



# Estates Update

January 2011

Issue 2

IF YOU HAVE ANY NEWS OR INFORMATION TO ENTER INTO THE NEXT NEWSLETTER PLEASE CONTACT:  
CARLA FANNING  
01395 441142  
carla.fanning@clintondevon.com

## Bicton Arena

January 2011

By Emma Vine



It only seems a moment ago I was packing up the Arena ready for the Christmas break and its now full steam ahead to the start of the season. With the great addi-

## Otterton Mill

By Detta Keane



Nestled in the Otter valley on the Clinton Devon Estate lies an historic gem of a working mill. Desna Greenhow with help from Judge Polson made it into what it is today by reclaiming it from a state of disrepair and inactivity and turning it back into a mill producing flour by water power. It opened to the public in 1977. Caroline and Simon Spiller, the present tenants took over the lease in 2008.

Otterton Mill's longevity owes its thanks to the caretakers who over the years have kept it going as a working mill. The grade two star listed Tudor building has a long history. This mill was one of the largest in Devon paying more dues than any other. The mill and seventy other mills in Devon were mentioned in the Domesday book. Ten of those mills were on the river

tion of the all weather arena, this season will be starting four months early with the first event being on the 16th January this year.

The sheep have been working wonders on the cross country course and there are remedial repairs planned for the grass arenas.

South Western Show Jumping Club are moving to a showground in Chard after over 25 years at the Arena. I will be taking on the running of the large three day shows.

New events to the Arena this year include the Pony Club Area Horse Trials, Area Tetrathlon and Affiliated Show Jumping. The Arena will welcome training days from Nick Gauntlett, Mary King and Clarissa Bleekman.

### Events:

- 23rd January** Unaffiliated Dressage
- 8th February** Nick Gauntlett Clinic
- 13th February** Unaffiliated Dressage
- 19th February** British Show Jumping Juniors
- 20th February** British Show Jumping Seniors
- 26th February** Mary King Clinic
- 27th February** Unaffiliated Show Jumping

Otter that is only twenty-six miles long. During the Norman Conquest there were at least five thousand in England.

Over many years the Estate has supplied some of the necessary materials for repairs. It took back the mill stable for the big horses they used in the forestry department before they were retired after the Second World War.

Otterton's mill stream was dug in the Middle Ages and passes through several sluice gates in the village before it reaches the mill. Ensuring everything is in working order is essential for the mills productivity. Pre flood a twenty-five kilo sack of flour took ten minutes to fill, post flood it took twenty-five minutes as the rains were bringing large amounts of sediment and gravel down stream. A strong flow of water is needed to move one of the great waterwheels that help grind the grain as it has unusual curved blades that act like paddles.

The millstone used is known as a "Dreadnought" a composite stone held together with a special mortar. On display but not in use is a unique set of French Burr Stone, one has an inscription, 'This stone worked the first time March 28th 1859'. Each pair of millstones at the time of the doomsday survey was referred to as a mill in itself. The milling stones need cleaning when the flour solidifies on the uneven surface and the

## The Commons

By Bungy Williams



### Car Park Counters

We have installed car park counters into four of our car parks, Woodbury Castle, 4Firs, Estuary and the Warren.

Even I was surprised by the amount of usage these car parks have had. We read them after two and a half months to see how many people had visited over Easter :

- Overall count - 33,854
- Busiest car park - Woodbury Castle with a total of 11491
- Busiest day - 250 at the Castle
- Busiest time - 1600 - 1700

With nearly 50 cars in each hour it must have been hectic. However, this was the day of the big fire, so most of these will be onlookers and emergency service vehicles.



### After The Fire

After the fire we had to replace some of the equipment that was lost. Paul was set the task of getting a new tractor and mower.

With shrewd bargaining, compromising and travelling the country for

a bargain we now not only have a tractor with mower, we have a Telehandler (all from an insurance settlement negotiated magnificently by Graham Vanstone) .This will enable us to enhance the work we are doing on the Commons.

