacon Hill.

Water quality is of great concern in the Axe valley and the AONB are working with various bodies to reduce the amount of nutrient runoff that has been detected in the Axe.

The Government response to the Glover report was finally received and is being digested. Likely outcomes are the renaming of AONB to National Landscape, plans to encourage diversity in visitors, possible increased funding for Nature Recovery and possible involvement of National Landscapes as consultees in planning applications.

Projects of interest but not involving the AONB at present.

Within, although not funded by, the AONB is the R. Otter wetlands project which is nearing completion and can be seen at Budleigh Salterton. It is aimed to reduce coastal erosion and flooding and is largely funded by EU money as a trial. If successful it will be copied in appropriate locations throughout the EU.

Another project of interest is the possible reintroduction of Pine Martins in Devon in an attempt to reduce the number of grey squirrels. If successful it may be possible to reintroduce the red squirrel which can live alongside the Pine Martin but not alongside the Grey. This is very much in its early stages and will take years to have any noticeable impact on Grey squirrel numbers.

Richard Huntington

SVA Annual Report – Excursions

The only excursion to take place since before Covid was the outing to Bodmin Jail.

We had a guided tour with theatrical and technological explanations of life in the Jail in the 1800's and 1900's and what crimes were committed resulting in imprisonment there. The tour took us through dark and gloomy cell blocks, the administration and operational workings of the Jail and to the hangman's noose and execution Pit. We had our lunch - for future interest the restaurant is very posh! Unfortunately, the Champagne Bar was closed.

In the afternoon we went to Buckfast Abbey, a complete contrast with its silent, serene stillness. We viewed the Monastic Way Exhibition and the Abbey grounds including the splendid Abbey Church, which was rebuilt from 1906 to 1932- 343 years later than the original - by the Benedictine's on the foundations of the Cistercian church. We had the traditional cream tea at Buckfast Abbey. All in all, a very good day.

Stephen Pemberton

Nature Explorer Backpacks at Sidmouth Library

In 2019 we decided that we wanted a way to encourage families to get out and about exploring our wonderful environment. So, we came up with the idea of a Backpack for families to borrow which would include all they needed.

We were delighted to receive funding from the Keith Owen Fund, along with Devon County Council and Sidmouth Library Friends Group to put together our Nature Explorer Backpacks last year. The kit for our 'Explorer's' consists of a large magnifying glass and pot, a bucket, ruler and torch. We also add identification and spotter sheets, and "matchboxes" for collection of any "tiny treasures". Our Backpacks can be borrowed at no charge, for 3 weeks from Sidmouth library, a library card and a deposit of £ 5 is needed and if families don't have a library card joining is quick and free.



We have made the conservation groups in Sidmouth aware of the Backpacks, which will be available for any of them to make use of, individually or with groups.

It has been lovely to see the children who have borrowed the Backpacks showing us their finds with great enthusiasm and has certainly encouraged more additions to our Library Nature Table.

A family 'spotter walk' around the town and gardens is being arranged for April this year. Staff from the library will lead a guided walk using the Backpacks.

Our plan is to extend our loans to whole school classes in 2023 to engage with even more children and families.

Thank you on behalf of Sidmouth Library



Sidford Tennis club would like to say a very big thank you to the Sid Vale Association Keith Owen Fund. Your generous contribution of £10,000 towards our floodlights was put to immediate good use and has enabled us to provide more adult and junior services through the darker (and frosty) nights. The floodlights are energy efficient LED with minimum light spill. The older non-LED lights were also replaced. These complied with the council planning permission to lessen the impact on wildlife at night.

The SVA plaque is also very much appreciated, and we will shortly be displaying it somewhere for all to see in our clubhouse.

As well as junior and adult coaching sessions, twice weekly social sessions and three league teams, the club also holds social events for its members every 2-3 months.

The picture was snapped by ace photographer Nick Keast at our Winter Triples League finale. In total 24 adults took part in this league which started the week the lights were 'switched on' back in October. Jacket potatoes, chilli and wine were enjoyed while the winning team was being calculated for the subsequent presentation ceremony.

Friday nights is our Sidford Juniors night and again all three floodlights courts are used to help develop our local talent.

Sidford is all about our community approach to tennis for ages 4 to 84.

We also run cardio tennis sessions for the community (no membership necessary) which are incredibly popular on Friday mornings. The emphasis is on movement and activity and requires minimal tennis skills. With the background music, you get an enjoyable workout and the opportunity for a social coffee afterwards. So - if any of your members would like to improve their physical and mental well-being then please let us know.

