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# COLWALL VILLAGE SOCIETY

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Newsletter

January 2002

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## **Events and activities**

**Our next open meeting** is on **Monday 28 January at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall** and will feature an illustrated talk by well-known local artist and naturalist Dudley Brook, entitled 'A Naturalist on the Malvern Hills.' It will be followed by a chance to ask questions, then tea, coffee and biscuits and a chat. We can look forward to a fascinating evening of slides and insights into Dudley Brook's extensive local knowledge. All welcome.

## **Village Design Statement**

**– have you had your copy?**

The Village Design Statement was printed in sufficient quantity to allow members of the Society to have their own copies. They may be collected at the next meeting, and also from Colwall Library: please tell the librarian, Margaret Rudge, that you are a member as she also holds copies for public loan. If you would like a copy but are unable to collect it in person, would you contact Susan Bond [REDACTED] before the end of January.

**History Projects meeting** Are you working away on one of the Society's history projects? On **Tuesday 5th March** there will be a meeting at 7.30 pm in the Jean Simon Room of the Village Hall of project leaders and anyone else who would like to take part to report progress and see if any help is needed. There are around half a dozen active projects finished or near completion, and a list of some 80 topics which might be tackled if you are interested. Do come and hear more.

The **Annual General Meeting** will be on **29 April** at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, and will be followed by 'Colwall Now and Then - Part II' a slide show compiled and presented by Graham Cowan and Jim Savage.

The **Parish Pictorial Map** is an A3-sized coloured three-dimensional view of the present-day parish – a follow-on to 'Colwall through the Millennia'. Some existing aerial photographs were studied as material for making the Map, and others were commissioned to add to our records. However, persistent bad weather over the 'floods' period last year created a huge backlog of orders for aerial photograph firms, and we had to take our place in the

queue. When a set of pictures of the parish finally arrived they were of mixed quality for our purposes but Ron Hill, who is making the map, has now been able to make a start. Further photographs are being organised.

The plan is to have at least a proof copy of what will now be the Golden Jubilee Map on display at the Jubilee Fun Day on June 3rd. Free distribution to all residents will follow as soon as possible after that and there will probably be an additional limited number for sale.

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## **A new railway history**

To mark the 75th anniversary of the Downs Light Railway, the book describing its history and development has now been published, entitled ***Don't stand up in the Tunnel***. The author is James Boyd, whose enthusiasm and dedication have ensured its successful operation over many years. Readers will be aware that the railway is the exclusive property of the Downs School and is solely used by the school; it is a part of the School's history and in its turn comprises a piece – and a very successful one – of Colwall history. Published by Rail Romances, the book is fascinating and a good read. Thanks and congratulations to Mr Boyd on this latest addition to his extensive works on railway history.

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**A water rail** has been seen and photographed near The Kettle Sings. This is a long-legged bird which is a fairly abundant winter visitor, although it's unusual to see one on the Hills. It conceals itself in reed beds and marsh vegetation, feeding on plant material and small animals.

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### Improvement of the Sewage Works

Biwater Treatment Company, under contract with Severn Trent Water have been working on the village sewage works at Colwall Mill Farm. The purpose of the work is to meet higher standards by giving a better quality discharge. The traditional rotating filters are being replaced with an oxidation ditch. This should lower the level of ammonia – a breakdown product of sewage – and give a lower biochemical demand, which is a measure of how much oxygen the effluent takes out of the water. A 3:1 improvement is expected and this should improve the quality of the discharge into the water course. In the planning of this work an estimate called population equivalent – a projection of the growth of the village – has been used, for the year 2010. Completion is expected by September.

*Details supplied by Mr Steve Evans who is in charge of the project for the Biwater Treatment Company.*

### Bird Survey Group

Last year, on 4th October Garth Lowe gave us a most interesting, lively and beautifully illustrated talk based on the Knapp Reserve. We were enthusiastically joined by a resident bat in the Alehouse during the talk which caused some consternation among the audience until Garth informed us that no-one had yet died from a bat wound! The Group has a full programme of activities planned for this year, starting on January 26 & 27 with RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch (only one hour of your time needed in this weekend to carefully count the number and variety of birds that visit your garden – ask Derek Turner [redacted] for a form). Then on February 7 there will be an illustrated talk by Gordon Forrest on the birds to be seen at Upton Warren Reserve. Contact Derek Turner for further details of the Group.

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### Where's that name from?

How did Colwall get its name? In the Domesday book it was Colewelle, said to be from the Old English *cald wiell* – cold well. But Colwall has springs, not wells, so did the name come from Roman times? Try this, from Colonel Michael Singleton, former Headmaster of the Elms School:

“When the Roman legions marched from the southeast across the plain towards the Malvern Hills on a summer evening, as the sun was setting, they saw the dark barrier of the hills stretched out in front of them. They called it COLLIS VALLUM – a rampart of hill. If you have driven that route in the early evening, you will see why. When they crossed over, they kept the name for the settlement on the west of the hills; this was later reduced to COLWALL.” The only other similarly named place in England, Colwell, is close to Hadrian's Wall.

Col. Singleton also suggests that Oyster Hill, in the hills overlooking Wellington Heath, might have been named after the Roman commander, Ostorius Scapula, who crossed the Severn towards Wales in the campaign of 47-51 AD against Caractacus, or Caradog. If so, the name would indicate that he at least passed this way. An alternative theory is that Oyster derives from the Old English Oestre, a pagan goddess whose festival turned into Easter. Oestre was associated with fertility rites and Lovers' Bush is still marked on Oyster Hill.

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### From the Archives: Hotels and Tariffs in 1930 – 31

#### Park Hotel

Room and breakfast	single 11/- (55p) double 16/- (80p)
Lunch	3/6 (17p)
Tea	1/6 (7p)
Dinner	5/- (25p)
Boarding terms:	from 15/- (75p) per day, 100/- (£5) per week.

#### Temperance Hotel

Room and breakfast	single 5/- (25p)
Lunch	2/6 (12p)
Tea	1/3 (6p)
Dinner	4/6 (22p)
Boarding terms:	9/- (45p) per day, 63/- (£3.15) per week.

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