Even I was roped into doing a course on the Telehandler. I must admit as far as courses go, I thoroughly enjoyed it. Paul and the Instructor thought I should be the one to do most of the training so I spent most of the two days lifting, shifting and slalom coursing around Otter Farm and digging sand piles at the arena. It was well worth it.



### Winter work goes ahead and the cows have gone

Winter work has started. We are opening up tracks that lead onto the commons that were pinpointed after we did a wash-up of the fire, cutting back overhanging trees and cutting back the mop-headed gorse that has grown up overhanging the fire breaks.

Our borrowed, flying herd has now left and our own experimental herd of Red Devon's have been moved from Dalditch plantations onto a field. They have not seen proper green grass for nine months!

They have certainly made some inroads and opened up Dalditch Common, though probably more than we wanted. Next year we will have to think about the numbers and the amount of time they spend out there.

stones need to be lifted so you can assess the surfaces. The groves can be cut again into the grinding surface which helps the grain to travel from the centre to the sides of each stone. The low and high points need to be chiselled to retain a sharp surface and well-defined grooves. This is called, 'dressing the stones'. Each millstone weighs in at over one tonne, is 1.2 meters wide and 20cm thick and can produce 200kg of flour in one hour. Twelve to twenty tons a year of flour is milled at Otterton.

Maris Widgeon wheat is grown specially for the mill, this makes good flour and is a very old variety. It is used in the Bakery where it is turned into bread and cakes consumed in the mill's café that was awarded Gold by Taste of the West in it's hospitality category, it was the first time the café had been put forward for the award.

The same flour is used in products sold in the shop, supplies are sent off to catering and local businesses such as the Salty monk and Darts Farm shop and other local outlets. The mill has an experienced head miller, baker and a team of maintenance volunteers are indispensable for the running of the mill. Milling happens twice a month and bakery courses sell-out fast with such a revival in home baking.

The mill is still a focal point for the area as it must have been in Tudor times.

What brings me back time after time is the satisfaction of leaving the mill with a loaf or two of delicious baked Otterton bread.

### Next milling dates:

February 8th and 24th, March 10th and 22nd , April 2nd and 21st, May 3rd and 14th

www.ottertonmill.com



# Estates Update

January 2011

Issue 2

On the 11th December, 73 members of Clinton Devon Estates descended on Woodbury Park for the first Estate Christmas Party in years.

It was wonderful to have everyone in one place celebrating not only the festive season but also what a great year it has been for the Estate.

The evening began with a wonderful 4 course meal and was followed by many of the Estate members up on the dance floor.

It was a chance for everyone to let their hair down and meet people from other parts of the Estate. I hope the true spirit of the evening has been captured in this selection of photographs from the evening.

If you have any feedback from the evening please get in contact so we can ensure this year is even better.

## Visits to North Devon, The Farms, Commons and East Devon

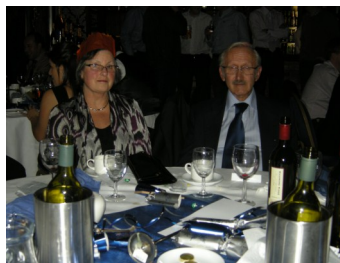
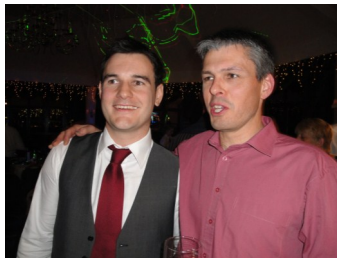
Over the course of the year I am hoping to organise a few visits so that everyone has visited each others places of work. This will give everyone a chance to meet each other and see all aspects of the Estate.

I will be sending some more information out about this in the next few weeks. Please contact me if you are yet to visit any of the above areas.

## The Estate Christmas Party

11th December 2010

Woodbury Park



Thank you to all who came, it was lovely to have everyone in one place and I hope you all had an enjoyable evening.

We welcome your feedback so we can ensure Christmas 2011 is even better.