To help promote the SVA you will be pleased to hear that your logo now appears on our new club merchandising tops and team tennis shirts.

We are also running coach trips this year up to various LTA Events (such as Birmingham, Nottingham or Eastborne) and would like to invite your members to join us for a good day out. Please contact nickfish16@hotmail.com or daryl.bass@hotmail.com for further info.

As a committee we feel that there will be opportunities where we can work together for the benefit of the community and look forward to discussing these further with you.

Nick Keast

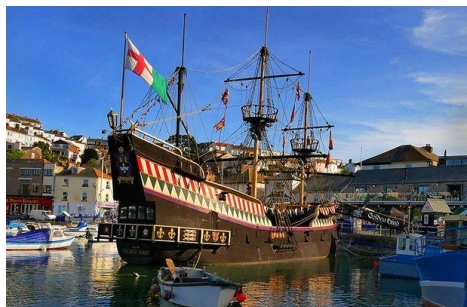
Information and application details for awards can be found on the Keith Owen Fund page of the SVA website. We encourage informal enquiries, and our Grant Committee members will work alongside organisations to help them understand the purpose of the funds and the information they need to supply to support their application.



SVA Excursions for 2023

Wednesday July 5th 2023: Brixham and Ugbrooke House

We head to **Brixham** for the morning to take in the Harbour and picturesque town, shops, and cafes. Explore the town, coffee, and purchase a lunch/packed lunch. Brixham is perhaps the least commercialised part of what is known as the English Riviera, a picturesque fishing town built upon a limestone outcrop at the southern end of the Torbay crescent of coastline. The town was built around the busy harbour and a



fine array of colour-washed houses line the narrow streets leading from this area. In addition to shops selling locally caught fish are cafés, craft shops and galleries. Displays in the Brixham Museum feature the rise and fall in the fortunes of the local seafaring community. The museum incorporates the National Coastguard Museum. In the Harbour there is a replica of *Sir*

Francis Drake's ship, the Golden Hind, emphasising Brixham's seafaring links.

In the afternoon we will head off to **Ugbrooke House and Park** for a private tour of the House with time to look around the Gardens and of course, Cream Tea. Ugbrooke House has a history covering 900 years, originally featuring in the Domesday book of 1086, and today it remains the private home of the Clifford family. It exhibits a variety of alterations made over the centuries, particularly the alterations made by Robert Adam when he and Capability Brown were commissioned by the 4th Lord Clifford to remodel the house, grounds and garden in the mid-18th century.

As one of the earliest examples of Adam's "toy fort" style, the house has had a thoroughly varied past, journeying through periods of stately grandeur and desperate, troughs of disrepair. Requisitioned as a school during the Second World War, then serving as a refuge for the Polish Army, the house was subsequently relegated to a grain store. However, it was rescued in 1957 by the 13th Lord and Lady Clifford who painstakingly restored it back into a family home. The Gardens include the three thousand acre estate encapsulating Capability Brown designed parkland, a fernery, walled gardens, meandering paths through enchanting woodland and peaceful lakes. We will take our Cream Tea at Ugbrooke House either in the Orangery or the House leaving to return to Sidmouth for approximately 6.00pm.

To Book An Excursion

Booking Forms for the July SVA Excursions will be sent out to SVA Members by email, from Sidmouth Museum or directly from Stephen Pemberton, three months before their date.

September excursion is in the planning and details will be emailed to SVA Members and advertised at the Sidmouth Museum and on Local Notice Boards nearer the date.

Please make any enquiries directly to Stephen Pemberton, SVA Excursions by email or telephone - Tel: 07810496566 Email: stevepemb@hotmail.com

A Celebration of Sidmouth Cemetery

Sidmouth cemetery is a photographer's dream and a pollinator's haven. East Devon District Council's Streetscene team should be applauded for managing this wonderful local asset so much better over the last two or three years.

Now in summer, wherever you look, there are stunning, surprising or atmospheric views.

Outstanding craftsmanship sits perfectly framed by nature's glory. Green woodpeckers can be heard "yaffling" as they peck for meadow ants amongst the long grass. Greenfinches – increasingly rare – flit through the cypress trees feeding on tiny insects and flocks of tits swarm through the high canopy of the Scots Pines. Kestrels hover motionless, looking for mice and voles to swoop down on. Slow worms and lizards find refuge amongst the warm stones that now overlay this ancient grazing pasture.



In spring, bluebells, primroses and violets spring up in the wilder area south of the chapel of rest, where there is a more wooded character and history to the land. Beech and Oak trees planted by Victorian Sidmothians now spread their canopy over much of this area, with some dating back to the opening of the cemetery in 1879. Nearly 50

trees have been mapped and recorded by Sidmouth Arboretum ([link](#)), with a little story about each one on the website.

In June, the lower section of the cemetery is a sea of oxeye daisies and birdsfoot trefoil, the food plant for the common blue butterflies, which light up the cemetery with a subtle blue flickering as you wander through.



Wildflower meadows are lodged deep in our psyche as a beautiful, rare and iconic feature of our landscape and memory. But fungi are also really important indicators of a rare and valuable habitat.



In autumn the cemetery is heaving with multi-coloured waxcaps, fairy rings, puffballs and many more.



The hedges running around and through the cemetery are often overlooked but some of them are in fact the most ancient feature of the cemetery, with the southernmost hedge possibly dating back to the Middle Ages. They are critical for wildlife, providing a green highway across the town for bats, including the rare Lesser Horseshoe Bat which roosts nearby at Knowle and uses the Knapp and cemetery hedges for foraging and

commuting. Dormice have recently been found in the old hedges that run through the Knapp and could expand their habitat into the cemetery if we manage the hedges well. What's important to the bats, butterflies, birds and even the dormice is not just mature and spreading hedgerows but the long grass all around them. Bats and birds feed on flying insects which multiply above long grass and dormice will feed on caterpillars and other insects they find on the stems, to boost their protein intake in the fallow period between summer flowers and autumn fruits. Combining short and long grass actually provides a more diverse habitat for an even greater range of insect and plant species, so perhaps a happy compromise can be found for relatives who want their family graves kept clear and easy to visit, and those who prefer a wilder setting.

The cemetery is now, ironically, heaving with life, and also beauty, surprise, monumental art and atmosphere. What better way to pay homage to our dead than to celebrate life by managing this outstanding fragment of our ancient landscape for nature and for the future.

Kate Tobin Sidmouth diversity group



Pillar Talk by Crumbling Cliff.

The Sid valley is a walker's paradise with more than the average number of public footpaths and the open access areas of Mutters Moor, Beacon Hill and Salcombe Hill. It is also bisected by one of the best and most challenging sections of the long distance South-West Coast Path and by the shorter, but equally worthwhile, East Devon Way. Unless you are content with ambling through the Byes or along the prom then you need to climb up the valley sides to fully appreciate the full range of options available to you. Even your regular route can be enhanced by a change of direction or a different season. Every walk is improved by having a purpose be it birdwatching, spotting flora and fauna or dog walking. One of my favourites is visiting a triangulation (trig) pillar.

Again, the Sid valley seems to have more than average; there being five of them within a few miles of the seafront. Trig pillars are a relic of the Ordnance Survey's last physical topographical survey between 1936 and 1962 when more than six thousand of these four feet high concrete pillars were constructed across the British Isles, mainly on hilltops and all but a few to the iconic truncated pyramid design. What is not so obvious is that they have a hollow core and are set on a concrete foundation of over a cubic yard in volume. They were used to provide a fixed mounting platform for a theodolite and lamp. Survey teams often had to camp out on the hilltops for months waiting for suitable



Pillar Mounting Plate

weather conditions that would enable them to observe at night the lights displayed by teams at pillars considerable distances away. The design has proved to be remarkably robust given the generally harsh environmental conditions associated with their location.

The most westerly local pillar is on High Peak and at 157m is the lowest. It is easily reached from the coast path by way of a steep forestry track just before the drop into Ladrum Bay. You will find it perched precariously on the remains of an ancient earthwork and will surely fall into the sea before long. From here the survey team would have been able to sight several other coastal pillars in good weather conditions, all the way from Portland Bill to Berry Head.

To the east, and also accessible from the coast path, is a pillar just 100m inland from Weston Cliff. It straddles a field boundary bank on the edge of a delightful meadow of wild flowers so best visited in the summer months. At only 162m and with quite limited sight lines, it seems to be an odd choice of locations.

Buckton Hill has the next highest pillar at 180m and will be found off the main bridlepath in private woods above Harcombe. Nowadays it has no sightlines due to the dense tree cover.

My favourite pillar is the one on (Fire) Beacon Hill at 242m. It is easily found just behind the main viewpoint. On a good day there is an extensive view to Dartmoor in the West and South, although High Peak is hidden behind Bulverton. The highest local pillar at 247m, and the only one you can drive to, is located on the summit of East Hill, just a mile or so North of White Cross. This one is also hidden in the trees now. In fact, on my first visit I mistook it for an old tree stump as it was so encrusted with moss and lichen. Look for the ancient burial mound by the road and search for the pillar just behind it. As, any peak bagger will tell you, there is nothing so welcome as the sight of a trig pillar after a long morning toiling uphill in poor weather conditions to confirm your location. Whenever you reach a trig pillar be sure to touch it – it is said to be lucky! Remember you might need the charm to find your way home.



Emma. A tale of how one story can lead to another.

A few years ago, my passion for delving into local history was sparked by researching an old, derelict cottage in Harpford Woods. This spurred me on to find out more about our parish, about the people, the buildings, the railway, even the tracks and lanes of our villages and towns.

I was hooked!

When I worked in Sidmouth, friends would bring me local books based on history, photographs and other memorabilia. One such book lent to me was 'I give you Sidmouth' by a gentleman called William Rising Bray. William was raised in Sidmouth and his book encompassed so many of the qualities of someone discovering and sharing their love for their home town, that I was enthralled by descriptions of old Sidmouth. He wrote of places, buildings, views that I knew. My obsession with this book led me to research William and his family, who owned businesses in Old Fore Street. During my research, I also came across numerous newspaper reports of a court case.

It's funny how sometimes looking into one thing can somehow lead you into a new story; well, this was one such time. This case involved William Bray's younger brother Ernest, and a package with a shocking content that he came across one day whilst out walking. Ernest would take daily walks in Sidmouth with his governess, and on one such walk in February of 1896 he made a grim discovery in the River Sid which set off a chain of reactions in the town and ultimately involved a young woman by the name of Emma.



Alma Bridge as it was at that time

This is when Emma Doble came into my life; she was a name in a newspaper report with a tragic story to tell. With determination and many hours reading books and researching online I managed to find out about Emma's childhood in Somerset and how she came to be in Sidmouth in 1896. I found that she had lived just across the Alma Bridge at Myrtle Lodge and that she had worked for the influential and wealthy Lubbock family. I discovered about some of the people she met along the way and just how she ended up being involved in a court case in which young Ernest Bray testified.



Myrtle Lodge

During this journey I gained so much knowledge, not just about Sidmouth but also about the life of a young working woman in Victorian Britain. I have written my findings into a short account which you may be interested to read. Find out about the discovery of the mysterious package in the river, the story it had to tell, hear about some of Sidmouth's characters and about Emma's ultimate involvement in this tale.

You can find the whole enticing story on the SVA website. Please take a look!

"It is only when someone who loves his native place seeks earnestly and honestly in the dustbins of the past that the fragments of their story are brought into the light". William Rising Bray

Judith Taylor

Goose Barnacles

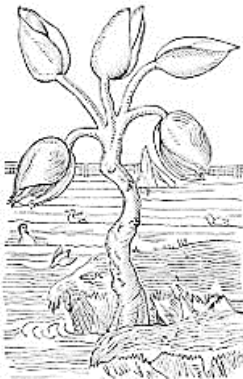
As readers may know, I am fascinated by the way nature tries to overcome all the pollution which humans discard.

My latest 'find' is a bunch of goose barnacles which had attached themselves to a plastic bottle. Sadly, for them, the bottle being buoyant, had washed ashore and the barnacles had sadly passed away - though the smell lingered on!!

I also found a much larger colony attached to a large piece of concrete, a leftover from the war defences that were placed along the beach. These were very much more alive and showing their full structure.

Goose barnacles also known as stalk barnacles or gooseneck barnacles are filter feeding crustacean that attach themselves to any flotsam or jetsam. They are an expensive delicacy in Portugal and Spain where they are harvested.

The barnacle has rather an unusual story - in early times it was thought that barnacle geese developed from them as they are of similar colour. Since nobody had ever found a goose's nest, it was a logical conclusion. Nobody realised that in fact the barnacle goose migrates and breeds abroad. The theory was that the barnacles were attached to a tree branch or some type of tree which fell into the water and was washed up on the beach. It seemed amazing now that nobody attempted to keep them and observe the change into a bird!! Consequently, as they were born not of flesh, they were allowed to be eaten on Christian nonmeat eating days.



On the left is the Barnacle Tree and on the right are the live Goose Barnacles.

Val Huntington

A memorable day at Salcombe Regis.

On Sunday 2nd October our usual 9.15am communion service was jointly led by our Curate, Reverend Nigel Candelent and the Very Reverend Jonathan Greener, Dean of Exeter Cathedral. The Dean had been invited by the Patron of The Friends of Salcombe Regis Church, Sheelagh Michelmores, to dedicate the stained glass roundel commissioned by The Friends celebrating the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

The idea for a permanent recognition of that historic achievement came from a Friends member putting her thoughts to the committee who, after examining its feasibility, enthusiastically supported it.

That was in October 2021 when celebrations at the national level were still in their early planning stages and launched us off on the long and tortuous road of deciding the form and placement of a glass tribute, getting the necessary permissions from the College of Arms and the PCC and appointing a master glazier to take our design ideas and turn them into reality once we had secured the necessary faculty from the diocese.

We were fortunate to find the Reverend Andrew Johnson, Master Glazier, of Exeter who worked closely with us to decide how our design thoughts could best be realised. The faculty was granted on 11th July and the window was installed on 24th August – poignantly just two weeks before the Queen died!



The dedication service was a fitting conclusion to what was a major project for The Friends and is believed to be the only tribute of its kind in the county and one of only two in England. A small brass plate below the window acknowledges The Friends' commissioning of the roundel.

The church is open daily from 11.0am until 4.0pm so please do come over the hill to see it.

Peter Whitfield

Sand, Sidbury – A new family takes it on



The first family, that we know of, was the tenant family who took their name from the place back in the 13th century – Thomas, son of Matilda de Sande. Then a couple of generations later, around 1240, William de Sande and Deodatus his son purchased Sand from the Dean & Chapter of Exeter which owned much of Sidbury Parish. William was “de Sand” because in the predominant Norman French naming, he was “of Sand” to distinguish him from William de Sydeforde. Sand was where they lived; and died. The Black Death hit Devon in the mid 1300s and Deodatus’ granddaughter Isabella de Sande was involved in many property leases as fields needed to be managed by different people.

In 1409 Roger Tremayle bought the small stone house in the Roncombe valley with a view to development. He built a large new house and when that was complete, and he had married Margaret de Farway, he added a chapel.

The Tremayle family stayed until the mid 1500s, having extended the older building as well, and finally sold to Harry and Ellen Huyshe who moved down from Somerset. Their sons eventually sold to a cousin, by which time both houses had lost their fashionable status, so it was time for a major extension to transform one of the buildings to an Elizabethan family house. Rowland and Ann Huyshe completed this in 1594 and also transformed the garden, building the thatched summerhouse we used as a ticket office on open days.

How do we know all this? This is not word passed down, but parchment and paper; deals signed and delivered, and kept as proof of ownership, there being no computerised Land Registry to hold the official entitlement. Hundreds of documents concerning Sidbury were inherited by my father, Pat Huyshe, in the 1960s and they have been housed in the Devon Heritage Centre ever since: Roncombe to Harcombe to Woolcombe. Those of you who have visited Sand on open days will have seen some of these documents.

Architectural fashion has often determined the fate of a domestic building and what once accommodated a family can become used as a barn and eventually demolished. But at Sand most of the older buildings have been incorporated into the new ones over the centuries. There was a testing point in the late 1700s when the Georgian style for country homes became fashionable, but shortly before this the Huyshe family had moved to Clyst Hydon, where the cousin who inherited was Rector. Sand itself was then let as a farmhouse and, in common with many tenanted buildings, was left untouched.

Francis Huyshe's account book 1810-1832 relates how he travelled over to Sand frequently to collect rents (no automatic bank transfers!), and to pay for actions such as "letting and flooding the meadow". It was not an easy time for either landlords or tenants. The cider orchards became unprofitable and other aspects of Devon farms suffered.

Change came in 1907, not with a new family, but with a renewed interest in the old buildings. William Morris had sparked the conservation movement in the 1870s and Rowland Huyshe, living at Clyst Hydon, decided to conserve the Elizabethan building and also bring it up to modern standards. Rebuilding one wing which had burnt down some decades earlier, he also added an extension with necessary rooms such as bathrooms and installed an electricity generator and water supply. Having built Sand Farm to house the tenant farmer, these changes enabled him to let the house as "a gentleman's residence".

The second tenant, Mrs Mary Sheldon outlived her husband and spent 1911-1955 restoring the garden with many interesting plants from Veitch's Exeter nursery. Rowland never married and stayed living at Clyst Hydon, though he built Sand Chalet on the hill above the house, apparently as somewhere to stay when he came to sing with the Sidmouth Arts Club Operatic Society which formed in the 1920s. Sand stayed let until Pat and Margaret Huyshe returned in 1967 – their 22nd marital home following a peripatetic life in the army. Few changes were made to the buildings, but the Edwardian coke-fired central heating was replaced with a multi-fuel boiler and the house re-wired and re-plumbed. When the price of heating oil rose significantly in the 1970s, wood burners were installed as well as solar panels. Pat will be remembered for advising hundreds of armed services veterans on obtaining war disability pensions and Margaret for her work in Sidmouth Town Council and her successful campaign to prevent Cotford Bridge over the Sid from being flattened. Their records have now joined the rest of the family archive in the Devon Heritage Centre.

The Huyshe estate was entailed through Pat to his eldest son Roger. Roger had a job and family elsewhere and had asked his sister Stella and her husband Stephen, with jobs in Devon, if they would cope with Sand until his daughters were in a position to take up ownership. This didn't go according to plan, Roger dying suddenly in 2017.

Stella & Stephen suggested to his two daughters that they consider taking over early. They tried, but Sand comes with overheads that are not for everybody. If you can share the house with others, the effort is worth it, but Covid lockdowns curtailed public opening and both decided that with no successors in place, it was time for a new family to take over.

Chance then took a hand and the Coman family walked down the drive exploring, as people often do. Matthew and Gertrude, with their two young children, finally moved in in the summer of 2022 and despite having now gone into the winter, still love the place.

As anyone who has visited will know, Sand is a beautiful house. It has sheltered and succoured many families since 1200 and seen them through the black death, civil war, religious and agricultural turmoil, world wars and a Covid pandemic. Families have mended it, extended it and loved it.

Outside, the old cider orchards and the big threshing barn are no more. The garden no longer has Edwardian formal beds and wildlife thrives. Wren and treecreeper still nest annually in the thatched summerhouse and a nuthatch in the exhaust pipe from the old electricity generator; lesser horseshoe bats rest nightly in the porch.

The wildlife stays, but the Huyshe family have passed Sand on to a new family to make the next move forward. Change is in the air!

Stella Huyshe Swires

The Big Draw 27th October 2022

It is always good fun organising The Big Draw which I have presented in the Museum for the last fifteen years during the October half term, and this time to be joined by several other like-minded artistic folks supervising different clever crafts in the Parish Church. This made the day even more enjoyable and sociable. The Big Draw is a nationwide project which encourages folk to paint and draw with no inhibitions and to express themselves through art. The national organisers suggest a general theme but we can elaborate on it and choose the specific subject each time but we are always open to suggestions. Other subjects in the past have included life in Victorian Times to commemorate, prehistoric Sidmouth with dinosaurs, Regency Sidmouth with Jane Austen type characters on the beach, and Mr. Fish with his menagerie of interesting animals and birds at The Knowle in the 1860s.

The Big Draw effort this time shows a more modern version of Queen Victoria's window in the Parish Church. The original was installed in 1866, and the



Queen designed it herself, depicting the Six Acts of Mercy from St. Matthew's Gospel (visiting the sick, clothing the naked, feeding the hungry etc.,) but being Queen Victoria, she added two more making eight (Supporting orphans and Teaching Religious Education). Initially, I drew out the shape of the window. Younger children drew cute pictures of themselves and their parents whilst older children added suggestions of how we can help others at home and in our community. It turned out to be a very busy day with about thirty children, parents and grandparents drawing together and thinking about contributing to the needs of less fortunate people.

I have always enjoyed drawing and painting and studying the History of Art and have been an active member of the Sidmouth Society of Artists since we moved to Sidmouth in 2001. I was able to combine all my interests with a well-established knowledge of history, dates and the Royal Family. Being a true Devonian, born and bred, I was persuaded several years ago to join the team who lead the town walks with Nigel Hyman at the helm. We are looking forward to meeting plenty of visitors and new Sidmothians for the 'walking and talking' season when the Museum opens again.

Margaret Adams

Editor's note: The Keith Owen Fund gave a very generous award of £20,000 towards the restoration of Queen Victoria's window in 2016.

Sampson's Sidmouth

The architect Robert William Sampson arrived in Sidmouth in 1891, initially working for the Sidmouth Manor Estate. Much of what was built in the town during the next 50 years was designed by him. In the early years he developed a number of houses in a loose form of Arts and Crafts style. They were built of brick from the Manor Estates own brickworks and the roofs were covered with plain clay tiles, his favourite roofing material. He always designed his houses so that the principal rooms gained as much sunlight as possible and often the houses included large windows to the hall and landing areas.

Although best known for the houses he designed, he was responsible for many commercial and public buildings in the town. These range from the Victoria Hotel, his largest building, to many smaller schemes, including a number of shops in the town centre - even the public toilets at the Triangle were designed by him. In fact, he was such a prolific architect that his buildings can be seen wherever you look in the town.



Bickwell Cottage



Marycourt, Convent Road

The Sampson Society has gone from strength since its formation in August 2009. Both in collating more information about Sampson and in physical numbers. It is open to anyone who has an interest in R W Sampson or architecture in general. You do not have to live in a Sampson house to be a member and many of our members do not. We visit Sampson properties when Martin Mallinson, our Sampson expert, tells a fascinating story of the property and also find some unexpected facts.

We have pictorial presentations, quizzes on Sidmouth architectural features, an annual Garden Party, Christmas Drinks and an Annual Lunch in the Victoria Hotel to commemorate the life of R W Sampson. We are a vibrant, interested group of residents of Sidmouth who enjoy learning of information still coming to the fore about R W Sampson's enhancement of Sidmouth, including his involvement with The Arts Club, which he helped to form before it became Sidmouth Musical Theatre.

In conjunction with the Museum we have produce a leaflet on Sampson Houses and Trails and Sylvia Brownlee's SVA publication, '*Sampson's Sidmouth*' - a title suggested by Handel Bennett, then Chairman of the Sid Vale Association. The publication is available to buy from the museum or online from the SVA web site.

More information at www.rwsampson.com

Martin Mallinson and Sylvia Brownlee.

The gig club has been extremely grateful to the Keith Owen Fund in the past for help purchasing their gigs. Their first wooden gig was the very appropriately named Keith Owen and the second 'Little Picket'. Keith Owen was built by the esteemed Fowey boat builder, Maurice Hunkin with Little Picket being built by Louis his son alongside Maurice.

A surprise 75th birthday 'party' was held recently in the form of a regatta at Fowey for all the boats that Maurice and his son Louis have built over the years. There were over 17 clubs involved in the regatta with clubs travelling from as far away as Portland. Maurice was absolutely delighted to "his" gigs back in Fowey and it was lovely to share stories about the building of the gigs.



Gig boats tend to be given names, often rather obscure, that connect them to the club or place from where they originate. Thus, the link with Keith Owen in recognition of the generous donation from the trust and to Sidmouth. Little Picket is the name of a stack which is at the far end of Jacobs Ladder beach. Other gigs that were present were Faith from Devoran, Lantic from Fowey, Pulpit Rock from Portland and Dagger from Bridport to mention just a few.

What better way to advertise the SVA KOF and put Sidmouth on the map!!

Julie Turner

What's New in the Museum this year?

Sidmouth Museum is closed during the winter months mainly to enable new exhibits to be introduced and ipso facto 'old' exhibits to be removed. If you visited in 2022 and think 'been there, don't need to go again', please, think again.

From the minute you enter and are greeted with colourful folk festival memorabilia many changes will be evident. Walk on and learn about various local shipwrecks all the while sitting on a bench salvaged from the Duchess of Devonshire.

In the War Room it is 1943. The Old Orchard Forces Club was very popular with visiting forces personnel; the museum owns the visitors book, a compelling read.

Onwards and upwards the Main gallery looks bigger and brighter. There is a wealth of new exhibits, too numerous to mention but including fire service equipment accompanied by an entrancing film, a display of local trophies in which there is a silver cup awarded to Salcombe Farm in 1891. Move on to a collection of medical equipment, look out for the anal syringe! There is an interesting cabinet devoted to old maps and mapping.



Another featuring Arabella Buckley, a scientific lecturer and author. She was secretary to Charles Lyell 1864-1975 and a contemporary of Darwin. Her books, many of which were beautifully self-illustrated popularised natural history for young people. Arabella lived at 3, Coburg Terrace, she died from influenza in 1929.

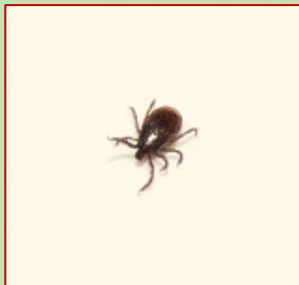
The Lace Room has also been transformed. This year the theme is from the 'cradle to the grave' so there are christening gowns, bridal lace and black mourning lace.

It is fascinating watching a new exhibit evolve and grow, there is the initial idea followed by a hunt in the attic for suitable items. These objects are placed in a cabinet, then go away, think about it, return and make changes. This process may be repeated many times until at last it all comes together and 'Yes I am happy'. The exhibit is finally complete- probably.

All the displays in the museum have relevance to Sidmouth especially and East Devon generally so come and visit.

Jane Bell

A warning about ticks on Sid Vale Association Land and Lyme Disease



With the spread of wild deer in the area comes the increased threat of ticks. These tiny little creatures can infect humans with Lyme Disease and attention should be paid to the possibility of these ticks attaching themselves to humans and pets that walk in areas that are shared with deer or sheep that are the tick carriers.

As the deer populations increase, they are becoming more and more present on our land and know no boundaries. As they are also active at night, their presence is not always noticed. The ticks, carried on deer, drop onto grass waiting for a suitable host. Part of the life cycle of the tick involves climbing tall plants that may be brushed against by suitable hosts, us for example, and they then jump off and attach themselves and make their way to a suitable spot on your body.

If you are out walking and have been out in the country or on SVA land around Sidmouth then please check yourself for ticks. The tick cannot be felt when it bites/attaches itself and are difficult to see as they are only the size of a pinhead, brown/black in colour. Later the immediate area starts to itch. They suck your blood and that is when the bacteria that causes Lyme's Disease can be transferred. The tick gets and carries the disease from another infected animal.

Remove them with very sharp pointed tweezers and spot the area with antiseptic. They have a hard exoskeleton so make sure it is dead when you have removed it. If not found immediately, they suck your blood and plump up in size from pinhead to 5mm before dropping off to lay eggs and repeat the cycle. If the area of skin around the bite shows signs of a target like pattern, seek help as this is more likely that the tick which has bitten you has infected you with Lyme's disease. Further specialist treatment is essential at this point.

Check your dog and cat regularly. The ticks can drop off your pet and reattach themselves to you! Your vet will advise you about tick treatments that can be given. As a precaution, wear long trousers if walking in areas with long grass or bracken in woodland or heath. The less flesh exposed the better. Ticks are active throughout spring summer and autumn and sometimes on warmer winter days.

For more information there are several help sites on line including Lyme Disease Action, Bigtickproject and NHS. **This area of Devon is now classed as high risk.**

Richard Huntington

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Whilst we make every effort to ensure details and times are correct at the time of going to press, please check the web page for latest details and any updates.

For all information go to www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of Sid Vale Association

Wednesday 24th May 2.30 pm

All Saints Church Hall, All Saints Road, Sidmouth EX10 8ES

TALKS

Science Week event Wednesday 11th October

Sidmouth Flood Relief Scheme at the Knowle by Paul Hargreaves of Jacobs Engineering.

Talk at All Saints Church Hall 14:30 to 15:30 followed by refreshments then an opportunity for a site visit at the Knowle 16:30 to 17:00 (Lifts for those without transport to be arranged)

EXCURSIONS – see page 26

Wednesday July 5th Brixham and Ugbrooke House

COUNTRYSIDE WALKS

Non planned. The web page will be updated and members emailed with details when they recommence.

MUSEUM – Opens Monday 3rd April

Hope Cottage Church Street Sidmouth EX10 8LY

Open Monday-Friday 10.00am - 4.00pm

Saturday 10.00-1.00

Admission: Adults £2.50 Under 16's and SVA members free.

Museum Walks: All start at 10.30 from Museum and last about 2 hours, gentle strolls. Free for SVA members. Booking not required

Monday: Sidmouth by the Sea

Tuesday: Royalty and Regency

Wednesday: Geology

Thursday: Crime, Church & Charity

Friday: Trees

HISTORY GROUP

The group meets on the second Monday of every other month, 7pm at 36A Fore St. - May 8th, July 10th, Sept. 11th, Nov 13th

The Sid Vale Association CIO, 36A Fore Street, Sidmouth EX10 8AQ

The Sid Vale Association CIO is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation Registration number 1154749. The association promotes conservation and heritage, the museum, and facilities for recreational and cultural activities in the Sid Valley.

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